

By: Rodríguez

S.B. No. 777

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the availability of school counselors at public middle,
junior high, and high school campuses.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 33.002, Education Code, is amended by
amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (d) to read as
follows:

(a) From funds appropriated for the purpose or other funds
that may be used for the purpose, the commissioner shall distribute
funds for programs under this subchapter. In distributing those
funds, the commissioner shall give preference to a school district
that received funds under this subsection for the preceding school
year and then to the districts that have the highest concentration
of students at risk of dropping out of school, as described by
Section 29.081. To receive funds for the program, a school
district must apply to the commissioner. For each school year that
a school district receives funds under this subsection, the
district shall allocate an amount of local funds for school
guidance and counseling programs that is equal to or greater than
the amount of local funds that the school district allocated for
that purpose during the preceding school year. Subsections (b) and
(c) apply [~~This section applies~~] only to a school district that
receives funds as provided by this subsection.

(d) A school district shall ensure that a full-time school

1 counselor certified under the rules of the State Board for Educator
2 Certification is available at each middle, junior high, or high
3 school campus in the district with an enrollment of more than 350
4 students. This subsection does not apply to a campus that serves
5 only students placed in a disciplinary alternative education
6 program, juvenile justice alternative education program, or other
7 alternative education program. If a campus serves a combination of
8 students placed in those programs and students enrolled in a
9 regular education program, only the number of students enrolled in
10 the regular education program is considered in determining whether
11 the campus is required to ensure the availability of a school
12 counselor in accordance with this subsection.

13 SECTION 2. Subchapter E, Chapter 42, Education Code, is
14 amended by adding Section 42.2519 to read as follows:

15 Sec. 42.2519. ADDITIONAL STATE AID FOR CERTIFIED SCHOOL
16 COUNSELORS. (a) For each school year, from funds that may be used
17 for the purpose, a school district is entitled to state aid in an
18 amount, as determined by the commissioner, sufficient to assist the
19 district in employing certified school counselors required by
20 Section 33.002(d).

21 (b) The commissioner shall adopt rules as necessary to
22 administer this section.

23 SECTION 3. This Act applies beginning with the 2017-2018
24 school year.

25 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.