

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-005

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DIRECT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE NEED FOR AND BENEFIT OF HAVING
A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY SPECIALIST EMPLOYED IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

BE IT PROPOSED BY THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

WHEREAS, the mental health and physical wellbeing of students play a critical role in a student's
ability to achieve academically; and

WHEREAS, all school districts must conduct a comprehensive evaluation of students suspected
of having a disability under the Department of Education Rule Governing Special Education, specifically
rule 2.4 and rule 6.04, and those evaluations must be conducted by a trained professional such as a
school psychology specialist; and

WHEREAS, school districts are required to provide an explanation of the results of a
comprehensive evaluation to a student's parent or guardian by having the results interpreted by a trained
professional as required under the Department of Education Rule Governing Special Education,
specifically rule 1.3 and rule 6.07; and

WHEREAS, many school districts are struggling to meet the mental health needs of students due
to the lack of having professionals on staff trained in facilitating system wide change for improved student
mental health, such as a school psychology specialist; and

WHEREAS, it is critical for the General Assembly to understand the need for and benefits of
having a school psychology specialist employed in each school district, including without limitation:

- (1) The role of a school psychology specialist;
- (2) The financial impact of requiring a school district to employ a school psychology
specialist; and
- (3) The impact having a school psychology specialist on staff has on student
achievement,

NOW THEREFORE,

1 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL
2 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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4 THAT the House Committee on Education conduct a study of the need for and benefit of having a
5 school psychology specialist employed in school districts.
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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the House Committee on Education shall include all willing
8 and able stakeholders to voice their thoughts on addressing the mental health needs of students in public
9 schools.
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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT by July 1, 2017, the study shall be completed and a report
12 presented to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.
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14 Respectfully submitted,
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18 Representative James Sturch
19 District 63
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22 By: SAG/PKJ
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