

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-005

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2
3 REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DIRECT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
4 EDUCATION TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE NEED FOR AND BENEFIT OF
5 HAVING A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY SPECIALIST EMPLOYED IN SCHOOL
6 DISTRICTS.

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

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

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14 WHEREAS, all school districts must conduct a comprehensive evaluation
15 of students suspected of having a disability under the Department of
16 Education Rule Governing Special Education, specifically rule 2.4 and rule
17 6.04, and those evaluations must be conducted by a trained professional such
18 as a school psychology specialist; and

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

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

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

- 34 (1) The role of a school psychology specialist;
35 (2) The financial impact of requiring a school district to
36 employ a school psychology specialist; and

1 (3) The impact having a school psychology specialist on staff
2 has on student achievement,

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4 NOW THEREFORE,

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

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8 THAT the House Committee on Education conduct a study of the need for
9 and benefit of having a school psychology specialist employed in school
10 districts.

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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the House Committee on Education shall
13 include all willing and able stakeholders to voice their thoughts on
14 addressing the mental health needs of students in public schools.

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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT by July 1, 2017, the study shall be
17 completed and a report presented to the Speaker of the House of
18 Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

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20 Respectfully submitted,

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24 Representative James Sturch
25 District 63

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28 By: SAG/PKJ
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