



**Overview of HF1102 (Clardy)/SF1428 (Westlin)
School Counseling and Mental Health Services
House Education Finance Committee
Wednesday, February 22, 2023**

HF1102 (Clardy)/SF1428 (Westlin) extends school counseling services to students enrolled in a nonpublic school or in an American Indian-controlled contract or grant school.

Under current law, students enrolled in an American Indian-controlled contract or grant school or a nonpublic school have access to school counseling services in grades 7-12. These services provide students with personal, social development and mental health services in addition to referral assistance. The resident school district provides either staff or will contract for the services. The school district receives reimbursement from the state for the costs.

We know there is an urgency for counseling and mental health services before students enter grade 7 – and we also know the importance of early intervention. According to a report from the White House issued in October 2021, data indicate an increasing number of students are experiencing moderate-to-severe anxiety and depression, even after the pandemic. Suicide rates remains the second leading cause of death among young individuals between the ages of 10 to 24. And there was a 24 percent increase in emergency room visits for mental health for children ages 5 to 11 in 2020.

Under this legislation, is estimated that at least 50% of students enrolled in nonpublic and tribal schools will access school counseling services in grades K-6. Currently, 92% of students enrolled in nonpublic and tribal schools access the school counseling services in grades 7-12.

By passing this legislation, an additional 30,000 students in grades K-6 in nonpublic and tribal schools will receive school counseling services. It is estimated this legislation will cost \$4 million in FY24-25.

In addition, a significant number of students in Minnesota will attend both a public and nonpublic schools during their education from grades K-12. This legislation helps ensure continuity of counseling and mental health services for students.

There are several organizations supporting this legislation including MINNDEPENDENT, the Minnesota Association of Independent Schools (MAIS), Minnesota Catholic Conference, the Jewish Community Relations Council, and other organizations as part of the Nonpublic Education Partners.