

## Colorado School Counselor Association

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Senate Education Committee Members:

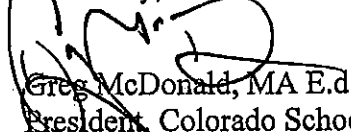
The Colorado School Counselor Association (CSCA) represents licensed school counselors at all levels in Colorado and serves over 1,500 school counselors and the public through programs that advance guidance and counseling in all school work settings. CSCA hereby supports House Bill 16-1305 Educator Training to Assist Students in Crisis.

School counselors are certified/licensed educators with a minimum of a master's degree in school counseling, making them uniquely qualified to address all students' academic, career, social/emotional development, and safety needs by designing, implementing, evaluating and enhancing a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes and enhances student success. Through leadership, advocacy and collaboration, school counselors promote equity and access to rigorous educational experiences for all students. School counselors also support a safe learning environment through intervention programs that are a critical part of a comprehensive school counseling program.

Colorado's student to counselor ratio is 396:1, far above the national recommended average of 250:1. Recognizing the all too common challenges of immense student case-loads and the current lack of funding to hire adequate levels of mental health professionals, school counselors appreciate that student needs can best be met through the collaborative efforts of all school personnel. Educator partnerships focused on mental health training, establishing appropriate referral protocols, and increasing awareness about student behaviors positively impacts achievement for all students.

CSCA supports HB16-1305's proactive approach to improving school mental health practices and welcomes all opportunities to work with other educators to support student academic and behavioral success.

Sincerely,

  
Greg McDonald, MA E.d  
President, Colorado School Counselor Association

*The mission of the Colorado School Counselor Association is to  
promote excellence in professional school counseling.*