



May 6, 2015

Honorable Joel Johnson, Chairman
House Workforce and Talent Development Committee
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Chairman Johnson:

The American School Counselor Association supports and commends all efforts to ensure that school counselors receive adequate training to help their students improve academic achievement, social and emotional development and college and career readiness. ASCA has long advocated that states recognize the unique skill sets school counselors possess and their role in ensuring all students graduate from high school college- and career-ready. ASCA's specific positions on school counselor preparation and student college and career readiness are attached.

ASCA commends the Michigan Department of Education for updating the Application for School Counselor Preparation Programs to include and ensure that college and career readiness standards are embedded throughout the entire required graduate curriculum. This measure demonstrates Michigan's commitment to ensure that school counselors entering the profession are adequately trained in college and career readiness.

ASCA certainly appreciates the efforts of any state initiatives to improve college access and workforce development needs. Given that the Michigan Department of Education has addressed the core requirements of pre-service training, ASCA recommends that other statewide initiatives continue to support the school counseling profession by closely examining the availability and access of school counselors and school counseling programs and the amount of time school counselors have available to spend in direct services to students.

The 2012-2013 data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that the ratio of school counselors to students in the state of Michigan was 1:728, the fifth worst in the nation, and nearly three times the recommended ratio of 1:250. Despite the highest standards and regulations in pre-service training, the risk is high that students would not receive the guidance and support they need if they do not have adequate access to their school counselor because of high school counselor-to-pupil ratios or because their school counselor spends an excessive amount of his or her workday performing inappropriate, non- counseling duties.

ONE VISION ONE VOICE

1101 King St., Suite 310
Alexandria, VA 22314
703 683 ASCA (2722) fax 703 683 1619
www.schoolcounselor.org

ASCA is the school counseling division
of the American Counseling Association

ASCA encourages diverse stakeholders from the school counseling field, college admissions field, the workforce development field, the state legislature and the department of education to collaborate in efforts to ensure that every student in Michigan has access to an effective school counseling program, as well as to ensure all school counselors have high-quality pre-service training and in-service professional development. The current students of Michigan, who comprise the future work force of Michigan, deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kwok-Sze Wong".

Kwok-Sze Wong, Ed.D.
Executive Director
American School Counselor Association

**CC: House Workforce Talent and Development Committee members
Michigan School Counselor Association**