

By: Representatives Scott (80th), Bailey,  
Banks, Broomfield, Evans, Gibbs, Middleton,  
Myers, Simpson, Smith (27th), Thomas,  
Thornton, Watson

To: Education;  
Appropriations

## HOUSE BILL NO. 1396

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE AN ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS UNDER THE MINIMUM  
2 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF EMPLOYING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
3 COUNSELORS; TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS IN EACH  
4 SUBSEQUENT FISCAL YEAR UNTIL EACH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HAS EMPLOYED  
5 AT LEAST ONE COUNSELOR; TO AUTHORIZE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS TO ASSIGN  
6 SCHOOL COUNSELORS TO PARTICULAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS; TO AUTHORIZE  
7 THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EMPLOY A SUPERVISOR OF  
8 COUNSELORS AND TO ISSUE REGULATIONS REGARDING THE SERVICES OF SUCH  
9 COUNSELORS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

11 SECTION 1. (1) Beginning with the 1999-2000 school year, in  
12 addition to other funds allotted under the minimum education  
13 program, each school district shall be allotted sufficient funding  
14 to employ one (1) elementary school counselor, with funding for an  
15 additional elementary school counselor to be allotted per fiscal  
16 year until each elementary school in the school district has one  
17 (1) state-funded counselor. However, until the time that there is  
18 a counselor in every elementary school at a counselor:student  
19 ratio of 1:500 or greater, the annual appropriation for elementary  
20 counselors shall not be reduced.

21 (2) The State Department of Education may increase the  
22 number of positions funded each year beyond the above requirements  
23 as money is made available.

24 (3) The assignment of the school counselors to the  
25 particular elementary schools shall be at the discretion of the  
26 local school district with the following restrictions:

27 (a) The counselor:student ratio shall be no less than  
28 1:500, or one (1) counselor per school building, whichever is  
29 greater.

(b) No individual shall be employed as an elementary school counselor without appropriate training and certification as a school counselor by the State Department of Education.

(4) To qualify for minimum program funding, school counselors shall be full-time professional personnel, shall spend at least seventy-five percent (75%) of work time in a direct counseling relationship with pupils, and shall devote no more than one-fourth (1/4) of the work day to administrative activities which are counselor related.

(5) Nothing in this act shall prohibit any school district from employing with local funds more elementary school counselors than are provided for in this act.

(6) The State Department of Education shall employ a supervisor of counselors who holds certification as a school counselor. The supervisor's responsibilities shall include the oversight of the new elementary counseling programs as well as existing secondary programs.

(7) The State Department of Education may adopt rules and regulations regarding the activities of the school counselor, and the school counselor is authorized to perform such services that are not inconsistent with the rules and regulations.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 1999.