

HOUSE No. 4456

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, September 8, 2025.

The committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 383) of Ryan M. Hamilton and Andres X. Vargas relative to expanding licensure opportunities for school counselors, reports recommending that the accompanying bill (House, No. 4456) ought to pass.

For the committee,

TACKEY CHAN.

HOUSE No. 4456

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act expanding licensure opportunity for school counselors.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The first paragraph of section 165 of chapter 112 of the General Laws, as
2 appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out clause (3) and inserting
3 in place thereof the following clause:- (3) demonstrates to the board, the successful completion
4 of a masters degree in a relevant field from an educational institution licensed by the state in
5 which it is located and meets national standards for granting of a masters degree with a
6 subspecialization in marriage and family therapy, rehabilitation counseling, counseling, or a
7 relevant subspecialization approved by the board; provided, however, that all relevant graduate
8 coursework credits, as determined by the board, that an individual earns that count towards the
9 credit requirement for professional licensure as specialized instructional support personnel,
10 which is inclusive of school counselors, school social workers, adjustment counselors, and
11 school psychologists, by the department of elementary and secondary education shall be applied
12 towards this educational requirement for applicants seeking licensure as a mental health
13 counselor, including credits earned in a graduate program that is less than 60 credits. To be
14 eligible for licensure, an applicant must have two additional years of supervised clinical

15 experience in the relevant field in either a clinic or hospital licensed by the department of mental
16 health or accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals or in an equivalent
17 center or institute under the direction of a supervisor approved by the board; provided, that any
18 applicant seeking licensure as a mental health counselor who applies graduate coursework or
19 clinical experience as specialized instructional support personnel licensed by the department of
20 elementary and secondary education shall also demonstrate completion of evidence-based
21 training in suicide prevention or intervention. Such training may be completed as part of a
22 graduate program, professional development, or continuing education approved by the board. For
23 purposes of this clause, “Supervision” shall be defined as no less than 200 hours of supervised
24 clinical experience, including experience as a specialized instructional support personnel
25 licensed by the department of elementary and secondary education, at least 100 hours of which
26 shall consist of individual supervision with a clinician who has expertise in marriage and family
27 therapy, rehabilitation counseling, educational psychology, social work, or counseling and who
28 holds a masters degree in social work, marriage and family therapy, rehabilitation counseling,
29 educational psychology, counseling or an equivalent field or holds a doctorate degree in
30 psychology, or a medical degree with a subspecialization in psychiatry; provided, however, that
31 experience as specialized instructional support personnel shall only apply towards the supervised
32 experience requirement for applicants who are seeking licensure as a mental health counselor;
33 and provided further, that experience as a school counselor may be supervised by an individual
34 who holds a masters in school counseling and is duly licensed as a mental health counselor;

35 SECTION 2. Said section 165 of said chapter 112, as so appearing, is hereby further
36 amended by inserting after the word “section”, in line 30, the following words:- provided,
37 however, that specialized instructional support personnel, which includes but is not limited to

- 38 school counselors, shall be qualified to sit for the written or oral examination for licensure as a
- 39 mental health counselor.