

Summary of progress on CSCA goals for legislative action since January 1, 2018 February 14, 2018

The Government Relations Committee is pleased to share the following update on advocacy efforts now that the 2018 CT Legislative Session is underway. Lobbyists Ken Przybsz and Brian Sullivan were hired as of January, and their work on behalf of the Connecticut School Counselor Association has been tremendous! The CSCA Board has actively been involved in outreach to legislators in an effort to get our message out:

- Priority #1: name change across all existing statutes referencing “Guidance Counselor (Counseling)” to “School Counselor (Counseling)”
- Priority #2: access to comprehensive school counseling programs for all students K-12, with appropriate student ratios.

While our #2 “Ask” is the ultimate goal, it is important that we begin with raising awareness to the role of school counseling in student success. Raising the first issue of the name change promotes these conversations and is a no-cost segue into the larger advocacy discussions with legislators.

Key meetings with members of the Education Committee, the CT State Department of Education leadership including Commissioner Wentzell, and several additional legislators over the past three weeks have led to “An Act Concerning School Counselors” on the agenda for the Education Committee’s first meeting of the session, held today, February 14th. <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2018/EDdata/ca/2018ca-00214-R001030ED-ca.htm>.

This is a significant step in the right direction; at this first meeting, they voted to move the bill concept to the committee drafting phase.

Ken and Brian will be working hard to ensure the bill (if drafted) is as close to meeting our goals as possible. They will also be pushing to make sure the bill is heard at a public hearing. **PLEASE NOTE: The Education Committee has hearings scheduled for Feb. 26 and March 5.** It is at the public hearing when suggested language changes can be made, if necessary. If we are able to get a bill, it will be vital to have a good turnout of school counselors at the hearing!

Please stay tuned for more information in the coming days. We will need to rally and mobilize quickly if we get a bill and a hearing date! The Government Relations Committee along with Ken and Brian, will be providing support for submitting written testimony and in – person testimony. School counselors and their supporters, we need your voices if we’re going to make a difference in helping all Connecticut students access comprehensive school counseling programming to positively impact student outcomes!