



Ohio School Counselor Association

House Bill 318 Amendment Support House Education and Career Readiness Committee

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chairwoman Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding House Bill 318. The Ohio School Counselor Association (OSCA) is the professional organization that represents and advocates for the interests of professional school counselors in Ohio. OSCA's mission is to empower, unite and support professional school counselors in their role of promoting student success.

OSCA recently had the opportunity to review House Bill 318 and is supportive of the goal. This legislation would define the qualification and duties of a school resource officer and create standardized training requirements. School resource officers play an important role in many school districts and school counselors respect and value what they provide for students.

However, after reviewing the specifics of the legislation, there is a provision that OSCA feels needs modified. The language specifically states the training that SROs must receive include "the mechanics of being a positive role model for youth, including informal counseling techniques". While the intent is certainly commendable, OSCA does not want there to be a perception that the work of a school counselor could be replaced by an SRO because of informal counseling training.

OSCA was able to work with the bill sponsors to craft the following alternative language: "the mechanics of being a positive role model for youth, including appropriate communication techniques which enhance interactions between the school resource officer and students."

We believe this language retains the goal of the legislation, without using the word "counseling", and eliminates any possible cause of confusion regarding the role of these district professionals in the schools.

The Ohio School Counselor Association sincerely thanks Representatives LaTourette and Patterson for their willingness to address this issue in the substitute bill this committee will be considering.