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OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Ohio Senate Education Committee

HB 367 – Proponent Written Testimony

December 16, 2020

Chair Lehner, Ranking Member Fedor and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit HB 367 Proponent written testimony on behalf of the Ohio Education Association (OEA). My name is Matthew Dotson and I am with OEA Government Relations.

OEA strongly supports HB 367 because school counselors are a critical and important service that public schools provide to students.

Unfortunately, even though school counseling services are becoming increasingly essential to students, many school counselors are being assigned to work tasks that are non-related to providing these counseling services to students. This practice makes it more difficult for students to access school counseling services, especially when their school building may not have enough counselors to meet existing demand.

HB 367 will support students by emphasizing the value and necessity of the core services school counselors provide. The bill seeks to accomplish this by requiring ODE to make specified recommendations for a job description for school counselors employed by public schools. These recommendations must be based on the standards for school counselors most recently adopted by the State Board of Education and specify that 80% of school counselor duties must be direct and indirect services to students and 20% of school counselor duties must be program planning school support activities.

Further, each public school must consider these recommendations when preparing job descriptions for and assigning duties to school counselors. Additionally, the bill requires at least one ODE employee to serve as a liaison for school counselors across the state.

OEA recommends passage of HB 367.

