

HB 80 "An Act repealing the requirement for secondary students to take college and career readiness assessments."

Testimony is in favor of HB 80 sponsored by Representative Gattis and co-sponsored by Representative Clover.

I am in favor of repealing the requirement for graduation set forth last year for students to take a College and Career Ready Assessment (CCRA). The current assessments are defined as the ACT, the SAT, or the WorkKeys exam.

In many school districts throughout Alaska, school counselors often serve as the building test coordinator. The test coordinator role routinely includes coordination of the CCRA's, Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP), Alaska Science Standards Based Assessment (Science SBA), National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Advanced Placement (AP) testing and Preliminary SAT (PSAT) in addition to required surveys like the Youth Behavior Risk Survey (YRBS) and the Prevention Needs Assessment (PNA).

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD) employs 16 certified school counselors who serve over 4000 middle and high school students. We provide service to students as outlined in the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Model which centers around three domains of service to students: academic, career, and personal/social development. The National Model recommends that school counselors spend 80% or more of their time in direct and indirect services to students. Direct services include curriculum activities, individual assistance to students in establishing personal goals and developing future plans, and responsive services to students in need. Indirect services include all of the consultation and collaboration activities that counselors perform with parents, teachers, administrators and agencies on behalf of their students. The ASCA K-12 College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards guide our school counseling programs.

Of the 16 KPBSD school counselors, 64% of them, in addition to the services listed above, are designated as their building "test coordinator". At a recent meeting, all counselors were asked to complete the "School Counseling Activity Rating Scale" in which they were asked to indicate both the "actual" and "preferred" frequency of functions that may be performed by school counselors. We found a significant difference between those school counselors who also are designated as their building test coordinator and those who are not. A few results of note:

- 100% of [non-test coordinator counselors](#) frequently or routinely counsel students regarding academic issues; only 25% of [test coordinator counselors](#) are able to do so at the same level.
- While 40% of [non-test coordinator counselors](#) routinely counsel with students regarding personal and family concerns; only 13% of [test coordinator counselors](#) do so on a routine basis.
- 60% of [non-test coordinator counselors](#) occasionally / frequently or routinely conduct classroom lessons addressing career development and the world of work; compared to 38% of [test coordinator counselors](#).
- And lastly, 80% of [non-test coordinator counselors](#) frequently consult with school staff concerning student behavior; compared to 13% of [test coordinator counselors](#)

As indicated by these survey results, the over-abundance of testing activities for school counselors serving as test coordinators directly impacts the level of direct and indirect services counselors are able to provide to their students, including the ability to deliver a school counseling program based on CCR Standards. School counselors are uniquely qualified to advise students on post-secondary options and to systematically guide students throughout their school careers in multiple areas. However, the services students both need and deserve are being impacted in a significant manner by the loss of school counseling services.

While it is my understanding that HB80 will only remove the graduation requirement associated with the CCRA regulations, I am hopeful this will be a first step in re-assessing the impact excessive school testing is having on our students.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony in favor of HB 80.

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