1	HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 58
2	INTRODUCED BY J. ISALY, L. DEMING, B. BARKER, J. COHENOUR, T. CROWE, B. EDWARDS, P.
3	ELVERUM, A. GRIFFITH, D. JOY, J. LYNCH, E. MATTHEWS, L. MUSZKIEWICZ, M. NIKOLAKAKOS, G.
4	OVERSTREET, D. POWERS, M. ROMANO, S. ROSENZWEIG, P. STRAND, M. THANE, E. TILLEMAN, J.
5	WEBER
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7	A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
8	MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY ON HOW TO BETTER LEVERAGE SCHOOL
9	COUNSELORS TO ENHANCE STUDENT OUTCOMES; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF
10	THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 70TH LEGISLATURE.
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12	WHEREAS, the first and foundational provision of Article X on education in the Montana Constitution
13	states that it is "the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational
14	potential of each person"; and
15	WHEREAS, the development of a child's potential is dependent on the child's health, including the
16	child's mental health; and
17	WHEREAS, the mental health needs of school-age children have increased sharply since the COVID-
18	19 pandemic and because of the societal and educational disruption caused by the pandemic; and
19	WHEREAS, research indicates that 1 out of 4 children experience a significant mental health event
20	each year that impacts their learning; and
21	WHEREAS, school counselors are highly trained educational leaders and mental health professionals
22	who implement evidence-based, comprehensive counseling programs in K-12 schools and work in concert with
23	parents, teachers, and administrators; and
24	WHEREAS, there is a critical shortage of school counselors, and many Montana school districts
25	struggle to hire school counselors; and
26	WHEREAS, school counselors play a crucial role in meeting Montana's constitutional goal for
27	education.
28	



69th Legislature

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF 2 THE STATE OF MONTANA: 3 That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee or statutory 4 committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, to examine how to better leverage school counselors to enhance 5 student outcomes. 6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee: 7 (1) collaborate in this examination with: 8 school counselors and organizations of school counselors; (a) 9 (b) the Board of Public Education; 10 (C) the Office of Public Instruction; 11 (d) school counselor preparation programs; and 12 (e) other school advocacy organizations; 13 (2) develop a basic understanding of the role that school counselors play in schools and the 14 positive impacts on student outcomes when school counseling programs are effectively and robustly 15 implemented; 16 investigate the extent of the shortage of school counselors in Montana and ways to strengthen (3) 17 the school counselor workforce pipeline; 18 (4) familiarize itself with the current student-counselor ratio within the accreditation standards of 19 the Board of Public Education and examine how the current ratio affects the ability of school counselors to 20 implement effective programs; 21 (5) gather input from school counselors about best practices and challenges they face in 22 implementing effective school counseling programs; and 23 (6) review successful efforts to leverage school counselors to enhance student outcomes in other 24 states and recommendations from national organizations focused on improving student outcomes through 25 effective school counseling programs. 26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review 27 requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2026. 28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions,



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- 1 comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 70th Legislature.
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