

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to school counselors; amending s.
3 1012.34, F.S.; requiring evaluation criteria for
4 certified school counselors to be based on specified
5 standards; amending s. 1012.55, F.S.; providing that
6 persons seeking employment as school counselors are
7 exempt from specified educator certification
8 requirements; providing an effective date.

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10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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12 **Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section**
13 **1012.34, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

14 1012.34 Personnel evaluation procedures and criteria.—

15 (3) EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA.—Instructional
16 personnel and school administrator performance evaluations must
17 be based upon the performance of students assigned to their
18 classrooms or schools, as provided in this section. Pursuant to
19 this section, a school district's performance evaluation system
20 is not limited to basing unsatisfactory performance of
21 instructional personnel and school administrators solely upon
22 student performance, but may include other criteria to evaluate
23 instructional personnel and school administrators' performance,
24 or any combination of student performance and other criteria.
25 Evaluation procedures and criteria must comply with, but are not

26 limited to, the following:

27 (a) A performance evaluation must be conducted for each
28 employee at least once a year, except that a classroom teacher,
29 as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a), excluding substitute teachers,
30 who is newly hired by the district school board must be observed
31 and evaluated at least twice in the first year of teaching in
32 the school district. The performance evaluation must be based
33 upon sound educational principles and contemporary research in
34 effective educational practices. The evaluation criteria must
35 include:

36 1. Performance of students.—At least one-third of a
37 performance evaluation must be based upon data and indicators of
38 student performance, as determined by each school district. This
39 portion of the evaluation must include growth or achievement
40 data of the teacher's students or, for a school administrator,
41 the students attending the school over the course of at least 3
42 years. If less than 3 years of data are available, the years for
43 which data are available must be used. The proportion of growth
44 or achievement data may be determined by instructional
45 assignment.

46 2. Instructional practice.—For instructional personnel, at
47 least one-third of the performance evaluation must be based upon
48 instructional practice. Evaluation criteria used when annually
49 observing classroom teachers, as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a),
50 excluding substitute teachers, must include indicators based

51 upon each of the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices adopted
52 by the State Board of Education.

53 a. For instructional personnel who are not classroom
54 teachers or certified school counselors, evaluation criteria
55 must be based upon indicators of the Florida Educator
56 Accomplished Practices and may include specific job expectations
57 related to student support.

58 b. For certified school counselors, evaluation criteria
59 must be based upon indicators of the Florida School Counseling
60 Standards adopted by the State Board of Education.

61 c. This section does not preclude a school administrator
62 from visiting and observing classroom teachers throughout the
63 school year for purposes of providing mentorship, training,
64 instructional feedback, or professional learning.

65 3. Instructional leadership.—For school administrators, at
66 least one-third of the performance evaluation must be based on
67 instructional leadership. Evaluation criteria for instructional
68 leadership must include indicators based upon each of the
69 leadership standards adopted by the State Board of Education
70 under s. 1012.986, including performance measures related to the
71 effectiveness of classroom teachers in the school, the
72 administrator's appropriate use of evaluation criteria and
73 procedures, recruitment and retention of effective and highly
74 effective classroom teachers, improvement in the percentage of
75 instructional personnel evaluated at the highly effective or

76 effective level, and other leadership practices that result in
77 student learning growth. The system may include a means to give
78 parents and instructional personnel an opportunity to provide
79 input into the administrator's performance evaluation.

80 4. Other indicators of performance.—For instructional
81 personnel and school administrators, the remainder of a
82 performance evaluation may include, but is not limited to,
83 professional and job responsibilities as recommended by the
84 State Board of Education or identified by the district school
85 board and, for instructional personnel, peer reviews,
86 objectively reliable survey information from students and
87 parents based on teaching practices that are consistently
88 associated with higher student achievement, and other valid and
89 reliable measures of instructional practice.

90 **Section 2. Subsection (6) of section 1012.55, Florida**
91 **Statutes, is renumbered as subsection (7), and a new subsection**
92 **(6) is added to that section, to read:**

93 1012.55 Positions for which certificates required.—

94 (6) A person who is seeking employment as a school
95 counselor is exempt from the educator certification requirements
96 in s. 1012.56(2)(g) and (i).

97 **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.