

HOUSE BILL 740

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6lr2858

By: **Delegates Stinnett, Addison, Rosenberg, Simmons, and Terrasa**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2026

Assigned to: Ways and Means and Health

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Schools – School-Based Mental Health Services – Full-Time Therapist**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring each public school to employ a full-time therapist that
4 provides school-based mental health services to students during the instructional
5 day; requiring the full-time therapist to be licensed and certified by the State Board
6 of Professional Counselors and Therapists; and generally relating to mental health
7 services in public schools.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

9 Article – Education

10 Section 7–401

11 Annotated Code of Maryland

12 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

14 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article – Education**

16 7–401.

17 (a) With the assistance of the county health department, each county board shall
18 provide:

19 (1) Adequate school health services;

20 (2) Instruction in health education, including the importance of physical
21 activity in maintaining good health; and

22 (3) A healthful school environment.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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1 (b) The Department and the Maryland Department of Health jointly shall:

2 (1) Develop public standards and guidelines for school health programs;
3 and

4 (2) Offer assistance to the county boards and county health departments
5 in their implementation.

6 (c) (1) (i) Each county board shall designate a school health services
7 program coordinator.

8 (ii) A county board may authorize the county health department to
9 designate the school health services program coordinator.

10 (2) The school health services program coordinator shall:

11 (i) Implement State and local health policies in the public schools;

12 (ii) Ensure that public schools adhere to local health services
13 guidelines; and

14 (iii) Communicate State and local health policies to the parents and
15 guardians of public school students.

16 (3) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the
17 county board shall grant the school health services program coordinator the authority to
18 carry out the provisions of this subsection.

19 (ii) The county board shall consult with a county superintendent
20 before any change in the hiring or termination of personnel in connection with a school
21 health services program.

22 (4) The Department shall conduct at least two meetings annually with all
23 school health services program coordinators in the State.

24 **(D) (1) EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL SHALL EMPLOY A FULL-TIME THERAPIST
25 THAT PROVIDES SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TO STUDENTS DURING
26 THE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY.**

27 **(2) THE THERAPIST EMPLOYED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS
28 SUBSECTION SHALL BE LICENSED AND CERTIFIED BY THE STATE BOARD OF
29 PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS AND THERAPISTS.**

30 **[(d)] (E)** On or before December 1, 2015, and every 5 years thereafter, the
31 Department shall report to the Governor and, subject to § 2–1257 of the State Government

1 Article, to the General Assembly a summary of the information reported to the State
2 Superintendent during the COMAR certification process.

3 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
4 1, 2026.