

COLORADO STATE SENATE

MAJORITY OFFICE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Number of school counselors to increase with new law



WESTMINSTER – The current ratio of students to school counselors in Colorado public schools is 400:1. Senators Nancy Todd, D-Aurora, and Rachel Zenzinger, D-Arvada, fought to improve this unacceptable ratio by securing additional funding and extending grant durations for the School Counselor Corps Grant Program. Today, Gov. Hickenlooper signed SB 14-150, putting the new law into effect immediately.

The law doubles the total annual grant funding from \$5 million to \$10 million; expands eligibility to all middle and high schools; and extends grant funding cycles from three years to four years. Grant funds are used to increase school counseling services focused on improving graduation rates and raising the percentage of students prepared for, and continuing on to, college or trade school.



“By bolstering the number of school counselors, we are allowing them more time to build relationships with students and better understand their needs,” said Sen. Zenzinger, a member of the Senate Education Committee and a former educator. “This grant program is a great way to reduce dropout rates in Colorado and boost college and trade school readiness.”

“The legislature prioritized a significant investment in K-12 education this session, and this law builds on that commitment to provide kids the right resources to help them excel at school,” said Sen. Todd, also a member of the Senate Education Committee and a former teacher.

A recent national study (Belasco, 2013) showed:

- Low-income students are more likely to attend college if they met frequently with a school counselor who supported their college goals.
- Students attending high schools with fully implemented school counseling programs earned higher grades and received more college-related information, which improves enrolling and persisting in postsecondary education.
- School-based college counseling is shown to narrow the college participation gap.

ABOUT SENATOR TODD

Senator Nancy Todd won her race for Senate District 28, which includes parts of Aurora and Unincorporated Arapahoe County, in the 2012 election -- moving her to the State Senate after serving her fourth term as the State Representative for House District 41. She serves as the Chair of the Transportation Committee and is a member of

the Education Committee and Appropriations Committee. For more information on Sen. Todd, please visit <http://www.nancytoddforsenate.org/>.

ABOUT SENATOR ZENZINGER

Sen. Rachel Zenzinger serves Colorado Senate District 19, which spans most of Arvada and the Jefferson County portion of Westminster. She was appointed to her seat and sworn into office on Dec. 13, 2013. She serves on the Senate Education Committee, Senate Local Government Committee and she is a Senate advisor to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. Her professional background is in education, and she was coordinator of the Regis University Master of Arts in Education program. She worked four years for Catholic Charities of Denver. For more information about Sen. Zenzinger, please go to <http://www.racheforcolorado.com/> or call her at 303-866-4840.