

House Concurrent Resolution No. 41

94TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2334L.021

2 **Whereas**, student discipline problems are frequently cited as a major reason for
3 teachers leaving the profession, and the feeling of being inadequately prepared for handling a
4 range of student behaviors is often reported by beginning teachers. A 2002 report by the
5 Missouri State Auditor's Office indicates that 15% of Missouri teachers leave the profession
6 after their first year of teaching. Only 29% of individuals in Missouri with a valid Missouri
7 teaching certificate currently work in Missouri's public schools and 28% of Missouri certified
8 teachers never enter the classroom; and

9 **Whereas**, the reported incidence in Missouri schools of violent acts from the
10 Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary education has risen from 2,211 to 3,736
11 between 2002 and 2005. The rate of removal from school for up to ten days has risen from
12 11,862 to 12,791, and removal for more than ten days has risen from 2,842 to 4,274; and

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14 **Whereas**, acts of violence are frequently associated with emotional disturbances;
15 and

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17 **Whereas**, the Missouri Department of Mental Health reports that in the 2004-2005
18 school year, 99,827 preK-12 students suffered from significant emotional disturbance that
19 dramatically impaired daily functioning, and 48,000 adolescents seriously considered suicide,
20 20,500 self-reported their intentions to attempt suicide, and 45 completed suicide, and despite
21 these alarming figures, only about 8,000 children were provided with special education services
22 in the ED (emotionally disturbed) category in the 2004-2005 school year; and

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24 **Whereas**, the December 2004 report "Reforming Children's Mental Health
25 Services in Missouri," published by the Department of Mental Health, recognizes schools as an
26 integral part of a cross-agency mental health delivery system. The President's New Freedom
27 Commission (2003) emphasized not only that schools offer unparalleled access as points of
28 engagement with children and youth, but also that schools must address students' interrelated

29 academic and mental health needs, leading the Commission to make an explicit recommendation
30 (4.2) to “expand and improve school mental health programs”; and

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32 **Whereas**, the University of Missouri-Columbia’s Center for the Advancement of
33 Mental Health Practices in Schools recently reported (July 2005) on the efficiency and
34 effectiveness of anti-bullying programs, noting that the ability to understand social problems,
35 recognize emotions, and maintain self-control is an important element in decreasing disruptive
36 behavior. When done well, school mental health practices can reduce the stigma of help seeking,
37 promote generalization and maintenance of treatment gains, enhance capacity for prevention and
38 mental health promotion, and offer more natural, ecologically grounded approaches. Effective
39 school mental health practices also are associated with strong satisfaction by diverse
40 stakeholders, improvement in student emotional and behavioral functioning, and improvements
41 in school outcomes. Effective school mental health practices offer potential to substantially
42 address the mandates of the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child
43 Left Behind) and the recently reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education and
44 Improvement Act (IDEIA):

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46 **Now, therefore, be it resolved** that the members of the House of
47 Representatives of the Ninety-fourth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate
48 concurring therein, hereby strongly urge and encourage:

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50 (1) Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, the University of Missouri-Columbia to
51 undertake a teacher-training curriculum that contains mental health and social and emotional
52 learning competencies distributed throughout required education courses. Preservice teachers
53 should be able to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and skills in:

54 (a) School mental health policy, law, and ethics; for example, understanding the
55 complexity of integrating mental health services with educational mandates, including policies
56 regarding confidentiality, guardian consent, etc.;

57 (b) Mental health assessment; for example, understanding the importance of considering
58 nonacademic barriers such as mental health problems, life stressors, and prior learning, as they
59 relate to learning needs and outcomes;

60 (c) Evidence-based mental health promotion strategies and learning supports, such as
61 skills for proactive classroom management and strategies for supporting student transitions at
62 all levels;

63 (d) Communication and collaboration skills for mental health and emotional/social
64 learning; such as developing skills to problem-solve effectively with families to promote social
65 emotional health and academic success;

66 (e) A systems approach, more specifically viewing the school as an organization within
67 a community and collaborating with professional outside of the school environment for the
68 betterment of students; and

69 (f) Teacher self-care; for example, understanding factors that lead to personal and
70 workplace stress that may interact with teaching performance and how to cope with such stress;
71 and

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73 (2) By the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year, the department of elementary and
74 secondary education and the department of higher education, with the cooperation of the
75 University of Missouri-Columbia and such other institutions of higher education as mutually
76 agreed upon, to develop a method of propagating the mental health/social and emotional learning
77 curriculum to teacher development programs throughout the state; and

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79 (3) By the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, practicing public school teachers to
80 include strategies in their individual professional development plan for meeting the above-
81 described competencies and applying them in the classroom. Examples include providing
82 strategies for implementing proactive classroom management and skills to identify risk factors
83 and practices leading to the least restrictive placements for students with social-emotional
84 concerns or disorders; and

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86 (4) Beginning with the fifth cycle of the Missouri School Improvement Program, each
87 school district to include a mental health promotion plan in its documentation for accreditation
88 review; and

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90 (5) Beginning in January 2008, a semi-annual report of progress to be delivered to the
91 Children's Services Commission; and

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93 **Be it further resolved** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of
94 Representatives be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the
95 University of Missouri-Columbia, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the
96 Department of Higher education, each school district in Missouri, and the Children's Services
97 Commission.

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