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On February 3rd, approximately twenty-five school counselors; counselor-educators; and MSCA-affiliated members gathered virtually to talk to Michigan state representatives and senators, and lawmaker staffers to advocate for the school counselor profession, on an annual day in the Great Lakes State known as ‘*School Counselors at the Capitol Day*’. Using this opportunity to build a bridge to powerful and influential lawmakers and their offices, attendees were able to talk to political representatives in Lansing about hot-button issues for MSCA members and school counselors across the state. Those issues included educating political representatives about Michigan’s second-highest student-to-school counselor ratio (573-to-1) in the nation; informing them that over 1/3 (37%) of school districts in the state reported having no school counselors; and laying the groundwork for the introduction of adopting a statewide comprehensive school counseling program model that aims to enhance life-readiness and academic success for every student. MSCA, in fact, is asking the state to adopt such a model that—among numerous things—is proactive for students; aligned with ASCA’s National Model; is data-informed; and integrates with MTSS Tier 1, 2, and 3 structures already in place in Michigan schools.

Furthermore, attendees for this annual event also talked to representatives about the hyper-specific (and currently unfunded) mandate that requires all Michigan-based school counselors to complete fifty hours of prescribed professional development hours (out of 150 hours, every five years)—and often at a significant financial and time-cost (i.e. having to drive long distances outside of school hours or experiencing difficulty with being released from their school buildings). This onerous requirement has resulted in hundreds of school counselor licenses lapsing each of the past several years since this law went into effect. Numerous key stakeholders—inside and outside of schools—support MSCA’s common-sense approach to revamping professional development hours that aims to create less of a burden for school counselors, while also striving to retain more professionals that can better serve our students from every corner of the state. Heading into the beginning months of 2026, MSCA will be actively advocating for state lawmakers to introduce a bill in the state Senate Education Committee that aims to give school counselors just such relief on the aforementioned professional development requirements necessary to maintain compliant licensure for school counselors across the state.