



## Call to Action

### **Governor Deal Signs FY18 Budget Additional School Counselor Funding Included!**

It is now official! On Monday, May 1, 2017, Governor Nathan Deal signed **the FY18 Budget**.

As previously reported, School Counselors benefitted significantly this year. This would not have been possible without the support of the Governor and Georgia General Assembly. This is a huge benefit for school counselors and the students across our state. Georgia School Counselor Association (GSCA) has advocated for over two decades to lower counselor ratios and to provide funding for special education, advanced content, ESOL and remedial education segments. Thank you to our GSCA Lobbyist, Matthew Gambill, and GSCA members who worked tirelessly to make this dream a reality.

FY18 Highlights Specific to School Counseling:

- \$4,051,741 for School Counselors to reflect HB 283 that originally passed during the 2013 Session (HB 283 set the funding ratio for counselors at 1 counselor per 450 FTEs and phased in the inclusion of funding for counselors in the weights of ESOL students, special needs, gifted, and remedial students).
- \$445,145 for additional School Counselors in school systems with military bases.
- \$1.2 million for a competitive grant program at the Governor's Office of Student Achievement to hire certified School Counselor-Graduation Specialists for low performing high schools. Priority will be given to chronically struggling schools.
- \$300,000 for PBIS Trainers at the Georgia Department of Education.
- \$1,269,950 to convert part-time PBIS specialists to full-time at RESA's.

It is now time for us to express our appreciation. Please use the following links to contact your local Representative, Senator, and Governor Deal:

House Members:

<http://www.house.ga.gov/Representatives/en-US/HouseMembersList.aspx>

Senate Members:

<http://www.senate.ga.gov/senators/en-US/SenateMembersList.aspx>

Governor Deal:

<https://gov.georgia.gov/webform/contact-governor-domestic-form>

As a reminder, please do not use your school email address and make sure you are emailing outside of school hours.

There were several legislators in particular that worked hard to support us:

- Sen. Jack Hill, [jack.hill@senate.ga.gov](mailto:jack.hill@senate.ga.gov)
- Rep. Terry England, [englandhomeport2@windstream.net](mailto:englandhomeport2@windstream.net)
- Rep. Robert Dickey, [robert.dickey@house.ga.gov](mailto:robert.dickey@house.ga.gov)
- Rep. Joyce Chandler, [joyce.chandler@house.ga.gov](mailto:joyce.chandler@house.ga.gov)
- Sen. Lindsey Tippins, [lindsey.tippins@senate.ga.gov](mailto:lindsey.tippins@senate.ga.gov)
- Sen. John Wilkinson, [john.wilkinson@senate.ga.gov](mailto:john.wilkinson@senate.ga.gov)

Please express appreciation to them also. If you have questions or need help identifying your representative or senator please email me and I will help.

Thank you again for all you do and I look forward to continuing our advocacy efforts!

Sincerely,

Matthew Gambill  
GSCA Lobbyist

Gail M. Smith  
GSCA Advocacy Chair