

Tiffany Meier

February 10, 2025

Subject: Testimony Regarding Bill 1449

My name is Tiffany Meier and I am a school counselor in rural North Dakota. This is my first year as a licensed school counselor. I finished my graduate program last April after a full year of interning underneath two astounding school counselors. During my time as an intern, I often was asking my school counselor supervisors and academic advisors if they knew of any job positions available because there were not many job openings listed in the state. I would look on the website we are directed to as college graduates, which I have attached for your knowledge: <https://www.edjobsnd.com/> . I also did regular searches online including Indeed, which I also have attached: <https://www.indeed.com/about> . To this day, I did not know that the school I am currently employed at even had an opening until I had a conversation with a coworker at my internship site. This coworker stated a relative mentioned the school needed one. After knowing the school I was searching for, then I was able to find the job opening on their school website. It was potentially posted elsewhere, however, it was not accessible through a search engine to my knowledge. I believe that this school is one example of what may be happening with these openings statewide. How is a school ever going to fill positions if said positions are not easily accessible?

As a graduate student, it was very difficult to listen to individuals discuss the large shortages within the school counseling field, but only be able to find a few openings across the state. I was trying to figure out my next steps in life, but this was putting it on pause. With this being said, it has all worked out for me and I was planning to be at this said school before I even finished graduate school. However, without the random coincidence of a coworker, their relative, and a five-minute conversation, I do not know if that would be true.

I understand that networking and having mentors on your side can be beneficial. In fact, I tell this to my high school students often. However, my mentors were also unaware of these open positions and not through lack of trying. This further proves that there is not public knowledge of what positions are currently available in each school district across the state. With this in mind, I do not know how the state would measure “a reasonable effort” for filling these vital positions knowing that in the past it was difficult to find the open positions to begin with. So instead of measuring this, maybe we need to figure out a way to make the school counseling positions more readily accessible to individuals entering the field. I urge you to oppose this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Tiffany Meier