School Counselors Matter in Kentucky

School counselors can play a critical role in making sure that students receive opportunities to have safe, enriching experiences in and out of school, and in helping to prepare students for postsecondary success. Our school counselors fact sheet paints a clear picture: In too many states, students — particularly students of color and students from low-income families — do not have enough access to school counselors. But what about Kentucky specifically?

There are not enough school counselors, but schools with the most students of color or students from low-income families have better access to them.

ADEQUACY: ARE THERE ENOUGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS?

The American School Counselor Association recommends that schools maintain a ratio of 250 students per school counselor. Kentucky’s schools do not meet this benchmark; and compared to other states, the average student-to-school-counselor ratio in high schools is particularly high.

- **Across all schools**, the average student-to-school-counselor ratio is **461:1**.
- **Across all schools**, about 6 percent of students — just over 40,000 children — do not have access to a school counselor at all, and nearly half of those students do not even have access to other school support staff, such as school psychologists or social workers.
- **Across high schools**, the average student-to-school-counselor ratio is **403:1**.
- **Across high schools**, just 2 percent of students are enrolled in a school where there is a sufficient amount of school counselors. This means there are about 185,000 students who are enrolled in a school without enough school counselors.

EQUITY: ARE STUDENTS OF COLOR AND STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES GETTING THEIR FAIR SHARE?

Thirty-eight states are shortchanging their students of color, students from low-income families, or both — by providing fewer school counselors in schools with more of these students. But Kentucky is not one of them.

Source: The Education Trust analysis of data from the 2015–16 Civil Rights Data Collection and the 2015–16 Common Core of Data.