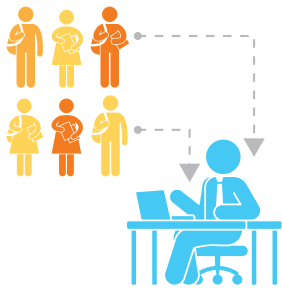**The Education Trust**

School Counselors Matter in **North Carolina**

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 North Carolina 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. In North Carolina, on average schools do not meet this benchmark, but high schools are fairly close to meeting the benchmark.
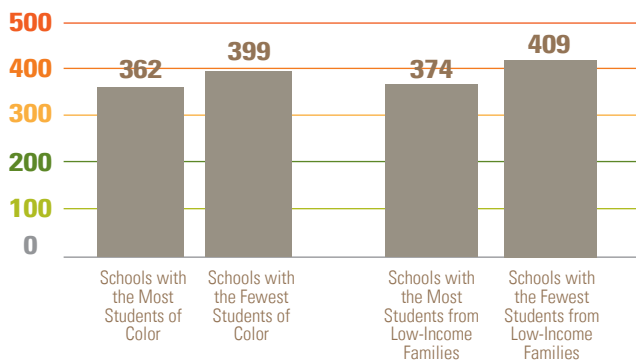
- **Across all schools,** the average student-to-school-counselor ratio is **378:1.**

- **Across all schools,** about **3 percent** of students — **about 39,000** children — do not have access to a school counselor at all, and **about 28,000** 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 **287:1.**

- **Across high schools, 1 in 5 students** is enrolled in a school where there is a sufficient amount of school counselors. This means there are **337,000** 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 North Carolina is not one of them.

Average Students per School Counselor, by School Characteristics, 2015 – 16

	Schools with the Most Students of Color	Schools with the Fewest Students of Color	Schools with the Most Students from Low-Income Families	Schools with the Fewest Students from Low-Income Families
	362	399	374	409

Average Students per School Counselor, in High Schools, by School Characteristics, 2015 – 16

	Schools with the Most Students of Color	Schools with the Fewest Students of Color	Schools with the Most Students from Low-Income Families	Schools with the Fewest Students from Low-Income Families
	267	302	272	290

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