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ASCA Releases Updated Student-to-School-Counselor Ratio Data

Ratio improves to 385:1 from 408:1 since last data collection

ALEXANDRIA, VA – New data from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) indicates the student-to-school-counselor ratio continues to narrow – reaching its lowest margin since ASCA began tracking ratios in 1986.

According to the data, the national student-to-school-counselor ratio was 385:1 in 2022–2023, compared with 408:1 the previous school year, representing a 5.6% improvement year over year. ASCA calculates student-to-school-counselor ratios using data from the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics [state nonfiscal public elementary/secondary education survey](#). The department recently released the 2022–23 data. Although the national average has decreased, it’s still significantly higher than ASCA’s recommended ratio of 250 students per school counselor.

Other key findings in the latest data:

- New York is the most-improved state, decreasing the state’s student-to-school-counselor ratio from 460:1 to 331:1 for an improvement of 28%.
- Other improvements include District of Columbia (444:1 to 328:1, a 26% improvement), Indiana (694:1 to 519, or 25%) and Washington (418:1 to 373:1, or 11%).
- While most states saw modest increases in the number of school counselors, a

few states lost school counselors, resulting in less favorable student-to-school-counselor ratios, including North Carolina (316:1 to 343:1, a nearly 9% change), Arizona (651:1 to 667:1, or 3%), Louisiana (432:1 to 441:1, or 2%), Oklahoma (356:1 to 363:1, or 2%).

Because not all states report counts for elementary/middle (pre-K–8) vs. high school counselors (9–12), it’s not possible to calculate exact ratios by grade level. However, calculating by only the states who report elementary/middle school counselors and high school counselors separately (37 states), we find average ratios of 737:1 for pre-K–8 school counselors and 232:1 for grade 9–12 school counselors.

Since 1965, ASCA has recommended a student-to-school-counselor ratio of 250:1. [Several research studies](#) have found that smaller ratios support increases in standardized test performance, attendance, GPA and graduation rates, as well as decreased disciplinary infractions. Additional studies have shown lower ratios also increase the likelihood of students having conversations with school counselors regarding college-going and postsecondary plans.

“Multiple research studies have shown that lower student-to-school-counselor ratios support student success,” said Jill Cook, CAE, ASCA executive director. “Although the newest national student-to-school counselor ratio data remains higher than the ASCA recommended ratio of 250:1, the year-over-year improvement is significant. Policymakers and administrators understand that school counselors are essential, especially as our nation continues to address a youth mental health crisis. Ensuring every student has access to a school counselor must be a national priority. Today’s students are tomorrow’s families, workforce and leaders. School counselors play a pivotal role in helping these students succeed in school and in life.”

The full ratio data, including state-level ratios, is available on the [ASCA website](#). Previous year reports are available upon request.

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About the American School Counselor Association

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a nonprofit, professional organization based in Alexandria, Va. ASCA promotes student success by expanding

the image and influence of school counseling through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and systemic change. ASCA helps school counselors guide their students toward academic achievement, career planning and social/emotional development to help today's students become tomorrow's productive, contributing members of society. Founded in 1952, ASCA has a network of 51 state and territory associations and a membership of approximately 43,000 school counseling professionals. For additional information about the American School Counselor Association, visit schoolcounselor.org.