



ASCA Calls for Nationwide Action in Response to Disparaging Data Released by Department of Education Civil Rights Survey Report

Report indicates lack of student access to critical school counseling support in U.S. school systems.

For immediate release – June 8, 2016

ALEXANDRIA, VA. – The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) urges local, state and federal government systems to review and consider the [recent data](#) report released by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection. The report, released on June 7, 2016, collected data from all public schools and school districts nationwide for the 2013-14 school year. The report reveals gaps in key areas affecting educational equity and opportunity for students, including incidents of discipline, access to courses and programs that lead to college and career readiness, teacher equity and rates of retention.

Key elements in this report show the following:

- Approximately 21 percent of high schools (totalling 850,000 high school students) don't have access to a school counselor.
- 1.6 million elementary, middle and high school students attend a school with a sworn law enforcement officer but not a school counselor.
- Latino students are 1.4 times as likely to attend a school with a law enforcement officer but not a school counselor as white students; Asian students are 1.3 times more likely; black students are 1.2 times more likely.

"We strongly urge local, state and federal systems to consider the staffing investments they make," says Amanda Fitzgerald, director of public policy for

ASCA. "Civil Rights Data Collection is an excellent resource that highlights educational inequities and should be utilized by schools and districts to re-evaluate their current practices. We must ensure we are heavily investing in proactive and preventive support services as opposed to reactive and punitive measures."

School counselors are an important part of the educational leadership team and support students at all grade levels so they can achieve success. ASCA recommends a student-to-school-counselor ratio of 250-to-1. However, many school districts are much higher. The average student-to-school-counselor ratio for the United States is 491-to-1.

The American School Counselor Association (www.schoolcounselor.org) is a worldwide nonprofit organization based in Alexandria, Va., and the school counseling division of the American Counseling Association. Founded in 1952, ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, career and social/emotional development so they not only achieve success in school but are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. The association provides professional development, publications and other resources, research and advocacy to school counselors around the globe.

- 30 -

**ASCA Contact: Lachelle Metcalf, ASCA, (571) 329-4199,
lmetcalf@schoolcounselor.org**