



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: Homeless Students Data

2019

Authorizing legislation: [RCW 28A.300.540](#)

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Executive Summary

Currently, there are more than 1.35 million children and youth experiencing homelessness enrolled in schools across the nation. Students experiencing homelessness are more likely to suffer academically and are less likely to finish school when compared to their housed peers. Homeless students are less likely to engage in school, more likely to have higher absentee rates, and more likely to have lower test scores. The federal McKinney-Vento Act broadly defines homelessness in an effort to provide supports for students living in a variety of unstable housing situations; thus ensuring school stability and continued enrollment at a time when a student’s nighttime residence may be constantly changing. In 2001, the McKinney-Vento Act began requiring all school districts to annually report the number of students experiencing homelessness enrolled in their schools. These reports show school districts have reported increased numbers of students experiencing homelessness every year since then.

In addition to the McKinney-Vento Act requirements, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 6074 (2014), which aims to improve educational outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness. The bill does this by bolstering homeless student identification and establishing further data reporting requirements.

Table 1: Change in the Number of Homeless Students

School Year	Number of Homeless Students
2008–09	20,780
2009–10	21,826
2010–11	26,049
2011–12	27,390
2012–13	30,609
2013–14	32,539
2014–15	35,511
2015–16	38,017
2016–17	39,450
2017–18	40,365

Source: The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS), 10/1/2018

The number of students experiencing homelessness represented in Table 1 has increased over the years. In part, this increase may be due to better data quality and school district reporting in the collection of data.

For more information related to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the education of youth experiencing homelessness, please visit the following websites:

- The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction [Homeless Children and Youth](#),
- The [National Center for Homeless Education](#),
- The [National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth](#), or
- The [Schoolhouse Connection](#).

Background

Legislation

In 2014, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 6074, which requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to report data on students experiencing homelessness to the Governor and the Legislature every other year starting January 10, 2015. This report will provide a more in-depth analysis of data pertaining to students experiencing homelessness than is currently required by the United States Department of Education under the federal McKinney-Vento Act. The statewide assessment data to be reported by OSPI must include performance outcomes disaggregated by at least the following groups of students: White, Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific Islander/Hawaiian Native, low-income, transitional bilingual, migrant, special education, and gender.

Additional information regarding student participation in a variety of supportive educational programs will also be included in this report.

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (per Title IX, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act) defines "homeless" as follows:

The term "homeless children and youths"--

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and

(B) includes—

- (i) children and youths who are sharing the house of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are

abandoned in hospitals;*

- (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section(a)(2)(C));
- (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

*Per Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, "awaiting foster placement" was removed from the definition of "homeless" on December 10, 2016.

Update Status

Homeless Enrollment

During the 2017–18 school year, 40,365 students were identified as homeless, which amounted to 3.4 percent of students statewide. Additional information on state enrollment demographics is located in the "Student Enrollment Information" section of the [state Report Card](#).

Conclusion and Next Steps

For students experiencing homelessness, schools are often the safest, most stable and supportive places. Stability is critical to the academic success of these students. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) provides training, technical assistance, and opportunities for grant funding to local school districts as they work to serve the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

In 2016, the Legislature passed the Homeless Student Stability and Opportunity Gap Act ([House Bill 1682](#)) to amend state laws related to improving educational outcomes for students experiencing homelessness through increased identification services, in-school supports, and housing stability. The resulting State Homeless Student Stability program complements the

federal McKinney-Vento program, providing additional support and resources for school districts beginning in the 2016–17 school year.

The new State Homeless Student Stability grant was designed to improve identification of students experiencing homelessness and to build local education agency (LEA) capacity to provide support to those students, particularly unaccompanied homeless youth. Through a competitive grant competition that concluded in June of 2018, OSPI awarded \$830,000 to 12 school districts for the 2018–19 school year. Funds will be used for a range of LEA determined priorities, including:

- Professional development for school districts and building-level liaisons related to meeting the needs of homeless students.
- Increased time for liaisons to carry out their McKinney-Vento responsibilities and remove obstacles to identification, enrollment, attendance, and school success.
- Increased staff focused on the specific needs of unaccompanied homeless youth, including graduation and planning for post-secondary options.
- Increased partnerships with community-based organizations, particularly those that provide tutoring, mentoring, and mental health services.

In addition to Washington’s state-funded Homeless Student Stability and Opportunity Gap Act, Congress reauthorized the federal McKinney-Vento Act in December 2015 under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and all public schools fully implemented the changes on October 1, 2016.

The McKinney-Vento Act, originally enacted in 1987 as the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, provides identification, enrollment, and access to children and youth experiencing homelessness. The Act serves to provide school stability for students experiencing homelessness, as each change of schools may cause further delays in a student’s academic progress. The Act promotes the academic success of students experiencing homelessness and ensures students experiencing homelessness are able to enroll and participate fully in all school activities, ensuring a free, appropriate education.

Provisions of the Act include immediate enrollment even if a student lacks records, the right to remain in their school of origin when in the student’s best interest, transportation, and other academic supports. Washington currently provides approximately \$888,630 in federal McKinney-Vento grant funding to two multi-district consortium programs and 27 school district programs.

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Table 2: Homeless Student Enrollment by Student Group

Student Group	# of Homeless Students	Total Student Population	% of State Population that is Homeless
All Students	40,365	1,194,095	3.4%
Gender			
Male	20,327	618,333	3.3%
Female	20,038	575,762	3.5%
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian/ Alaska Native	1,214	16,447	7.4%
Asian	966	91,297	1.0%
Black/African American	4,536	53,750	8.4%
Hispanic/Latino	12,689	278,430	4.6%
White	15,890	644,171	2.5%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	1,016	13,431	7.6%
Two or more	4,042	96,240	4.2%
Student Group			
Unaccompanied	5,914	6,927	85.4%
Special Education	8,792	183,427	4.8%
English Learner	7,137	141,030	5.1%
Low-Income	39,215	562,731	7.0%
Learning Assistance Program (LAP)	10,291	171,485	6.0%
Migrant	1,978	23,727	8.3%
504 Plan	1,351	50,274	2.7%
Gifted	246	45,215	0.5%
Running Start	367	27,831	1.3%

Source: CEDARS, 10/1/2018. Count of students enrolled at any point in the school year.

Table 3: Homeless Student Enrollment by Grade Level

Grade Level	Number of Homeless Students	% of Students who are Homeless	Total State Enrollment	% of State Enrollment who are Homeless
Pre-K	1,066	2.6%	50,004	2.1%
Kindergarten	3,011	7.5%	85,036	3.5%
1st	3,123	7.7%	86,600	3.6%
2nd	3,025	7.5%	86,606	3.5%
3rd	3,058	7.6%	88,976	3.4%
4th	3,020	7.5%	90,715	3.3%
5th	2,985	7.4%	89,683	3.3%
6th	2,717	6.7%	87,078	3.1%
7th	2,649	6.6%	85,029	3.1%
8th	2,569	6.4%	85,048	3.0%
9th	2,577	6.4%	86,348	3.0%
10th	2,844	7.0%	85,574	3.3%
11th	3,207	7.9%	90,783	3.5%
12th	4,514	11.2%	96,615	4.7%
Total	40,365	100.0%	1,194,095	3.4%

Source: CEDARS, 10/1/2018. Count of students enrolled at any point in the school year.

Table 4: Homeless Student Enrollment and Nighttime Residence

Nighttime Residence	Description	# of Homeless Students
Doubled-Up	Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason.	29,772
Hotels/Motels	Living in hotels/motels due to lack of alternate adequate accommodations.	2,533
Shelters	Supervised publicly or privately operated facilities designed to provide temporary living accommodations. (This category included children and youth who were "awaiting foster care" during the data collection period. As of December 10, 2016, the term "awaiting foster care" was removed from the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless.)	5,102
Unsheltered	Includes living situations such as cars, parks, campgrounds, temporary trailers, abandoned buildings, and substandard housing.	2,958

Source: CEDARS, 10/1/2018.

Homeless Student Academic Outcomes and Graduation Rates

Table 5: Percent of Homeless Students that Met Standard in English Language Arts by Student Group

Student Group	Grade Level						
	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	10th
Statewide	55.5%	57.3%	59.2%	55.9%	59.6%	58.9%	69.5%
Homeless (All)	31.1%	31.9%	32.3%	29.3%	33.4%	32.6%	37.3%
Gender							
Female	35.3%	35.2%	36.0%	35.5%	41.4%	39.4%	37.3%
Male	26.8%	28.6%	29.0%	23.1%	25.8%	26.1%	29.9%
Race/Ethnicity							
American Indian/ Alaska Native	25.8%	13.2%	19.0%	12.2%	21.2%	16.3%	30.8%
Asian	44.8%	44.6%	57.1%	38.9%	50.0%	48.1%	47.2%
Black/African American	26.8%	20.0%	22.5%	20.4%	24.4%	21.7%	31.5%
Hispanic/Latino	24.3%	26.4%	26.7%	23.8%	29.1%	27.2%	28.4%
White	36.9%	39.9%	38.6%	36.9%	41.3%	40.0%	43.4%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	20.3%	18.8%	25.4%	35.0%	21.7%	21.2%	38.7%
Two or more	36.0%	36.3%	38.5%	31.1%	34.6%	40.9%	43.1%
Student Groups							
English Learner	11.8%	11.0%	8.7%	5.9%	10.0%	7.6%	11.4%
Low-Income	31.1%	31.8%	32.2%	29.4%	33.5%	32.5%	38.0%
Migrant	17.9%	16.4%	21.0%	14.3%	20.4%	25.9%	28.4%
Special Education	11.7%	9.7%	10.6%	7.0%	7.6%	7.8%	11.3%
Section 504	39.7%	25.3%	39.7%	23.0%	45.6%	40.4%	40.6%

Source: 2017–18 end of year spring assessment results, 9/8/2018.

Table 6: Percent of Homeless Students that Met Standard in Math by Student Group

Student Group	Grade Level						
	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	10th
Statewide	57.5%	53.8%	48.5%	48.2%	49.0%	47.5%	40.6%
Homeless (All)	33.4%	27.6%	23.1%	21.8%	21.0%	19.6%	11.6%
Gender							
Female	32.8%	25.5%	23.0%	23.0%	22.5%	20.7%	10.7%
Male	34.0%	29.7%	23.3%	20.6%	19.6%	18.5%	12.4%
Race/Ethnicity							
American Indian/ Alaska Native	24.7%	19.1%	7.6%	6.8%	8.8%	7.0%	7.7%
Asian	53.2%	50.9%	50.0%	38.9%	38.1%	40.7%	31.5%
Black/African American	25.9%	12.6%	15.0%	12.1%	14.1%	13.7%	8.8%
Hispanic/Latino	27.6%	22.4%	19.9%	18.3%	16.0%	16.0%	7.7%
White	40.4%	36.7%	27.6%	27.1%	27.5%	25.3%	13.5%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	21.9%	15.6%	15.9%	19.7%	15.9%	12.1%	4.7%
Two or more	36.1%	25.7%	26.3%	24.6%	22.8%	17.7%	15.2%
Student Groups							
English Learner	20.2%	12.6%	8.5%	4.7%	5.5%	7.8%	3.3%
Low-Income	33.3%	27.5%	22.9%	21.9%	21.0%	19.4%	11.9%
Migrant	29.9%	20.3%	16.5%	11.8%	13.4%	19.3%	10.5%
Special Education	14.2%	10.2%	5.9%	4.7%	3.3%	4.9%	1.9%
Section 504	28.4%	25.3%	26.0%	23.6%	23.1%	21.3%	8.3%

Source: 2017–18 end of year spring assessment results, 9/8/2018.

Table 7: Percent of Homeless Students that Met Standard in Science by Student Group

Student Group	Grade Level		
	5th	8th	11th
Statewide	55.1%	52.9%	30.3%
Homeless (All)	31.3%	27.4%	14.7%
Gender			
Female	30.5%	26.3%	14.1%
Male	32.0%	28.4%	15.4%
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian/ Alaska Native	18.5%	11.5%	13.0%
Asian	56.1%	40.0%	20.5%
Black/African American	18.7%	18.9%	7.8%
Hispanic/Latino	23.5%	18.8%	10.5%
White	41.5%	37.5%	19.3%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	15.9%	9.1%	9.2%
Two or more	36.8%	35.0%	16.5%
Student Groups			
English Learner	8.7%	7.7%	2.9%
Low-Income	31.0%	27.3%	14.8%
Migrant	13.7%	16.4%	8.7%
Special Education	11.1%	9.2%	3.6%
Section 504	35.6%	35.6%	17.8%

Source: 2017–18 end of year spring assessment results, 9/8/2018.

Table 8: Homeless Student Performance on the English Language Proficiency Assessment

Student Group	% Proficient	% Progressing	% Emerging
Statewide	13.8%	73.4%	10.4%
Homeless (All)	7.6%	67.7%	20.6%
Gender			
Female	8.8%	68.2%	18.7%
Male	6.5%	67.2%	22.3%
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian/ Alaska Native	6.0%	83.7%	11.2%
Asian	13.3%	63.1%	18.9%
Black/African American	7.7%	64.1%	22.7%
Hispanic/Latino	7.3%	67.1%	21.8%
White	10.9%	64.7%	20.6%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	4.3%	74.3%	16.4%
Two or more	10.2%	75.7%	13.0%
Student Groups			
English Learner	7.6%	66.7%	21.3%
Low-Income	7.6%	68.1%	20.4%
Migrant	7.5%	69.0%	20.1%
Special Education	2.0%	74.8%	15.6%
Section 504	8.9%	67.9%	19.6%

Source: 2017–18 end of year spring assessment results, 9/8/2018.

Table 9: Homeless Student Graduation Rates, 4-Year Adjusted Cohort, Class of 2018

Student Group	Adjusted 4 Year Cohort Graduation Rate	Cohort Dropout Rate	Continuing Rate
Statewide	80.9%	11.2%	8.0%
Homeless (All)	55.5%	28.3%	16.2%
Gender			
Male	49.8%	32.6%	17.6%
Female	60.8%	24.2%	14.9%
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian/Alaska Native	43.4%	41.4%	15.2%
Asian	73.7%	10.6%	15.6%
Black/African American	59.3%	21.5%	19.2%
Hispanic/Latino	54.7%	30.3%	14.9%
White	54.2%	29.4%	16.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	57.9%	29.0%	13.1%
Two or more	57.7%	24.8%	17.5%
Student Groups			
English Learner	50.2%	32.9%	16.9%
Low-Income	55.8%	28.0%	16.2%
Migrant	55.8%	32.3%	11.9%
Special Education	46.5%	30.4%	23.1%
504 Plan	51.0%	31.9%	17.1%

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2018 graduation data.

Table 10: Homeless Student Graduation Rates, 5-Year Adjusted Cohort, Class of 2017

Student Group	Adjusted 4 Year Cohort Graduation Rate	Cohort Dropout Rate	Continuing Rate
Statewide	82.7%	13.9%	3.4%
Homeless (All)	58.9%	33.6%	7.5%
Gender			
Male	53.6%	37.9%	8.4%
Female	65.3%	27.5%	7.2%
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian/Alaska Native	46.0%	44.5%	9.5%
Asian	66.9%	22.0%	11.0%
Black/African American	59.8%	30.2%	10.0%
Hispanic/Latino	60.0%	31.2%	8.8%
White	59.6%	33.6%	6.8%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	74.7%	17.6%	7.7%
Two or more	61.1%	33.4%	5.5%
Student Groups			
English Learner	57.5%	33.3%	9.3%
Low-Income	59.8%	32.4%	7.7%
Migrant	62.9%	27.5%	9.6%
Special Education	53.4%	34.5%	12.2%
504 Plan	56.5%	34.2%	9.3%

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2018 graduation data.

Homeless Student Absenteeism and Behavior

Table 11: Homeless Student Absenteeism and Truancy by Student Group

Student Group	Number of Students Chronically Absent*	Percent of Students Chronically Absent	Number of Students Truant**	Percent of Students Truant
Statewide	161,965	15.4%	80,854	7.7%
Homeless (All)	12,033	36.2%	8,504	25.6%
Gender				
Female	6,060	36.5%	4,261	25.6%
Male	5,973	36.0%	4,243	25.6%
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian/Alaska Native	489	49.5%	381	38.6%
Asian	241	28.4%	199	23.4%
Black/African American	1,370	36.1%	1,173	30.9%
Hispanic/Latino	3,437	33.0%	2,496	23.5%
White	4,825	37.0%	3,087	23.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	335	41.5%	230	28.5%
Two or more	1,334	40.6%	937	28.5%
Student Group				
English Learner	1,531	26.5%	1,151	19.9%
Low-Income	11,637	36.6%	8,165	25.7%
Migrant	422	25.7%	265	16.2%
Special Education	2,914	41.2%	1,965	27.8%
504 Plan	513	46.8%	298	27.2%

Source: CEDARS, 10/1/2018.

* Students with 18 or more full-day absences (excused or unexcused).

** Students with either five or more full-day unexcused absences in any continuous 30-calendar-day period or students who have 10 or more full-day unexcused absences in the school year. Truancy rates are based on reported absences, not whether or not a truancy petition was filed.

Table 12: Homeless Student Suspensions and Expulsions by Student Group

Student Group	# of Students that were Suspended or Expelled*	% of Students that were Suspended or Expelled
Statewide	45,522	3.8%
Homeless (All)	3,937	9.8%
Gender		
Female	1,181	5.9%
Male	2,757	13.6%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaska Native	160	12.1%
Asian	37	3.7%
Black/African American	608	12.8%
Hispanic/Latino	1,023	7.9%
White	1,587	9.8%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	94	8.9%
Two or more	464	10.4%
Student Groups		
English Learner	449	6.4%
Low-Income	3,830	9.5%
Migrant	163	7.8%
Special Education	1,365	15.6%
504 Plan	185	15.2%

Source: CEDARS, 10/1/2018.

* Students that received one or more of the following: short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion.



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