POLICY ANALYSIS

FOCUS IN.
Study up
on important
education policies.

State and Federal Policy: Homeless youth

MICAH ANN WIXOM

During the 2013-14 school year (the most recent year for which federal data are available), more than 1.3 million homeless children and youth

THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT STRENGTHENS EXISTING REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVING HOMELESS STUDENTS, INCLUDING INCREASED EMPHASIS ON IDENTIFYING HOMELESS STUDENTS AND SERVING PRESCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN.

were enrolled in schools nationwide.[1] It is quite possible that the number of homeless children and youth in the

country is even higher; some research puts the number in 2013 as high as 2.5 million, although not all would be enrolled in school.[2]

Many school, district and state leaders report an increase in the number of homeless children and youth enrolled in their schools and districts over the past several years and national data certainly bear that out. The number of homeless children and youth enrolled in U.S. schools nearly doubled between the 2004-05 and 2013-14 school years from just under 700,000 to 1.3 million – a 91 percent increase.[3] This is clearly a growing population that, given the trend over the past decade, is likely to continue increasing.

Federal policies drive states' approach to educating homeless students; **few states** have **crafted policies** beyond the **federal requirements**.

The number of **homeless students enrolled** in U.S. schools **nearly doubled** between the 2004-05 and 2013-14 school years.
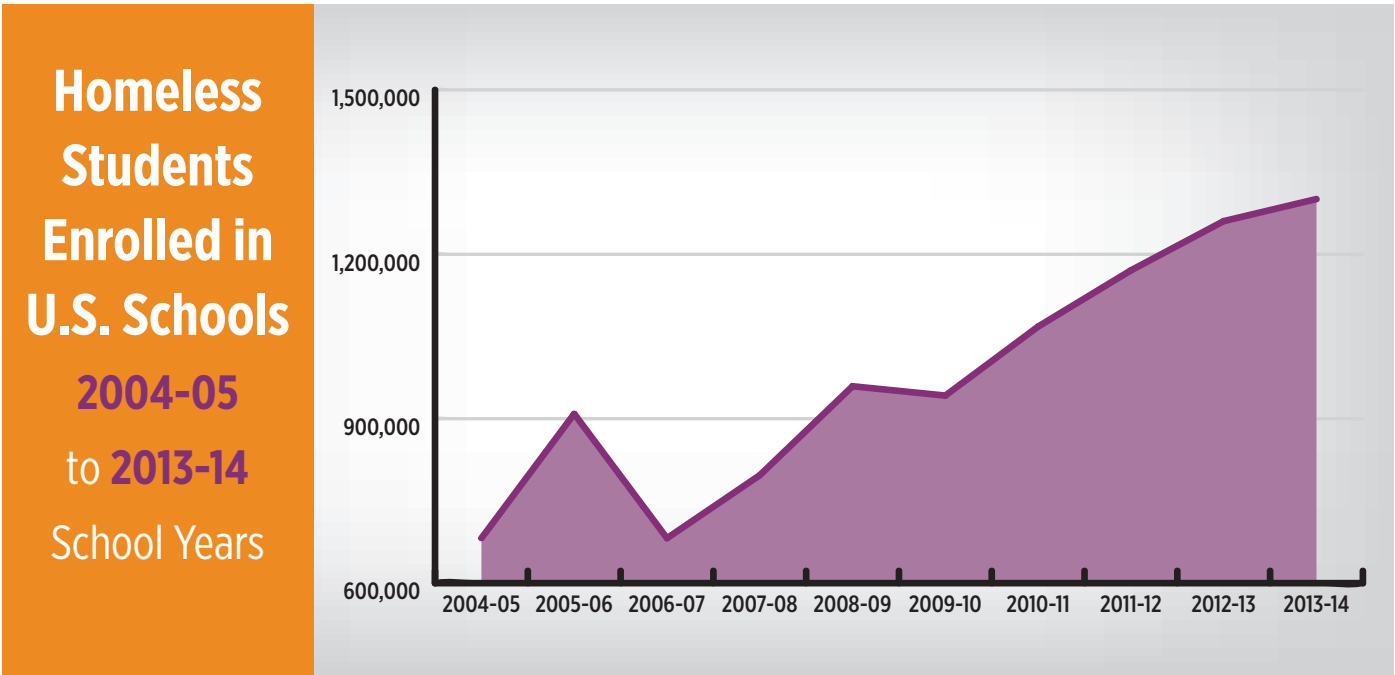
Related Education Commission of the States reports:

State and Federal Policy:
INCARCERATED YOUTH

State and Federal Policy:
GIFTED AND TALENTED YOUTH

State and Federal Policy:
MILITARY YOUTH

State and Federal Policy:
NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH

Homeless Students Enrolled in U.S. Schools 2004-05 to 2013-14 School Years

Source: Education Commission of the States analysis of National Center for Homeless Education data[4]

Who are homeless children and youth?

Describing the homeless youth population in the United States is challenging, in part because the U.S. Department of Education does not collect information about race and ethnicity when tracking data on homeless students. However, some general demographic information may be extrapolated from existing research on homelessness in the United States.

Definition

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, a homeless child or youth does not have "a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence."[5] This includes children living with other families for lack of housing, living in motels or shelters or sleeping in places not ordinarily used as sleeping accommodations.

Age

A large portion of homeless students are young. During the 2013-14 school year, 35 percent of enrolled homeless students nationwide were in grades K-3 and 50 percent were in grades K-5.[6] Over the past few years the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) annual homelessness estimates found that fully half of children in shelters were under six years old.[7] Although HUD's estimates are specific to sheltered children and use a narrower definition of homeless than the U.S. Department of Education, their findings suggest that a large portion of homeless children are either preschool aged or too young to attend school, thus the Department of Education would not include most of these children in their counts.

POLICY ANALYSIS

Unaccompanied youth – adolescents not under the care of an adult – make up about 6 percent of enrolled students nationally, and during the 2013-14 school year they made up 10 percent or more of the homeless student population in about one-third of states.[8] Because unaccompanied homeless youth are quite likely to drop out of school, numbers of unaccompanied youth are difficult to track and probably higher than current estimates. Additionally, many unaccompanied homeless youth are reticent to disclose their situation for fear of being sent back to the family situation they fled or put into foster care. Some researchers suggest that in "any given year, 1.5 to 2 million unaccompanied adolescents are homeless in the U.S."[9]

Race and ethnicity

Although specifics about the race and ethnicity of homeless students enrolled in U.S. schools are not available, research indicates that homelessness is more prevalent among people of color. For example, HUD estimates suggest that in 2014 nearly 75 percent of homeless families in shelters were from minority groups.[10] African Americans in particular make up a disproportionate percentage of the overall homeless population.[11]

Living arrangements

Generally, homeless children and youth enrolled in school live doubled up, meaning they live with another family because of economic hardship or loss of housing. This is a significant and growing portion of homeless students, accounting for more than three-quarters of students in the 2013-14 school year. During the same school year a much smaller percentage – 21 percent – were living in shelters, transitional housing or motels. Unsheltered children and youth made up the smallest group, at just 3 percent.[12]

Other demographic information

According to research, most of the overall homeless population is transitionally homeless – meaning they pass through homelessness for relatively brief periods of time.[13] Homeless families are typically headed by young, unmarried women.[14] Some homeless youth have been in the foster care system at some point,[15] and many have brushes with law enforcement or juvenile justice systems.[16]

Finally, LGBTQ youth tend to be overrepresented in the homeless youth population. Although exact numbers are not available, research suggests that between 20-40 percent of unaccompanied homeless youth identify as LGBTQ, compared to 3-5 percent of the nation's general population.[17]

Education Commission of the States resources:

Strengthening Policies for Foster Youth Postsecondary Attainment

State and Federal Policy: Incarcerated youth

The states with the most enrolled homeless students during the 2013-14 school year were, in descending order: **California** (with more than twice as many as the next largest state), **New York**, **Texas**, **Florida** and **Illinois**.[18] A number of states also saw a large increase in the number of enrolled homeless students between the 2011-12 and 2013-14 school years. The following seven states saw increases of 25 percent or more: **Illinois**, **Montana**, **Nevada**, **New Jersey**, **Tennessee**, **Texas** and **Wisconsin**.[19]

POLICY ANALYSIS

Barriers to better educational outcomes

Homelessness can negatively impact students' academic performance, not to mention their social and emotional well-being. Homeless students often have high rates of mobility, which has been connected with low academic performance time and time again.[20] Interrupted education is a high risk factor for any student, regardless of their housing situation, but homeless students also face stressors related to their unstable environments. As a district local liaison said, "It's not that students don't want to be engaged, it's that they often can't because they are dealing with so many external issues."[21]

These students also face many other risk factors associated with low achievement levels, such as high rates of grade retention and absenteeism, and they tend to have much lower graduation rates.[22] A few of the multiple other barriers and risk factors for homeless youth include:

- **Under-identification:** Students are often reluctant to self-identify as homeless and tend to move around frequently. In addition, teachers and school staff often do not know how to recognize signs of homelessness. As such, under-identification is a common problem in districts, leaving students and their families unaware of their rights.[23]

- **Instability:** An unstable living environment often means that students do not have a place to study, complete homework or take care of basic needs. Many students, particularly unaccompanied youth, also may not know where they will live in the near future. This can lead to academic decline, absenteeism, higher rates of disciplinary measures or school dropout.

- **Exceeding age limits or under credit:** States or districts typically have upper age limits for students attending high school – often 20-21 years old.[24] However, some homeless students will not graduate by this cut-off age because they are too far behind in credit accumulation or have been retained in previous grades and are older than is typical for their grade. There are often alternative education options for these students, but school staff may not understand the options without the support of the district's local liaison.

- **Summer break:** Summer break can bring multiple challenges for homeless students and their families. Not only are they are susceptible to the so-called summer slide – when some students fall behind academically during the summer break – but they also lose connections to supports and services available during the school year, such as guaranteed meals provided through free and reduced price lunch programs.

- **Mental health and trauma:** Homeless children and youth are more likely than their peers to have significant mental health issues, and they often experience trauma from instability, violence or separation from family.[25] For example, in a 2013 survey of unaccompanied homeless youth over 60 percent reported symptoms associated with depression and over 70 percent had experienced major trauma at some point.[26]

Federal Policy: The McKinney-Vento Act

The policies established by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act largely drive the approach to educating the homeless children and youth enrolled in the nation's schools; nearly all of these requirements fall to districts and schools rather than state-level entities. While a few states have crafted policies related to homeless students, most states have few policies, if any, beyond the federal requirements.

Grants and funding

The Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program (EHCY) – housed in the U.S. Department of Education and authorized by the McKinney-Vento Act – distributes grant funding to states to support programs for homeless children. The federal government requires states to distribute at least 75 percent of their federal allocation as three-year local subgrant awards; they may use the rest to fund state activities. During the 2016 fiscal year, EHCY distributed $70 million in grant funding to all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. With the most recent count of close to 1.3 million enrolled homeless students enrolled in school, this amounts to about $54 in additional education funding per homeless student.

About one-quarter of school districts nationwide received EHCY subgrants during the 2013-14 school year, although grant distribution varies widely between states.[28] All districts must meet the requirements under the McKinney-Vento Act whether they receive a subgrant or not.

While districts *with* a subgrant still enroll more than half of homeless students, the percentage of homeless students enrolling in school districts *without* a subgrant has steadily increased – from 20 percent of homeless students in the 2009-10 school year to 36 percent in the 2012-13 school year.[29] More districts are enrolling homeless students without the benefit of extra funding and potentially with less expertise and capacity than districts receiving the subgrant.

DEFINITION DISCREPANCIES

Local officials frequently cite the **lack of a consistent federal definition of homeless** between the U.S. Department of Education and HUD. Specifically, the U.S. Department of Education includes families who are doubled up, while HUD does not.[27] At last count, the majority of enrolled homeless students – 75 percent – were living with other families, making them ineligible for HUD programs.

District and school requirements

The McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires that homeless students must have access to the same public education provided to other students, including access to any programs and services for which they meet eligibility requirements. While ESSA didn't significantly overhaul the McKinney-Vento Act provisions, the bill includes a number changes that, taken together, can strengthen existing requirements.

These requirements generally fall into six categories:[30]

- **Academics and services:** Homeless students must have access to the same public education system as their peers, including access to programs and services like meal programs or special education services.

- **Local liaisons:** Every district must designate one staff person as a local liaison to help coordinate efforts for and support homeless students, such as enrollment support, transportation and local service referrals. Under ESSA, local liaisons should have the capacity and training necessary to carry out their duties.

- **School attendance:** Homeless students have the right to attend their school of origin, which is the school the student last attended or the school they attended before becoming homeless. The changes in ESSA strengthen the presumption that these students should remain in their schools of origin and include public preschool programs and their feeder schools in the definition of school of origin.

- **Transportation:** School districts must provide transportation to and from the students' schools upon request, with districts determining how to divide the costs when necessary.

- **Enrollment:** Schools and districts must immediately enroll and transfer records for homeless students who have moved, even if they lack records normally required for enrollment. Under ESSA, districts and schools must also remove enrollment barriers related to absences, certain required health records and fines, fees or missed enrollment deadlines.

- **Dispute resolution:** Families and students have the right to dispute enrollment, eligibility or school selection decisions.

IN JULY 2016 THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RELEASED EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTHS PROGRAM NON-REGULATORY GUIDANCE, AN UPDATED GUIDANCE DOCUMENT, AND ISSUED A POLICY LETTER ABOUT THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT. BOTH RESOURCES INCLUDE INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE ON A NUMBER OF TOPICS, SUCH AS TRANSPORTATION AND LOCAL LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES, PLUS INFORMATION ABOUT CHANGES IN ESSA.

Additional changes to the McKinney-Vento Act in ESSA

- **Identification:** Increased emphasis on identifying homeless students, such as additional training to help staff recognize the signs of homelessness.

- **Preschool children:** Increased emphasis on identifying and supporting homeless preschool-aged children, including providing access to public preschool programs.

- **Strengthen collaboration:** State coordinators' collaboration efforts should also include public and private child welfare agencies, juvenile and family courts, runaway and homeless youth centers and law enforcement agencies, among others.

- **Accountability:** States must now disaggregate data for homeless students in accountability reporting starting in the 2017-18 school year.

- **Definition:** The definition of homeless no longer includes students awaiting foster care placement.

For more information on ESSA and homeless youth, see materials from the National Center for Homeless Education webinar Overview of ESSA Updates to McKinney-Vento and the National Association of State Boards of Education's ESSA and Homeless Youth 2016 Policy Update.

State Legislation

While most of the activity around helping homeless students is currently happening at the local level and driven by provisions in the McKinney-Vento Act, some states have taken steps to address the needs of homeless youth beyond the federal requirements.

Housing assistance

In 2016, the **Washington** legislature passed House Bill 1682 creating a grant program for high-needs districts to provide housing assistance to homeless students and their families through local partnerships. (See the sidebar for more information about this bill).

Healthcare access

Both **Florida's** Senate Bill 2011 (2014) and the aforementioned **Washington** bill address unaccompanied youth accessing healthcare services. In Florida, underage unaccompanied homeless youth may access health care services for both themselves and children in their custody without a parent's permission.

Identification

Three states – **California** (Assembly Bill 982, 2015), **Colorado** (House Bill 16-1100, 2016) and **Florida** (Senate Bill 211, 2014) – sought to improve the identification process through legislation allowing homeless shelter or youth homeless program officials, in addition to a school district's local liaison, to identify students as homeless. Florida also allows social workers and courts to identify homeless students, while California includes Head Start program officials. Florida and Colorado's bills are specific to unaccompanied youth.

School-based issues

Over the past few years, **California** has passed multiple bills regarding education for homeless children and youth. For example, Senate Bill 252 (2015) exempts homeless students from testing fees, and Senate Bill 177 (2013) addresses homeless students' participation in extracurricular activities, including athletics.

POLICY ANALYSIS

Washington House Bill 1682 (2016)
Grant-Funded School-Community Partnerships and Homeless Youth Provisions

- **Housing assistance:** Through partnerships with community and local government organizations, this grant allows high-needs districts to provide housing assistance for homeless students and their families, including rental and transportation assistance, emergency shelter and housing case management.

- **Point of contact for unaccompanied youth:** The state requires any school district that has identified 10 or more homeless youth to create a point of contact in each middle school and high school responsible for identifying unaccompanied homeless youth and connecting them with the district's local liaison.

- **Health care authorization for unaccompanied youth:** A school nurse, counselor or the district local liaison may provide consent for unaccompanied youth to receive routine health care services.

- **Data on homeless students of color:** The legislation directs the state superintendent to collect information on the number of homeless students of color.

Local Activities

Homeless youth task forces

The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) has helped launch 14 youth task forces in 11 states. These task forces have helped create a number of projects, such as a shelter and drop-in center, transportation assistance and legal clinics. In a few states these task forces have facilitated state policy changes that better respond to the needs of homeless youth.[31]

In 2016, the local liaison at **Florida's** Polk County Public Schools, with assistance from NAECHY, started a homeless youth task force to foster better coordination and information sharing between schools, government agencies and local service providers. For example, legislation from 2014 allows unaccompanied homeless youth to access healthcare services for themselves. The task force spent time addressing the issue of unaccompanied homeless youth accessing healthcare services, and the local health department identified clinics where homeless unaccompanied youth can obtain these services.

Housing programs for unaccompanied youth

Some districts have instituted programs that provide stable housing for unaccompanied homeless youth so the students can focus on their schooling. NAEHCY identified four types of housing programs: host home programs, where a community member provides housing and service providers offer other supports; group homes, where multiple unaccompanied youth live together in a home with adult supervision; independent living programs, which provide rent subsidies and support services to youth; and emergency shelters specifically for youth.[32]

Joe's Place, located in **Missouri's** Maplewood Richmond Heights School District, provides stable housing for a small number of young men in high school in a family setting under the supervision of house parents. The host parents and district staff support and supervise the students' academic progress, and community members act as mentors. The house is operates Sunday night through Friday and the students stay with family, mentors or friends on weekends. Joe's Place operates as a nonprofit but was established the school district, which remains involved in the program.[33]

Schools primarily serving homeless students

A handful of schools across the country primarily serve homeless children and youth. Many are either private, nonprofit organizations – such as Positive Tomorrows in Oklahoma City, a private, tuition-free elementary school for homeless students – or partnerships between districts and nonprofits – like the Monarch School, located in San Diego. At two charter schools in the Phoenix metropolitan area, homeless students make up the majority of enrolled students.

Monarch School in San Diego, which exclusively serves homeless students, is a partnership between the San Diego County Office of Education and the nonprofit organization Monarch School Project. About half of the school's funding comes from each partner. The K-12 school serves up to 350 students from across the district each day, with most students attending for about nine months. Monarch School offers a variety of supports and services specific to the student population, such as life-skills classes, mental health services and an internship program.[34]

Policy considerations

Because so much of the activity around homeless students occurs at the local level, many of these policy considerations are for the school or district level rather than the state level.

- **Fully implement ESSA requirements**, particularly focusing on efforts to increase identification of homeless students. For example, staff beyond teachers and administrators – such as bus drivers, crosswalk guards and cafeteria staff – can serve as valuable sources in spotting signs of homelessness in students. Instituting training programs for all personnel on spotting and reporting homelessness can help address problems with the under identification of homeless students. Districts and schools could also gather information about residency multiple times throughout the year rather than only at the beginning.[35]

- **Strengthen the state homeless coordinator's role.** The homeless students program is often a small part of coordinators' jobs. In addition, there is often a high turnover rate for state coordinators which can be disruptive for local liaisons. States could consider taking steps to ensure more continuity and allow state coordinators to focus largely or solely on homeless education programs.

- **Ensure local liaisons have the capacity and resources to effectively fulfill their responsibilities required by ESSA.** Local liaisons serve as the main point of contact for homeless students and play a critical role in ensuring districts are successfully serving these students.

- **Increase and strengthen affordable housing efforts.** Housing and education policies are often closely related, particularly when it comes to children and youth homelessness.

- **Look for small fixes to support homeless students and their families.** For example, some school districts with high rates of homelessness have installed washers and dryers on school property for students and their families to use.[36] Not only does this provide them with a degree of stability and dignity, it also may increase family engagement and attendance rates.

Additional resources

Expert organizations:

- **National Center for Homeless Education**: As the U.S. Department of Education's technical assistance and information center, this organization collects and disseminates data on homeless children and youth enrolled in the nation's schools. In addition, they have a wealth of resources on issues related to educating homeless students.

- **National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth**: This national membership organization provides technical assistance and a number of resources on education for homeless students.

- **National Coalition for the Homeless**

Resources and reports:

- **Hidden in Plain Sight: Homeless Students in America's Public Schools**, Civic Enterprises and Hart Research Associates, 2016.

- **America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness**, American Institutes for Research, 2014.

- **Data Collection Study Final Report**, Administration for Children and Families Family and Youth Services Bureau Street Outreach Program, 2016.

- **Promising Practices for Children Experiencing Homelessness: A Look at Two States**, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2014.

- **Seeking Shelter: The Experiences and Unmet Needs of LGBT Homeless Youth**, Center for American Progress, 2013.

- **Serving Homeless Children and Youth in Charter Schools**, National Center for Homeless Education, 2013.

- **Rural Homelessness**, National Coalition for the Homeless, 2007.

Endnotes

1. National Center for Homeless Education, *Federal Data Summary School Years 2011-12 to 2013-14 Education for Homeless Children and Youth* (Greensboro, North Carolina: National Center for Homeless Education, November 2015), 6, **http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/data-comp-1112-1314.pdf** (accessed August 31, 2016).

2. Ellen L. Bassuk et al., *America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness* (Waltham, Massachusetts: American Institutes for Research, The National Center on Family Homelessness), 14, **http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Americas-Youngest-Outcasts-Child-Homelessness-Nov2014.pdf** (accessed August 31, 2016).

3. Author analysis of Nation Center for Homeless Education data, 2004-05 to 2013-14. Data available here.

4. Ibid.

5. 42 U.S.C. § 11434a

6. Ibid., NCHE 2015, 6, author analysis.

7. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *2012 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress: Volume 2 - Estimates of Homelessness in the U.S.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2013), 3-8, **https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2012-AHAR-Volume-2-Section-3.pdf** (accessed October 3, 2016); U.S. Department Housing and Urban Development, *2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress: Volume 2 - Estimates of Homelessness in the U.S.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015), 3-8, https://www.hudexchange.info/onecpd/assets/File/2013-AHAR-Part-2-Section-3.pdf (accessed October 3, 2016); U.S. Department Housing and Urban Development, *2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress: Volume 2 - Estimates of Homelessness in the U.S.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015), 3-8, **https://www.hudexchange.info/onecpd/assets/File/2014-AHAR-Part-2-Section-3.pdf** (accessed October 3, 2016).

8. States with 10 percent or more of enrolled unaccompanied homeless youth in the 2013-14 school year: Alaska, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Virginia and Utah. Ibid., NCHE 2015, 6.

9. Joseph Murphy, "Homeless Children and Youth at Risk: The Educational Impact of Displacement," *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2011): 38-55, doi: 10.1080/10824669.2011.554143.

10. Ibid., HUD 2014, 3-9.

POLICY ANALYSIS

11. Ibid., HUD 2014, 3-9; Ibid., HUD 2013, 3-9; Ibid., HUD 2012, 3-9; Ibid., Bassuk et al., 77; Peter M. Miller, "A Critical Analysis of the Research on Student Homelessness," *Review of Educational Research*, vol. 81, no. 3 (2011): 308-337, doi: 10.3102/0034654311415120.

12. Ibid., NCHE 2015, 11.

13. Ibid., Miller.

14. Ibid., HUD 2012; Ibid., HUD 2013, 3-6 – 3-8; Ibid., HUD 2014, 3-6 – 3-8; Ibid., Miller.

15. William G. Tierney, Jarrett T. Gupton and Ronald E. Hallett, *Transitions to Adulthood for Homeless Adolescents: Education and Public Policy* (Los Angeles: Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis, 2008), 3, **http://www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/pdf/Homeless_Youth_final.pdf** (accessed October 14, 2016).

16. Administration for Children and Families, *Data Collection Study Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, Street Outreach Program, April 2016), 63, **https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/data_collection_study_final_report_street_outreach_program.pdf** (accessed August 31, 2016).

17. Ibid., 11.

18. Ibid., NCHE 2015, 7-8.

19. Ibid., 9.

20. See, for example: Yvonne Rafferty, Marybeth Shinn and Beth C. Weitzman, "Academic achievement among formerly homeless adolescents and their continuously housed peers," *Journal of School Psychology*, vol. 42 (2004): 179-199, doi: **10.1016/j.jsp.2004.02.002**; Janette E. Herbers et al., "Early Reading Skills and Academic Achievement Trajectories of Students Facing Poverty, Homelessness, and High Residential Mobility," *Educational Researcher*, vol. 41, no. 9 (2012): 366-374, doi: 10.3102/0013189X12445320.

21. Dee Dee Wright, Polk County Public Schools, telephone interview, September 7, 2016.

22. Ibid., Tierney, Gupton and Hallett, 13-14; "Supporting the Success of Homeless Children and Youths," U.S. Department of Education, July 27, 2016, **http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/160315ehcyfactsheet072716.pdf** (accessed October 3, 2016); Erin S. Ingram et al., *Hidden in Plain Sight: Homeless Students in America's Public Schools* (Washington, D.C.: America's Promise Alliance, 2016), 5, **http://www.gradnation.org/sites/default/files/HiddeninPlainSightFullReportFINAL.pdf** (accessed August 31, 2016).

23. U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Education of Homeless Students* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2014), GAO-14-465, 12, http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-14-465 (accessed October 3, 2016).

24. Stephanie Aragon, *Free and compulsory school age requirements* (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2015), **http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/18/68/11868.pdf** (accessed October 3, 2016).

25. Ibid., Bassuk et al., 10 and 79-83.

26. Ibid., Administration for Children and Families, 3 and 55-57.

27. U.S. Government Accountability Office, *A Common Vocabulary Could Help Agencies Collaborate and Collect More Consistent Data* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2010), GAO-10-702, 3-5, **http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-10-702** (accessed October 3, 2016).

28. For example, take Illinois and Wisconsin: during the 2013-14 school year, about 90 percent of school districts in Illinois received an EHCY subgrant, while about 6 percent of Wisconsin's districts received a subgrant. Ibid., NCHE 2015, 3-5, author analysis.

29. National Center for Homeless Education, *Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Data Collection Summary, SY 2009-10, SY 2010-11 and SY 2011-12 Data Collections* (Greensboro, NC: National Center for Homeless Education, March 2014), 10, **http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/data-comp-0910-1112.pdf** (accessed August 31, 2016); National Center for Homeless Education, *Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Consolidated State Performance Report Data School Years 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13* (Greensboro, NC: National Center for Homeless Education, September 2014), 1, **http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/data-comp-1011-1213.pdf** (accessed August 31, 2016).

30. Ibid., U.S. Department of Education; National Center for Homeless Education et al., *The McKinney-Vento Act At a Glance* (Greensboro, North Carolina: National Center for Homeless Education, 2008), **https://www.achildsplace.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/mckinney-vento-act.pdf** (accessed October 3, 2016); National Coalition for the Homeless, *McKinney-Vento Act* (Washington, D.C.: National Coalition for the Homeless), **http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/McKinney.pdf** (accessed October 3, 2016).

POLICY ANALYSIS

31. "NAECHY Local Youth Task Forces," National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, http://www.naehcy.org/legislation-and-policy/youth-task-forces (accessed October 3, 2016).

32. Patricia Julianelle, *Housing + High School = Success: Schools and Communities Uniting to House Unaccompanied Youth* (Minneapolis: National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, 2009), 4, http://www.naehcy.org/sites/default/files/images/dl/youthhousing.pdf (accessed October 3, 2016). For more information about other types of housing programs, also see: http://www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/housing-high-school-success.

33. Ibid, Julianelle, 23-25; "Our Story," Joe's Place, http://joesplacestl.org/our-story/ (accessed October 3, 2016).

34. "About Monarch," Monarch School, http://monarchschools.org/about/ (accessed October 3, 2016); Eilene Zimmerman, "A High School for the Homeless," *The Atlantic*, June 16, 2015, accessed October 3, 2016, http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/06/a-high-school-for-the-homeless/395177/.

35. Ibid., Ingram et al., 8.

36. See, for example: Rachel Dicker, "Schools Improve Attendance By Installing Laundry Facilities," *U.S. News & World Report*, August 23, 2016, accessed October 17, 2016, http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2016-08-23/schools-improve-attendance-by-installing-laundry-facilities; Chris Weller, "Whirlpool gave washers and dryers to 17 schools in Illinois and California and attendance rates shot up – here's why," *Business Insider*, August 30, 2016, accessed October 17, 2016, http://www.businessinsider.com/washing-machines-solve-schools-big-problem-2016-8.

AUTHOR

Micah Ann Wixom is a policy analyst in the K-12 Institute at Education Commission of the States and has a master's degree in public administration. She recently hiked the Kalalau Trail on the beautiful island of Kauai and lived to tell the tale. Contact Micah at **mwixom**@**ecs.org** *or* **303.299.3673**.