

**Education for Children and Youth
Experiencing Homelessness
Program
2014-15 State Evaluation Report**

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Executive Summary

The Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program exists to ensure that each child or youth experiencing homelessness has equal access to the same free and appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youth. As such, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) created a state plan that outlines Pennsylvania's implementation of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 and issued a *Basic Education Circular* to offer guidance to local education agencies (LEAs) regarding implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act. The current *State Plan* and *Basic Education Circular*, as well as other basic education circulars related to homelessness, can be found on PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov/homeless.

The ECYEH Program structure is designed so that every child or youth identified as experiencing homelessness has an opportunity to receive needed support and services. Pennsylvania is divided into eight regions, each with a regional coordinator. Eight regional coordinators and their site coordinators provide outreach, training, and technical assistance to LEAs and work to link children, youth, families, and LEAs to additional services or resources for individuals experiencing homelessness. The Center for Schools and Communities, a subsidiary of the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, provides statewide technical assistance to regions and LEAs. The statewide technical assistant monitors the regions to ensure compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act and maintains a resource website.¹ The state coordinator, based at PDE, is responsible for program coordination and collaboration at the state level and manages dispute resolutions among LEAs should they occur.

Evaluators collected and analyzed data for the evaluation from several sources to provide a picture of homelessness as it relates to the McKinney-Vento Act. The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- Examine the extent to which regions provide support to LEAs to meet the goals and objectives of the ECYEH Program;
- Examine the extent to which children and youth identified as experiencing homelessness receive services and support;
- Identify the types of services and supports children and youth received;
- Build capacity within each region to examine results and make improvements based on data; and
- Provide recommendations for overall program improvement.

¹ <http://homeless.center-school.org/index.cfm>

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION FINDINGS

Evaluators examined the extent to which the ECYEH Program offered outreach, professional development, technical assistance, and/or support to LEAs or other entities that serve the homeless population, or on behalf of the families, children, and youth experiencing homelessness. This information was captured in three different ways.

First, evaluators examined who participated in ECYEH-provided training, professional development, and/or workshops. Overall, 6,405 participants representing 412 entities participated in some type of ECYEH-provided events. Participants typically included local homeless liaisons, Title I staff, special education staff, administrative staff, or other school staff. Participating entities included LEAs, shelters, pre-kindergarten programs, and other agencies, organizations, and groups.

Next, evaluators examined the technical assistance ECYEH staff offered. Technical assistance could be child- or family-specific or through the distribution of McKinney-Vento Act-related materials, resources, or bulk supplies. A total of 891 entities received technical assistance from the ECYEH Program. Of these entities, 92 percent received materials or resources, 77 percent received child-specific technical assistance, and 94 percent received technical assistance that was not child/family specific. Additionally, 415 LEAs, shelters, and pre-kindergarten programs received ECYEH-provided bulk supplies. Bulk supply items typically included, but were not limited to, bus passes, backpacks, school supplies, clothing, or personal hygiene items. Some items were funded through regional ECYEH funds while others came from donations or workshops.

Finally, ECYEH staff participated in meetings, on committees or boards, or in consortia, and ECYEH staff reported participating in 146 unique events. Events were, for the most part, county- or regional-level meetings with other entities that work with homelessness such as children and youth agencies, shelters, housing-related organizations or groups, pre-kindergarten programs, runaway and trafficking groups, mental health agencies, social workers, drug and alcohol agencies, or food pantries. In some cases meetings with groups of LEAs were captured here. These events occurred annually (five events), monthly (31 events), one time (25 events), quarterly (50 events), weekly (one event), or other (34 events). Other events were held on an as-needed basis or twice a year. ECYEH staff's role was most typically as a collaborating partner (58 events), leader facilitator (12 events), one-time attendee (17 events), regular attendee (52 events), other or not designated (seven events). Event attendees ranged from two to almost 400 people with 33 people being the average number of people at an event.

ECYEH Program efforts for outreach are the method by which information about the McKinney-Vento Act and the ECYEH Program is shared with the commonwealth and supports the identification of children/youth/families. Increased counts of children and youth experiencing homelessness are a direct result of ECYEH staff outreach and collaboration as agencies, partners, and others become aware of the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness and how it may apply to those the agency serves.

PROGRAM OUTCOME FINDINGS

As a result of the coordinators' outreach and ongoing collaboration work, 26,273 children or youth were reported as being served during the 2014-15 program year (directly or indirectly),² of which 22,014 were also identified as being enrolled in school.³ Students experiencing homelessness comprised about one percent of the total Pennsylvania population enrolled in public school during the 2014-15 school year.

Key findings about the children/youth identified as experiencing homelessness include:

- Sixty-four percent (of enrolled children/youth) were doubled-up; 29 percent were in shelters, transitional housing, or awaiting foster care placement; six percent were in hotels or motels; and one percent were unsheltered.
- Twelve percent (of served children/youth) were identified as being unaccompanied youth.⁴
- Twenty-four percent (served) were identified as experiencing homelessness in 2013-14.
- Seventy-two percent (served) were classified as economically disadvantaged, though it is likely that many of the balance with unknown status (22 percent) may have been economically disadvantaged as well. For the most part, children/youth included in the 22 percent with unknown economic status were children in the birth to age two category, ages three to five and not enrolled in pre-kindergarten, residing in shelters, or were migrant children. Migrant out-of-school youth were also included in the 22 percent with unknown economic status.
- Twenty-nine percent (served) were White/Caucasian (not Hispanic), 28 percent were Black/African American (not Hispanic), 14 percent were Hispanic (any race), and six percent were classified as American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Multi-Racial, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Race could not be determined for 23 percent.
- In terms of the state's public school enrollment, students experiencing homelessness comprised one percent of the state's White/Caucasian (not Hispanic) population, three percent of the state's Black/African American (not Hispanic) population, and two percent of the state's Hispanic (any race) population.
- Less than 10 percent (served) were designated as English language learners.
- Five percent (served) were migrant, which translates to 27 percent of migrant children/youth experiencing homelessness.

² "Direct services" refers to the 16 authorized activities outlined in the McKinney-Vento Act (Sec. 723). "Indirect services" are those services provided by a staff member whose position is supported through McKinney-Vento Act funds. Included in indirect services is technical assistance, training, or services ECHYEH staff provided to an entity.

³ The federal age/grade category designation of a child or youth determines if they are considered served or enrolled.

⁴ An unaccompanied youth is any person age 21 or younger who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

- Most served students (80 percent) did not have a special education disability. Of those students with a disability, 42 percent were categorized as having a “specific learning disability.”
- Fifty-seven percent (enrolled) attended schoolwide Title I schools, 10 percent attended targeted Title I schools, and 27 percent attended non-Title I schools.
- Based on National Center for Education Statistics school classifications,⁵ the majority (72 percent) of students attended LEAs categorized as either “city” (8,901 students) or “suburban” (6,913 students).
- National School Lunch Program information indicated that 54 percent of LEAs that enrolled students attended had free or reduced price lunch rates of 40 percent or higher.

PROGRAM IMPACTS

Program impacts include findings that document the extent to which the anticipated outcomes of the ECYEH Program occur, including reducing or eliminating enrollment or education barriers, remaining in the school of origin, and receiving services aligned with the authorized activities outlined in the McKinney-Vento Act. Student academic outcomes are also included.

Barriers are defined as situations that interfere with children/youth’s school enrollment, attendance, and/or educational success. Overall, 14 percent of enrolled students (2,807) were reported as having barriers to enrollment, attendance, and/or academic success. The most common barrier was transportation, followed closely by determining if a student was eligible for homeless services. Transportation issues remain high especially in light of LEA financial constraints or logistical challenges in arranging transportation.

One of the rights of eligible students is to remain in their school of origin if it is in the best interest of the student. Of the 22,014 students identified as being enrolled in school, LEA-school mobility could be determined for 20,949 students (95 percent). Almost two thirds of enrolled students remained in their LEA-school combination during the program year and 24 percent had two LEA-school combinations.

Students experiencing homelessness have the right to support services that promote academic success. Overall, 82 percent of the 26,273 children and youth are documented as receiving service at the individual child/youth level. Tutoring or other instructional support was by far the most prevalent service children/youth received.

State academic assessment data for 2014-15 includes the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), the Pennsylvania Alternative State Assessment (PASA), and the Keystone Exams. State assessment data were available for approximately 80

⁵<http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/School-Locale.aspx#.Vv0qvZwrK70>

percent of students experiencing homelessness. Overall, 32 percent scored in the proficient or advanced levels in reading/literature, 16 percent scored in the proficient or advanced levels in math/Algebra I, and 37 percent of students scored in the proficient or advanced levels in science/biology.

Evaluators also examined the results for students experiencing homelessness in comparison to state results and Pennsylvania's Historically Underperforming students⁶ as well as national results. Students experiencing homelessness score lower than Pennsylvania students as a whole, lower than the Historically Underperforming subgroup, and lower than the national results in reading and mathematics, especially in mathematics.

REFLECTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Reporting accuracy increases each year. Most notably, in 2014-15, reporting by non-LEA entities increased, especially for the pre-kindergarten age/grade categories, which has contributed to the overall increase of children/youth identified and reported. Also noteworthy is the depth and breadth of ECYEH outreach, which has also improved the identification and reporting rates of children and youth experiencing homelessness. As reporting has become more complete and accurate, several themes emerge.

- Most students (almost two thirds for 2014-15) remain in their LEA-school of origin.
- Most children/youth (82 percent for 2014-15) receive individual support and services.
- Transportation remains the most common barrier statewide.
- Children/youth experiencing homelessness are predominately economically disadvantaged.
- More than half of students experiencing homelessness attend LEAs that have high levels of poverty.
- LEAs with the highest levels of poverty may also have minimal or no Title I resources, especially in rural areas.
- Children/youth being reported as experiencing homelessness in more than one year is increasing slightly each year.
- Despite some consistency for a large portion of children/youth, there are students who experience extreme mobility, are homeless for more than two years, or experience barriers to enrollment.
- Site visits and technical assistance to the regions continue to reveal that families' homeless situations (and those of unaccompanied youth) are becoming more complicated, with examples provided in the Findings section. As such, these situations take more of the coordinators' time, resources, and collaboration efforts to resolve.

⁶ Historically Underperforming group consists of students who are: (1) economically disadvantaged, (2) English language learners, or (3) have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Given the relative similarities between 2014-15 findings' and prior year findings, evaluators suggest that PDE consider ECYEH Program adjustments in order to optimize program implementation at the regional and local levels in the areas of transportation, Title I services for students with academic needs in non-Title I schools, and instructional supports through collaboration with other state, national, or local initiatives.

Introduction

McKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT OVERVIEW

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act was signed into federal law in 1987, requiring states to review and revise residency requirements for the enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness. The McKinney Act was amended in 1990, requiring states to eliminate all enrollment barriers and provide school access and support for academic success for students experiencing homelessness; McKinney Act funds could then be used to provide direct educational services to eligible students. In 1994, the education portion of the McKinney Act was included in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), adding preschool services, greater parental input, and emphasis on interagency collaboration. The latest revision occurred in 2001 when the law was reauthorized as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act)(Title X, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act), strengthening legislative requirements and requiring all local education agencies (LEAs) to appoint a local liaison to ensure the law is implemented effectively at the local level. Additional adjustments may begin in July 2016 with the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The McKinney-Vento Act outlines how state educational agencies must ensure that each child of an individual experiencing homelessness and each youth experiencing homelessness have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education as other children and youth, including a public preschool education. The McKinney-Vento Act uses the following definition for “children and youth experiencing homelessness.”

“Homeless children and youth:

- (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 housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason: children and youth living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
 - 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 103(a)(2)(C));
 - iii. Children and youth 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).”

Children or youth who meet the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homeless may also be identified as an “unaccompanied homeless youth,” meaning they are not in the physical custody of their parent or guardian. There is no age range specified for an unaccompanied youth in the federal law. The upper age range is determined by what a state defines as school age, unless the child is in special education, in which case the upper age range is 21 years old. There is no lower age range.

The McKinney-Vento Act also outlines the rights of students experiencing homelessness, including:

- Immediate enrollment even when records are not present;
- Remaining in the school of origin, if in the student’s best interest;
- Transportation to the school of origin; and
- Provision of support services that promote academic success.

The complete McKinney-Vento Act can be found on the United States Department of Education’s website: <http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/other/2002-1/030802a.html>.

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS PROGRAM

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) implements the McKinney-Vento Act through its Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program.⁷ As such, PDE created a state plan that outlines Pennsylvania’s implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act and issued a *Basic Education Circular*⁸ to offer guidance to LEAs regarding implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act. The current *State Plan*⁹ and *Basic Education Circular*, as well as other basic education circulars related to homelessness, can be found on PDE’s website at www.education.pa.gov/homeless.

Instead of providing federal McKinney-Vento Act funds directly to LEAs, Pennsylvania employs a regional model for dispersing funds. Pennsylvania is divided into eight regions with each region having one regional coordinator whose primary responsibility is to implement the goals and objectives of the program. The regional coordinator position is filled by competitive bid on a three-year cycle. In some cases the regional coordinators subcontract for additional support (site coordinators) within their region, or identify intermediate unit staff to support student identification and program activities.

⁷ The program name was changed for the 2011-12 academic year from Pennsylvania’s Homeless Children’s Initiative (PAHCI) to Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH).

⁸ February 3, 2010,

<http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Codes%20and%20Regulations/Basic%20Education%20Circulars/US%20Code/Education%20for%20Homeless%20Youth.pdf>

⁹ October 2013, <http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/Homeless%20Education/ECYEH%20State%20Plan%202013%20FINAL.pdf>

The ECYEH state coordinator, based at PDE, is responsible for program coordination and collaboration at the state level and manages dispute resolutions among LEAs should they occur. PDE contracts with the Center for Schools and Communities (CSC), a subsidiary of the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, to provide technical assistance to the regions and LEAs. As part of that technical support the CSC maintains a website that includes statewide directories of the ECYEH Program regional and site coordinators, LEA homeless liaisons, and Pennsylvania shelters for families, domestic violence, and runaway youth, in addition to other relevant resources. Additionally, the CSC conducts compliance monitoring or technical assistance visits for the regions and prepares a comprehensive report of each region's results.

The goals of Pennsylvania's ECYEH Program are to:

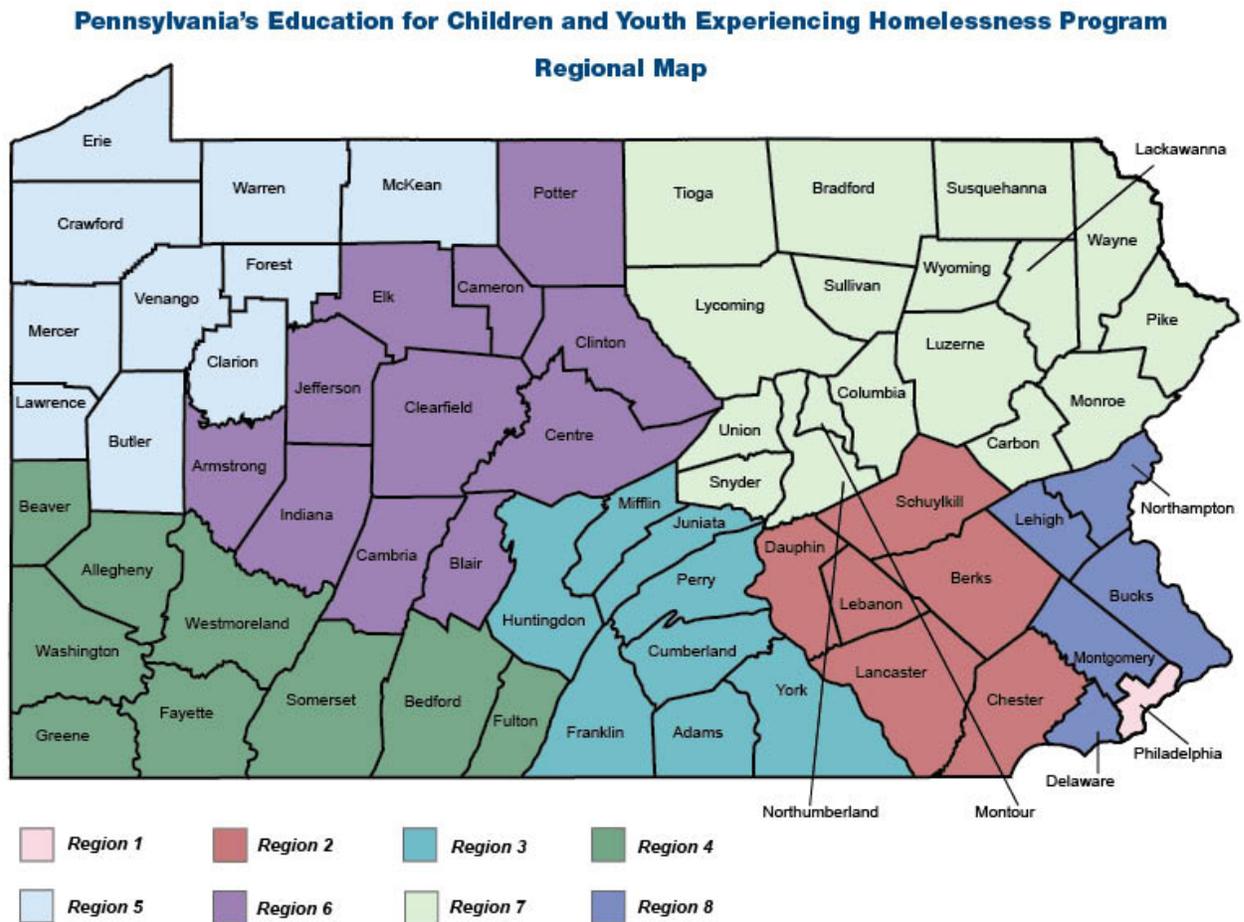
- Ensure that all children and youth experiencing homelessness enroll, participate, and have the opportunity to succeed in school;
- Ensure children and youth experiencing homelessness receive a free and appropriate public education on an equal basis with all other children in the state; and
- Eliminate and/or reduce educational barriers through the use of local best practices and the authorized activities of the McKinney-Vento Act.

The main objectives of Pennsylvania's ECYEH Program are to:

- Reduce the disruption in the educational lives of children and youth experiencing homelessness;
- Increase awareness about the nature and extent of the problems children and youth experiencing homelessness have enrolling in and gaining access to educational programs and services;
- Explain laws and policies already in place that help students overcome these barriers to education;
- Build on laws and policies already in place that help students overcome these barriers to education;
- Build the capacity of others to assist in identifying, enrolling, and ensuring the educational success of children and youth experiencing homelessness; and
- Provide opportunities to collaborate with other statewide initiatives to improve academic achievement of students experiencing homelessness.

The ECYEH coordinators' primary role is to make sure the McKinney-Vento Act is being followed in every public LEA in Pennsylvania. Coordinators train, troubleshoot, intervene, support, and collaborate with LEAs, shelters, agencies, and organizations to eliminate and/or reduce educational barriers and ensure that all children and youth experiencing homelessness receive a free and appropriate public education on an equal basis with all other children in the state.

The following map illustrates the eight ECYEH regions in Pennsylvania.



EVALUATION DESIGN AND ACTIVITIES

PDE's Division of Student Services contracts with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to conduct a comprehensive external evaluation of the ECYEH Program to fulfill the federal evaluation requirement. Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

SEC. 724. SECRETERIAL REPSONSIBILITES. (d) EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION- The Secretary shall conduct evaluation and dissemination activities of programs designed to meet the educational needs of homeless elementary and secondary school students, and may use funds appropriated under section 726 to conduct such activities.

The 2014-15 program evaluation was the fifth year of program evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation of Pennsylvania's ECYEH Program is to:

- Examine the extent to which regions are providing support to LEAs to meet the goals and objectives of the program;
- Examine the extent to which those students identified as experiencing homelessness receive services and support;
- Identify the types of services and supports students received;
- Build capacity within each region to examine results and make improvements based on data; and
- Provide recommendations for overall program improvement.

In addition to program evaluation, evaluators worked with PDE to prepare the portions of required annual federal reporting related to children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Evaluators used the *EDFacts* file formats and the *Comprehensive State Performance Report* to identify all the required federal reporting data elements. Evaluators also used the National Center for Homeless Education's quality standards and evaluation guidance to ensure adequate data was included in the evaluation. Evaluators then worked with PDE to ensure that all data elements were identified and no duplication of work was required on the part of the LEAs. Accordingly, some data were collected at the program level and some data were collected at the state level; whenever possible, existing data sources were used to reduce the burden on the LEAs.

Evaluators created the Student Information and Service Delivery data instrument¹⁰ to collect information about identified children/students/youth, any barriers to enrollment, and the services received in school, in shelters, or from the ECYEH Program. The funding source(s) supporting the services(s) are also captured. The PAsecureID¹¹ was one of the data elements collected for students who were enrolled in school. The PAsecureID was used to pull data from other sources or when matching data across multiple data sources.

¹⁰ Evaluators offer annual training for data collection via webinar, which is offered to all reporting entities in collaboration with the CSC and PDE. The annual webinar is recorded and frequently asked questions are compiled and answered. The CSC emails to all LEAs and posts to its website a link to the webinar, slide content, and frequently asked questions. An evaluation website also includes all information regarding data collection.

¹¹ PAsecureID is a unique, permanent, anonymous statewide student identification number assigned to all students upon their first entry into Pennsylvania's public school system. The single, unique PAsecureID remains with an individual student throughout their educational career. The PAsecureID is the key to the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) longitudinal data system. It does or will in the future:

- Reduce the number of unique reports required by PDE and the effort to produce them,
- Provide districts' access to longitudinal data to support local instructional decision making,
- Link student records between districts and across years to increase the accuracy and utility of data gathered, and
- Streamline reporting processes from LEA to PDE and United States Department of Education.

The homeless liaison in LEAs where students were enrolled, pre-kindergarten program staff, representatives from shelters where children and youth resided, and regional or site coordinators provide the information requested in the Student Information and Service Delivery instrument. Each regional office collects and compiles information for the region and submits it to the state evaluator at designated times throughout the year.

In addition to the data collected about identified children/youth, evaluators also created instruments to collect information on the work of the ECYEH Program staff. Instruments are reviewed each year and fine-tuned as needed to better capture work of the ECYEH Program staff.

Evaluators also collected each region's monitoring and technical assistance reports from the CSC or the PDE state coordinator to further examine program implementation.

In addition to information gathered at the program level, evaluators collected individual student information using existing information in PIMS, MIS2000¹² (the state migrant database), and through the state assessment office.¹³ Evaluators collected LEA and school Title I funding information and National School Lunch Program data at the state level.

Finally, to adhere to confidentiality in reporting afforded to domestic violence shelters, evaluators used a separate data collection instrument and procedure for children and youth residing in domestic violence shelters. Evaluators developed this instrument and procedure in 2010-11 in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The instrument captured some demographic information related to school attendance, data related to student services received at the facility, and information related to working with the ECYEH Program. Only domestic violence shelters receiving direct or indirect services from the ECYEH Program are required to be included in reporting.

Ultimately, it is the ECYEH Program's responsibility to verify children/youth identified as experiencing homelessness. Given this responsibility, PDE, ECYEH Program staff, evaluators, and PIMS staff worked together after the first year of the evaluation to secure permission for the ECYEH evaluation data collection to serve as the official source for flagging students experiencing homelessness in Pennsylvania. To accomplish this, evaluators conduct an extensive cross-referencing and follow-up process by using data collected through the ECYEH Program, PIMS, MIS2000, and the state assessment office. After the cross-referencing and follow-up process is complete,

¹² Migrant Education Program staff receive ongoing training related to ECYEH eligibility to support this process and collaboration. Migrant Education Program staff document, in the state migrant database, homelessness among migrant children/youth who meet the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness. All children/youth eligible for migrant services between July 1 and June 30 are incorporated into the homeless identification and verification process.

¹³ PDE contracted with Allegheny Intermediate Unit to conduct the statewide evaluation. As such, the evaluation team completed the necessary confidentiality protocols for data collection at the state level.

evaluators compile a unique, comprehensive list of children/youth and their accompanying information. From this information, evaluators: 1) prepare the *EDFacts* files and information for the annual federal *Comprehensive State Performance Report*; 2) provide the homeless flag for the PIMS system for all other PDE reporting that might include this population; and 3) prepare the annual evaluation report.

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

The state evaluation of the ECYEH Program for 2014-15 examined information about children and youth identified as experiencing homelessness, the services the children and youth received, and the work of the ECYEH Program staff. The Executive Summary provides a condensed representation of the findings explained throughout this report.

The targeted audiences for this report are the program management at PDE, the state technical assistance providers, and ECYEH Program regional staff, though the results can be useful for other groups. The findings and results provided within this report should be used to guide program management and assist the state program team to provide technical assistance and support to regional staff in order to improve implementation, outcomes, and results.

Findings presented in this report are provided overall for the state and by region as the regions are the sub-grantees and the means by which the McKinney-Vento Act is implemented in Pennsylvania. This report provides an overall picture of implementation, outcomes, and impacts of the ECYEH Program and addresses statewide and regional issues. However, detailed information at the county, LEA, or school level, when appropriate, is provided to the regional coordinators and the program staff at PDE to assist with needs assessment, internal program implementation, program improvement, and decision making.

Evaluators have included graphical representations of results along with the supporting data table. Pertinent percentages and counts are provided in the narrative sections. Throughout this report, for ease of reading, percentages may be rounded and as such, may not total 100 percent. Furthermore, evaluators have eliminated any instances of zero in tables (shown as a blank cell) or “0%” in graphs where the result represents no instances. In cases where zero percent is included in a graph, it means less than one percent.

Throughout this report individuals identified as experiencing homelessness are categorized as being enrolled or served based on the federal reporting definitions, which are described in detail in the report. “Enrolled” includes any student enrolled in an LEA (public or nonpublic). “Served” is any child/youth identified as experiencing homelessness, regardless of their school enrollment status. Enrolled students are a subset of the served population and are included as part of the child/youth counts.

References to relevant prior years' state results are provided in the narrative where explanations are pertinent. Additionally, references to national results are included as appropriate. Evaluation reports for the 2010-11 through 2013-14 program years are available on PDE's website: www.education.pa.gov/homeless.

This report should also be used to highlight especially positive and successful implementation, outcomes, and programs as models. Care should be taken to avoid making comparisons across regions, as each region has differing numbers of LEAs, collaborating entities, ECYEH Program staff, and total child/youth counts. Additionally, regions have differing areas of focus based on regional need within the population experiencing homelessness. However, differences among the regions may also guide program improvement and state level technical assistance.

This report highlights findings regarding the ECYEH Program based on available data from the 2014-15 program year.

Findings

Findings are grouped by program implementation, program outcomes, and program impacts including student outcomes. As described in the Evaluation Design and Activities section of this report, data came from several sources pulled together to provide a picture of child/youth homelessness in Pennsylvania as it relates to the McKinney-Vento Act.

Program implementation findings reveal the extent to which the ECYEH Program offered professional development, technical assistance, or support to LEAs, other entities that serve the homeless population, or on behalf of the families, children, and youth experiencing homelessness. This information is collected via the Formal Training, Workshops, and Presentations; Technical Assistance and Bulk Supplies; and Meetings, Consortiums, and Boards reporting instruments. This information and the instruments used to collect it have been refined each year to better capture the work of the ECYEH staff. Information in this section is also gleaned from the region's monitoring or technical assistance reports.

Program outcomes findings reveal information about the children/youth identified and served through the ECYEH Program and information about LEAs and schools identified students attended. Children/youth information is collected through the Student Information and Service Delivery instrument, PIMS, MIS2000, and domestic violence shelter reporting. LEA and school information comes from PDE's Division of Federal Programs for Title I, the National Lunch Program, the National Center for Education Statistics, and LEAs.

Program impact findings reveal the extent to which the anticipated outcomes for children/youth of the ECYEH Program are occurring. Anticipated child/youth outcomes include reducing or eliminating enrollment or education barriers, remaining in the school of origin, and receiving services aligned with the authorized activities outlined in the McKinney-Vento Act. Student academic outcomes are also included in this section. This information comes from the service delivery portions of the Student Information and Service Delivery instrument, the Bulk Supplies portion of the Technical Assistance and Bulk Supplies instrument, PIMS, MIS2000, domestic violence shelter reporting, and the PDE assessment office.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Coordinators train, troubleshoot, intervene, support, and collaborate with LEAs, shelters, agencies, and organizations to eliminate and/or reduce educational barriers and ensure that all children and youth experiencing homelessness receive a free and appropriate public education on an equal basis with all other children in the state.

ECYEH Professional Development and Technical Assistance Services

Professional development and technical assistance to LEAs, parents, shelters, and organizations serving the homeless population command a large portion of the ECYEH staff's time and plays a very large role in implementing the McKinney-Vento Act as outlined in the state plan.

Outreach to LEAs and shelters has been a longstanding priority for the ECYEH Program and the listing of LEAs and shelters is relatively finite, making it possible to determine what percentage were recipients of ECYEH services. In recent years, there has been increased focus on outreach to pre-kindergarten programs. Likewise, there has been a more systemic focus on ECYEH collaboration with agencies/organizations that work directly with homelessness or with agencies in the larger community to increase awareness of the McKinney-Vento Act.

Evaluators have worked each year with coordinators to improve data collection instruments to more precisely capture the work that coordinators and their staff do as well as improve the consistency of reporting across regions.

Revisions for the 2014-15 program year were the most comprehensive to date. Evaluators included a listing of LEAs, shelters, and pre-kindergarten programs in the data collection instruments to capture consistently an entity's receipt of ECYEH services. ECYEH staff could add an entity, note if an entity closed, or provide any other comments.

As a result, evaluators were better able to capture and report on professional development and technical assistance that the ECYEH staff offered or where the staff were active collaborators. However, there are still improvements to be made in how regions document services.

Recipients of ECYEH Services

To gain an understanding of the breadth of ECYEH-offered services, evaluators examined the program implementation data in several different ways, combining information collected from the multiple program implementation data collection instruments. As such, it is important for the reader to take note of both the narrative and the graphic representations throughout this section.

First, evaluators wanted to examine the extent to which entities in a region participated in trainings, professional development, and/or workshops, or received technical assistance or bulk supplies. Percentages of LEAs and shelters participating could be calculated because there is a finite list of LEAs and shelters. However, it was not possible to determine a percentage of pre-kindergarten programs participating in ECYEH services. Several programs listings were used to create a comprehensive list of pre-kindergarten programs for regional documentation, including Head Start, Early

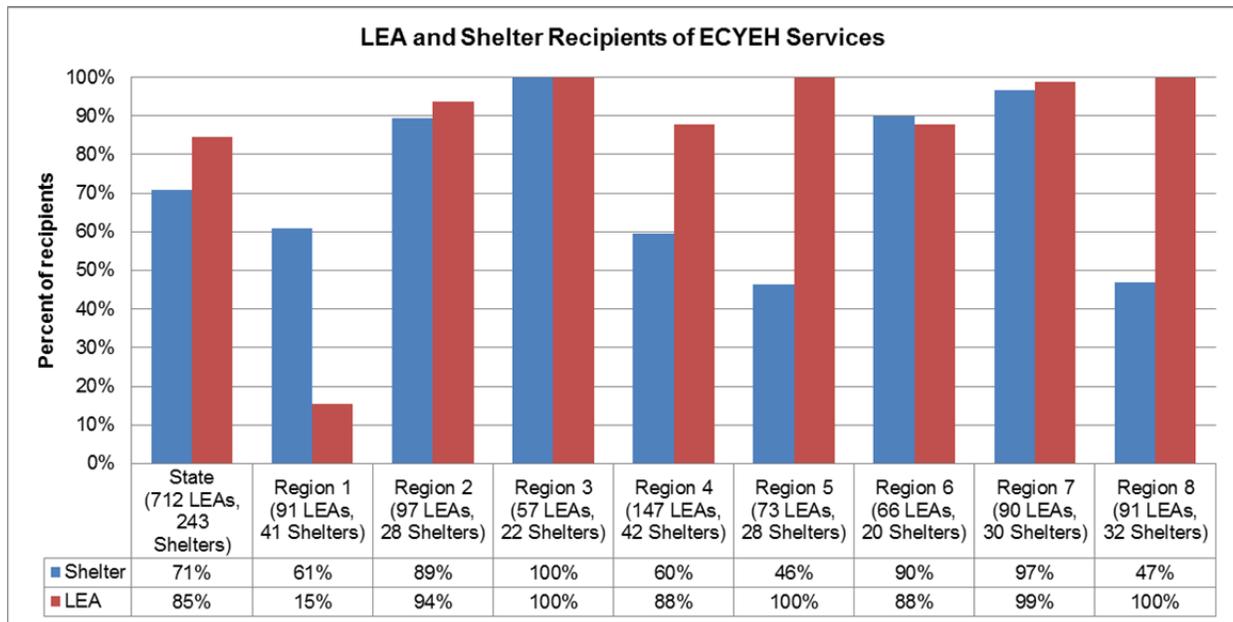
Head Start, PreK Counts, and Early Intervention programs. These pre-kindergarten programs may be operated by an LEA or a community agency or organization. In some cases an entity offered one or more of these programs and it was impossible to determine if the programs should be combined within an entity or remain separate. Therefore, pre-kindergarten programs are not included in the percent of participation graph below as it would be misleading to mark a pre-kindergarten program as not participating/receiving services when they may have received such services with an LEA or another pre-kindergarten program within their entity. That said, it should be noted that 58 percent (148) of the 256 identified pre-kindergarten programs were specifically identified as participating in or receiving some type of ECYEH Program services. This is noteworthy given that outreach to pre-kindergarten programs and establishing those relationships has been a new focus of outreach in the past few years.

Like pre-kindergarten programs, agencies, organizations, and other groups with which the ECYEH staff collaborated may be recipients of training/professional development or workshops, receive technical assistance or participate in meetings, consortia/committees, or boards with ECYEH Program staff. There is not a finite listing of agencies, organizations, or other groups, so the entities included in reporting are those that the regions have identified as working with in some capacity. In other words, 100 percent of agencies that ECYEH identified are reported. Since this would appear misleading, agencies, organizations, and other groups are not included in the percentage of participation graph.

Pre-kindergarten programs, agencies, and organizations are included elsewhere in this section of the report.

The graph below shows the number of LEAs and shelters in each region and the percent that were recipients of trainings, professional development, or workshops or received technical assistance or bulk supplies.

Overall, 85 percent of listed LEAs and 71 percent of all shelters were recipients of ECYEH Program services. Caution should be used to interpret results across regions as several variables contribute to variations among regions including the number and different types of LEAs within a particular region, varying numbers of shelters, new liaisons, LEA/shelter needs, or regional priorities. Additionally, shelters, while within a region, can opt not to participate or receive services or support from the ECYEH Program.

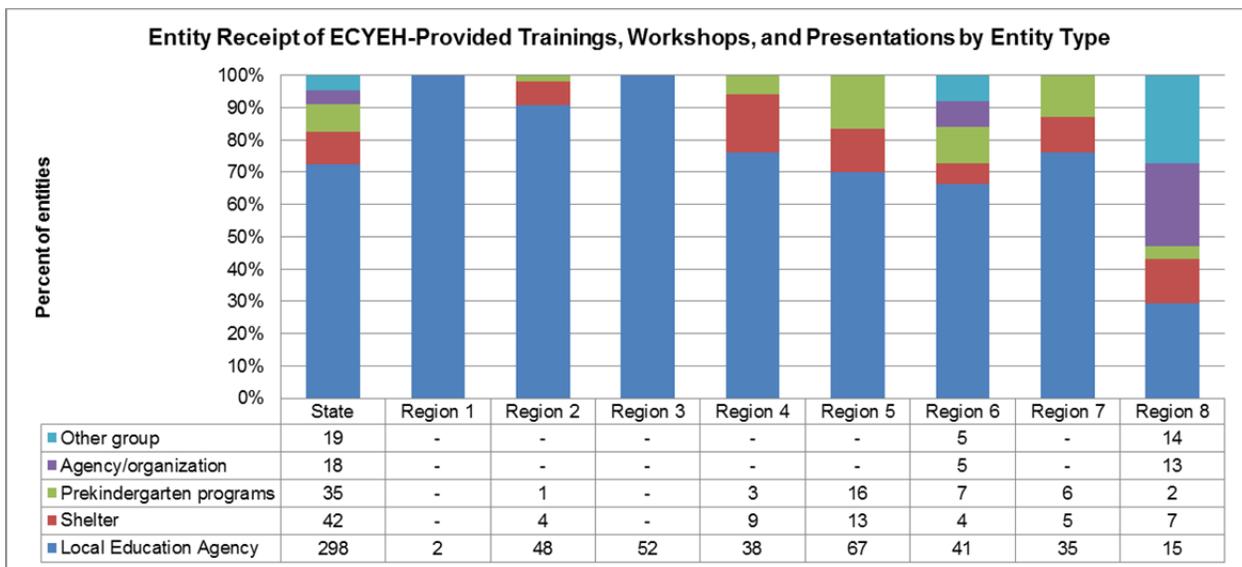
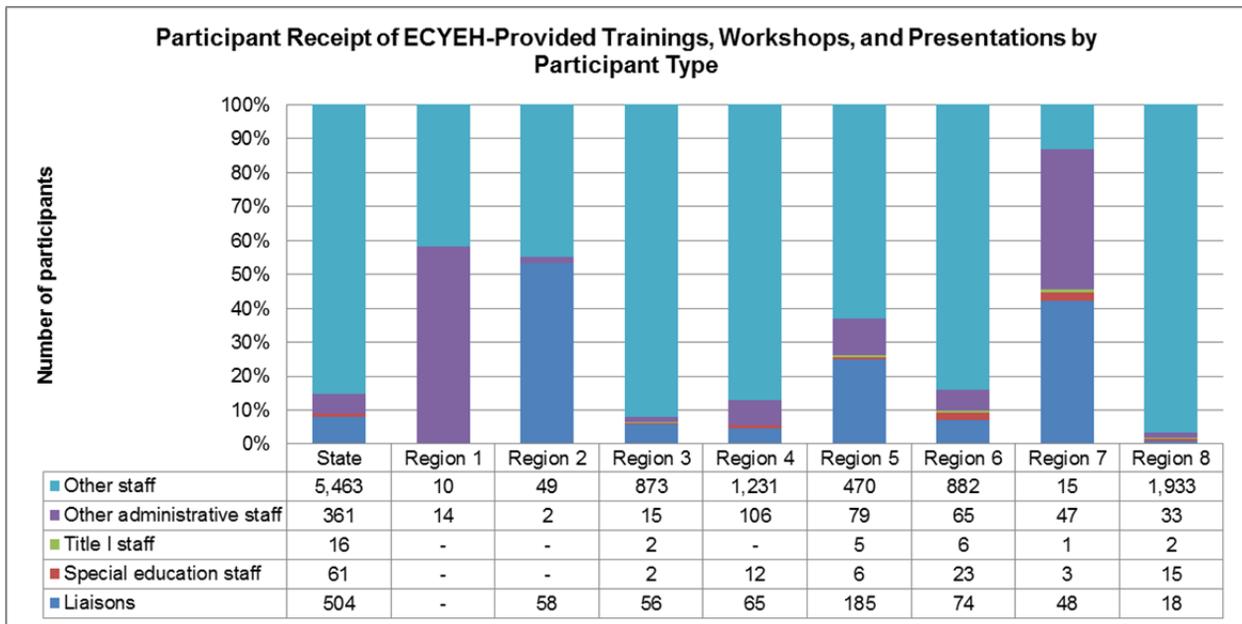


The next set of graphs pertains specifically to formal trainings, presentations, or workshops ECYEH staff conducted. These opportunities most typically included liaison training, often with a focus on new liaisons; school in-service; information sharing; awareness building; rights of students experiencing homelessness; and strategies for working with students experiencing homelessness. Combinations of these topics were also grouped together and reported as McKinney-Vento 101.

The first graph shows the total number and types of participants and the second graph shows total number of entities and different types of entities that participated in ECYEH-offered training, presentations, or workshops.

Overall, 6,405 participants representing 412 entities participated in some type of ECYEH-provided training, professional development, or workshops in 2014-15.

Participant types include LEA liaisons, special education staff, Title I staff, other administrative staff, and other staff. Participating entities included LEAs, shelters, pre-kindergarten programs, agencies and organizations, and other groups that could not be easily categorized. LEAs were the largest entity counts overall and for seven of the eight regions; LEA liaisons had the largest counts of specified staff overall and for five of the eight regions. This is not surprising since LEAs represent the largest entity group and are the first priority of ECYEH Program, with LEA liaisons being directly involved with this population.



The next set of graphs illustrates technical assistance or bulk supplies ECYEH staff provided to entities. This information was collected at the entity level in order to gauge the extent to which the ECYEH Program provided technical assistance or bulk supplies to entities in a region.

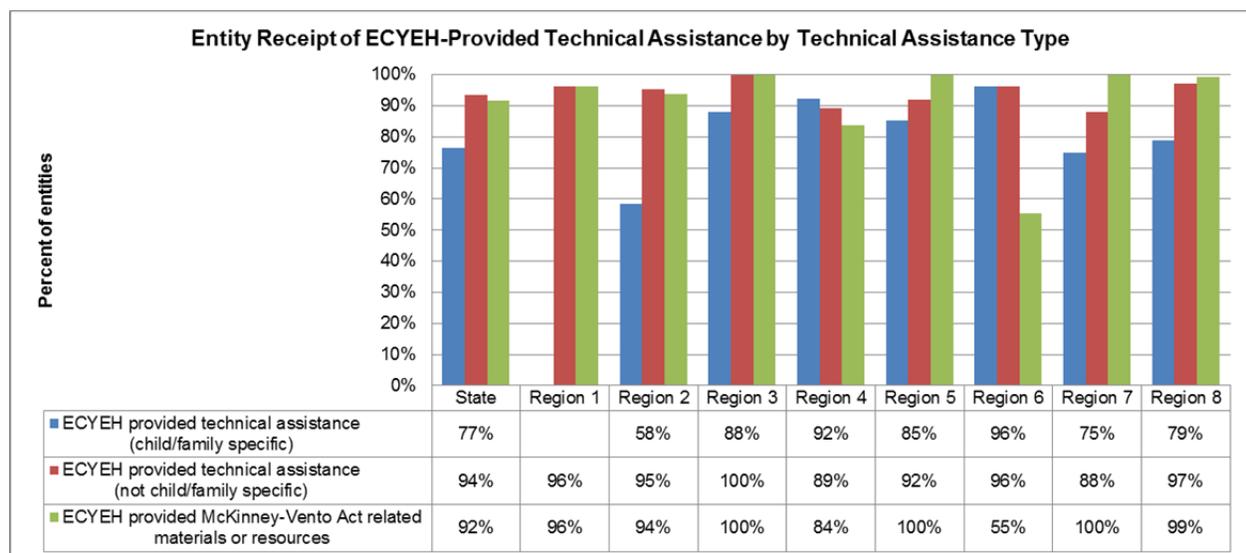
The ECYEH Program provided technical assistance to LEAs, shelters, pre-kindergarten programs, agencies and organizations, and other groups. A particular entity may have received all three kinds of technical assistance over the course of the program year. As such, an individual entity may be counted in more than one of the technical assistance categories.

Technical assistance categories included: child/family-specific, child/family non-specific, or in the form of McKinney-Vento Act related materials or resources. Child/family-specific and child/family non-specific technical assistance typically occurred through phone call or emails. Technical assistance frequency to an entity was captured as once, occasionally, or often. McKinney-Vento Act related materials or resources were documented as 'yes' or 'no.' If applicable, child/family-specific technical assistance resulting in services provided to an individual child was documented on the Student Information and Service Delivery instrument.

A total of 891 unique entities received technical assistance from the ECYEH Program. As can be seen in the graph below, 92 percent (817 of the 891 entities) receiving technical assistance received McKinney-Vento Act related materials or resources, 77 percent (682 of 891 entities) received child-specific technical assistance, and 94 percent (834 of 891 entities) received technical assistance that was not child/family-specific.

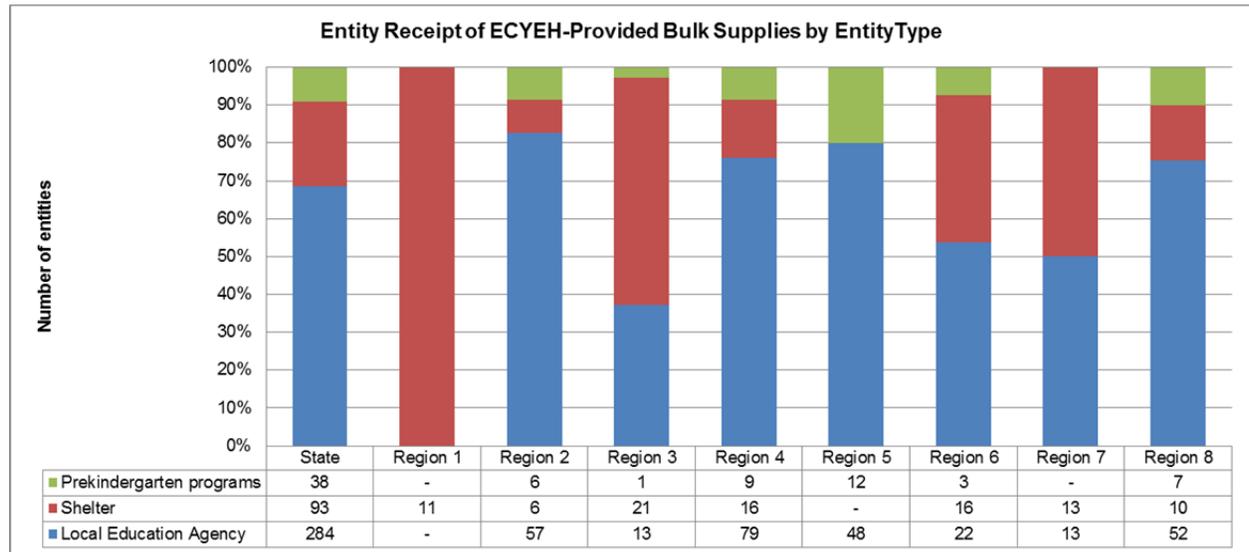
Of the 682 entities that received child/family technical assistance, 104 entities received such technical assistance 'once,' 383 entities received such technical assistance 'occasionally,' and 195 entities received such technical assistance 'often.'

Of the 834 entities receiving not child/family-specific technical assistance, 107 entities received such technical assistance 'once,' 534 entities received such technical assistance 'occasionally,' and 193 entities received such technical assistance 'often.'



Bulk supplies were provided to entities for children and families through the ECYEH Program and typically included, but were not limited to, bus passes, backpacks, school supplies, clothing, or personal hygiene items. Some items were funded through regional ECYEH funds while others came from donations or workshops.

The graph below shows how ECYEH-provided bulk supplies were distributed among the 415 receiving entities. LEAs, shelters, and pre-kindergarten programs were the recipients of such supplies. As might be expected, LEAs were the largest group of entities, overall, to receive bulk supplies. As a reminder, supply provision to a known individual is documented in the Student Information and Service Delivery instrument and is reported on page 49 of this report.



Meetings, Boards, Consortia, or Committees

In addition to conducting trainings, presentations, and workshops or providing technical assistance, ECYEH staff members also spend a portion of their time collaborating with other agencies, organizations, or groups as part of committees, boards, meetings, or consortia. Attempts to improve the documentation of these efforts have occurred each year with 2014-15 providing the most accurate information to date.

For 2014-15, ECYEH staff reported participating in 146 unique events. These events occurred annually (five events), monthly (31 events), one time (25 events), quarterly (50 events), weekly (one event), or other (34 events). Other events were most often on an as-needed basis or twice a year.

ECYEH staff members' role was most typically collaborating partner (58 events), leader facilitator (12 events), one time attendee (17 events), regular attendee (52 events), or other or not designated (seven events).

Event attendees ranged from two to almost 400 people with 33 people being the average number of people at an event.

For the most part, events were county- or regional-level meetings with other entities that work with homelessness, such as children and youth agencies, shelters, housing-related organizations or groups, pre-kindergarten programs, runaway and trafficking groups, mental health agencies, social workers, drug and alcohol agencies, or food pantries. In some cases, meetings with groups of LEAs were captured here.

In summary, ECYEH Program efforts for outreach through training, technical assistance, or collaboration not only spread the word about the McKinney-Vento Act and the ECYEH Program, but also assisted in the identification of children/youth and families. Increasing counts of children and youth experiencing homelessness are a direct result of the outreach and collaboration conducted by the ECYEH staff.

Regional Monitoring

Historically, coordinators maintain a plethora of information to document their work within the region and are monitored in alternate years by the CSC, PDE's contractor for ECYEH Program monitoring. In 2013-14 the regional offices received comprehensive technical assistance visits. In 2014-15 the CSC conducted comprehensive formal monitoring.

The monitor examined materials and activities that supported services for children and youth experiencing homelessness in the region and recorded detailed documentation on the monitoring form to verify that the monitor reviewed enough information to determine if the region was meeting a requirement. The program requirements monitored included the following:

- Homeless children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including access to Head Start, Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the LEAs in the region.
- Homeless children and youth receive K-12 after-school or supplemental instruction in LEA or shelter locations (e.g. tutoring, computer-assisted instruction, enriched educational services such as educational after-school field trips, expedited evaluations, and/or limited English proficiency services).
- Evidence that the region's school districts review and revise policies and practices (such as those regarding immunization and health records, residency requirements, birth certificates, school records, and guardianship) to ensure they do not act as barriers when enrolling homeless students.
- An appropriate staff person is designated as the LEA liaison for homeless children and youth at each school district in the region to carry out the duties described in Title X, Part C of the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Homeless students are immediately enrolled in school.
- Transportation is provided, at the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, to and from school of origin or appropriate school.
- Homeless children and youth in the region receive free meals through the National School Lunch Program.
- School records are made available in a timely manner.

- Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with Pennsylvania’s dispute resolution process.
- The region’s McKinney-Vento Act application/plan includes assessment of the needs of homeless students and the supplemental services provided.
- The regional office expands or improves services for homeless children provided by the regional office and the region’s school districts.
- School personnel, service providers, and advocates working with homeless families are informed of the duties of the local homeless education liaison.
- Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth is disseminated where such children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens.
- Homeless children and youth are identified by school staff/homeless liaisons and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
- The parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of the educational opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children, including school of origin/transportation options.
- The regional office/school district homeless liaison assists unaccompanied youth with school placement decisions.
- Homeless families, children, and youth receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.
- All of the region’s school districts reserve Title I, Part A funds necessary to provide comparable services to homeless students attending non-Title I schools.
- The regional office submitted all required reports to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for Title I, Part A; Title I, Part D; Title III, Part A; and Title X, Part C.
- The regional office conducted LEA monitoring and submitted LEA monitoring reports to the Pennsylvania Department of Education per federal requirements.

Monitoring reports prepared by the regional monitor revealed that most regions received a ‘yes’ in each of the above requirements, with ample supporting evidence. One region was out of compliance with the newest program requirement, LEA monitoring, and was required to submit a plan to become compliant. The regional monitor followed up to ensure full compliance. Even when requirements were met and supporting evidence provided, the monitor often provided additional comments or recommendations to promote continuous improvement in areas such as program development, collaboration, documentation, and data collection.

Highlights of activities occurring in the region were also included as part of the documentation in the monitoring reports. Common or typical activities included such things as serving on the board of local community agencies or groups, collaborating with other agencies that serve the homeless population, making presentations to community or school groups in order to increase awareness about the McKinney-Vento Act and the ECYEH Program, facilitating student access to or LEA provision of transportation to and from school, providing referrals for families and children to other community or government agencies, holding or collaborating on supplemental academic

programs or tutoring, providing LEA homeless liaisons with training and technical assistance related to their role as a liaison, developing and maintaining informational websites, summer programs and activities, a targeted focus on outreach to early childhood providers to ensure identification of younger children experiencing homelessness, and facilitating donations of goods and money to serve the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness. These activities are most often also captured in the previous section that highlighted training, technical assistance, and collaborations through meetings, committees, consortia, etc.

Unique or innovative strategies being used in the regions were gleaned from the monitoring reports and the monitor's anecdotal notes and are included below. In some cases, variations of these highlighted activities may also occur in other regions, though they may not be as comprehensive as the highlighted examples. Please refer to the regional map on page 10.

- **Region 1:** The regional office continues to increase its capacity to identify and serve the doubled-up homeless population in the city, which provides a more accurate assessment of the number of students experiencing homelessness. This has been made possible due to families now registering their children in school through an intake process conducted at the district's central registration office. With the regional staff now housed within the district's Office of Student Enrollment and Placement, and physically located on the same floor as the enrollment office, any student or family identified as homeless during enrollment is connected to appropriate services immediately. The regional office staff also conducts research about identifying and working with the doubled-up population in urban areas to ensure best practice strategies are utilized to reach this elusive population. The regional office now coordinates an afterschool and summer enrichment/tutoring program using district teachers to provide tutoring at six shelter sites.
- **Region 2:** The regional staff focused on increasing the capacity of school staff to accurately identify students experiencing homelessness. McKinney-Vento Act information has been provided to the school counselors in all of the region's LEAs, with instructions to be in contact with their school district homeless liaison if they identify (or suspect) a student is experiencing homelessness. The region's Berks County site coordinator has focused on a large urban area in the county to enable the district to create a district-wide procedure to facilitate identification and referral of students experiencing homelessness.
- **Region 3:** Quarterly regional meetings provided information and materials for liaisons and other interested school staff regarding current trends in Pennsylvania, the state plan, and the *Basic Education Circular*. The regional coordinator collaborated with ECYEH regions 2, 4, and 6 on cross-region homeless situations and to provide cross-regional liaison trainings to maximize attendance and outreach. The regional office provided county-specific cross-system training for Children and Youth Services, LEAs, community agencies and providers in the region. During the

regional training sessions the participants learned about student identification strategies and an intake form that sensitively and accurately identifies families experiencing homelessness.

- **Region 4:** The regional office coordinated with the local Homeless Children's Education Fund to provide winter and summer field trips for shelter children and summer programming in the domestic violence shelter and family shelter in Washington County. A partnership with the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh supports a summer literacy program in selected Allegheny County housing programs through a six-week program that encourages student reading through group activities and incentives provided by both the regional office and the library system. The region encouraged every school district and charter school to develop a McKinney-Vento Act plan to address student identification, internal communication, connection to community resources, and connection to district resources such as free lunch, Title I, tutoring, special education evaluations, and student assistance programs. The regional staff compiled the program data for the last three years and is using data comparison to alert the school districts to potential under-identification of students experiencing homelessness.
- **Region 5:** The Slippery Rock University Americorps tutor provided parent education through parent groups at shelters. Meetings were scheduled between the shelter tutors and the parent(s) of the children participating so that the families were aware of and could support their child's academic enrichment. Information was provided to parents regarding Adult Basic Education, General Education Diploma, and English as a Second Language programs for adults so that parents could increase their own skill levels. The regional coordinator worked with school districts, community groups, and partners to conduct art workshops and events in conjunction with local screenings of the documentary *Inocente*. These activities allowed students at risk (including students experiencing homelessness and/or living in poverty) to participate in art-making activities and to showcase their artwork within the community.
- **Region 6:** The regional staff collaborated with the local Children and Youth Services (CYS) education liaisons to ensure appropriate services for foster children who are experiencing homelessness. To reinforce cross-system coordination and education regarding McKinney-Vento Act requirements, CYS agency staff are invited to attend the regional training sessions. In addition to the required LEA monitoring, the regional staff also monitored the local shelters to ensure their compliance with identification and enrollment of their residents.
- **Region 7:** The regional coordinator encouraged homeless families to pursue enrollment in 21st Century Community Learning Center programs when students are in need of afterschool tutoring. The regional office provided afterschool and summer tutoring through a Housing and Urban Development Supportive Services grant coordinated with the Luzerne County Continuum of Care. The regional coordinator

tracked the number of students participating in summer academic programming by accessing the HMIS system (Housing and Urban Development database) directly, which facilitated real-time tracking of the number of participants.

- **Region 8:** The regional staff worked with drop-in centers for unaccompanied youth to provide service referrals, tutoring, employment services, meals, and other items. The regional coordinator also focused on the prevention of human trafficking and gang involvement, which is a growing concern for this student population. The regional staff worked with Valley Youth House in Bucks and Lehigh counties to provide extended (several months) hotel stays to students who were homeless while they finish out the school year, in coordination with the local school districts.

Formal regional monitoring and technical assistance with the regional staff of the ECYEH Program has been conducted for the past several years. Evaluators asked the monitor to comment on trends that appeared across the state, new issues that are emerging, other issues that are resolving, and challenges coordinators are experiencing. This information is useful when evaluators consider program implementation recommendations at the state or program level. The observations of the monitor included:

- The regional staff continue to report that the challenges faced by students and their families who are experiencing homelessness are becoming more complex each year, while the ability of schools and community-based organizations to meet their needs is continually stretched by dwindling budgets.
- The ECYEH program continues to strive toward a more consistent statewide interpretation of the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness. In situations where stakeholders' interpretations may vary, there are sometimes delays in the identification and reporting of students experiencing homelessness, which may negatively impact the delivery of appropriate services to meet educational needs.
- The ECYEH Program regional staff determine homeless eligibility on a case-by-case basis; however, there are still LEAs that are resistant to full and accurate identification of these students, as the McKinney-Vento Act requirements often necessitate a greater burden on their budgets.

Evaluators and monitors continue to work in tandem to keep abreast of any documentation or program implementation issues that arise during monitoring or as a part of the ongoing data submissions. A part of that work includes a monthly phone conference with the PDE program officer, bi-monthly regional coordinator meetings with site coordinators attending in the fall and spring, and conference calls with all parties as needed throughout the year.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Outreach and increased awareness regarding the McKinney-Vento Act and the rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness are addressed in the objectives of the ECYEH Program and are the primary focus of program implementation. Meeting these objectives is reflected by the number of entities represented in reporting and also the number of children/youth who were identified, served, and reported. Program outcomes include findings about the reporting entities and also demographic and homeless information about the children/youth identified and served through the ECYEH Program. Per federal reporting requirements, all public LEAs are required to report on students attending their schools who are experiencing homelessness. Additionally, all entities that receive training, professional development, technical assistance, or resources from the ECYEH Program are required to report on students experiencing homelessness who reside in the facility or attend their pre-kindergarten programs.

Public LEAs include school districts, charter schools, intermediate unit-operated pre-kindergarten programs,¹⁴ and full-time (comprehensive) career and technical centers,¹⁵ In Pennsylvania, there were 499¹⁶ school districts, 185 charter and cyber charter schools, and 11 career and technical centers in the 2014-15 academic year.

Based on the unique, comprehensive list of identified students from across Pennsylvania, nearly all LEAs were represented. There were 25 school districts, 59 charter/cyber charter schools, and three full-time (comprehensive) career and technical centers that reported zero students meeting the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness.

Further exploration of the 87 LEAs with no identified students¹⁷ revealed that many of the LEAs were small (41 LEAs had fewer than 500 students), they served a subset of the total K-12 population (48 LEAs), the LEA (16) had very low free or reduced lunch percentages,¹⁸ or had some combination of these conditions. That said, each year regional coordinators make it a priority to reach out to LEAs where no students are

¹⁴ Not all intermediate units offer all pre-kindergarten programs (Early Intervention, Early Head Start, Head Start, Pre-K Counts). Additionally, Pittsburgh-Mt. Oliver IU2 and Philadelphia IU26 are incorporated into Pittsburgh and Philadelphia school districts, respectively. School-age students who attend intermediate unit schools or classrooms for instruction are attributed and reported by their home district, even if the student receives instruction in another school in the district or in another school district.

¹⁵ Students who attend part-time career and technical centers are attributed to their home school for data and reporting purposes. Students who attend full-time career and technical centers are attributed to the career and technical center.

¹⁶ Pennsylvania technically has 500 school districts; however, one very small district in suburban Philadelphia enrolls no students – Bryn Athyn School District, <http://www.brynathynschooldistrict.org/>.

¹⁷ It is important to note that even if an LEA did not identify any students, students experiencing homelessness may have attended that LEA at some point during the program year either before a precipitating event or after becoming housed. Likewise, students identified in a shelter with no identifying LEA and students in domestic violence shelters may have also attended a non-reporting LEA.

¹⁸ National trends indicate that there is a relationship between higher percentages of students eligible for free or reduced lunch and greater likelihood of homelessness.

being identified. It should be also noted that outreach to charter schools is relatively new and new charter schools are established each year, making outreach to these LEAs especially challenging.

As a result of the ECYEH Program providing training, professional development, technical assistance, or resources to shelters and non-LEA pre-kindergarten programs, 91 different facilities reported on 3,394 children/youth, which is a considerable increase over the prior year (2013-14) where 79 facilities were included in reporting and 2012-13, where 59 facilities reported. These children/youth were only identified by a non-LEA facility. Many of the children/youth identified by these facilities were birth to age two, ages three to five (not enrolled in pre-kindergarten), attending non-LEA pre-kindergarten programs, or attending nonpublic, parochial, or private schools. The number of non-LEA facilities reporting has increased each year due to ongoing coordinator outreach and increased awareness of reporting responsibilities of these entities.

Served and Enrolled Children and Youth

Children and youth experiencing homelessness are identified by their nighttime status (fixed, regular, adequate) and are reported based on their age or grade category, which determines if they are 'served' by the program and/or 'enrolled' in school. The sections that follow provide demographic and homeless information for identified children/youth experiencing homelessness based on all reported children/youth included in the unique, comprehensive list of individuals identified as experiencing homelessness at any point during the ECYEH Program year (July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015).

The term 'served' includes all children and youth identified as meeting the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homeless and include the following age/grade categories: birth to age two, ages three to five (not enrolled in pre-kindergarten), pre-kindergarten (LEA or non-LEA pre-kindergarten programs), kindergarten through 12th grade (including ungraded), and out-of-school youth. Pre-kindergarten (LEA only) through 12th grade (including ungraded) students make up the 'enrolled' category, which is a subset of the served population.

In 2014-15, a unique count of 26,273 children or youth were identified and reported as experiencing homelessness and receiving direct or indirect services from the ECYEH Program, of which 22,014 were also identified as enrolled in school. For the most part, the numbers of identified children and youth have increased with each year the state evaluation has been implemented and coordinated reporting occurred. However, caution should be used in comparing counts of children/youth across years, as fluctuation among years may be due to increasing outreach and better reporting of children and youth, not necessarily an increase in the number of children and youth experiencing homelessness. While it is not yet possible to determine the extent to which increased awareness or homelessness contribute to change over time, increases being attributed to increased awareness can especially be seen with the non-enrolled population, as outreach prior to the state evaluation primarily focused on school-age

students. From 2010-11 to 2014-15, the reported non-enrolled population grew from 9.4 percent of all served children and youth to 15.2 percent of all served children and youth, which is most likely attributed to increased outreach to the organizations serving the non-enrolled population. In 2010-11, 20,556 were identified as served and 18,621 were identified as enrolled in school. In 2011-12, 19,914 were identified as served and 18,231 were identified as enrolled in school. In 2012-13, 22,618 were identified as served and 19,459 were identified as enrolled in school. In 2013-14, 24,504 children or youth were identified as served and 20,785 were identified as enrolled in school.

Pennsylvania public school enrollment, based on third-day enrollment for the 2014-15 academic year, was 1,780,602 students. Enrolled students experiencing homelessness made up about one percent of the total public school enrolled population. Even though the numbers of identified students has increased, students experiencing homelessness have consistently been about one percent of the total public school population.

Age/Grade Categories

The graphs that follow show the age/grade breakdowns for both the served and enrolled populations.

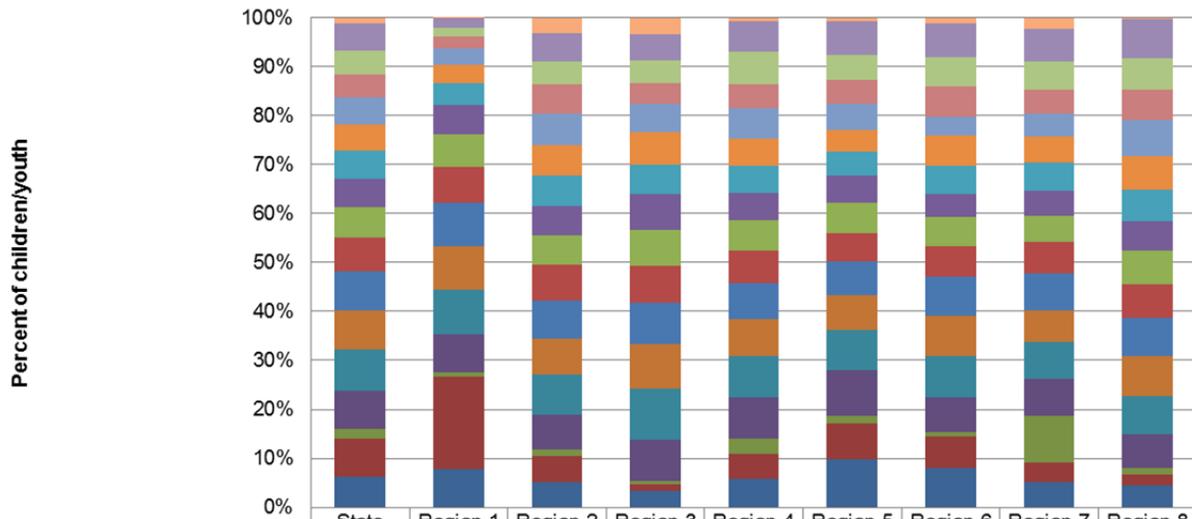
As non-LEA reporting has become more consistent, the under-five (not kindergarten) population has increased each year. The under-five population includes the age/grade categories of children birth to age two, children ages three to five and not enrolled in pre-kindergarten, and pre-kindergarten children. This grouping of children increased from 3,809 in 2013-14 to 4,211 in 2014-15.

Differences among regions in the pre-kindergarten categories are most likely reflective of differing migrant populations, differing numbers of pre-kindergarten programs, differing numbers of domestic violence shelters among regions and the reporting choices of those shelters, and the extent to which each of these reporting entities reported on children in the under-five categories.

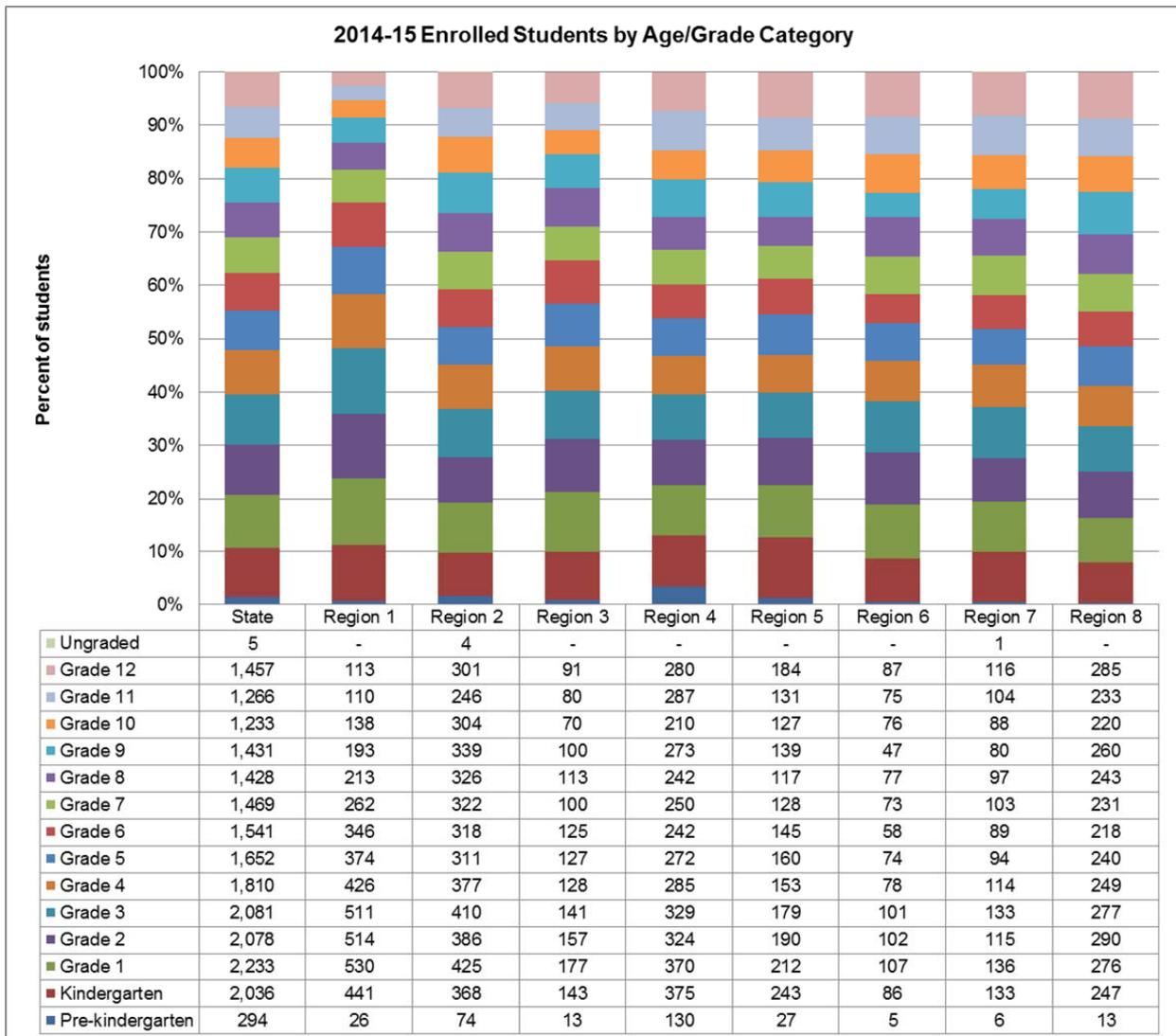
Differences in the pre-kindergarten counts between the served (539 children) and enrolled (294 children) graphs are reflective of non-LEA pre-kindergarten programs that are counted in the served population. As a reminder, only LEA-operated pre-kindergarten programs are counted in the enrolled in school population.

The large number of out-of-school youth in Region 2 is directly related to the migrant out-of-school population in this area.

2014-15 Served Children/Youth by Age/Grade Category



	State	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8
Out-of-school youth	342	3	166	59	30	18	15	41	10
Ungraded	5	-	4	-	-	-	-	1	-
Grade 12	1,457	113	301	91	280	184	87	116	285
Grade 11	1,266	110	246	80	287	131	75	104	233
Grade 10	1,233	138	304	70	210	127	76	88	220
Grade 9	1,431	193	339	100	273	139	47	80	260
Grade 8	1,428	213	326	113	242	117	77	97	243
Grade 7	1,469	262	322	100	250	128	73	103	231
Grade 6	1,541	346	318	125	242	145	58	89	218
Grade 5	1,652	374	311	127	272	160	74	94	240
Grade 4	1,810	426	377	128	285	153	78	114	249
Grade 3	2,081	511	410	141	329	179	101	133	277
Grade 2	2,078	514	386	157	324	190	102	115	290
Grade 1	2,233	530	425	177	370	212	107	136	276
Kindergarten	2,036	441	368	143	375	243	86	133	247
Pre-kindergarten	539	49	76	13	130	43	13	168	47
Age 3-5, not pre-kindergarten	2,039	1,097	273	21	224	188	81	72	83
Birth to age 2	1,633	444	269	58	256	258	99	91	158



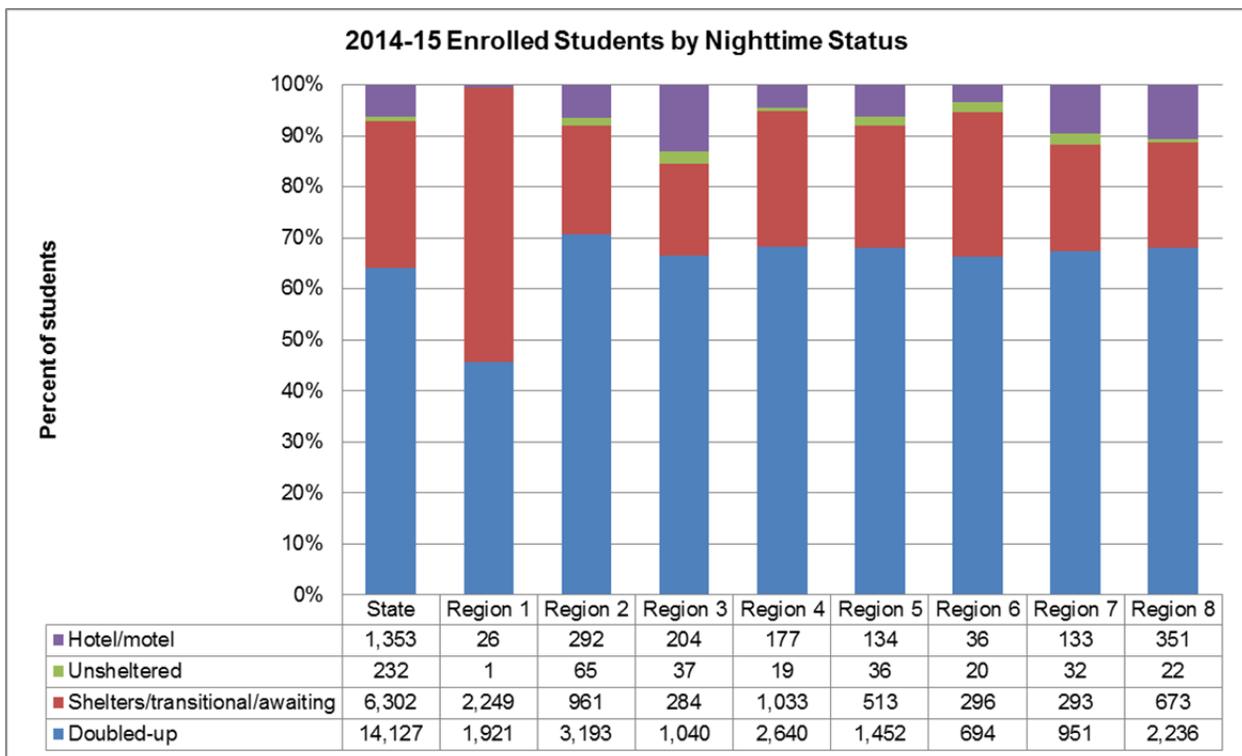
Nighttime Status

Nighttime status is what determines if a child or youth is identified as eligible for services under the McKinney-Vento Act. Nighttime status is a required federal reporting category for the enrolled population. Nighttime status reporting categories include doubled-up; hotels/motels; shelters, transitional housing, or awaiting foster care; and unsheltered. The graph that follows shows the nighttime status for the 22,014 enrolled students.

Overall, 64 percent of enrolled students had a nighttime status of doubled-up and 29 percent of enrolled students had a nighttime status of shelter, transitional housing, or awaiting foster care. This differs from the 2013-14 national percentages of 76 percent

for doubled-up and 14 percent for sheltered,¹⁹ but this may be reflective of ECYEH Program’s outreach to shelters. Students identified through shelter visits or shelter reporting may otherwise go unreported as a student’s homeless status may be unknown to a student’s LEA.

Region 1, though still lower than the other regions with regard to doubled-up numbers, continues to implement specific strategies to better identify the doubled-up population and their efforts are showing in the steady increase in the reporting of that population. Since 2010-11, Region 1 child/youth double-up counts have steadily increased from 402 students to 1,921 students in 2014-15. Prior to 2010-11 the focus of programming in this region had been with the shelter, transitional housing, or awaiting foster care population. Consequently, this region had not been systematically collecting information on children/youth having doubled-up status.



¹⁹ <http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/data-comp-1112-1314.pdf>

Unaccompanied Youth

Unaccompanied youth is a federally-defined term and is reported for the served population. Children or youth who meet the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness may also be identified as an “unaccompanied homeless youth,” meaning the child is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. An unaccompanied youth can be any age, birth to 21 years old.²⁰

Overall, 3,139 (12 percent) of the 26,273 served children and youth were identified as being an unaccompanied youth, which is consistent with the past two years (10 percent in 2014-15 and 13 percent in 2012-13). In the initial years of the evaluation, these figures were considerably higher: 19 percent in 2011-12 and 24 percent in 2010-11.

Identifying and documenting unaccompanied youth has been an area of focus and training each year in order for regions and LEAs to more accurately identify and report on this population. Consequently, each year the information being reported is more complete and accurate.

The national percentage of unaccompanied youth is approximately seven percent.²¹ Pennsylvania’s percentage may be slightly higher due to the out-of-school migrant youth population. In Pennsylvania, the Migrant Education Program and the ECYEH Program collaborate to identify children/youth that are eligible for migrant services and meet the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness.

Demographics

Additional child/youth or school demographic information provides context to the evaluation findings to the extent that it further describes the population that is being identified and served as a result of ECYEH Program outreach and education. Demographic information is not available for every individual identified. What exists is based upon the data system from which the information was collected. Each section that follows will indicate the population of child/youth included in the demographic data element.

Demographic information presented here includes race, economic status, special education status, English language learner status, migrant status, and history of homelessness of identified children/youth. LEA or school demographics, such as Title I status and percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch is also included and provides further information regarding the economic status of the communities of the schools which identified students attended. Urban-centric locale of LEAs is included to show LEA location in context to population and distance variables.

²⁰ This definition of unaccompanied youth differs from the Housing and Urban Development definition, which extends to under 25 years of age <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/changes-in-the-hud-definition-of-homeless>.

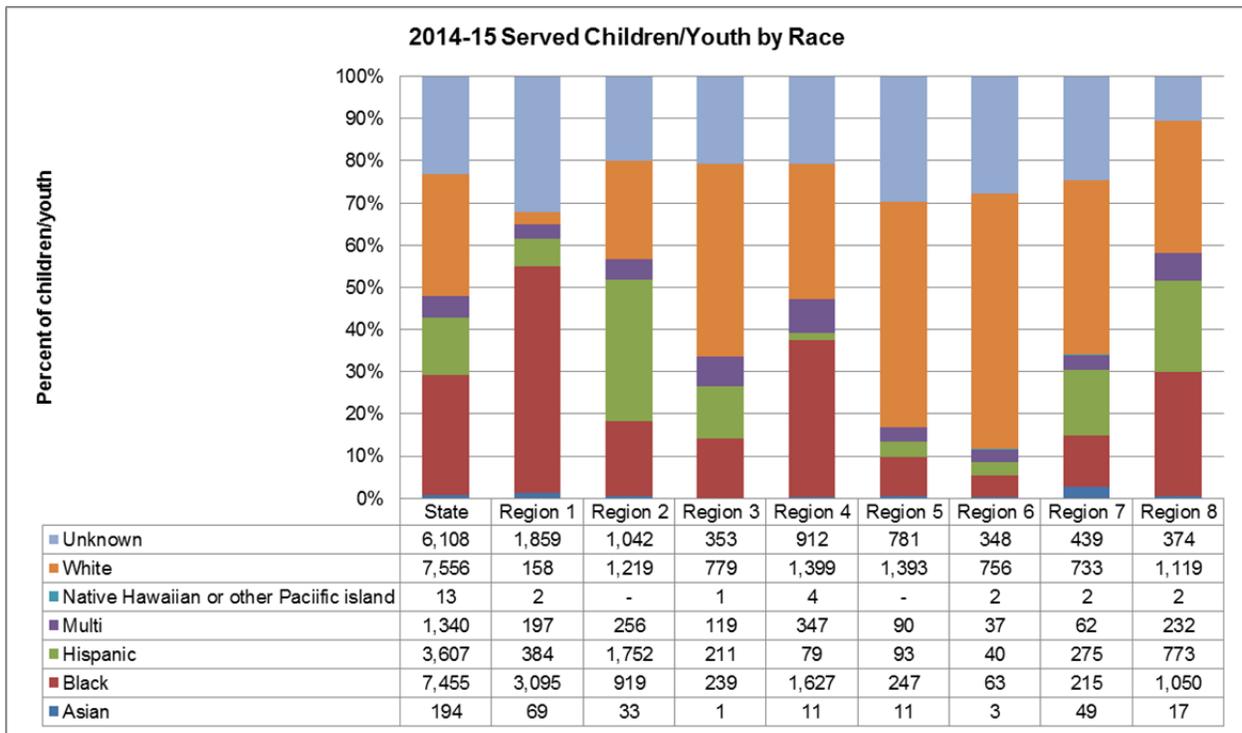
²¹ <http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/data-comp-1112-1314.pdf>

Information about race and ethnicity was collected through the PIMS extract for all enrolled students and through the MIS2000 extract for migrant children/youth also identified as experiencing homelessness, making race and ethnicity information available for the served population. Information regarding race and ethnicity was not collected for non-enrolled students with the exception of the migrant population and disaggregated by region.

Evaluators used federal race reporting categories in the graph that follows. The proportions of children and youth experiencing homelessness in the federal race categories have remained relatively consistent each year. White/Caucasian (not Hispanic) children and youth comprise 29 percent of the identified children/youth, Black/African American (not Hispanic) children and youth comprise 28 percent, and Hispanic (any race) individuals comprise 14 percent of children/youth experiencing homelessness. Race varies by region, reflecting the populations of the regions. For example, regions 1 (Philadelphia) and 4 (Pittsburgh) have large urban areas with greater diversity; regions 5 and 6 (northwest and north central PA) are more rural and homogeneous, and Region 2 (southeastern PA) has large Hispanic communities. Race information could not be determined for 23 percent of the served population. Race categorization for those individuals not having a race designation may reflect that of the region, though it cannot be assumed.

As stated in the enrolled section, students experiencing homelessness comprise approximately one percent of Pennsylvania's population enrolled in public school. Almost 70 percent of this population is White/Caucasian (not Hispanic), 15 percent is Black/African American (not Hispanic), and 10 percent is Hispanic (any race). This breakdown is consistent with prior years; however, the Hispanic population of Pennsylvania increased from nine percent in 2013-14 to 10 percent in 2014-15.

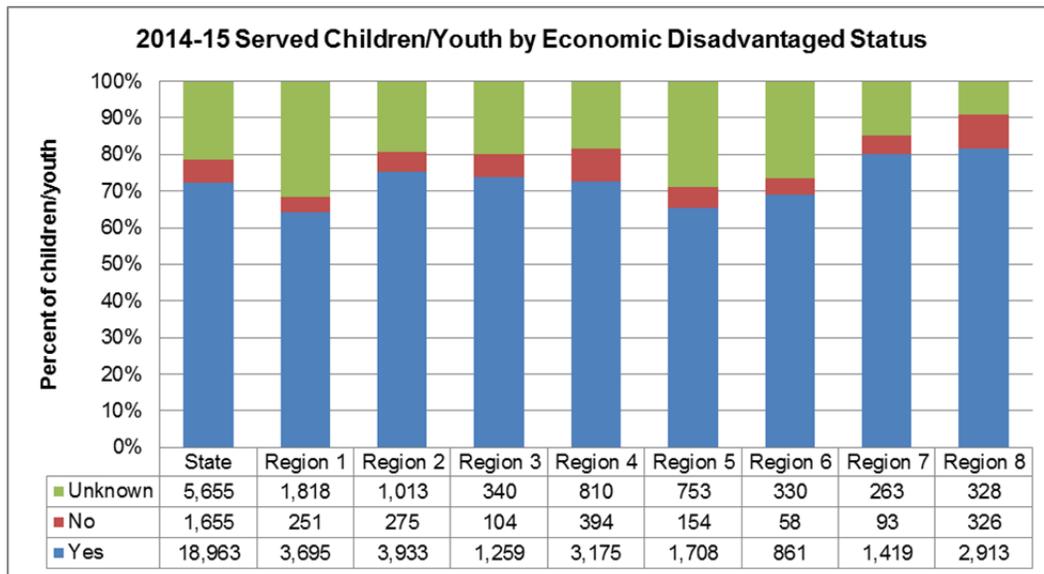
When looking at the race of students experiencing homelessness compared with state race findings, White/Caucasian (not Hispanic) students experiencing homelessness comprised approximately one percent of the state White/Caucasian (not Hispanic) public school population, Black/African American (not Hispanic) students experiencing homelessness comprised approximately three percent of the state Black/African American (not Hispanic) population, and Hispanic (any race) students experiencing homelessness comprised approximately two percent of the state Hispanic (any race) student population. The percentage of White/Caucasian (not Hispanic) and Black/African American (not Hispanic) students experiencing homelessness has remained the same as prior years. The percentage of Hispanic students (any race) experiencing homelessness increased from one percent of the state Hispanic population to two percent in 2014-15. This increase may be a result of better reporting and collaboration with the Migrant Education Program.



Economic disadvantage information was collected from PIMS for all enrolled students. Additionally, evaluators were also able to include pre-kindergarten children who attended Head Start or Early Head Start programs as being economically disadvantaged because all children who attend such programs are eligible based on economic need. Because many of the pre-kindergarten programs are not operated by LEAs, economically disadvantaged status is provided for the served population.

Economically disadvantaged status is a demographic element collected for all students enrolled in school, not just the homeless population. It is also an eligibility criterion for all children who attend Early Head Start or Head Start programs. Of the 26,273 served children and youth, 72 percent were designated as economically disadvantaged.

The 22 percent of children/youth whose economic status is unknown includes children/youth in the birth-to-age-two category, ages three to five and not enrolled in a pre-kindergarten program, or out-of-school youth populations. These individuals, for the most part, would have been identified in shelters or were migrant children/youth not enrolled in school. While some portion, or even a majority, of such children/youth may be economically disadvantaged, because the information is not collected for these populations, it cannot be assumed.



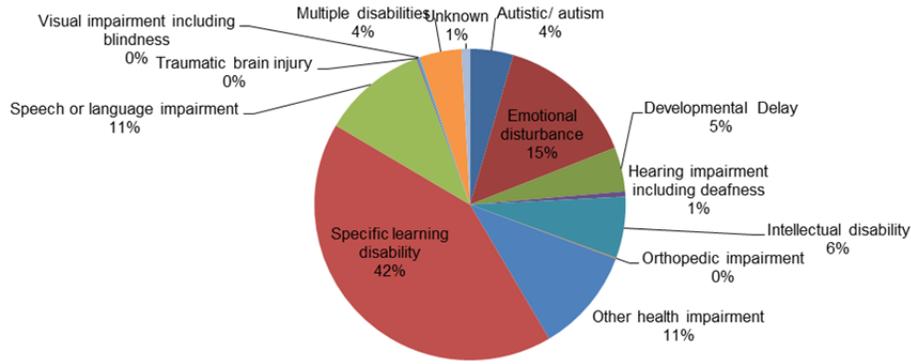
Specific special education status information was collected from the PIMS extract for students enrolled in school. Additionally, children identified in early intervention programs were documented as receiving special education services and included in the developmental delay designation. Therefore, special education status information is based on the served population. Of the 26,273 served children and youth, 5,271 (20 percent) were identified as having a disability, 15,906 (61 percent) were identified as not having a disability, and disability status was not reported for 374 (one percent). There were 4,724 (18 percent) children and youth for which these data were not collected. These were children and youth who were identified in shelters and did not have a PASecureID by which special education information could be requested.

Nationally, the portion of served children and youth with disabilities was 17 percent in 2013-14.²²

Of the 5,271 students designated as having a disability, the largest percentage of individuals (42 percent) was categorized as having a “specific learning disability.” The graph that follows shows the breakdown of the disability categories for those students with a disability designation. Because of small numbers in several of the categories, for confidentiality, regional findings are not included. Evaluators used federal reporting categories in the graph below.

²² <http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/data-comp-1112-1314.pdf>

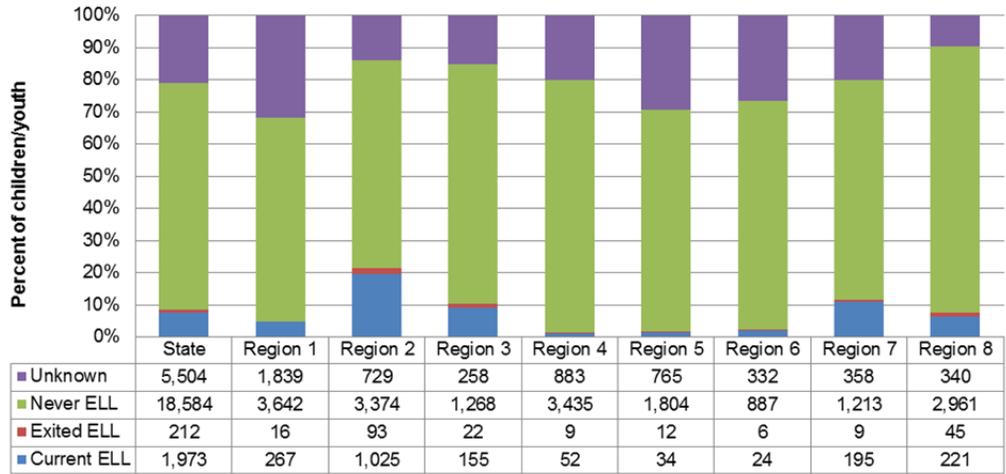
2014-15 Disability Designation of Served Children/Youth with a Special Education Disability



	Autistic/ autism	Emotional disturbance	Developmental Delay	Hearing impairment including deafness	Intellectual disability	Orthopedic impairment	Other health impairment	Specific learning disability	Speech or language impairment	Traumatic brain injury	Visual impairment including blindness	Multiple disabilities	Unknown
Series1	237	767	242	29	336	5	572	2,212	575	9	11	230	46

English language learner information was collected through PIMS for all enrolled students and through MIS2000 for migrant children/youth also identified as experiencing homelessness. Therefore, English language learner findings are provided for the served population. English language learner information was not collected for non-enrolled age/grade categories with the exception of the migrant population. Consistent with prior years, English language learners comprised close to 10 percent of the children/youth experiencing homelessness. Children/youth in Region 2 had the greatest percentage of English language learners, followed by Region 7 and then Region 3. Each of these regions reflects migrant patterns, which are reported next. Nationally, children and youth experiencing homeless who are English language learners make up about 12 percent of the homeless population.

2014-15 Served Children/Youth by English Language Learner Status



Migrant status can be determined for all children/youth identified as experiencing homelessness. MIS2000, the state migrant education database, captures homeless eligibility information.

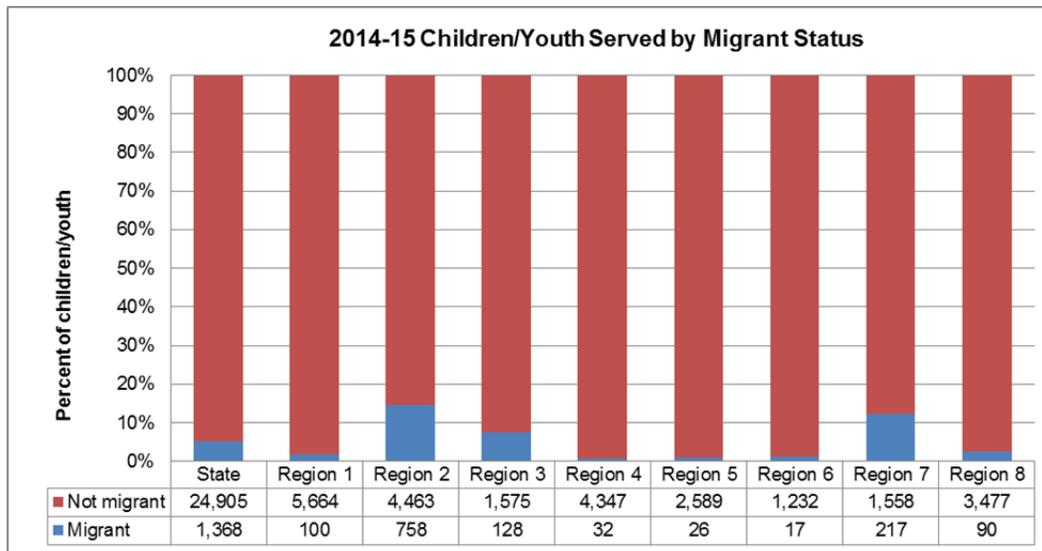
Of the 26,273 served population, five percent (1,368 children and youth) were also identified as eligible for services through the Pennsylvania Migrant Education Program. This has remained relatively consistent each year.

Looking at homelessness within the migrant population, there were 5,065 migrant children and youth between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015 (the ECYEH Program year); 27 percent of the migrant population was identified as homeless during this time period. This percentage has remained stable from the prior year which reflects ongoing training and collaboration between the Migrant Education Program and the ECYEH Program. Early on in the ECYEH evaluation, this percentage increased each year.

The numbers of migrant children/youth vary considerably across Pennsylvania depending on where migrant work is located. While migrant children and youth only make up five percent of the total homeless served population it is important to note the differences among the homeless regions. Migrant status may also influence other demographics such as English language learner status, mobility, or economic status, especially in the regions where there is a larger migrant population.

As can be seen in the graph that follows, ECYEH Program Region 2 has the largest numbers of migrant children/youth. It is important to note that the migrant population is greater in the eastern half of Pennsylvania (Regions 2, 7, 3, 8, and 1). As such, the numbers of migrant youth experiencing homelessness are greater in these regions than the rest of the state.

Nationally, children and youth experiencing homeless who are also eligible for migrant services make up about one percent of the homeless population. Pennsylvania's higher percentage of migrant youth experiencing homelessness may be directly related to the increased collaboration of the two programs and also that homeless status is documented and reported for the most part by the Migrant Education Program. Additionally, due to this collaboration and reporting, migrant out-of-school youth homeless status is being captured and reported.



History of Homelessness

Approximately 25 percent of children and youth identified as experiencing homelessness in 2014-15 were also identified as such in 2013-14. The percentage of children and youth identified as experiencing homeless in two consecutive years has increased each year of the state evaluation, but the increase should be interpreted with caution, as the increase may be a result of more complete and accurate reporting. The 2013-14 rate for children and youth experiencing homelessness in two consecutive years was 22 percent, and in 2012-13 the rate was 20 percent. It is important to note that with the exception of the migrant population, there is no consistent coding of children and youth not enrolled in school across program years. Therefore, history of homelessness could not be determined for approximately 11 percent of the 26,273 children/youth in 2014-15.

LEA Poverty Indicator

The percentage of students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch serves as an indicator of the economic status of the community in which an identified student attended school and/or resided. Student eligibility for free and reduced lunch is based upon several criteria²³ and the National School Lunch Program reports the percentage of students eligible for a free or reduced lunch for each LEA and school within the LEA that it funds.²⁴ Typically, 40 percent or more of students receiving free or reduced lunch in an LEA is used as an indicator to determine higher poverty LEAs.

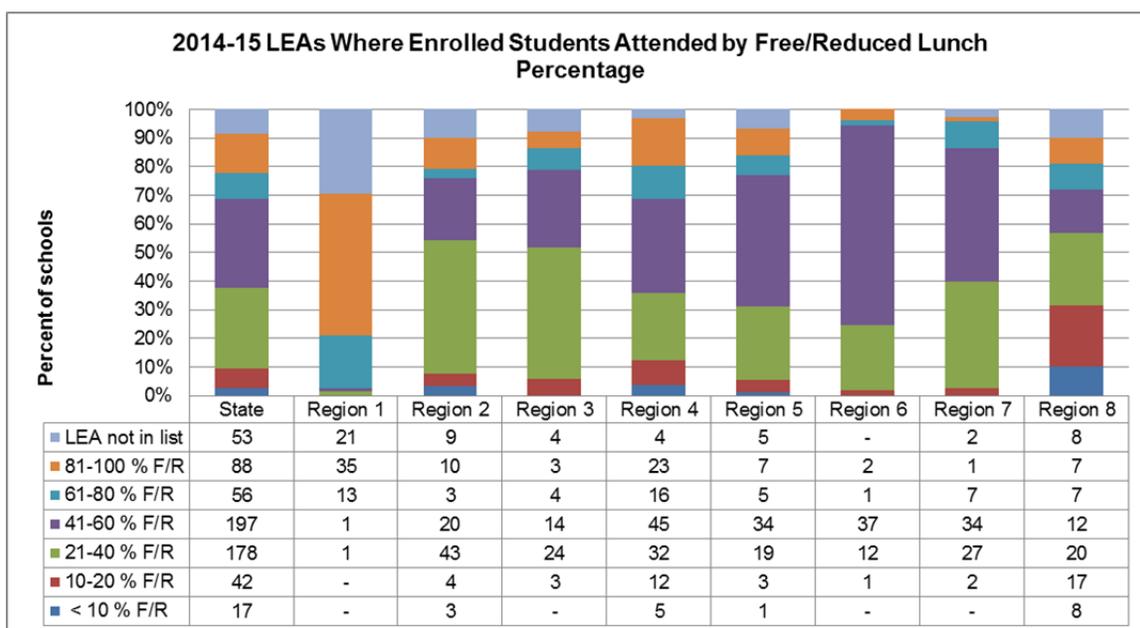
²³ http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/EliMan_highlighted.pdf

²⁴ http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/national_school_lunch/7487

There were 631 LEAs in which students experiencing homelessness were identified. The graph that follows shows the percentage of students within an LEA that were eligible to receive free or reduced lunch regardless of their homelessness status.

Overall, 54 percent of LEAs (341) where identified students attended had 40 percent or more of the student population classified as eligible to receive a free or reduced price lunch by the National School Lunch Program. 'LEA not in list' means the LEA was not on the National School Lunch Program list so an eligibility percentage was not available. Regions 1, 6, 5, 4, and 7 had the greatest percentages of LEAs with students eligible for free or reduced lunch.

What is important to glean from these findings is that poverty is a factor for the student body in almost two thirds of the LEAs where students identified as experiencing homelessness attended. Depending on the region, poverty may be a factor in three quarters or more of LEAs.



School Title I Status

A school's percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch is used to determine Title I funding and the type of Title I services²⁵ offered in the school. Each school within an LEA can have a different Title I status. Title I type²⁶ is based on the poverty level of the whole student body attending a school. As stated in the previous

²⁵ Title I type – schoolwide or targeted assistance – is determined at the school level.

²⁶ http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/title_i/7382

section, poverty rate is determined by the percentage of students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

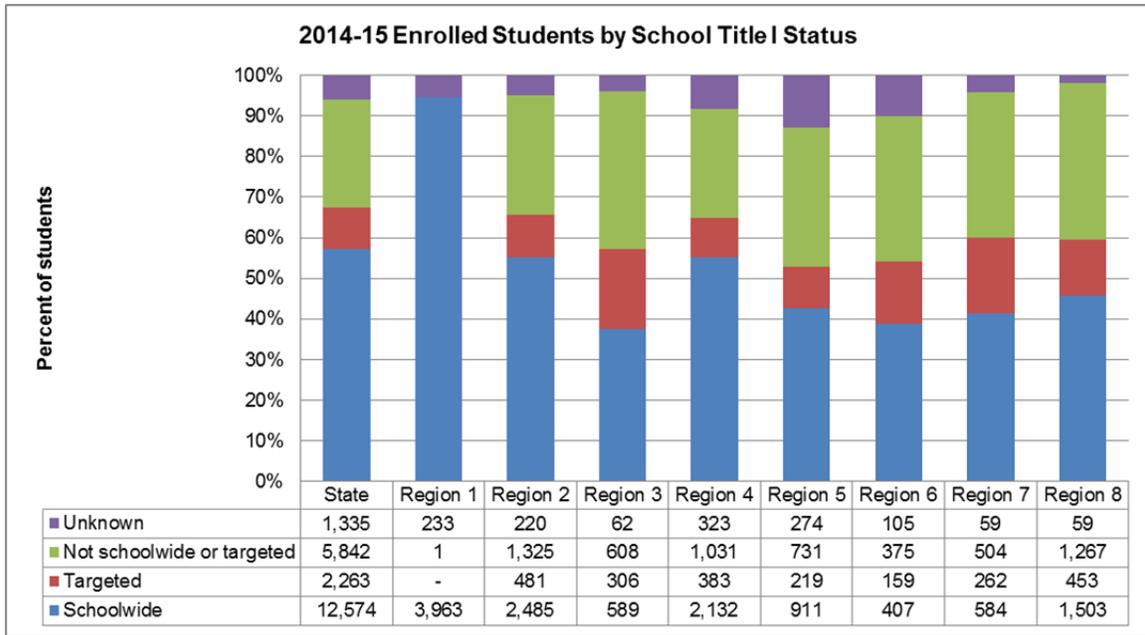
Typically, in buildings with a poverty rate of 40 percent or greater, LEAs may use Title I funds to upgrade the entire curriculum of the school and are considered schoolwide programs. All students in a schoolwide building benefit from Title I funds and services. In buildings with poverty rates of less than 40 percent, programs are designed to help specific children and are targeted assisted programs. Specific grade bands or students with academic need within those grade bands may be targeted for services. Students experiencing homelessness are eligible for Title I services in targeted assistance schools even if they are not included in the targeted population prior to becoming eligible for McKinney-Vento Act supports.

Title I status is only applicable to enrolled students. Title I school status information comes from PDE's Division of Federal Programs. Typically, Title I schools are elementary or middle schools though there are some cases, especially in high poverty areas, where high schools may also receive Title I funds.

Evaluators linked the type of Title I school funding to each enrolled student. Of the 22,014 enrolled students, 57 percent attended schoolwide Title I schools, 10 percent attended targeted schools, 27 percent attended schools that were not identified as either schoolwide or targeted, and the Title I status could not be determined in six percent of students' schools. These percentages have remained relatively similar.

The graph that follows shows enrolled students by their school's Title I status. Not targeted or schoolwide means that a student's school was not identified as either schoolwide or targeted. Students' receipt of Title I services is discussed later in the service delivery section of this report.

These findings echo free and reduced lunch eligibility findings. More than half of students (12,574 students) identified as experiencing homelessness attended schools with a schoolwide status, meaning that poverty was a factor of the school regardless of the student's homeless status.



To summarize, the percentage of students who receive free or reduced lunch and a school's Title I status conveys something about the economic status of the community in which the student resided or attended school. The above findings indicate that about half of the identified students (12,574 of 22,014 students) attended schools where poverty is prevalent based on the Title I status of the school. Likewise, almost two thirds of the LEAs (341 of 631 LEAs) students attended had 40 percent or more of all students experiencing poverty, based on the LEA's percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch. In other words, poverty is a prevalent factor of the community regardless of the homeless status of the identified students.

When looking at both charts an interesting pattern emerged. Of the regions with LEAs having the highest percentages of students receiving free/reduced lunch (1, 6, 5, and 4), regions 6 and 5 have the fewest LEAs receiving Title I schoolwide or targeted assistance funding. Consequently, in these regions there may be a greater need for ECYEH Program support for students experiencing homelessness who attend schools where no Title I funds are allocated.

Urban-Centric Locale Code

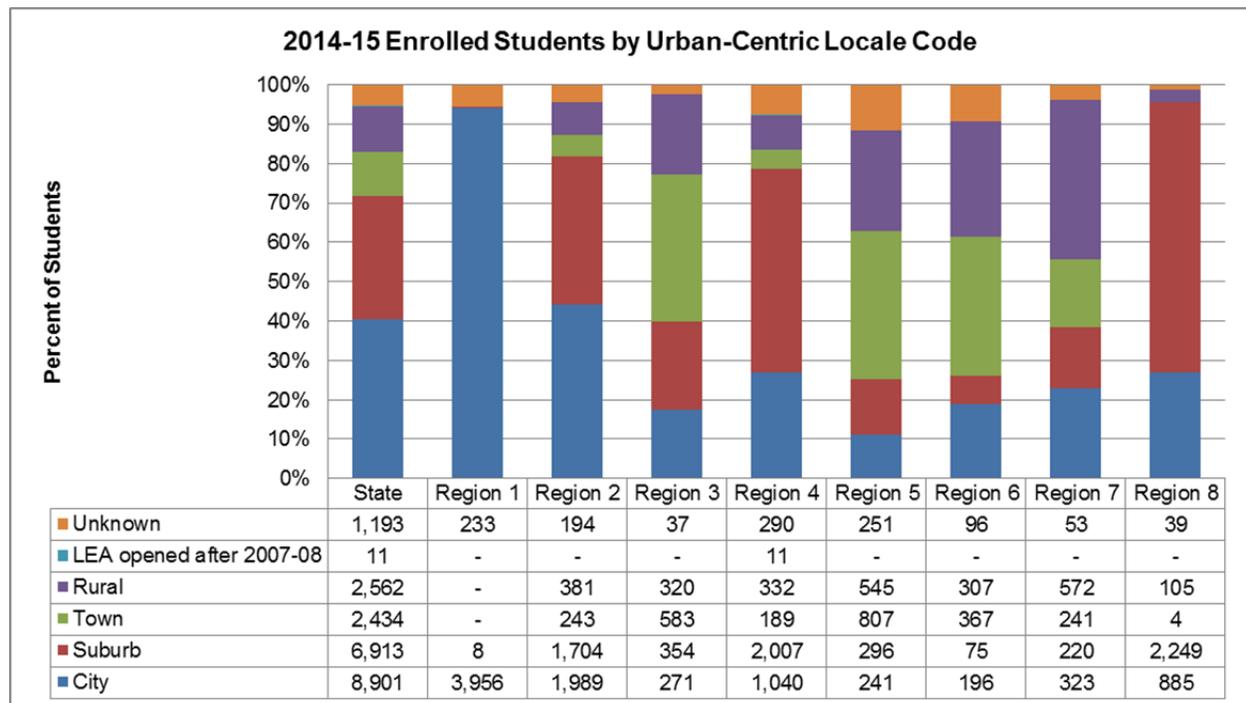
In 2009-10, public LEAs²⁷ were coded using an urban-centric locale code system from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD). The urban-centric locale code system uses 12 categories to designate the region type and population size and replaced the previously-used eight metro-centric locale codes. The

²⁷ http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/data_and_statistics/7202/school_locale/509783

12 category descriptions can be found on the NCES website.²⁸ These 12 categories were further collapsed by the evaluator to gain a better picture of the key categories - city, suburban, town, rural, LEA opened after 2007-08,²⁹ and unknown.

The graph that follows shows the student population by public school's locale code. The unknown category includes 955 students who attended LEAs that did not appear in the file, most often because they were intermediate unit-operated pre-kindergarten programs (108 students), nonpublic LEAs (15 students), or the LEA was unknown (832 students).

Overall, 72 percent of enrolled students (22,014) attended LEAs categorized as city (8,901 students) or suburban (6,913 students). However, distinct variations can be seen across the regions, with Region 1 being almost exclusively city, regions 2, 4, and 8 having large suburban populations, and regions 3, 5, 6, and 7 having more town or rural designations. The variations across the regions contribute to differences in the numbers and types of agencies and resources that exist to support children, youth, or families experiencing homelessness.



²⁸ http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp

²⁹ 'LEA opened after 2007-08' is an actual category in the data file. In cases where the LEA locale could not be determined, this classification remained.

PROGRAM IMPACT

As a result of coordinators' work, LEAs should increase their capacity to ensure that students enroll in a timely fashion, remain in the school of origin if it is in the best interest of the student, and receive the services to which they are entitled based on needs of students.

This section of the report examines the extent to which the anticipated outcomes of the ECYEH Program occurred for the program year. Included here are reducing or eliminating enrollment or education barriers, remaining in the school of origin, and receiving services aligned with the authorized activities outlined in the McKinney-Vento Act offered through the ECYEH Program, the LEA they attended, the Migrant Education Program, and/or the shelter in which they resided.

Barriers

Barriers are situations that interfere with children/youth's enrollment, attendance, and/or educational success. Barrier information is only collected through ECYEH Program's Student Information and Service Delivery instrument. Of the 22,014 enrolled children and youth, 88 percent (19,361) were included in barrier analysis, of which 14 percent (2,807) were reported as having barriers to enrollment, attendance, and/or academic success.

The table that follows shows the prevalence of barriers as reported by LEAs or ECYEH Program staff. The most common barrier was transportation, followed closely by determining if a student was eligible for ECYEH program services, and then school selection. Though slightly more students were reported as experiencing a barrier in 2014-15, up from 12 percent in 2013-14, the most common barriers and their ranking remained the same.

Transportation and determining if a student was eligible for homeless services have been in the top three reported barriers since the inception of the state evaluation. Transportation issues continue to grow, though not as sharply (up from 1,205 in 2013-14 and 168 students in 2012-13). Transportation as a barrier has increased in every region except for Region 1 and has been especially difficult in Region 4. Steps to address the transportation issue in Region 4 began in the 2013-14 program year and continue.

Ongoing clarification of barrier documentation by coordinators and data collection training for reporting entities has most likely contributed to a better understanding of this reporting element. The percentages of students experiencing barriers have decreased substantially from 35 percent since the 2010-11 analysis when it was revealed that there was a misunderstanding of the 'determining eligibility for homelessness services' barrier.

Most notable is the variation of barriers across the state, with Regions 2, 3, and 4 reporting the highest percentage of barriers, and Regions 1, 8, and 5 reporting the lowest. Such variances warrant further explanation.

Table 1. Barriers to School Enrollment

	State	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8
Determining eligibility for homeless services	1,422	1	827	347	116	72	50	-	9
Transportation	1,704	-	413	95	958	30	41	163	4
Obtaining other medical records	117	-	59	17	15	-	1	25	-
Immunization records	163	-	83	34	14	2	-	30	-
School records	187	-	87	39	21	9	-	31	-
School selection	324	-	108	66	72	10	9	58	1
Other	109	-	50	14	18	8	13	3	3
Any barriers	2,807	1	959	386	1,044	97	101	204	15
Total youth for whom data was available	19,361	3,655	3,760	1,450	3,740	1,788	756	1,171	3,041
Percentage of youth with any barrier	14%	0%	26%	27%	28%	5%	13%	17%	0%

Barriers were examined separately for the pre-kindergarten population (attending both LEA and non-LEA pre-kindergarten programs), regardless of if they were enrolled or served. There were 539 children identified as experiencing homelessness who attended a pre-kindergarten program.³⁰ Of those 539 children, 11 children (two percent) were identified as having one or more barriers. Determining eligibility for services and transportation were the primary barriers indicated. Each year, a smaller percentage of pre-kindergarten children experienced transportation or eligibility for services barriers. In 2013-14, three percent of children experienced these same barriers, slightly less than 2012-13 (four percent).

Student Mobility

One of the rights of eligible students is to remain in their school of origin if it is in the best interest of the student. To examine student mobility, evaluators identified every school in which a student attended during the program year, July 1 through June 30, even if the student was not identified as being homeless by that particular LEA.

Of the 22,014 students identified as being enrolled in school, LEA-school mobility could be determined for 20,949 students (95 percent). The “unable to determine” group (1,065 students) is comprised of two groups of students: those students who were reported through the ECYEH Program, but no school, LEA, or PAsecureID information was provided (274 students), and those students who were identified only by domestic violence shelters (791 students). Students reported in these ways could be identified at the county or regional levels.

³⁰ A considerable portion (87 percent) of the under-five age group (4,211 children) are children birth to age two (1,633 children) and children ages three to five not enrolled in pre-kindergarten (2,039 children). Pennsylvania’s Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program

Table 2 shows LEA-school moves and includes the number of LEA-school combinations a student had and the number and percentage of students associated with each move. Almost two thirds (65 percent) of enrolled students remained in their LEA-school combination during the program year. This is down from almost 75 percent in 2013-14, but similar to 2012-13 when 64 percent of students remained in their LEA-school combination for the program year. Twenty-four percent of students had two LEA-school combinations in 2014-15; again, similar to 2012-13, with 25 percent having such combinations. In 2013-14, 20 percent of students had two LEA-school combinations during the program year.

While many students remained in one LEA-school combination, there are still many students (1,445) who experienced two or more moves during the program year and 1,065 students for which moves cannot be determined.

Table 2. Students Enrolled in Multiple LEA-School Combinations

# LEA-Schools	State		Region 1		Region 2		Region 3		Region 4		Region 5		Region 6		Region 7		Region 8	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
1	14,269	65%	2,722	65%	2,995	66%	1,098	70%	2,376	61%	1,290	60%	561	54%	935	66%	2,292	70%
2	5,235	24%	979	23%	1,043	23%	341	22%	975	25%	464	22%	293	28%	337	24%	803	24%
3	1,219	6%	229	5%	262	6%	79	5%	246	6%	124	6%	82	8%	64	5%	133	4%
4	194	1%	28	1%	40	1%	16	1%	44	1%	12	1%	12	1%	20	1%	22	1%
5	32	0%	6	0%	5	0%	3	0%	8	0%	3	0%	2	0%	1	0%	4	0%
Unable to determine	1,065	5%	233	6%	166	4%	28	2%	220	6%	242	11%	96	9%	52	4%	28	1%
Total	22,014	100%	4,197	100%	4,511	100%	1,565	100%	3,869	100%	2,135	100%	1,046	100%	1,409	100%	3,282	100%

Service Delivery

One of the rights of students experiencing homelessness is the right to support services that promote academic success. As such, the McKinney-Vento Act outlines authorized activities for which funds can be used. This section of the report addresses services provided to eligible children or youth. Services reported in this section may have been provided by the ECYEH Program directly or through use of McKinney-Vento Act funds, by an LEA, by a pre-kindergarten program, by the Migrant Education Program, or by domestic violence shelters. Documentation of these services was reported through the service delivery section of the Student Information and Service Delivery instrument, PIMS Program Fact Template, MIS2000, and the domestic violence shelter spreadsheet.

All information was pulled together for each child/youth and categorized under the McKinney-Vento Act authorized activities categories. Those categories include: tutoring or other instructional support; expedited evaluations; referrals for medical, dental, and other health services; transportation; early childhood programs; assistance with participation in school programs; before-school, after-school, mentoring, and summer programs; obtaining or transferring records necessary for enrollment; coordination between schools and agencies; counseling; addressing needs related to domestic violence; clothing to meet school requirements; school supplies; referrals to other programs and services; emergency assistance related to school attendance; and other services not previously listed. Additionally, any children attending an LEA-operated pre-kindergarten program were considered to have received instructional support and any children attending a non-LEA pre-kindergarten program were considered to have received early childhood support. Any children receiving services from the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning Early Intervention Program were considered to have received instructional support. Likewise, any student attending a Title I schoolwide school was treated as having received instructional support.

Services in each category were documented by the funding source for the service: McKinney-Vento Act, Title I, or other funds. Other funds included services or programming offered by the LEA, pre-kindergarten program, Migrant Education Program, domestic violence shelter, collaborating agency/organization, or donations.

Tables 3 and 4 on pages 49-50 show the services received and the funding source with which the service was affiliated. All services documented here were reported at the child/youth level. Although service delivery documentation has improved, the table should be read with caution as there is no way to assure that individuals completing the spreadsheets report all services provided or selected the correct funding option. However, the table demonstrates what types of services identified children/youth received.

Overall, 82 percent of the 26,273 children and youth are documented as receiving service at the individual level. Regions 1 and 5 show the largest percentages of children and youth receiving services, 91 percent and 93 percent, respectively. Additionally, Region 4 shows 84 percent, Region 2 shows 82 percent, Region 7 shows 74 percent, regions 3 and 8 show 72 percent, and Region 6 shows 68 percent of students receiving services. The overall percentage of children/youth receiving services has remained relatively stable in the low 80 percent range since 2012-13.

Tutoring or other instructional support was by far the most prevalent service children/youth received when all three funding categories were combined. This is influenced by the number of students attending schoolwide Title I schools. As noted previously, all students attending schoolwide Title I schools receive academic supports built into the school curriculum. Coordination between schools and agencies, transportation, school supplies, and clothing to meet a school requirement were the next largest cluster of services children/youth received when all funding categories are examined. When examining individual funding sources, coordination between schools and agencies was the most frequent service provided with McKinney-Vento Act (MV) funds. Given the role of the coordinators, it is not surprising that coordination between schools and agencies is the most frequent service. Tutoring and instructional support are the most frequent services provided with both Title I (TI) funds and other (O) district funds. Again, this is not surprising given that other sources of data that captured tutoring and instructional support activities were included in the analysis.

Table 3. Service Delivery by Funding Type at the State Level

	TI	MV	O
Tutoring or other instructional support	12,963	1,019	4,190
Coordination between schools and agencies	1,244	3,740	2,361
Clothing to meet a school requirement	3,099	1,863	2,490
School supplies	1,611	2,169	3,661
Transportation	537	914	5,989
Referral to other programs and services	1,239	1,575	2,969
Counseling	1,226	1,035	2,898
Referrals for medical, dental, and other health services	1,159	1,244	2,440
Other Services	199	683	6,288
Addressing needs related to domestic violence	346	404	2,318
Before-, after-school, mentoring, summer programs	589	530	2,082
Obtaining or transferring records necessary for enrollment	1,093	1,063	1,285
Early childhood programs	101	135	976
Assistance with participation in school programs	517	259	739
Emergency assistance related to school attendance	173	61	615
Expedited evaluations	358	28	553
Unique count of children/youth receiving Title I services		13,256	
Unique count of children/youth receiving MV services		5,617	
Unique count of children/youth receiving Other services		15,849	
Total children/youth receiving services		21,565	
Total children/youth		26,273	
Proportion of children/youth with any services		82%	

Table 4. Service Delivery by Funding Type at the Regional Level

	Region 1			Region 2			Region 3			Region 4			Region 5			Region 6			Region 7			Region 8		
	TI	MV	O	TI	MV	O	TI	MV	O	TI	MV	O	TI	MV	O	TI	MV	O	TI	MV	O	TI	MV	O
Tutoring or other instructional support	3,672	8	722	2,643	770	1,906	660	1	244	2,388	17	281	950	9	227	328	4	62	675	-	254	1,647	210	494
Coordination between schools and agencies	4	68	99	820	880	1,169	3	4	40	95	27	153	7	1,817	385	20	149	170	97	2	43	198	793	302
Clothing to meet a school requirement	1,589	192	170	798	864	1,258	11	8	42	6	258	78	79	257	501	39	46	113	88	16	70	489	222	258
School supplies	315	68	103	800	864	1,341	16	8	131	98	397	522	92	376	799	8	194	96	92	23	70	190	239	599
Transportation	2	32	1,455	99	76	2,165	66	31	178	73	92	603	35	116	318	9	2	301	-	-	317	253	565	652
Referral to other programs and services	4	22	146	812	794	1,270	4	5	92	104	2	208	15	176	557	9	31	184	90	-	88	201	545	424
Counseling	4	27	81	795	773	1,362	-	4	32	100	1	311	23	11	590	20	30	137	90	-	168	194	189	217
Referrals for medical, dental, and other health services	4	35	172	794	787	360	1	3	63	52	5	575	30	66	632	5	5	84	84	-	120	189	343	434
Other Services	-	576	2,008	1	27	1,214	45	-	512	88	3	367	45	11	637	8	48	343	12	-	363	-	18	844
Addressing needs related to domestic violence	2	83	493	57	75	265	-	5	36	3	-	221	1	12	695	9	26	211	85	-	134	189	203	263
Before-, after-school, mentoring, summer programs	156	39	73	88	4	860	7	-	121	19	268	305	28	4	116	12	9	41	87	-	255	192	206	311
Obtaining or transferring records necessary for enrollment	4	11	13	797	745	905	-	2	17	6	5	43	-	1	34	8	11	48	88	-	11	190	288	214
Early childhood programs	-	-	228	1	13	51	4	2	22	3	108	133	-	-	156	8	10	79	84	-	211	1	2	96
Assistance with participation in school programs	2	5	9	84	4	245	14	9	42	113	2	129	11	4	59	18	12	33	86	-	17	189	223	205
Emergency assistance related to school attendance	-	5	18	59	3	112	1	1	13	3	2	12	14	2	82	8	11	24	85	-	7	3	37	347
Expedited evaluations	-	1	3	59	2	463	-	9	18	35	4	14	173	-	18	2	3	21	87	-	4	2	9	12
Unique count of children/youth receiving Title I services		3,675			2,656			724			2,457			1,011			378			686			1,669	
Unique count of children/youth receiving MV services		785			1,072			52			731			1,825			288			29			835	
Unique count of children/youth receiving Other services		4,062			3,805			802			1,957			1,529			738			944			2,012	
Total children/youth receiving services		5,229			4,306			1,219			3,639			2,440			851			1,314			2,567	
Total children/youth		5,764			5,267			1,703			4,333			2,615			1,249			1,775			3,567	
Proportion of children/youth with any services		91%			82%			72%			84%			93%			68%			74%			72%	

Some services provided to children/youth by the ECYEH Program are not captured at the individual student level because the Technical Assistance and Bulk Supply instrument was designed to track services provided at the group level. Services documented in the Technical Assistance and Bulk Supply instrument include activities where the ECYEH Program provided funds, supplies, and clothing to an entity (school, shelter, or organization) for children or youth experiencing homelessness, but the individual recipient of the service was not known to the ECYEH Program coordinator. The distribution of bus passes, clothing, school supplies (backpacks, college preparation materials, curriculum materials, hygiene items), fees for school activities, or recreational, social, or holiday activities and events were the types of services that were typically provided in bulk, where the recipient was unknown. Details regarding technical assistance and bulk supplies provided by the ECYEH Program are detailed earlier in the report (page 16).

Title I Services

All students identified as experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Title I services, regardless of whether his or her school is a Title I school. LEAs must reserve (or set aside) the funds necessary to serve children and youth experiencing homelessness who do not attend Title I schools, including educational-related support services. As noted earlier in this report, 67 percent of enrolled students (14,837 of 22,014 students) attended schoolwide (57 percent) or targeted assistance schools (10 percent).

As indicated in the service delivery table, 60 percent of enrolled students (13,256 of 22,014 students) were documented as receiving Title I services and those services were most often instructional support services.

Evaluators further examined students who did not have any Title I services documented in the previous service delivery section, which included 6,840 such students (or 31 percent) of the enrolled students. Of the students not receiving any Title I services, 70 percent (4,779 of 6,840 students) attended a school that was not designated as schoolwide or targeted assistance school and 24 percent of students (1,619) attended targeted assistance schools. For the remaining six percent of enrolled students (442 students) who were not documented as receiving Title I services, no school was identified, therefore the Title I status of the schools was unknown.

LEAs are expected to set aside funds for these students who attend schools that do not receiving any Title I funds. However, if all schools in an LEA receive Title I funds then LEAs are not required to set aside funds. To make matters more complicated, while a student may be eligible for Title I services by virtue of their homeless status, they are eligible for Title I academic services based on academic need, which means that just because a student is eligible they may not have corresponding academic or other needs requiring intervention.

It is not possible to ascertain to what degree students who are not reported as receiving Title I funds are in need of such services.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Academic outcomes and examples of positive student outcomes scenarios are highlighted in this section. Examples of positive outcomes highlight situations where positive outcomes for students occurred as a result of the ECYEH Program.

School attendance, graduation, and drop-out results at the state level are not available at the time of this report. These results are provided to the PDE state homeless staff upon request when the data is finalized, which typically occurs in the spring following the program year. Academic outcomes include state assessment results for students experiencing homelessness.

State academic assessment data for 2014-15 includes the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), the Pennsylvania Alternative State Assessment (PASA), and the Keystone Exams. The PSSA is given in reading, mathematics, science, and writing. The reading and math assessments are given in grades three through eight; the science assessment is given in grades four and eight; and the writing assessment is administered in grades five and eight. The PASA assesses students with the most severe cognitive disabilities in four grade level spans (third/fourth, fifth/sixth, seventh/eighth, and 11th). The 2014-15 Keystone Exams were offered in literature, Algebra I, and biology for grades seven through 11 in the fall, spring, and summer. Students can re-take the Keystone Exams until they demonstrate proficiency. Once they score at the proficient level, their scores are banked and used for 11th grade state and federal assessment and accountability reporting. All students enrolled in public school in these grades should participate in the appropriate state assessments unless they meet one of the exemption criteria. For the purposes of this program, evaluators analyzed reading, math, and science PSSA data; reading, math, and science PASA data; and literature, Algebra I, and biology Keystone Exam data.

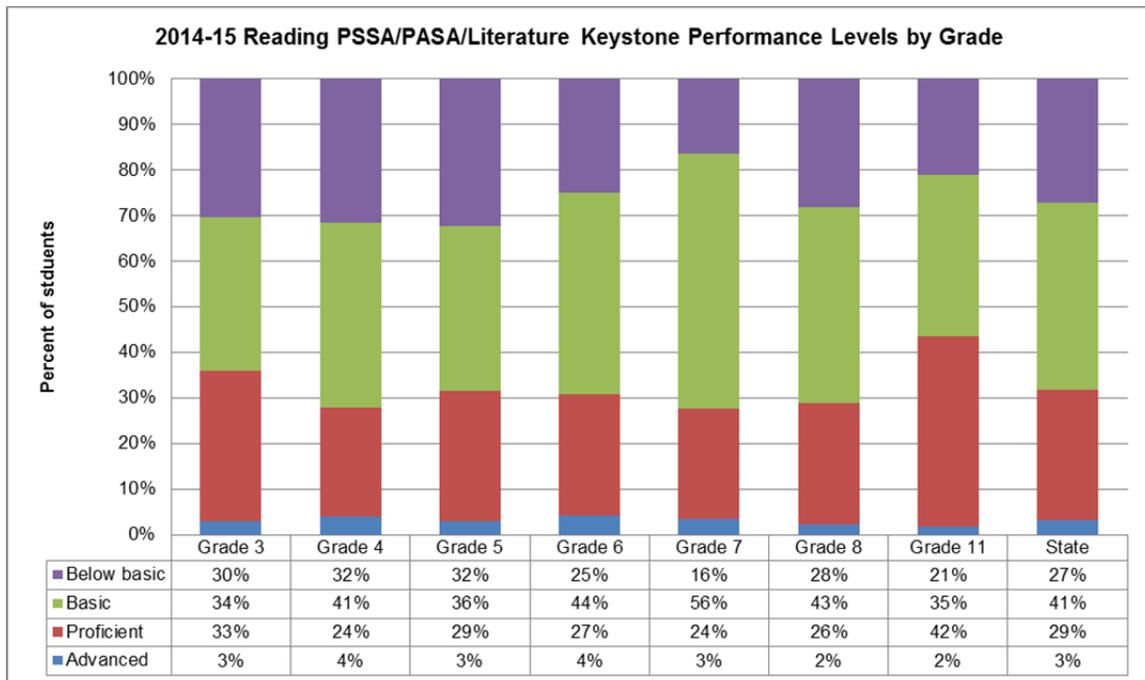
It is important to note that the state assessments underwent substantial changes for the 2014-15 academic year both in item construction and scoring rubric. These changes were designed to make Pennsylvania state assessments more in line with other states. As such, 2014-15 results are not being compared to prior years and prior year results are not addressed.

Reading PSSA/PASA and Literature Keystone Exam

During the 2014-15 school year, there were 11,247 students experiencing homelessness and enrolled in grade levels eligible to take the reading PSSA (grades 3-8), the literature Keystone Exam (grade 11), or the reading PASA (grades 3, 8, or 11), of which PSSA, PASA, or Keystone Exam results were available for 8,973 students (80

percent). The graph that follows shows student results in reading/literature by the performance level categories: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced, overall and by grade level.

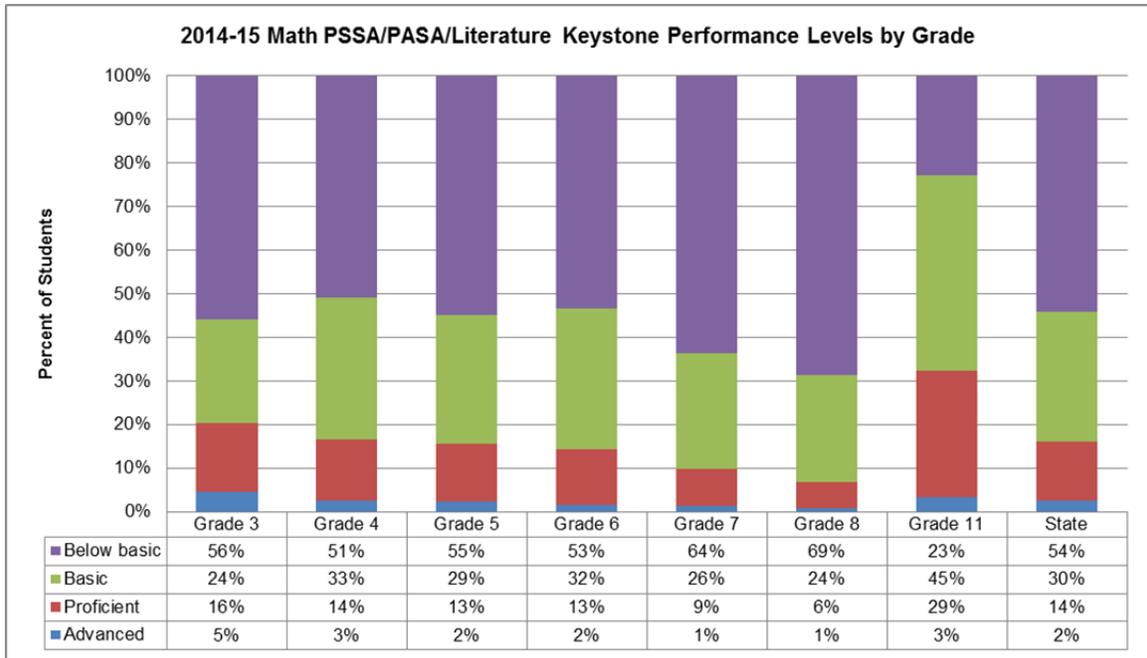
Overall, 32 percent of students scored in the proficient or advanced levels. This percentage varied by grade with 11th grade having the greatest percentage of students (44 percent) scoring proficient or advanced, and seventh grade having the smallest percentage of students (27 percent) scoring proficient or advanced.



Math PSSA/PASA and Algebra I Keystone Exam

During the 2014-15 school year, there were 11,247 students experiencing homelessness and enrolled in grade levels eligible to take the math PSSA (grades 3-8), the Algebra I Keystone Exam (grade 11), or the math PASA (grades 3, 8, or 11), of which PSSA, PASA, or Keystone Exam results were available for 9,147 students (81 percent). The graph that follows shows student results in math/Algebra I by the performance level categories: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced, overall and by grade level.

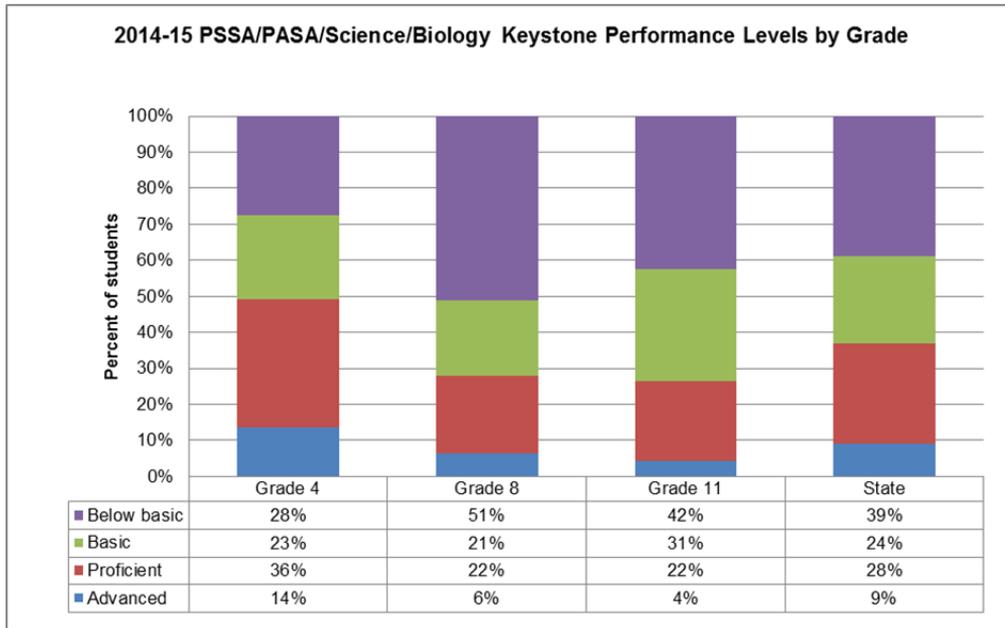
Overall, 16 percent scored in the proficient or advanced levels. This percentage varied by grade with 11th grade having the greatest percentage of students (32 percent) scoring in the proficient or advanced levels and 8th grade having the smallest percentage of students (seven percent) scoring proficient or advanced.



Science PSSA/PASA and Biology Keystone Exam

During the 2014-15 school year, there were 4,505 students experiencing homelessness who were enrolled in a grade level eligible to take the science PSSA (grades 4 and 8), the science PASA (grades 4, 8, and 11), or the biology Keystone Exam (11th grade), of which results were available for 3,486 students (77 percent). The graph that follows shows student results in science/biology by the performance level categories: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced, overall and by grade level.

Overall, 37 percent of students scored in the proficient or advanced levels. Fourth grade had the largest percentage of students who scored proficient or advanced (50 percent) and 11th grade had the smallest percentage of students who scored proficient or advanced (26 percent).



As mentioned previously, historical discussion of state assessments is not possible due to the substantial changes that occurred with the 2014-15 assessments. This is also in line with Pennsylvania being granted an exemption by the United States Department of Education for using state assessments for accountability purposes in 2014-15.

Evaluators examined students experiencing homelessness in comparison to state results of all students and also in comparison to Historically Underperforming students. The Historically Underperforming group consists of students who are: economically disadvantaged, English language learners, or have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

State performance results for all students showed:

- 60 percent of students scored proficient or advanced in reading (grades three through eight);
- 73 percent scored proficient or advanced in literature (grade 11);
- 40 percent of all students scored proficient or advanced in math (grades three through eight);
- 64 percent scored proficient or advanced in Algebra I (grade 11);
- 68 percent of students scored proficient or advanced in science (grades three through eight); and
- 59 percent scored proficient or advanced in biology (grade 11).

State performance results for Historically Underperforming students showed:

- 41 percent of students scored proficient or advanced in reading (grades three through eight);
- 54 percent scored proficient or advanced in literature (grade 11);
- 22 percent of all students scored proficient or advanced in math (grades three through eight);
- 44 percent scored proficient or advanced in Algebra I (grade 11);
- 51 percent of students scored proficient or advanced in science (grades three through eight); and
- 37 percent scored proficient or advanced in biology (grade 11).

Nationally, the most recent assessment data for students experiencing homelessness is from 2013-14. The national percentages show 43 percent of students scored proficient or above in reading in grades three through eight and 46 percent scored proficient or above in grade 11. In mathematics, 38 percent scored proficient or above in grades three through eight and 40 percent scored as such in grade 11.³¹

Students experiencing homelessness score lower than Pennsylvania's Historically Underperforming subgroup and homeless students' national results in reading and mathematics, especially in mathematics.

Examples of Positive ECYEH Program Impact

Behind the numbers and all of the efforts of the ECYEH Program across the state there are children, youth, and families struggling to survive in the face of homelessness and the situations that precipitated their homelessness. During the bi-monthly state coordinator meetings, coordinators often share exceptional stories about children/youth or families with which they were involved or whom they assisted through a crisis. Evaluators asked coordinators to share a story resulting in a positive outcome in their region. What follows are examples from each region.

Region 1: As a talented artist, stylist, and pianist, one of our recent high school and T.E.E.N. program graduates grew up in a happy home until her mother had a stroke (she now resides in a nursing facility) and her stepfather had to fight his own illness. Lacking ideal conditions at home, this individual was taken in by her older sister. She felt her academic experience was going well until she reached her junior year. Without a natural sense of direction, the student tried to find the right pathways in all the wrong directions. This student believed she could not confide in her family so she looked for that comfort in relationships. Then, just before her senior year, she learned she was pregnant. The situation put her between a rock and a hard place, but she knew she had support within our T.E.E.N. program and the ECYEH Region 1 family. Regional ECYEH staff advocated for her to be able to obtain her schoolwork

³¹ <http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/data-comp-1112-1314.pdf>

while out on maternity leave, cover her senior dues, and contacted the principal to ensure that she would walk down the aisle at graduation. It was a great, but tough, senior year, especially when she was not with, nor supported by, her child's father. In spite of the circumstances, by focusing and working hard, she was able to graduate. Being handed her diploma with her child in hand, she said, "I cried like a baby, too - knowing that I accomplished that huge step on my [way to] becoming successful and being a strong mother." Now 18 years old, she is happy with her newly-found life and family. She has also found the time to come back to visit the office staff and the T.E.E.N. program on occasion to share her experience. Currently attending a postsecondary technical school, the student works part-time in retail sales, and has said, "Now, I'm looking forward to getting my very own first apartment or house."

Region 2: The regional office connected with local liaisons in Schuylkill County to find an unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness who had dropped out of school and provided her with the resources and information to return to school. The student was not aware that she could continue in her school of origin under the McKinney-Vento Act. The local district liaison coordinated with the regional office and conducted several home visits to locate and provide information to this student. The student has re-registered in her school of origin and it set to graduate in June.

Region 3: A pair of siblings - a nine year old boy and six year old girl - dealt with a myriad of obstacles in terms of schooling, housing, and general stability. In the midst of economic hardships, the children's parents were chronically underemployed and constantly seeking work, leading the family to move constantly and seek shelter wherever they could, doubling up with friends and family and staying in hotels and homeless shelters. Consequently, they homeschooled their children, and the children had never attended a traditional school milieu.

When ECYEH staff met the family, they were sleeping on the floor of a church basement every night. Enrolling the children in school, where they could achieve a measure of stability, consistency, and structure, was paramount to their well-being. At the beginning of the process, the children found the prospect of school to be extremely daunting and were, understandably, quite scared to attend. However, with the support system of both ECYEH and their parents, the children were able to overcome these fears and find success. ECYEH staff handled the registration process, checked in with the children several times a week to assist with any questions or concerns, provided support as a liaison between the school district and the children's parents, and connected them with key school personnel, including the education liaison of the district.

As a result of these interventions, the children were able to thrive in their new school setting. By the end of the school year, despite how markedly behind they initially were, both children were able to catch up to their appropriate grade level; they even achieved perfect attendance. This educational achievement helped bolster their own sense of self-worth and accomplishment, and stands as a testament to the children's hard work

and dedication. Though the children still face challenges, the structure and stability of regular, consistent education will be a cornerstone of their future success.

Region 4: Over the past three years, Region 4 developed a wonderful collaboration with Carlow University and has a great relationship with Professor Rae Ann Hirsh in the Early Childhood department. Twice a year, Region 4 staff work closely with her classes to inform future educators of the issue of childhood homelessness. For each semester the students' final project is to create a fun event for families experiencing homelessness, to which, the regional staff invite housing providers to the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for an evening of fun and activities created and facilitated by the Carlow students. The winter carnival was a great success, having 34 children from five housing providers participate. Children enjoyed games, activities, a photo booth, face painting, balloon animals, snacks, and prizes. Parents also had the opportunity to visit the 13 resource tables from local early childhood and health care agencies. The spring play fair was also successful with 24 children from four housing providers participating in developmentally appropriate play activities that parents could learn and replicate with their children at home. ECYEH Program staff received excellent feedback from shelter provider staff and parents about how much fun the children had and how they likely would not otherwise have had the opportunity for an experience like this. Region 4 plans to continue collaborating with Carlow University to host more events like these.

Region 5: A district in the region had five seniors who experienced homelessness during the academic year; all five of the seniors graduated. Four of the five seniors are enrolled to continue their education in either a community college or four year college, and one senior secured a job after graduation from the Career Center and is continuing his education to pick up additional vocational certificates while working.

One of the seniors had been kicked out of her parent's home in a neighboring district and moved in with aunt and uncle in another district. The student chose to attend a school in the district. The student was kicked out of her aunt and uncle's home when she became pregnant and moved in with her boyfriend and his family in yet another neighboring district. The regional coordinator assisted in coordinating transportation between neighboring districts and ensuring a linkage with the Teen Parenting Program through the intermediate unit. Despite these challenges, the student successfully graduated and enrolled in a community college.

Another student voluntarily left her home after disclosing concerns regarding her family and moved in with her grandparents across the state line. The regional coordinator assisted in coordinating transportation reimbursement through PDE and the respective district in the receiving state.

Another student was kicked out her home by her mother. The regional coordinator assisted with coordinating transportation. The student graduated and is enrolled in a community college.

Another student was living with his or her grandma due to neglect by his or her parents and chose to file charges against both parents. The regional coordinator assisted with tuition and books for dual enrollment classes at a local college. The student graduated with honors and received an early admission to four year college.

The remaining student was kicked out of his home by his parents and moved in with his girlfriend and her family. He and his girlfriend subsequently were kicked out of her mother's home and both ended up living with his father in a neighboring district. Through this entire ordeal, they continued to attend school and the district assisted with transportation costs. The regional coordinator helped the neighboring school district to clarify responsibility and coding. The student graduated, is working and also attends a trade school to gain additional certificates.

Region 6: A student moved from one district to another to stay with his father. The father kicked the son out. He was staying with friends and an aunt. The regional coordinator assisted in providing supplies, filling out applications and staying in contact with him about school and issues that may arise. He was becoming depressed because of his living situation. He spoke about going back to his original district but really did not want to due to drugs and the environment, but if he had to, he would. The regional coordinator was able to assist the student in securing housing and related fees from donations and human service agencies in the area. The school district staff assisted with other needs to help make the apartment a home. He was able to remain in the district. He played basketball and received a scholarship to play basketball for a local college to continue his education. He still resides in the apartment, has a job, and is going to college on a basketball scholarship.

Region 7: At the beginning of this past school year, a woman with four children, ranging from 3rd to 11th grade, suddenly lost her home when the city condemned it. She was staying in various hotels throughout the summer and did not have money to buy her children clothes and/or school supplies. Her husband had lost his job a few months before and they were barely putting food on the table. The 11th grade daughter was trying to prepare for SATs and they did not have the money for the testing fees. The family was not aware of the McKinney-Vento law until a local family informed them about it. They did not tell the school about their situation, but learned how to contact the regional ECYEH Program. The mother was struggling to transport the students, because they all attended different schools and she had to get to work in the morning.

The first of day school ECYEH staff met with the family outside the youngest child's elementary school and provided some backpacks and school supplies, along with some gift cards. ECYEH staff contacted the district liaison who set up transportation and took care of the SAT fees for the oldest child. The staff held a drive and the family received more clothes along with some gift certificates for a local food market. The mother was not sure if she qualified for any assistance, so ECYEH Program staff contacted a local agency that not only set them up for some assistance, but also enrolled them in a program to help them find employment, medical care, and housing.

A couple of months later, the mother shared with the ECYEH staff that not only were they able to find housing, the husband got a decent job and the housing they found was in a great area with one of the better elementary/junior high schools. Three of the children were now being transported to one school and the eldest daughter was in high school, preparing for her SATs. The daughter did very well on her SATs, from what the mother told me, and was now looking at some of the local colleges. They did not know the McKinney-Vento law existed, but were very grateful to all of the people who were able to help them.

Region 8: An 18-year-old student stopped attending school because he was living on the streets and couch hopping between friends' houses. He left home due to a volatile situation with his father. He believed that he was unable to remain in school while he was homeless in and out of the county where he had been attending school. The school district did not know how to follow up and stay in contact with the student. The regional coordinator had been engaged in street outreach efforts to assist unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness and identified the youth. The coordinator explained the educational rights of the student and the student was put in touch with the homeless liaison where he had been attending school. The student immediately received transportation, returned to his school of origin, and expressed a strong desire to graduate on time, but did not know how he could do that while living on the streets and couch hopping.

The two Region 8 coordinators worked together to connect the youth with a funding source available through a local youth assistance program to provide a one-room apartment for the student that would give him a place to live until he was able to receive his diploma. The student worked hard to get back on track and five months later the student received his diploma and enrolled, with the help of the coordinators, into JobCorps where he has been thriving. He should graduate from JobCorps with a strong knowledge of a trade, which will make employment more attainable. Throughout the entire process, the coordinators remained connected with the student to ensure that he had the necessary school supplies (provided by McKinney-Vento Act funding) and basic necessities such as food and hygienic items (provided by the local youth assistance program).

Evaluator Reflections, Implications, and Recommendations for Improvement

The Pennsylvania regional model to implement the McKinney-Vento Act provides an opportunity for every child or youth identified as experiencing homelessness to access needed resources or services, especially related to school enrollment, including pre-kindergarten, and academic success.

Regional coordinators and their staff train, troubleshoot, intervene, and collaborate on behalf of children and youth and their families, the schools they attend, or the shelters in which they reside. The nature of their work and the differences among the regions provide challenges unique to each region. There are differences in geographic territory and urban-centric locale of communities and schools in their region. There are differences in the numbers of LEAs (including the growing number of charter and cyber charter schools), shelters, pre-kindergarten programs, and kinds of organizations that provide services to children, youth, or families experiencing homelessness. Additionally, there are differences in the numbers and roles of ECYEH Program staff within the regions. These challenges and differences contribute to the recommendations that follow.

Each year reporting is more complete and accurate. As such there has been an increase in the number of children and youth reported. As reporting has become more complete and accurate there are several themes that are emerging.

- The number of children/youth experiencing homelessness for more than one year is increasing slightly each year (page 28).
- Children/youth experiencing homelessness are predominately economically disadvantaged (pages 35-36).
- A majority of students experiencing homelessness attend LEAs that have high levels of poverty (page 40).
- The majority of students remain in their LEA-school of origin (pages 45-47).
- Regions 5 and 6 have areas of poverty that have limited or no Title I resources based on the Title I status of the regions' schools (pages 40-42).
- Transportation remains the most common barrier statewide (page 44).
- Despite some consistency for a large portion of children/youth, there are students who experience extreme mobility, are homeless for more than two years, or experience barriers to enrollment (pages 45-47).

The increase of reporting by non-LEA entities, especially for the pre-kindergarten age/grade categories, is the most notable development in 2014-15 and has contributed to the overall increase of identified children and youth. This increase is also related to increases in ECYEH staff outreach, and new information collection methods are demonstrating the how ECYEH staff engage regional resources to identify and support youth and families experiencing homelessness.

Furthermore, examples of innovative practices, collaborations, and stories of positive student outcomes highlight the creative and compassionate ways in which the ECYEH Program is influencing the lives of children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness.

At this time, evaluators offer the following specific recommendations to optimize program implementation at the regional and local levels.

- Transportation for students experiencing homelessness remains a challenge among the regions. Broader statewide perspective and state office support to identify solutions may be helpful to LEAs struggling with transportation issues.
- Continue to reinforce Title I services to students with academic need and attending non-Title I schools. Also, further examination between high poverty LEAs and limited Title I funding is needed, especially in rural areas. This may be a factor in how McKinney-Vento Act funds are used in those LEAs.
- Students experiencing homelessness are underperforming on state assessments compared to the Historically Underperforming subgroup especially in mathematics, though prior years' analysis revealed that their performance was more similar to their classmates than to statewide performance results. They are also under-performing compared to national performance of students experiencing homelessness. Continue to collaborate and explore any options that offer additional instructional support to students experiencing homelessness – such as tutoring in shelters by college students, priority for service in LEA or community after-school or summer programs, or inclusion in other state – or federally-funded programs such as Migrant Education, English as a second language, or 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

The evaluation of the ECYEH Program is intended to provide a statewide and regional picture of program implementation, outcomes, and impacts. These findings, along with detailed information at the county, LEA, or school level, when appropriate, is provided to the regional coordinators and the program staff at PDE to assist with internal program implementation, improvement, and decision making. Additionally, regions received individual child/youth information from the data collection process. Results are based upon the data available.