

Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) 2016-17 State Evaluation Report

February 2018



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

333 Market Street

Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

www.education.pa.gov



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Wolf, Governor

Department of Education

Pedro A. Rivera, Secretary

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

Matthew S. Stem, Deputy Secretary

Bureau of School Support

Sherri Smith, Ph.D., Director

Division of Student Services

Carmen M. Medina, Chief

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, [sex] gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, gender identity or expression, AIDS or HIV status, or any other legally protected category. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with State Law including the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and with Federal law, including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Pennsylvania Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies:

For Inquiries Concerning Nondiscrimination in Employment:

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Equal Employment Opportunity Representative
Bureau of Human Resources
333 Market Street, 10th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Voice Telephone: (717) 787-4417, Fax: (717) 783-9348

For Inquiries Concerning Nondiscrimination in All Other Pennsylvania Department of Education Programs and Activities:

Pennsylvania Department of Education
School Services Unit Director
333 Market Street, 5th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Voice Telephone: (717) 783-3750, Fax: (717) 783-6802

If you have any questions about this publication or for additional copies, contact:

Pennsylvania Department of Education	Voice: (717) 787-8913
Bureau of Teaching and Learning	Fax: (717) 783-6617
333 Market Street, 5th Floor	TTY: (717) 783-8445
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333	www.education.pa.gov

All Media Requests/Inquiries: Contact the Office of Press & Communications at (717) 783-9802.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	6
McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act Overview	6
Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program	7
Evaluation Design and Activities.....	9
How To Use This Report.....	12
Findings	14
Program Implementation	14
Program Outcomes	25
Program Impact	36
Student Outcomes	44
Evaluator Reflections, Implications, and Recommendations for Improvement	50

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 educational 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 connect children, youth, families, and LEAs to additional services and resources for individuals experiencing homelessness. The Center for Schools and Communities (CSC), 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 state evaluation from several sources to provide a picture of homelessness as it relates to the McKinney-Vento Act in Pennsylvania. 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;
- Examine the extent to which students identified as experiencing homeless attend and succeed in school;
- 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. A new web-based system was implemented in 2016-17 to capture this information.

There were 638 unique entities that participated in some type of ECYEH-provided training, professional development, or workshops in 2016-17. Approximately 8,158 individuals participated, though this may include duplicates, as some individuals may have attended one or more events; in some cases a count of participants was not provided for an event. A unique participant count is not available. LEAs and liaisons were the most represented group and participant type, though this varied by region. This is not surprising since LEAs are the largest entity group and are the first priority of ECYEH Program, with LEA liaisons being directly involved with this population.

Whereas professional development or training is ECYEH-offered to various entities, technical assistance is most often request-based help initiated by the LEAs, shelters, pre-kindergarten programs, agencies and organizations, or other groups. Individual entities may be counted in more than one of the technical assistance categories. Of the 757 entities receiving technical assistance:

- 73 percent were LEAs; 13 percent were shelters; 13 percent were groups, agencies, or organizations; and 1 percent was pre-kindergarten programs; and
- 81 percent received child-specific technical assistance; 90 percent received non-child specific technical assistance; 87 percent received McKinney-Vento related materials; and 69 percent received bulk supplies, such as bus passes, backpacks, school supplies, clothing, or hygiene items.

Of the 614 entities receiving child-specific technical assistance, 358 were classified as 'often,' 224 were classified as 'occasionally,' and 32 were classified as receiving child-specific technical assistance 'once.'

Of the 680 entities receiving child non-specific technical assistance, 219 were classified as 'often,' 385 were classified as 'occasionally,' and 76 were classified as receiving child non-specific technical assistance 'once.'

In addition to conducting trainings, presentations, and workshops or providing technical assistance, ECYEH staff members spend a portion of their time collaborating with other agencies, organizations, or groups as part of committees, boards, meetings, or consortia. For 2016-17, ECYEH staff reported participating in 199 unique events under the umbrella of meetings, boards, consortia, or committees. These events occurred annually (15 events), monthly (66 events), one time (four events), quarterly (95 events), or other (19 events). Other events were most often bi-monthly, seasonal, or on an as-needed basis. ECYEH staff members' role was most typically regular attendee (140 events), collaborating partner (14 events), one time attendee (nine events), or leader

facilitator (36 events). 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.

PROGRAM OUTCOME FINDINGS

As a result of the coordinators' outreach and ongoing collaboration work, 30,264 children or youth were identified as experiencing homelessness in 2016-17. Students experiencing homelessness comprised about 1 percent of the total Pennsylvania population enrolled in public school during the 2016-17 school year.

Of the 25,113 children/youth in pre-kindergarten through grade 12, 63 percent were doubled-up; 28 percent were in shelters, transitional housing, or awaiting foster care placement; 8 percent were in hotels or motels; and 1 percent were unsheltered. Nighttime status was not required for the birth to age 2 population or for children ages three to five and not enrolled in an LEA-operated pre-kindergarten program.

Key findings about the 30,264 children/youth identified as experiencing homelessness include:

- 14 percent were identified as unaccompanied youth;²
- 65 percent were classified as economically disadvantaged, though it is likely that many of those with unknown³ status (26 percent) may have been economically disadvantaged as well;
- 29 percent were White/Caucasian (not Hispanic), 33 percent were Black/African American (not Hispanic), 17 percent were Hispanic (any race), and 7 percent were classified as American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Multi-Racial, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Race could not be determined for 14 percent;
- 7 percent were identified as English language learners;
- 3 percent were migrant; and
- 55 percent did not have a special education disability. Of those students with a disability, 26 percent were categorized as having a "specific learning disability."

Of the 25,113 students for which LEA data were available:

- 70 percent attended LEAs categorized as city or suburban;
- 75 percent of students attended LEAs that had 40 percent or more of the student population classified as coming from low-income families; and
- 77 percent were documented as receiving Title I services, with a majority of those services being instructional support services.

² An unaccompanied youth is any person age 21 or younger who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

³ Children/youth with 'unknown' status were children in the birth to age 2 category, ages 3-5 and not enrolled in pre-kindergarten, residing in shelters, or migrant children.

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, 8 percent of enrolled students were reported as having one or more barriers to enrollment, attendance, and/or academic success. The most common barrier was determining if a student was eligible for homeless services followed by transportation. 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 25,113 students identified as being enrolled in school, LEA/school mobility could be determined for 93 percent, of which 70 percent remained in their LEA/school combination during the program year and 23 percent had two LEA/school combinations.

Students experiencing homelessness have the right to support services that promote academic success. Overall, 90 percent of the 30,264 children and youth were 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 2016-17 includes the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), and the Keystone Exams. State assessment data were available for approximately 75 percent of students experiencing homelessness in grades where the assessments are given. Overall, 34 percent scored in the proficient or advanced levels in reading/literature, 18 percent scored proficient or advanced in math/Algebra I, and 34 percent of students scored proficient or advanced in science/biology.

REFLECTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Reporting accuracy increases each year, and reporting by new entities (such as Homeless Management Information System [HMIS] and pre-kindergarten programs) have contributed to an increase in the number of children and youth reported, despite some populations no longer being eligible for McKinney-Vento Act-supported programs. As reporting has become more complete and accurate, several themes have emerged.

- Most students (approximately two thirds for the past three years) remain in their LEA/school of origin.

- Most children/youth (90 percent for 2016-17) receive individual support and services.
- Transportation remains one of the top two most common barriers statewide.
- Children/youth experiencing homelessness are predominately economically disadvantaged and attend LEAs that have high levels of poverty.
- Despite some consistency for a large portion of children/youth, there are students who experience extreme mobility or experience barriers to enrollment.

Considering these themes, evaluators recommend that: 1) state and regional ECYEH staff continue to explore creative transportation options to support LEAs with this barrier; 2) regional staff continue to work with local Continuum of Care contemporaries; 3) regional staff continue to explore options for instructional support to students; 4) regional staff consider professional development or technical assistance to LEAs related to examining students' school attendance, participation in academic support activities, and assessment data; and 5) regional staff continue to improve documentation of ECYEH-offered professional development, technical assistance, and engagement activities conducted by, or with, other entities that work or support homelessness to accurately represent the work that is occurring on behalf of the ECYEH Program.

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. 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 educational agencies (LEAs) to appoint a local liaison to ensure the law is implemented effectively at the local level. The McKinney-Vento Act was again amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in December 2015, with changes beginning to take effect in October 2016. This report covers programming between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Therefore, it reflects the legal requirements outlined in the latest revision that began in 2016.

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; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;⁴

(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));

⁴ Per Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, "awaiting foster care placement" was removed from the definition of homeless on December 10, 2016. The only exception to this removal is that "covered states" have until December 10, 2017 to remove "awaiting foster care placement" from their definition of homeless.

- (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Children/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.

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. As such, PDE created a state plan that outlines Pennsylvania’s implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act and a Basic Education Circular to offer guidance to LEAs regarding implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act. Information regarding homelessness and the ECYEH Program can be found on PDE’s website at www.education.pa.gov/homeless. Updates, as they occur to align with ESSA, are posted there as well.

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.

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 along with PDE, conducts 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:

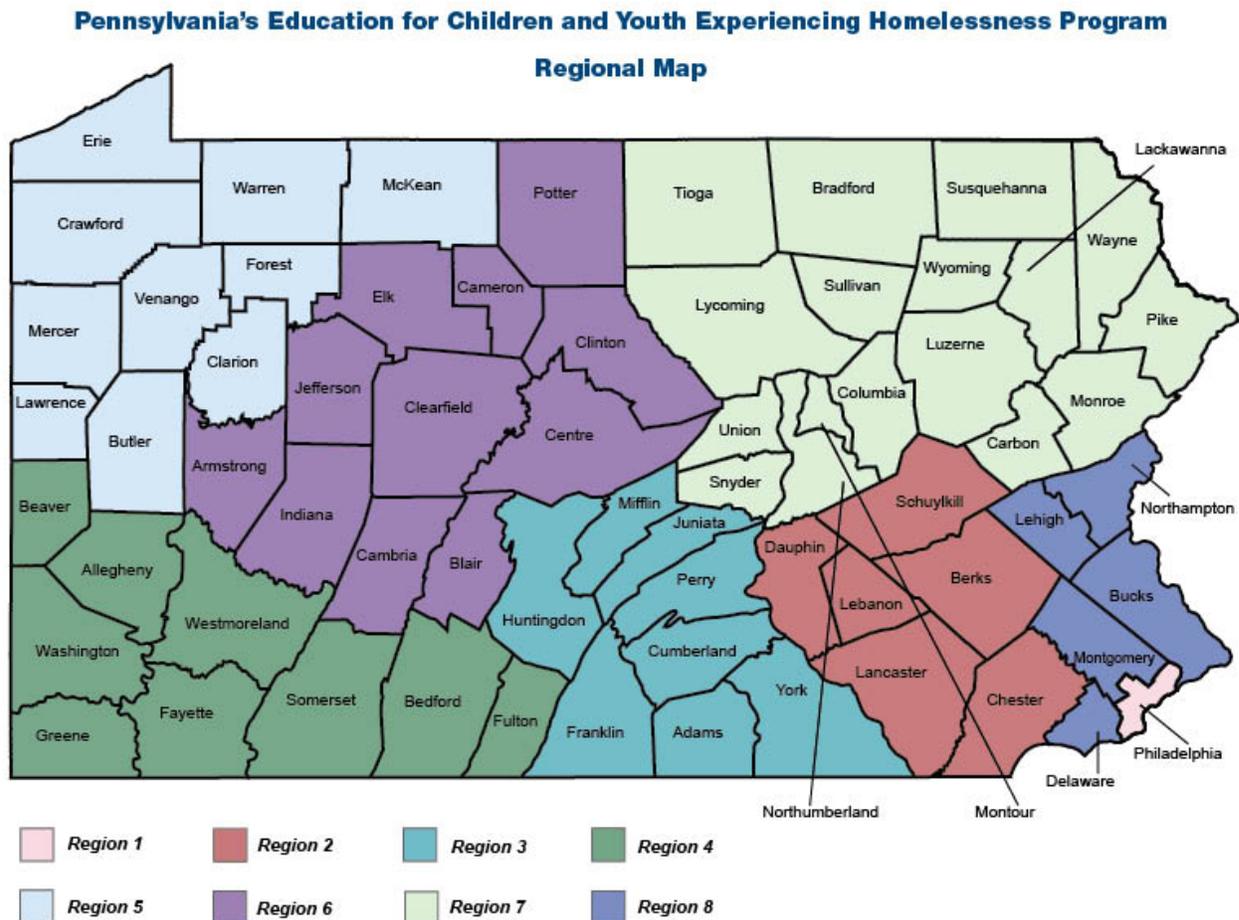
- Ensure that all children and youth experiencing homelessness enroll, participate, and have the opportunity to succeed in school;
- Ensure children and youth experiencing homelessness receive a free and appropriate public education on an equal basis with all other children in the state; and
- Eliminate 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 educate, 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 ECHYEH regions in Pennsylvania.



EVALUATION DESIGN AND ACTIVITIES

PDE's Bureau of School Support contracts with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to conduct a comprehensive external evaluation of the ECHYEH 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 2016-17 program evaluation was the seventh 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;
- Examine the extent to which students identified as experiencing homeless attend and succeed in school;
- 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 U.S. Department of Education *EDFacts* file formats and the *Comprehensive State Performance Report* to identify 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 needed for federal reporting and program evaluation were identified and the most appropriate sources of data were used. 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, such as the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS), MIS2000⁵ (the state migrant database), and the state assessment office.⁶ Evaluators also collected LEA and school Title I funding and poverty information at the state level. The use of existing data sources was designed to reduce the burden on LEAs.

Data collection procedures at the program level have evolved to a web-based reporting system that promotes more secure and accurate data through an easier data reporting interface. As such, improvements to the data collection process have reduced the data management by ECYEH staff while providing ECYEH staff continuous access to monitor information reported by entities in their region.

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 provided the requested information. In some cases, ECYEH staff

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.

worked with shelters in their region to provide information at the county level instead of individual shelters reporting information.⁷ Shelters receiving direct or indirect services from the ECYEH Program are required to be included in McKinney-Vento Act reporting.

The PAsecureID⁸ was a key data element for all individuals enrolled in school. The PAsecureID was used to pull data from other existing data sources or when matching data across multiple data sources.

To adhere to confidentiality in reporting afforded to domestic violence shelters,⁹ 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. This process also evolved to reduce duplicate reporting as domestic violence shelters now have their own data collection systems from which staff can create the needed extract.

Ultimately, the ECYEH Program is responsible for verifying 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, HMIS, and the state assessment office. After the cross-referencing and follow-up process is complete, 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.

In addition to data collected about identified children/youth, evaluators collect information on the work of the ECYEH Program staff. This data collection has also evolved to a web-based system that collect details on the training/professional

⁷ Shelters have their own reporting requirements and are required to report information in the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). In regions where data sharing agreements are in place, applicable data was extracted from the HMIS and provided to the coordinator or directly to the evaluator depending on the agreement thus eliminating duplicate reporting.

⁸ 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.

⁹ Domestic violence shelters are exempt from reporting in the HMIS due to the confidentiality of programs.

development and technical assistance ECYEH Program staff provide to LEAs, shelters, or other community organizations/agencies that work with homelessness, as well as information regarding homeless-related boards, consortia, or other meetings ECYEH Program staff attend to advocate and educate on behalf of McKinney-Vento Act implementation in Pennsylvania.

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

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

The state evaluation of the ECYEH Program for 2016-17 examined information about children and youth identified as experiencing homelessness, the services these 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. Prior year evaluation reports are available on PDE's website: www.education.pa.gov/homeless.

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 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 PDE program staff 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 1 percent.

This report should 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,

numbers of collaborating entities, reporting practices, ECTEH 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 can guide program improvement and technical assistance at the state level.

This report highlights findings regarding the ECTEH Program based on available data from the 2016-17 program year. Not all 2016-17 data were available at the time of this report. An addendum will be provided once school attendance, graduation, and drop-out data become available.

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. Information on trainings and workshops, technical assistance and bulk supplies, and meetings, consortia, and board participation is collected at the regional level via a web-based data collection system. The process by which this information is collected has 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 ECYEH Program data collection, PIMS, MIS2000, HMIS, or individual shelter reporting. LEA and school information comes from PDE public data, PDE's Division of Federal Programs for Title I, 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 attendance and academic outcomes are also included in this section. This information comes from the service delivery portions of the ECYEH student-level data collection, the bulk supplies portion of the technical assistance and bulk supplies web-based reporting process, PIMS, MIS2000, 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 Program's staff time and play an important 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. 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 organizations in the community to increase awareness of the McKinney-Vento Act.

Evaluators have worked each year with coordinators to improve data collection to more precisely capture the work that coordinators and their staff do as well as improve the consistency of reporting across regions. A new web-based system was implemented in 2016-17. As with any new system, there were growing pains in how regions classified the differing services they offered. As a result, in some cases the information was only reported at the state level due to variations among the regions that might be misleading. The intent of this section is to highlight the scope and depth of the McKinney-Vento Act outreach provided across the state.

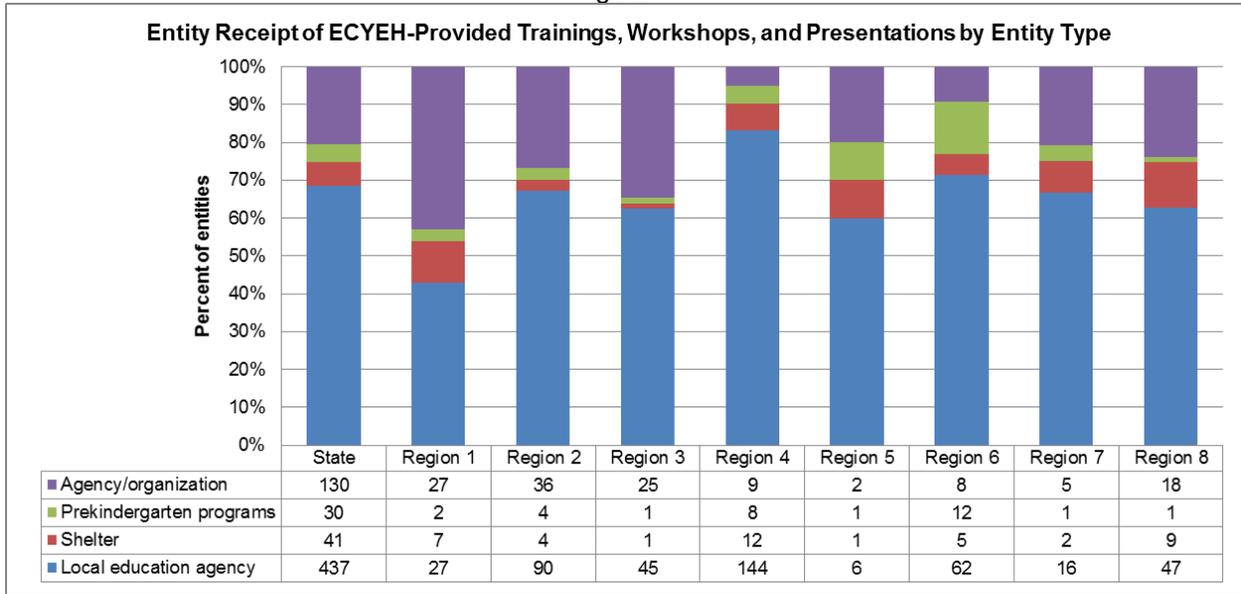
Recipients of ECYEH Services

First, evaluators examined ECYEH-offered trainings, professional development, and/or workshops. Professional development captured here was categorized as liaison training, McKinney-Vento 101, ECYEH 101, McKinney-Vento special topics, which included specific topics such as transportation or training geared to specific populations such as court volunteers, special education directors, or various educational or community groups.

Professional development could have been provided at the regional, county, LEA, entity, or individual level. As such, participation is represented by the unique number of different entities receiving these services and the type and count of participants. Additionally, each region varies in the number of ECYEH staff who may be conducting or attending events or providing assistance. As such, caution should be used when interpreting the graphs that follow.

There were 638 unique entities that participated in some type of ECYEH-provided training, professional development, or workshops in 2016-17. Figure 1 shows attendance by entity type: LEAs (including LEAs with pre-kindergarten programs), pre-kindergarten programs or services, shelters, and agencies, organizations, or groups.

Figure 1.



Figures 2 and 3 show entity participation by participant type: liaison, Title I, special education, administrators, or other staff. More than one participant type per entity may have attended an event.

Figure 2.

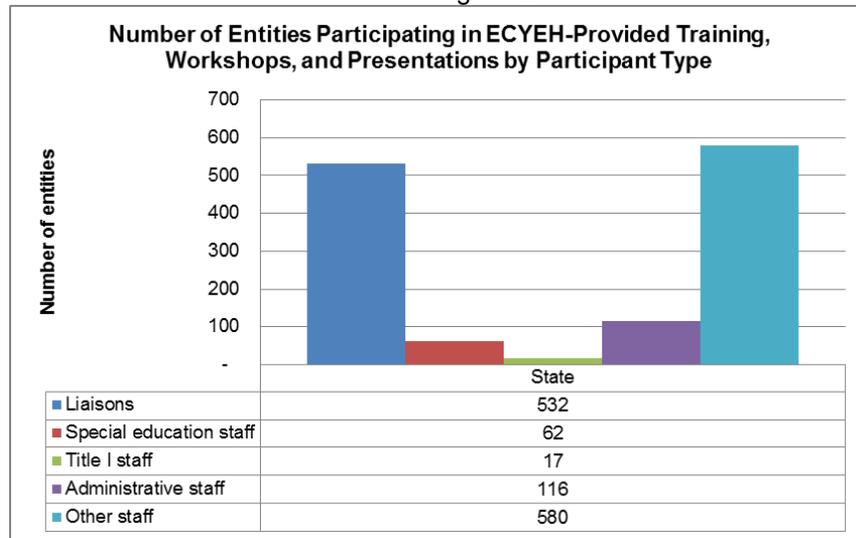


Figure 3.

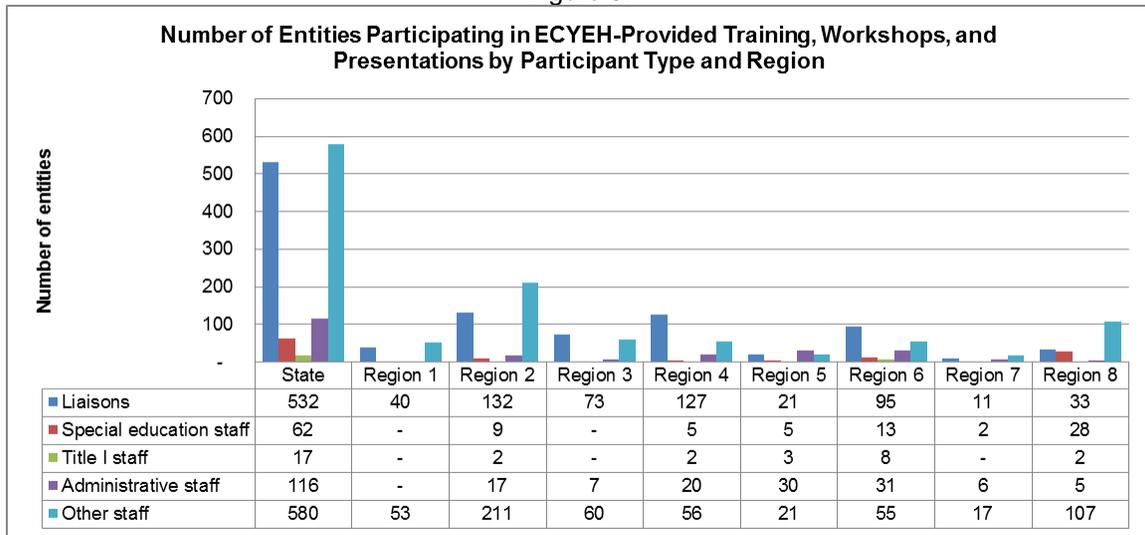
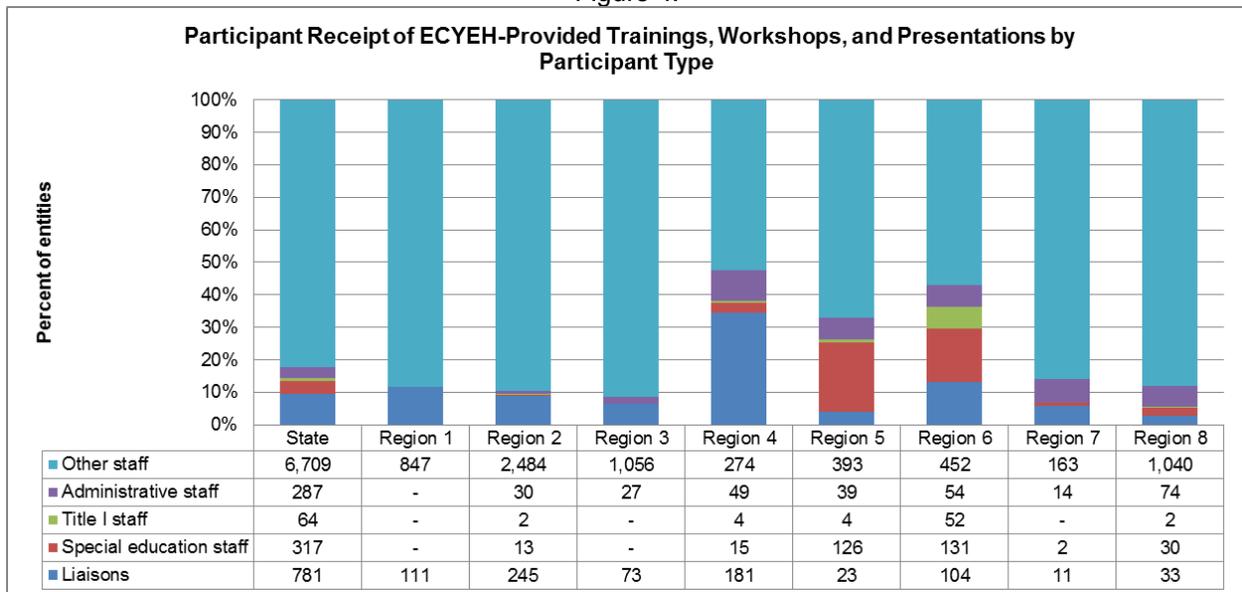


Figure 4 shows participation by participant count and type. Overall, 8,158 individuals participated, though this may include duplicates, as some participants may have attended one or more events and in some cases a count of participants was not provided for an event. A unique participant count is not available.

Figure 4.



Overall, LEAs and liaisons were the most represented group and participant type, though this varied by region. This is not surprising since LEAs are the largest entity group and are the first priority of ECYEH Program, with LEA liaisons being directly involved with this population.

Whereas professional development or training is ECYEH-offered to various entities, technical assistance is most often request-based help initiated by the LEAs, shelters, pre-kindergarten programs, agencies and organizations, or other groups. Due to the great variability in how technical assistance was reported, these data are reported at the state level only.

Technical assistance categories included: child/family-specific, child/family non-specific, or McKinney-Vento Act-related materials or resources. Child/family-specific and child/family non-specific technical assistance typically occurred through phone calls or emails. Technical assistance frequency to an entity was captured as once, occasionally, or often. Receiving 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/youth or family is then documented in service delivery for that child/youth.

A particular entity may have received all four 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. A total of 757 unique LEAs, shelters, pre-kindergarten programs, and groups/agencies/organizations were reported as receiving support through one or more of the technical assistance categories. Of the 757 entities receiving technical assistance, 73 percent were LEAs, 13 percent were shelters, 13 percent were groups, agencies, or organizations, and 1 percent was pre-kindergarten programs.

Of the 757 unique entities, 81 percent received child-specific technical assistance, 90 percent received non-child specific technical assistance, 87 percent received McKinney-Vento Act related materials, and 69 percent received bulk supplies, such as bus passes, backpacks, school supplies, clothing, or hygiene items.

Child-specific and non-child specific technical assistance were further classified as often, occasionally, or once. Of the 614 entities receiving child-specific technical assistance, 358 were classified as 'often,' 224 were classified as 'occasionally,' and 32 were classified as receiving child-specific technical assistance 'once.'

Of the 680 entities receiving child non-specific technical assistance, 219 were classified as 'often,' 385 were classified as 'occasionally,' and 76 were classified as receiving child non-specific technical assistance 'once.'

Meetings, Boards, Consortia, or Committees

In addition to conducting trainings, presentations, and workshops or providing technical assistance, ECYEH staff members spend a portion of their time collaborating with other agencies, organizations, or groups as part of committees, boards, meetings, or consortia. Again, due to the great variability in how technical assistance was reported, these data are reported at the state level only.

For 2016-17, ECYEH staff reported participating in 199 unique events. These events occurred annually (15 events), monthly (66 events), one time (four events), quarterly (95 events), or other (19 events). Other events were most often bi-monthly, seasonal, or on an as-needed basis.

ECYEH staff members' role was most typically regular attendee (140 events), collaborating partner (14 events), one time attendee (nine events), or leader/facilitator (36 events).

Event attendees ranged from three to 150 people, with 32 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 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 Technical Assistance Site Visits

Historically, coordinators maintain a plethora of information to document their work within the region. They are formally monitored or receive technical assistance site visits from the state team in alternate years. During 2016-17, the CSC, the contracted technical assistance provider, and the PDE state program officer conducted on-site technical assistance visits to each of the regional programs.

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

- Homeless children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including access to Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs.
- The region/site's protocols ensure prompt/accurate identification of McKinney-Vento Act eligible students.
- The region/site's protocols ensure immediate enrollment of homeless children and youth in school (as applicable).
- The region/site's protocols ensure "school of origin" rights for homeless children/youth.

- The region/site's protocols ensure appropriate educational services for eligible students, including transportation.
- Homeless children and youth receive K-12 after-school or supplemental instruction in LEA or shelter locations.
- The region ensures that homeless children and youth receive free meals through the National School Lunch Program.
- The region appropriately provides homeless families, children, and youth referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.
- The regional office reviews/monitors LEA 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.
- Each LEA has designated a liaison for homeless children and youth to carry out the duties described in Title X, Part C, Section 722(g)(6)(A).
- The region/site's protocols, training, and technical assistance ensure the appropriate use of Title I monies, including the Title I set-aside, for eligible students.
 - An appropriate homeless set-aside is determined (where required).
 - Homeless children and youth with academic needs in targeted and non-Title I schools receive appropriate academic support.
 - The regional office reviews the academic assistance provided to homeless children and youth in any LEA with Title I priority/focus school buildings.
- The region ensures that there is public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth disseminated where such children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens.
- The regional office complies with all ECYEH data collection/submission requirements and other reporting requirements.
- Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with Pennsylvania's dispute resolution process.
- The regional/site office effectively facilitates community collaboration and interagency coordination to support the education of McKinney-Vento Act eligible students.
- The regional/site office effectively facilitates inter-region collaboration and coordination.
- The regional office used grant funds, and other funds as appropriate, to meet the needs of homeless children and youth.
- The regional office effectively facilitates site management (for regions with paid or unpaid site coordinators).

Monitoring reports prepared by the regional monitor revealed that most regions received a 'yes' in each of the above requirements, with ample supporting evidence. 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 regions were also included as part of the documentation in the monitoring reports. Common or typical activities included the following: 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, providing or collaborating on supplemental academic programs or tutoring for students experiencing homelessness; 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 for mobile families and youth; 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 in the pages that follow. 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 9.

Region 1: The regional office continues to increase its capacity to identify the younger population of children experiencing homelessness through coordination with the district's Office of Early Childhood Education and outreach to the other early childhood programs in the city. The regional office now cross-checks the ECYEH data with a list of school-age and preschool-age residents provided by the city's Office of Supportive Housing to ensure that all children are identified and provided with appropriate services. The regional office has entered into a partnership with the Valley Youth House Synergy Project to facilitate activities at the district's high schools and to distribute project materials at various school sites so that students can access services, including an independent living program.

Region 2: The regional staff provide ECYEH information to guidance counselors in all 76 LEAs in the region and encourage them to contact their homeless liaison when homelessness is suspected or confirmed. The regional office provided county-specific training for LEAs regarding determination of an appropriate Title I set-aside amount and stressed that an appropriate funding level should be determined through a needs assessment process. The regional office now partners with the Berks Coalition to End Homelessness to provide a Homeless Youth Conference, attended by school personnel and community agency professionals, focused on the educational rights of homeless children under the federal McKinney-Vento Act and challenges, solutions, and best practices for serving this population.

Region 3: The regional office has been coordinating activities to better capture the number of pre-school children experiencing homelessness, such as providing

McKinney-Vento Act training to the Capital Area Intermediate Unit early childhood program group and visiting early childhood program sites in the region. The regional office has been instrumental in securing cooperation from local, regional, and state government agencies to heighten awareness of and support for students and families experiencing homelessness. The regional coordinator assists the Cumberland County and York County Continuum of Care with their annual Point in Time counts.

Region 4: Through feedback garnered by online surveys, the regional office has determined that the region's school districts want more training opportunities regarding homelessness and the McKinney-Vento Act. The county-wide meetings and spring regional training events are providing greater outreach to the counties within the region. In June 2016, the region provided specialized training for shelters and housing providers regarding student transitions and school attendance to encourage school stability and success. The regional staff participate in the Allegheny County Service Access for Youth group, which focuses on reconnecting school-age youth to their educational options.

Region 5: The regional staff conduct onsite technical assistance visits with any LEA in the region that identifies 10 or fewer students experiencing homelessness annually to ensure they are accurately assessing families' situations. The regional office expands and improves program services through partnerships with a wide variety of agencies and programs, media groups, service groups, businesses, advocacy groups, colleges/universities, and faith-based organizations. The regional staff distribute questionnaires to shelter staff to assess and ameliorate any existing barriers to students' educational success.

Region 6: The regional coordinator presented program information to the Local Interagency Coordinating Council to ensure collaboration with the region's Head Start programs, services for children from birth through 3 years old, and the preschool program directors. The regional coordinator facilitates excellent community partnerships and awareness activities throughout the year to expand and improve identification of services for families and students experiencing homelessness.

Region 7: The regional coordinator makes connections with the English as a Second Language programs and staff to ensure that those services are available to children and families experiencing homelessness. The regional office continues to publish a comprehensive resource directory that is provided to LEAs and agencies in the region and online as well, so that parents and program partners can easily access resource information. The regional coordinator provides an annual McKinney-Vento Act presentation for the Lackawanna County Continuum of Care education committee to ensure all entities are aware of the definitions and requirements.

Region 8: The regional staff participate in the Continuum of Care Point in Time counts in Bucks, Lehigh, and Montgomery counties. The regional coordinator is a member of the Bucks County Truancy Task Force to reinforce the attendance challenges of students experiencing homelessness. The regional coordinator continues to co-chair the Bucks County Direct Service Coalition and is now involved in Your Way Home Montgomery County, a partnership among government, philanthropy, nonprofits, and

community partners to address the problem of homelessness. The regional coordinator participated in the development of a video interview with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit (IU) executive director, which was then shared with the IU's 1,200 employees to increase awareness and garner donations to support the program.

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 ECYEH program regional staff continue to report that the doubled-up population is difficult to identify, necessitating the development and implementation of new strategies to better reach this population to ensure appropriate services are provided.
- The ECYEH program continues to experience barriers to appropriate transportation options for students experiencing homelessness; facilitating appropriate transportation for students experiencing homelessness is especially difficult to resolve in Allegheny County and the rural areas of the state.
- The ECYEH Program regional staff determine homeless eligibility on a case-by-case basis, and some LEAs are still resistant to full and accurate identification of students experiencing homelessness, as the McKinney-Vento Act requirements often necessitate a greater burden on their budgets.
- The lack of shelter options for families experiencing homelessness, as well as unaccompanied homeless youth, creates significant barriers to locating appropriate housing and contributes to the increasing number of unsheltered and doubled-up homeless situations.

Evaluators, CSC, and PDE staff 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.

State Technical Assistance

In addition to the regional site visits or monitoring visits conducted each year by the CSC technical assistance staff, the CSC staff conducts or coordinates several state-level professional development activities, often in collaboration with regional coordinators or other state personnel. State-level professional development activities not only support the regional coordinators, but also provide outreach and information to other state entities that work with children and youth. What follows highlights these activities.

- Coordinated the August 25, 2016 ECYEH Coordinators' Training. Training topics included non-regulatory guidance for McKinney-Vento within the Every Student

Succeeds Act, ECYEH data collection, conference planning, resources, and regional planning for the 2016-17 program year. Approximately 25 people attended.

- Coordinated the exhibit table at the October 5, 2016 Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Family Engagement Conference in Harrisburg. Approximately 300 individuals had access to the ECYEH materials.
- Facilitated the coordination of the exhibit table at the October 6, 2016 OCDEL Family Engagement Conference in Erie. Approximately 200 individuals had access to the ECYEH materials.
- Coordinated and staffed the exhibit table at the Attendance/Child Accounting Professional Association conference on November 3, 2016. All conferees had access to ECYEH posters, maps, and program infographic.
- Presented a McKinney-Vento/ESSA overview webinar on November 8, 2016 for OCDEL home visitor staff and supervisors for their Data and Continuous Quality Improvement Quarterly Learning Webinar.
- Coordinated the November 15-16, 2016 ECYEH State Conference. Approximately 140 people attended. Topics included children and youth experiencing homelessness in the Every Student Succeeds Act, childcare, understanding changes to the McKinney-Vento law, unaccompanied youth, school-housing partnerships, educational stability for children in foster care, Title I coordination, sex exploitation of children, bullying prevention, early childhood, and access to higher education.
- Staffed the ECYEH exhibit table at the Pennsylvania School Counselors' Association annual state conference. More than 300 individuals had access to materials to support the education of students experiencing homelessness; followed up with email correspondence/additional materials to two of the conferees.
- Coordinated the January 11, 2017 ECYEH Regional Coordinators' Training. Topics included a PDE update, regional reports, data collection, and final guidance/integration of ESSA. Approximately 14 people attended, including two individuals via GoToMeeting.
- Coordinated the ECYEH exhibit table at the Pennsylvania Association of Student Assistance Professionals in late February to distribute program materials and brainstorm students' homeless situations. Approximately 450 professionals had access to the information.
- Moderated and presented the "Claims, Red Flags, and What to do about Them" webinar. Topics included identification of students/families and strategies for verifying homeless status. Approximately 140 individuals participated in the training.
- Attended the Migrant Education Program/English as a Second Language conference and staffed the ECYEH exhibit table on March 27-28, 2017. Approximately 300 professionals had access to ECYEH posters and other materials to support homeless education.
- Coordinated the ECYEH Regional Coordinators Training on March 29, 2017. Six of the eight regional coordinators attended the training, which covered federal and state updates, data collection updates from the Allegheny IU, regional sharing, and discussion with Barbara Duffield of SchoolHouse Connection specifically about Head Start and early childhood McKinney-Vento eligibility and coordination of transportation services.

- Coordinated the ECYEH exhibit table at the Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses and Practitioners conference. Approximately 200 individuals had access to ECYEH posters and other materials.
- Co-presented an April 11, 2017 ECYEH workshop at the ELECT Conference with the Region 3 Coordinator. Provided 17 participants with program information and materials.
- Provided the ECYEH exhibit for the May 10, 2017 Parents as Teachers statewide conference. Approximately 150 professionals had access to McKinney-Vento information and materials.
- Moderated and co-presented the May 24, 2017 webinar "Youth Homelessness in PA: Statistics and Solutions." Approximately 183 individuals participated.
- Coordinated the June 1-2, 2017 ECYEH Coordinators Training. Approximately 22 individuals participated in the training, which covered PDE updates; sharing successes and challenges; brainstorming solutions for barriers, data collection, and submission; program awareness and marketing; ECYEH conference planning; and program resource development.

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. The program's success in meeting these objectives is reflected in 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 children/youth 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,¹⁰ and full-time (comprehensive) career and technical centers.¹¹

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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.

In Pennsylvania, there were 499¹² school districts, 182 charter and cyber charter schools, and 10 comprehensive career and technical centers in the 2016-17 academic year.

Based on the unique, comprehensive list of identified students from across Pennsylvania, nearly all LEAs were represented. There were nine school districts, 46 charter or cyber charter schools, and two full-time (comprehensive) career and technical centers for which no students meeting the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness were reported.

Further exploration of the 54 LEAs with no identified students¹³ revealed that many of the LEAs were small (32 LEAs had fewer than 500 students), served a subset of the total K-12 population (44 LEAs), had very low free or reduced lunch percentages (8 LEAs),¹⁴ or had a combination of these conditions. Each year regional coordinators make it a priority to reach out to LEAs where no students are being identified. It should also be noted that outreach to charter schools is relatively new. Liaison turnover appears to be more pervasive in charter schools, and new charter schools are established each year, making outreach to these LEAs especially challenging. However, in 2016-17 the total number of LEAs with no students identified decreased from 69 to 54, with more school districts reporting than ever before.

In addition to students that LEAs reported, non-LEA facilities identified 5,848 children/youth (19 percent of identified children/youth). Most of the children/youth (4,091) reported by these facilities were birth to age 2, ages 3-5 (not enrolled in pre-kindergarten), or attending non-LEA pre-kindergarten programs. Non-LEA facilities reporting has increased each year due to ongoing coordinator outreach and increased awareness of reporting responsibilities of these entities.

Children and Youth Characteristics

Children and youth experiencing homelessness are identified by their nighttime status (fixed, regular, adequate) and are reported based on their age or grade category. One of the changes that occurred as a result of ESSA is the way in which children and youth are reported. While the under five population is still captured in the same way, the out-of-school population – those youth who are 21 or younger, have not graduated, and meet the definition of McKinney-Vento homelessness – are no longer reported unless they are enrolled in an LEA-operated credit recovery or alternate graduation program option. Additionally, as of December 2016, awaiting foster care was no longer

¹² 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/>.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ National trends indicate that there is a relationship between higher percentages of students eligible for free or reduced lunch and greater likelihood of homelessness.

considered eligible for homeless identification and services under the McKinney-Vento Act. Consequently, overall children and youth identified numbers cannot be compared to prior years, and 2016-17 will serve as a new baseline for subsequent years. That said, in 2016-17 more children and youth were identified as experiencing homelessness than in any prior year. This continued growth in identified children and youth is a direct result of the ECYEH Program outreach to LEAs, shelters, and pre-kindergarten programs.

Additionally, 2016-17 results cannot be compared to national results as national results reflecting ESSA changes have not yet become publically available.

The sections that follow provide homeless information and demographics for identified children/youth experiencing homelessness based on all reported children/youth identified as experiencing homelessness at any point during the ECYEH Program year (July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017).

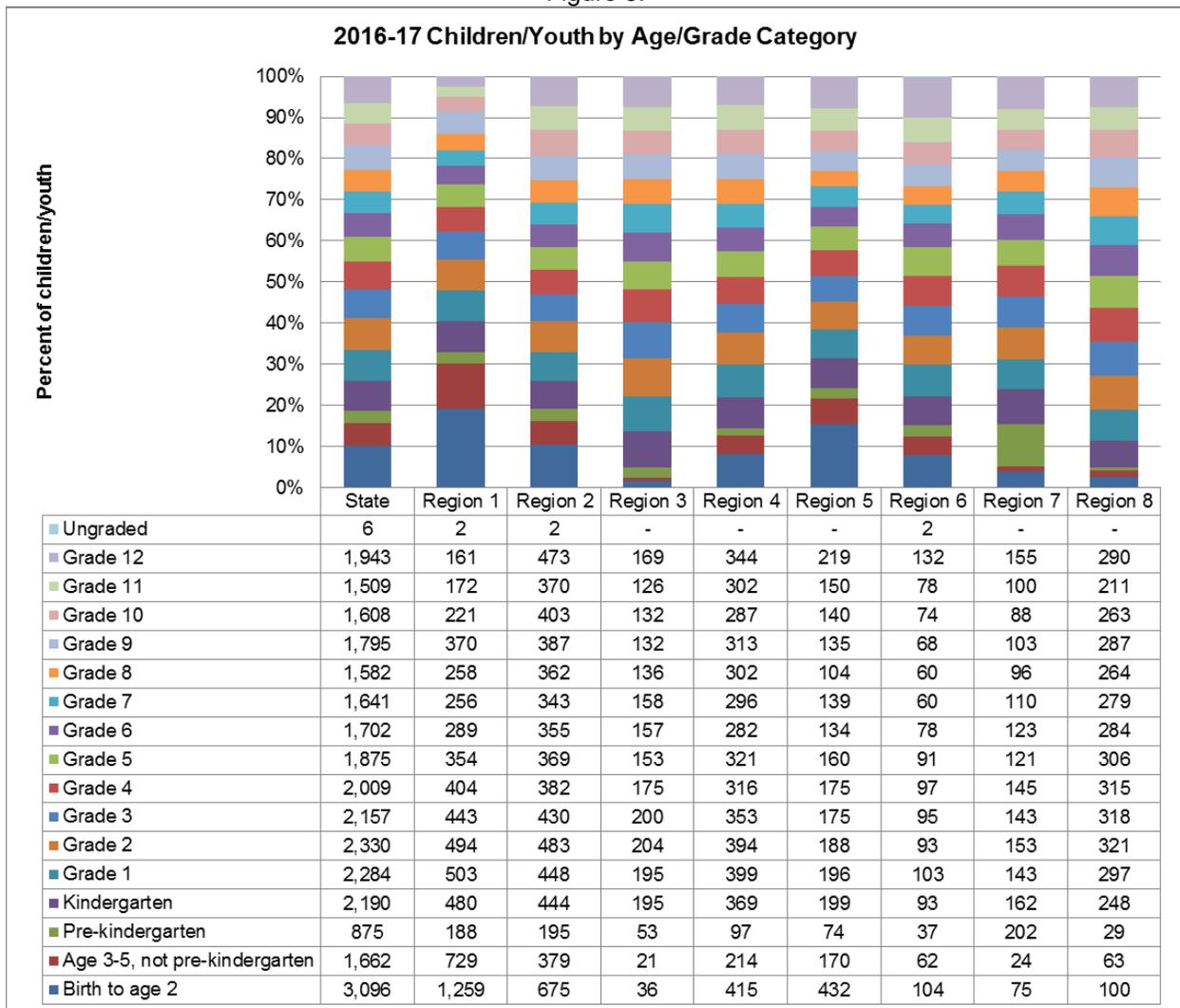
Pennsylvania public school enrollment, based on third-day enrollment for the 2016-17 academic year, was 1,777,065 students. Students experiencing homelessness made up about 1 percent of the total public school enrolled population. Even though the numbers of identified students has increased, students experiencing homelessness have consistently been about 1 percent of the total public school population.

In 2016-17, 30,264 children and youth were identified as experiencing homelessness. Homeless information and demographics in this section reflect the required federal reporting elements: age/grade categories, nighttime status, unaccompanied youth status, migrant status, English language learner (ELL), and disability. Demographic information is not available for every individual identified. What exists is based upon the data source from which the information was collected. Each section that follows will indicate the population included in the demographic data element.

Figure 5 shows the age/grade breakdowns as defined by the federal reporting categories: birth to age 2, ages 3-5 (not enrolled in pre-kindergarten), pre-kindergarten (LEA or non-LEA pre-kindergarten programs), and kindergarten through 12th grade (including ungraded).

The focus on under five (not kindergarten) reporting has increased each year. As such this grouping of children has steadily increased each year even as changes in ESSA may have reduced those meeting eligibility criteria. 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 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.

Figure 5.



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 students enrolled in public pre-kindergarten through grade 12 schools. Nighttime status was not required for the birth to two population or for children ages three to five and not enrolled in an LEA-operated pre-kindergarten program.

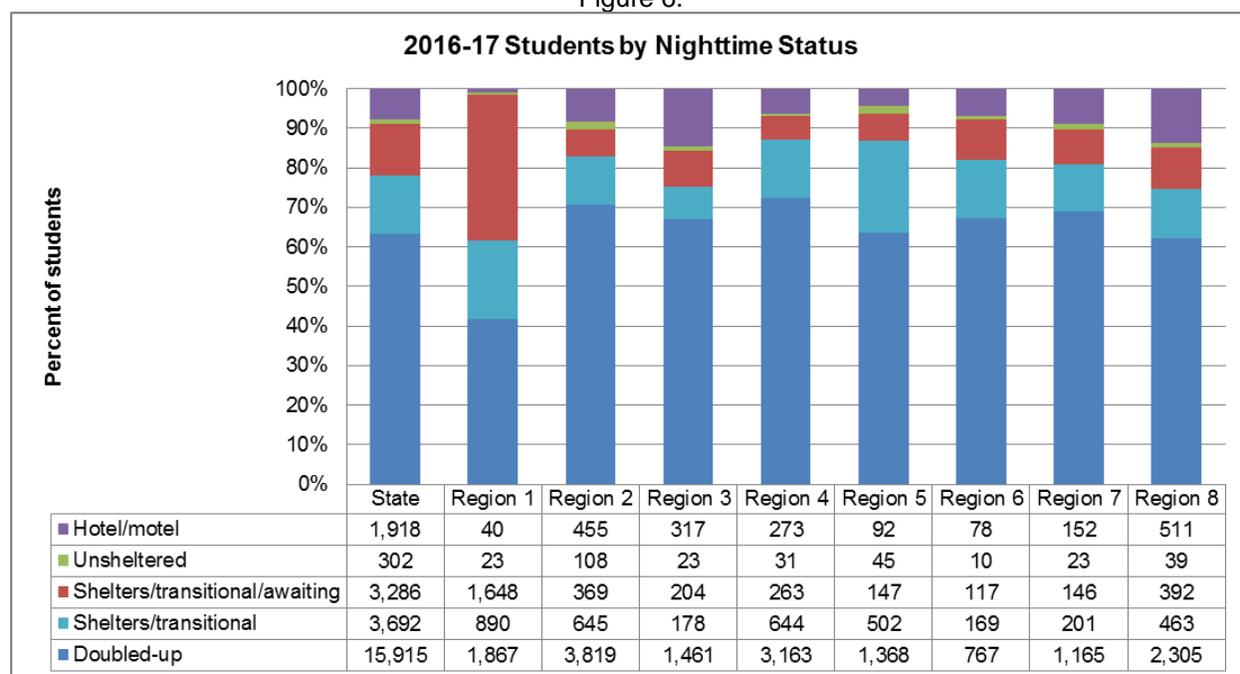
Nighttime status reporting categories include doubled-up; hotels/motels; shelters, transitional housing, or awaiting foster care; and unsheltered. In December 2016, the awaiting foster care status was removed from McKinney Vento eligibility as such, there are two categories reflecting this mid-year eligibility change in Figure 6.

Figure 6 shows the nighttime status for the 25,113 students who attended school, pre-kindergarten programs through grade 12.

Overall, 63 percent of students had a nighttime status of doubled-up, and 28 percent of enrolled students had a shelter as their nighttime status category.

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 increased from 402 students to 1,867 students in 2016-17. Prior to 2010-11, the focus in this region had been with shelters, thus reflecting such a low number in 2010-11.

Figure 6.



Unaccompanied youth is a federally-defined term. 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.¹⁵ Overall, 4,209 (14 percent) of the 30,264 children and youth were identified as being an unaccompanied youth. This percentage decreased from the prior year percentage of 20 percent, which is most likely due to the removal of awaiting foster care and out-of-school youth from reporting, a population that is often unaccompanied.

Specific special education status information was collected from the PIMS extract for students enrolled in school. Additionally, children identified in early intervention

¹⁵ 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>.

programs were documented as receiving special education services and included in the developmental delay designation.

Of the 30,264 identified children and youth, 6,930 (23 percent) were identified as having a disability, and 16,724 (55 percent) were identified as not having a disability. There were 6,610 (22 percent) children and youth for which this information was not available. Children and youth for which the data was not available were in most cases reported only by a shelter or non-LEA program. Furthermore, since birth to age two and pre-kindergarten early intervention children are identified by early intervention programs, it is highly unlikely that those without information had a disability.

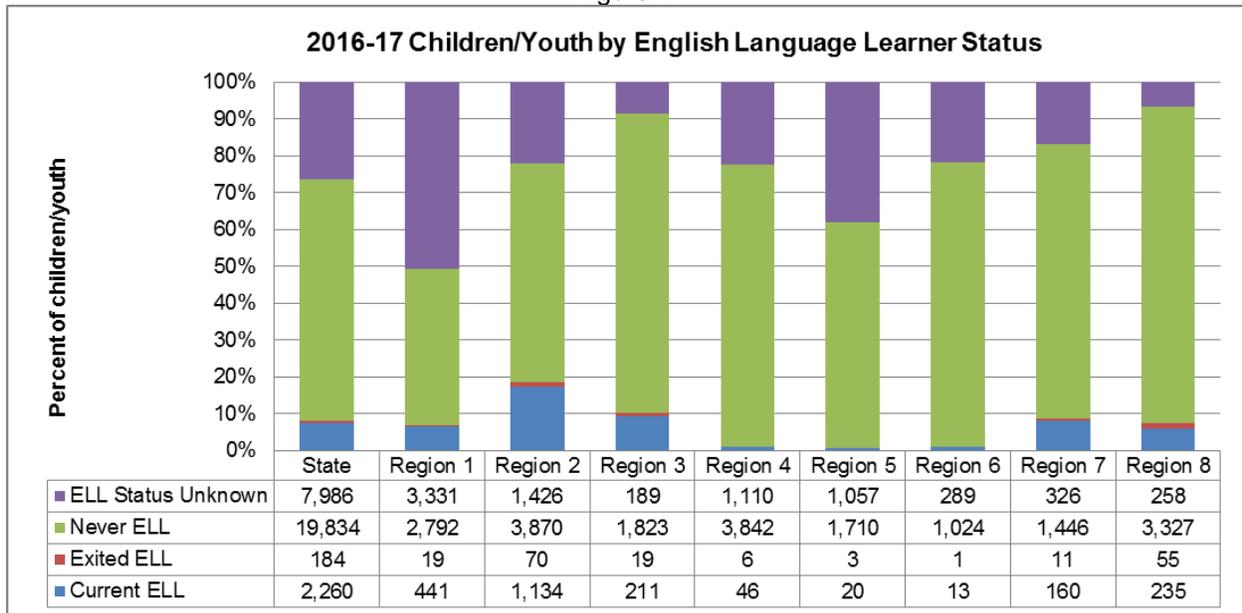
Of the 6,930 students designated as having a disability, the largest percentage of individuals (36 percent) was categorized as having a “specific learning disability.” The table that follows shows the breakdown of the disability categories. Because of small numbers in several of the categories, for confidentiality, regional findings are not included. Evaluators used federal reporting categories in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Disability by Category Type.

Disability Category	Number of students	Percent of students
Specific learning disability	2,506	36
Emotional disturbance	999	14
Other health impairment	883	13
Speech or language impairment	749	11
Developmental delay	419	6
Intellectual disability	433	6
Autistic/ autism	332	5
Multiple disabilities	275	4
Disability type unknown	265	4
Hearing impairment including deafness	31	< 1
Visual impairment including blindness	14	< 1
Traumatic brain injury	14	< 1
Orthopedic impairment	10	< 1

English language learner information was collected through PIMS for all enrolled students and through MIS2000 for migrant children/youth identified as experiencing homelessness. English language learner information was not collected for non-enrolled age/grade categories with the exception of the migrant population. English language learners comprise about 7 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.

Figure 7.



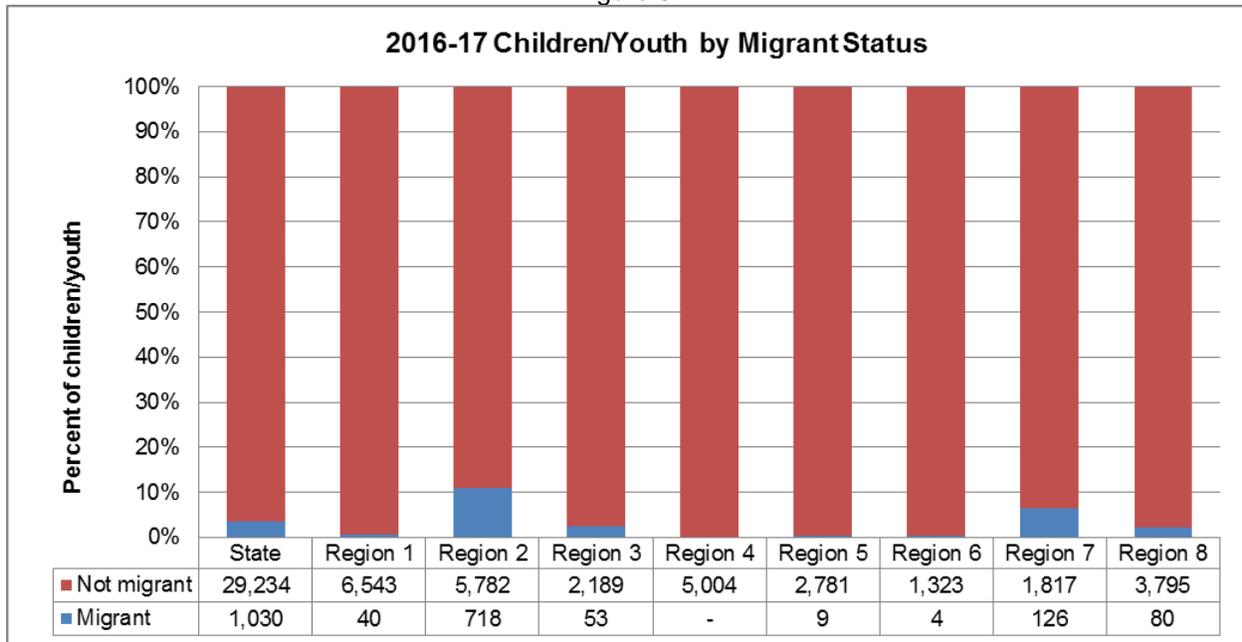
Migrant status can be determined for all children/youth identified as experiencing homelessness. MIS2000, the state migrant education database that tracks all eligible migrant children and youth, captures homeless eligibility information. As such, the migrant status of all eligible homeless children can be documented.

Of the 30,264 identified children and youth, 3 percent (1,030 children and youth) were also identified as eligible for services through the Pennsylvania Migrant Education Program. This number and percentage is slightly lower than in prior years most likely due to no longer reporting the out-of-school population, a population that is more common among the migrant here-to-work youth.

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 3 percent of the total homeless served population, it is important to note the differences among the ECYEH regions. Migrant status may also influence other demographics such as ELL status, mobility, or economic status, especially in the regions where there is a larger migrant population.

Figure 8 shows that 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, and 8). As such, the numbers of migrant youth experiencing homelessness are greater in these regions than the rest of the state.

Figure 8.



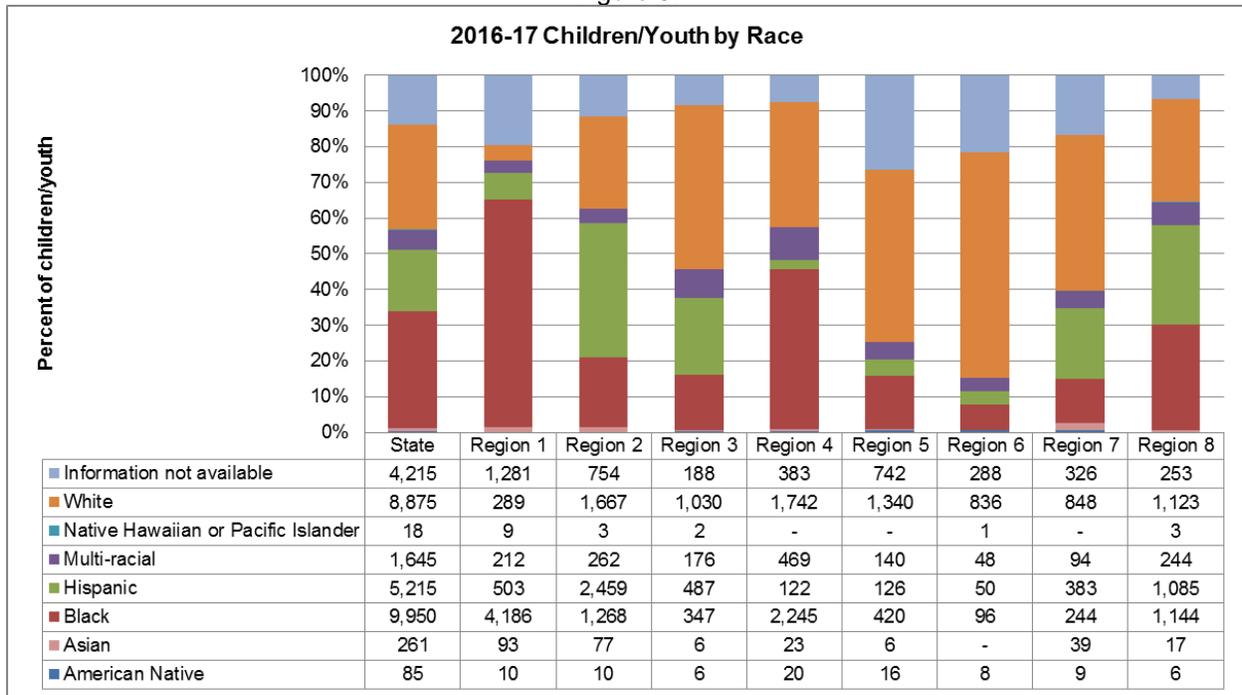
Additional child/youth or LEA demographic information provides context to the evaluation findings to the extent that it further describes the population that is being identified and served as a result of ECYEH Program outreach and education and the community in which the identified children/youth live and attend school.

Child/youth demographics presented here includes race and economic status. LEA demographics include percent of LEA enrollment from low-income families and urban-centric locales of the LEAs.

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. In some cases, HMIS extracts also provided race/ethnicity information. As such, race and ethnicity information is available for 86 percent of the identified children/youth. It is likely that the unknown population would reflect the ethnic/racial composition of the region, though it cannot be assumed.

Evaluators present federal race reporting categories in Figure 9. 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 33 percent. Hispanic (any race) individuals comprise 17 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.

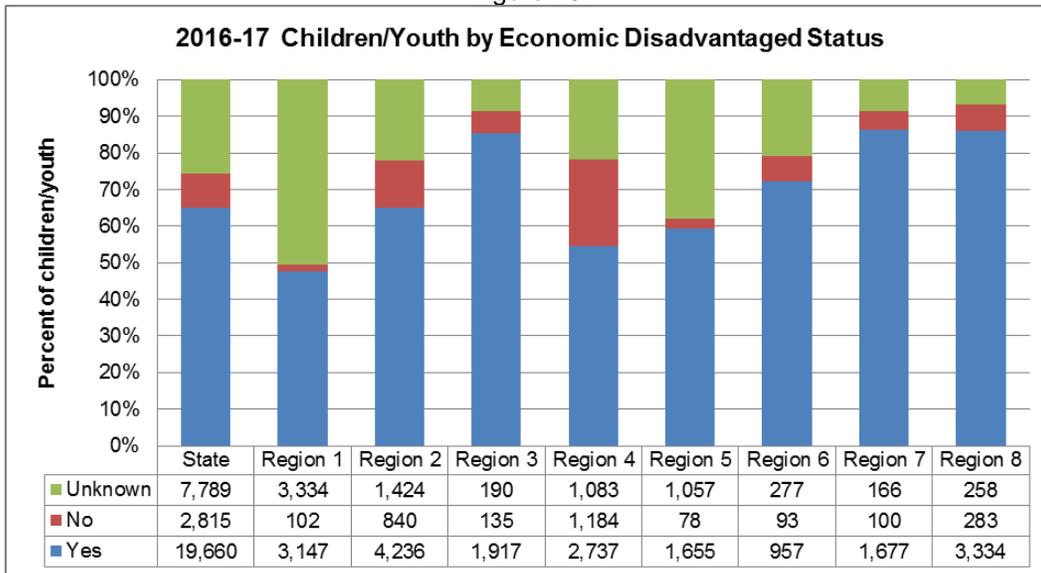
Figure 9.



Economic disadvantage information was collected from PIMS for all enrolled students. It is also an eligibility criterion for all children who attend Early Head Start or Head Start programs. As such, evaluators were able to code pre-kindergarten children who attended Head Start or Early Head Start programs as being economically disadvantaged.

Of the 30,264 identified children and youth, 65 percent were designated as economically disadvantaged, and 9 percent were reported as not economically disadvantaged. The 26 percent of children/youth whose economic status is unknown is comprised primarily of children/youth identified in shelters. 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.

Figure 10.



LEA Demographics

Enrollment from low-income families and urban-centric locale of the LEA provides further information regarding the communities of the schools that identified students attended.

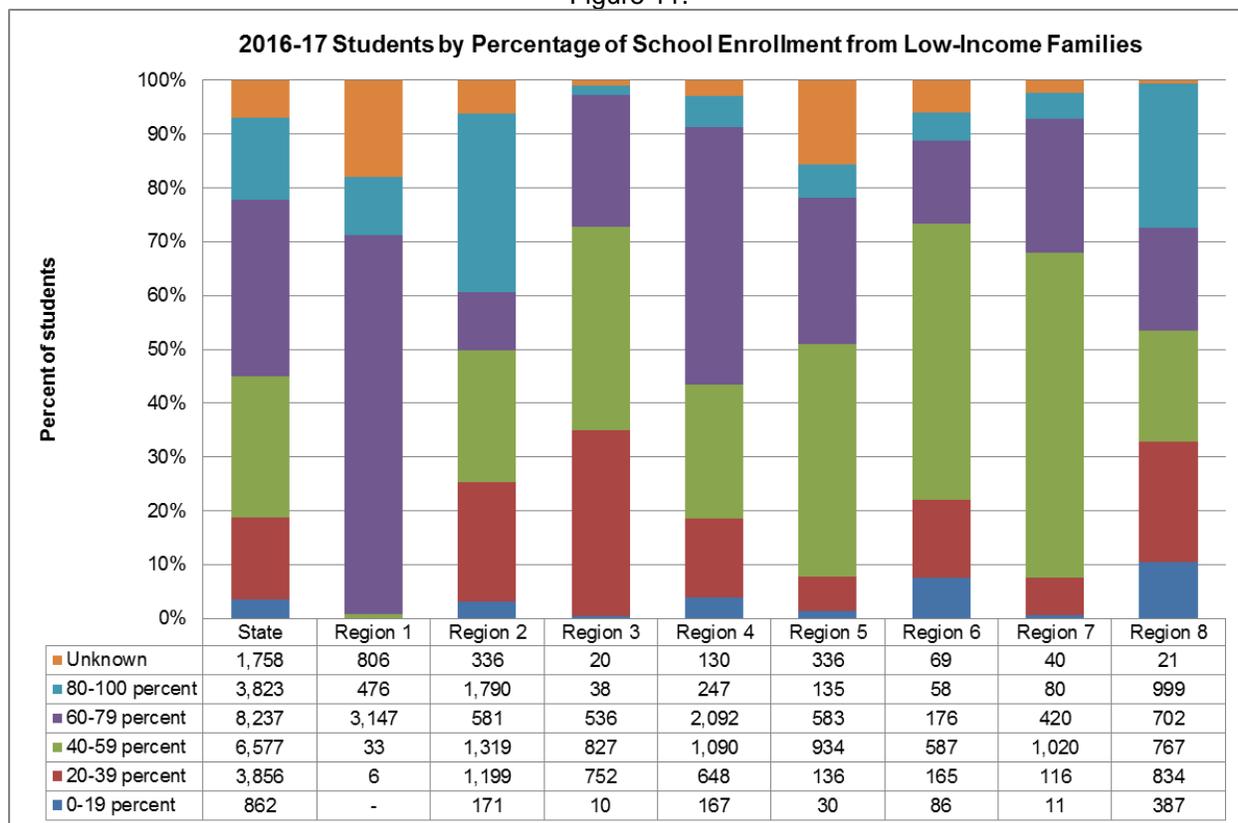
PDE produces a public report that provides the percentage of students who come from low-income families. This report is based on LEA third day enrollment of economically disadvantaged students and shows the percentage of the enrollment from low-income families in each LEA.

Evaluators examined the percentage of low-income families in the LEAs enrolled students attended to determine what percentage of the identified students attended higher poverty schools. The graph that follows shows percentage categories of low-income families in an LEA and the number of students attending LEAs within each low-income category.

Overall, 75 percent of students for which LEA information was available (25,113) attended LEAs that had 40 percent or more of the student population classified as coming from low-income families. Typically, LEAs with an economically disadvantaged identification rate of 40 percent or more are considered high-poverty LEAs. Region 1 had almost all of identified students attending high-poverty LEAs with Region 7 having about 90 percent of identified youth attending high-poverty LEAs. Regions 4, 5, and 6 had about 80 percent of identified students attending high-poverty schools.

What is important to glean from these findings is that poverty is a factor for the student body and the community at large where students identified as experiencing homelessness attended school.

Figure 11.



In 2009-10, public LEAs¹⁶ 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 region type and population size and replaced the previously used eight metro-centric locale codes. The 12 category descriptions can be found on the NCES website.¹⁷ These 12 categories were further collapsed by the evaluator to gain a better picture of the key categories - city, suburban, town, rural, and unknown.

Figure 12 shows the student population by public school's locale code. The 'could not be determined' category includes 157 students who attended an LEA that served multiple LEAs, most typically intermediate unit pre-kindergarten programs and regional or cyber charter schools. There were 1,758 students who were reported as attending school, but were identified in a shelter and the LEA was unknown.

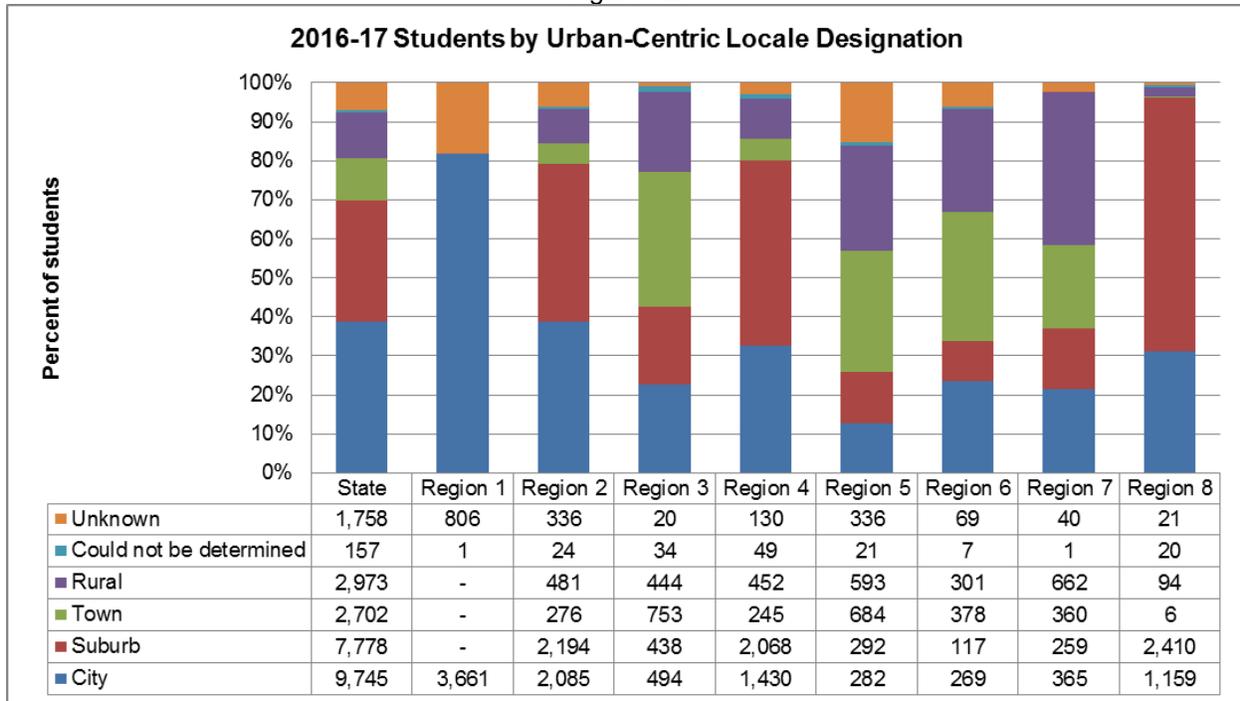
Overall, 70 percent of enrolled students (25,113) attended LEAs categorized as city (9,745 students) or suburban (7,778 students). However, distinct variations can be seen across the regions, with Region 1 being almost exclusively city; Regions 2, 4, and 8 having large suburban populations; and Regions 3, 5, 6, and 7 having more town or

¹⁶http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/data_and_statistics/7202/school_locale/509783

¹⁷http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp

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.

Figure 12.



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 need.

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 the ECYEH program. Of the enrolled children and youth, 83 percent (20,883 of 25,113) had barrier data, of

which 10 percent (2,014) were reported as having barriers to enrollment, attendance, and/or academic success.

Table 2 shows the prevalence of barriers as reported by LEAs or ECYEH Program staff.¹⁸ The most common barrier was determining if a student was eligible for ECYEH program services followed closely by transportation, and then other barriers. Other barriers reported included school breaks/holidays, hospitalization between identification and attendance, securing childcare, incomplete disclosure of information during enrollment, or family-initiated delays in attendance. Determining if a student is eligible for homeless service and transportation have consistently been the top two barriers.

It is concerning, however, that in some cases items that are reported as barriers are in actuality rights regarding school enrollment for students experiencing homelessness. Those rights include immediate enrollment without medical or immunization records.

Table 2. Barriers to School Enrollment.

Barrier	State	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8
Determining eligibility for homeless services	1,515	61	235	255	269	194	188	262	51
Transportation	736	27	143	138	170	92	55	91	20
Obtaining other medical records	72	2	26	1	1	9	1	29	3
Immunization records	136	2	39	4	7	35	5	38	6
School records	143	6	43	8	11	23	10	36	6
School selection	103	3	29	11	17	17	5	21	-
Other	165	6	39	55	23	15	6	13	8
Any barriers	2,014	74	340	336	417	246	231	290	80
Total youth for whom data was available	25,113	4,468	5,396	2,183	4,374	2,154	1,141	1,687	3,710
Percentage of youth with any barrier	8%	2%	6%	15%	10%	11%	20%	17%	2%

Barriers data were examined separately for the pre-kindergarten population (LEA and non-LEA) because this is the only under-five population for which barrier data could have been collected. Of the 875 children identified as experiencing homelessness who attended a pre-kindergarten program, slightly more than half (278 children) had barrier data.¹⁹ Of those 278 children, 25 children (9 percent) were identified as having one or

¹⁸ One large LEA in Region 4 did not submit any barrier information after multiple attempts. Failure to submit barrier data was due to staff change at the end of the program year. As such, the percentages in Region 4 are lower than they are known to be, especially when it comes to transportation, a long-standing issue for this LEA.

¹⁹ A considerable portion (84 percent) of the under-5 age group (5,633 children) are children birth to age 2 (3,096 children) or children ages 3-5 not enrolled in pre-kindergarten (1,662 children).

more barriers. Similarly, determining eligibility for services and transportation were the primary barriers indicated.

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, 2016 through June 30, 2017, even if the student was not identified as being homeless by that particular LEA.

Of the 25,113 students identified as being enrolled in school, LEA/school mobility could be determined for 23,361 students (93 percent). The ‘unable to determine’ group (1,752 students) is comprised of students who were reported as being enrolled in schools, but did not have enough information to be able to determine mobility.

Table 3 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. Sixty-five percent of enrolled students remained in their LEA/school combination during the program year, 22 percent of students had two LEA/school moves, and 6 percent had more than two moves.

While many students remained in one LEA/school combination, there are still many students (6,995) who experienced two or more moves during the program year and 1,752 students for which moves cannot be determined.

Table 3. Students Enrolled in Multiple LEA/School Combinations.

Region	Total	1 LEA/ School	2 LEA/ Schools	>2 LEA/ Schools	Unable to Determine	% 1 LEA/ School	% 2 LEA/ Schools	% >2 LEA/ Schools	% Unable to Determine
Region 1	4,468	2,578	856	229	805	58%	19%	5%	18%
Region 2	5,396	3,653	1,111	297	335	68%	21%	6%	6%
Region 3	2,183	1,466	525	172	20	67%	24%	8%	1%
Region 4	4,374	2,847	1,061	339	127	65%	24%	8%	3%
Region 5	2,154	1,261	419	137	337	59%	19%	6%	16%
Region 6	1,141	692	287	95	67	61%	25%	8%	6%
Region 7	1,687	1,097	416	134	40	65%	25%	8%	2%
Region 8	3,710	2,772	784	133	21	75%	21%	4%	1%
State Total	25,113	16,366	5,459	1,536	1,752	65%	22%	6%	7%

Service Delivery

Students experiencing homelessness have 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 through multiple sources including the ECYEH Program directly or through use of McKinney-Vento Act funds, LEAs, pre-kindergarten programs, the Migrant Education Program, or shelters. Documentation of these services was reported through the service delivery section of the ECYEH data collection process, 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, many children and youth were designated as receiving instructional support services. These included children who were identified as attending federal, state, or locally funded pre-kindergarten programs, receiving services from the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development Early Intervention, or identified as receiving special education or Title III services. Likewise, any student attending a Title I schoolwide school was treated as having received instructional support since schoolwide schools may use Title I funds to upgrade curriculum of the school and all students in a schoolwide building benefit from Title I funds and services.

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 programs, the Migrant Education Program, shelters, collaborating agency/organization, or donations.

Tables 4 and 5 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.

Overall, 90 percent (27,200) of the 30,264 identified children and youth are documented as receiving service at the individual level. Region 5 showed the largest percentages of

children and youth receiving services at 95 percent with several regions in the low 90 percent range.

Tutoring or other instructional support was by far the most prevalent service children/youth received. This is influenced by the number of students attending schoolwide Title I schools and the number of children and youth who received additional educational services such as pre-kindergarten programs, special education, or Title III services. 'Other services' was the next largest category. This was influenced by children/youth receiving in-home or other services through the Migrant Education Program or services as a result of residing in a shelter or transitional housing.

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 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 funds and other 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 4. Children/Youth Served by Service Type and Funding Source at the State Level.

Service	Title I Funds	McKinney-Vento Act Funds	Other Funds
Tutoring or other instructional support	19,103	552	4,717
Clothing to meet a school requirement	3,249	1,005	1,501
Transportation	1,290	912	4,008
School supplies	1,664	1,169	2,461
Other Services	535	237	6,943
Expedited evaluations	194	41	407
Assistance with participation in school programs	473	82	625
Counseling	1,007	593	2,134
Coordination between schools and agencies	1,094	1,729	1,609
Referral to other programs and services	969	1,209	2,309
Before-, after-school, mentoring, summer programs	248	86	1,512
Referrals for medical, dental, and other health services	720	674	1,533
Early childhood programs	173	91	726
Obtaining or transferring records necessary for enrollment	828	665	817
Emergency assistance related to school attendance	272	63	652
Addressing needs related to domestic violence	271	174	2,122
Unique count of children/youth receiving Title I services	19,426		
Unique count of children/youth receiving MV services		2,859	
Unique count of children/youth receiving Other services			16,606

Table 5 provides counts of children and youth served by each funding source, where each child or youth is only counted once within that funding source category, for the state overall and each region individually. For context, the number of children and youth served, total number of children and youth, and the percentage of children or youth served is also provided.

Table 5. Number and Percentage of Children/Youth Served by Funding Type and Region.

State/ Region	Unique count of children/ youth receiving Title I services	Unique count of children/ youth receiving MV services	Unique count of children/youth receiving Other services	Total children/ youth receiving services	Total children/ youth	Percentage of children/ youth with any services
State	19,426	2,859	16,606	27,200	30,264	90%
Region 1	4,142	101	4,584	6,581	6,583	100%
Region 2	3,914	955	3,671	5,502	6,500	85%
Region 3	1,540	51	1,011	1,921	2,242	86%
Region 4	3,509	95	2,222	4,550	5,004	91%
Region 5	1,502	506	1,848	2,662	2,790	95%
Region 6	802	114	676	1,155	1,327	87%
Region 7	1,280	136	1,001	1,765	1,943	91%
Region 8	2,737	901	1,593	3,064	3,875	79%

Table 6 also provides service delivery details, specifically the service category indicated for the greatest number and percentage of children/youth within each funding category, for the state and each region. For a full list of service categories, refer to Table 4. The service categories and percentage of children/youth served should be interpreted with caution, as each region has a differing mix of entities reporting, which contributes to variability in the sources, volume, and types of services available to children and youth experiencing homelessness. At the state and in each region, tutoring or instructional support was the leading service provided using Title I funds. Under McKinney-Vento Act funds, the state and three regions showed coordination among agencies as the leading service provided. 'Other services' was the leading category under other funds for the state and four of the eight regions.

Table 6. Predominant Service Delivery by Funding Source, Region, and Percentage of Children/Youth Receiving That Service.

State/ Region	Title I Funds Leading Service	Title I Funds: Percentage of Region's Children/Youth Served by This Service	McKinney-Vento Act Funds Leading Service	McKinney-Vento Act Funds: Percentage of Region's Children/Youth Served by This Service	Other Funds Leading Service	Other Funds: Percentage of Region's Children/Youth Served by This Service
State	Tutoring or other instructional support	63	Coordination between schools and agencies	6	Other services	23
Region 1	Tutoring or other instructional support	63	Addressing needs related to domestic violence	1	Other services	40
Region 2	Tutoring or other instructional support	59	Clothing to meet a school requirement	12	Other services	23
Region 3	Tutoring or other instructional support	66	Transportation	2	Other services	21
Region 4	Tutoring or other instructional support	69	Transportation	1	Other services	21
Region 5	Tutoring or other instructional support	53	Coordination between schools and agencies	7	Referrals for medical, dental, and other health services	24
Region 6	Tutoring or other instructional support	57	Coordination between schools and agencies	4	Transportation AND addressing needs related to domestic violence	15 / 15
Region 7	Tutoring or other instructional support	66	School supplies	5	Tutoring or other instructional support	18
Region 8	Tutoring or other instructional support	70	Coordination between schools and agencies	22	Emergency assistance related to school attendance	13

Some services provided to children/youth by the ECYEH Program are not captured at the individual student level. 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. This information is captured in the Technical Assistance and Bulk Supply section of the web-based data collection system. Details regarding technical assistance and bulk supplies provided by the ECYEH Program are detailed earlier in the report (pages 17-18).

Title I Services

All students identified as experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Title I services, regardless of whether their school is a Title I school or the student has academic need.²⁰ 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. Before ESSA, if all schools in an LEA received Title I funds then the LEA was not required to set aside funds. However, beginning with the 2017-18 academic year, this changed so that all LEAs receiving Title I funding must set aside funds for students experiencing homelessness.

As described in the service delivery section above, receipt of Title I services is collected or designated in several ways. And, as indicated in Table 5, 77 percent of enrolled students (19,426 of 25,113 students) were documented as receiving Title I services, and those services were most often instructional support services.

Given that higher poverty schools are recipients of Title I funding, and almost all identified children/youth were designated as economically disadvantaged, it would make sense that a majority of students attended LEAs that received Title I funds.

Of the 25,113 students, 96 percent (24,127 student) attended an LEA with one or more schools that received Title I funds, of which 67 percent (16,738 students) attended an LEA with all schools receiving Title I school-wide funding. Thus confirming that poverty is pervasive not only to the identified homeless youth, but to the LEAs they attend.

²⁰ When a school has a 40 percent or higher of the school's enrollment comprised of low-income families, the school is eligible to apply for schoolwide Title I funds. 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.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Academic outcomes and examples of positive student outcomes 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 collected at the state level are not available at the time of this report. Therefore, these results will be analyzed separately and provided to the PDE state homeless staff when the data is finalized, which typically occurs in the spring following the program year. Academic outcomes included here are the state assessment results for students experiencing homelessness.

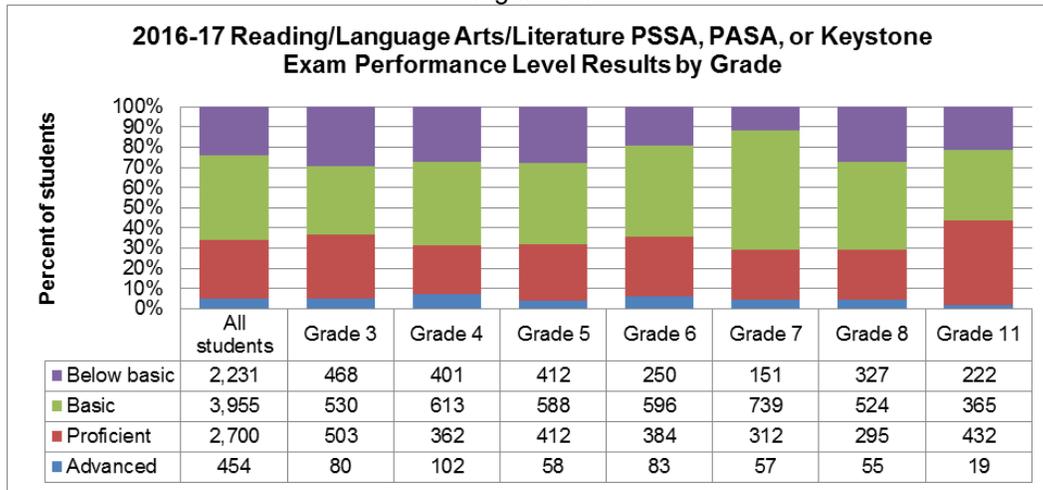
State academic assessment data for 2016-17 includes the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), and the Keystone Exams. The PSSA is given in reading, mathematics, science, and writing. The reading and math assessments are given in grades 3-8; the science assessment is given in grades 4 and 8; and the writing assessment is administered in grades 5 and 8. The PASA assesses students with the most severe cognitive disabilities in four grade level spans (grades 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8, and 11). The 2016-17 Keystone Exams were offered in literature, Algebra I, and biology for grades 7-11 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 grade 11 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.

Reading PSSA/PASA and Literature Keystone Exam

During the 2016-17 school year, there were 12,475 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 9,304 students (75 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, 34 percent of students scored in the proficient or advanced levels. This percentage varied by grade with grade 11 having the greatest percentage of students (43 percent) scoring proficient or advanced, and grades 7 and 8 having the smallest percentage of students (29 percent) scoring proficient or advanced.

Figure 13.

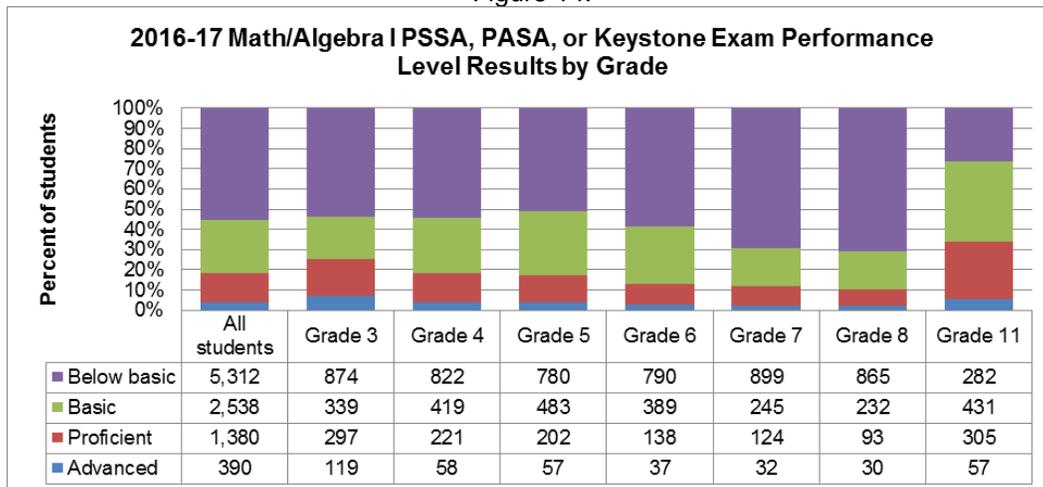


Math PSSA/PASA and Algebra I Keystone Exam

During the 2016-17 school year, there were 12,475 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 9,620 students (77 percent). Figure 14 shows student results in math/Algebra I by the performance level categories: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced, overall and by grade level.

Overall, 18 percent of students assessed scored in the proficient or advanced levels. This percentage varied by grade, with grade 11 grade having the greatest percentage of students (34 percent) scoring in the proficient or advanced levels and grade 8 having the smallest percentage of students (10 percent) scoring proficient or advanced.

Figure 14.

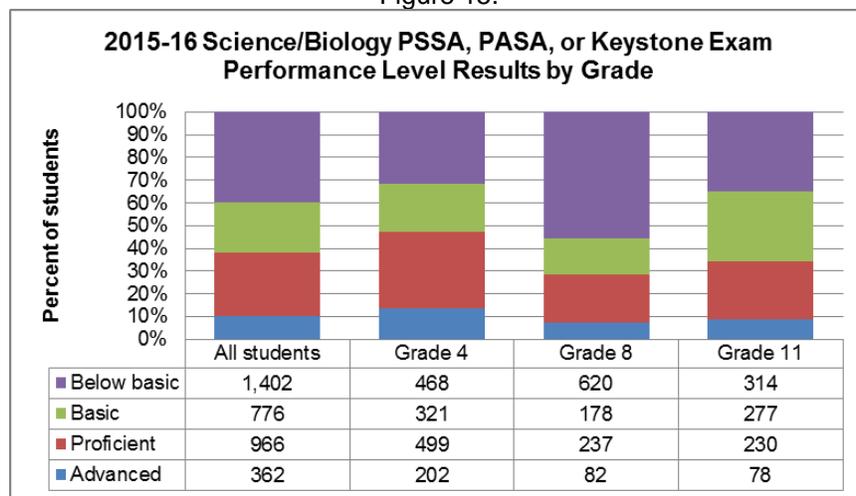


Science PSSA/PASA and Biology Keystone Exam

During the 2016-17 school year, there were 5,100 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 (grade 11), of which results were available for 3,795 students (74 percent). Figure 15 shows student results in science/biology by the performance level categories: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced, overall and by grade level.

Overall, 34 percent of students scored in the proficient or advanced levels, with grade 4 having the largest percentage of students who scored proficient or advanced (44 percent) and grade 8 having the smallest percentage of students who scored proficient or advanced (24 percent).

Figure 15.



Overall the percentage of students taking the state assessments is lower than the designated criteria of 95 percent. Mobility and its effects on attendance is the most likely factor that contributes to not attaining the PSSA participation criteria.

Furthermore, students experiencing homelessness in Pennsylvania scored about 10 percentage points lower than the historically underperforming population²¹ in all grades and content areas.

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

²¹ Historically Underperforming Students are defined as a non-duplicated count of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English Language Learners enrolled for a full academic year taking the PSSA/PASA/Keystone Exams.

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. Below are examples from regional staff.

Region 1: Region 1 chose to highlight success stories from the Teen Evolution Experience Network (TEEN) Program. The program had 15 students, with 10 of them being consistent members; each consistent member attended different workshops, such as our Inspire Series, and has gained community service hours for volunteer work that they have been connected to outside of the program. Students worked on creating their own business plans that include what they're passionate about and seeing how they can make an impact. In addition, they worked on short- and long-term goal setting. Three students began preparing for their next "move," as they like to call it, with one of the seniors being accepted to five Pennsylvania universities, with one offering a sizable scholarship.

Another highlight is related to a TEEN Program alumnus. The student was an unaccompanied youth who had immigrated to the U.S. at a young age. The youth bounced among shelters and houses with little or no help from her family. Despite adversity, this student graduated with honors in 2017 and was accepted to all 10 of the universities to which she applied, even receiving a full scholarship at her school of choice. The student currently attends school full time and has a job and apartment, while maintaining a near 4.0 grade point average.

Region 2: An unaccompanied youth wanted to go to college, but her financial aid did not cover all of her expenses. The high school homeless liaison, the ECYEH coordinator, and a representative from the college worked together to get this student everything she needed to succeed. She was able to start college with a work-study job, a computer, books, school supplies, and basic living supplies. This is a great example of how outreach and collaboration have helped an unaccompanied homeless youth succeed.

Region 3: A student came to our office's attention in the fall of 2016. She was a senior, living in a motel room with her mother, her mother's boyfriend, and his son. An IU employee contacted our office to ask for resources to assist this student. The adults in her family were not reliable and she was working two jobs while attending school, and doing surprisingly well, including applying to colleges for early admission.

Unfortunately, her grades started to slip, and she started missing her van to school. Through the constant collaboration, communication, and outreach between the IU worker, guidance counselor at school, and the Region 3 ECYEH office, all were able to address each situation/barrier that popped up and reassured the student that there were adults in her life who would not give up on her and would continue to push her to graduate. Through donated funds, she was able to enroll in drivers' education to learn how to drive. Teachers and staff volunteered time to get her the additional hours she needed to complete her training. Her grades would go up and down, depending on the

situation she was experiencing, but she always returned strong knowing her education was key. Six weeks prior to graduation, this student made the hard decision to call children and youth and ask to be placed in foster care. This was something she struggled with after her “brother” was removed from her mom and her boyfriend’s care, but she had to make the choice on her own. She was able to attend prom and was treated like royalty with hair and make-up expertly applied and a dress bought at a huge discount. She was able to be a “normal” senior due to the hard work she put in with the assistance of caring adults in her educational life. She graduated with honors and now attends college.

Region 5: One example of a student who has been helped by our program is that of a teen girl and her mother who were living in a shelter. They were displaced by a recent hurricane, and had initially thought that they were going to a family home in Michigan. When they arrived there, the family member had no more room in the home (as others had also ended up relocating there from this disaster). They then took a bus to Pennsylvania to try to find housing with another, more distant relative, with no success and ended up in a family homeless shelter. The mother did not speak any English, and the student was limited in her ability to communicate, although she acted as the interpreter for her mother. ECYEH regional staff assisted in getting her enrolled in the local school and the normal requirements for paperwork were waived. She came to the U.S. with almost no clothing, and what she had was unsuitable for Pennsylvania’s colder climate. Using our grant funds and school Title I funds/donations, we were able to supply this student with a winter wardrobe and school supplies. The school also provided ESL services and she continues to be enrolled and doing well.

Another example is that of a 16 year-old girl whose father recently passed away, leaving her without a legal guardian but with new financial benefits at his death. Her biological mother was estranged from her, and the student had never lived in her home, but initially insisted on taking her in, and moved her across state lines into Ohio. However, this situation quickly changed, and she was "given" to two other relatives in neighboring school districts over the next month who had no legal guardianship. The student ran away, back to her father's home, in order to live with her stepmother and step-siblings, where she had resided for the past 10 years. The district liaison in her school of origin worked to keep the student in school, providing transportation and continuing to allow her to attend, even when she was classified as a "runaway." The stepmother is working with her attorney and the local CYS agency to obtain custody, and the student has remained in school without interruption to date.

Region 6: An unaccompanied youth had been kicked out of his home. He was couch surfing between two different families. A local shelter took him in. He received transportation to school, to vocational technical school, then back to the shelter. Region 6, shelter, school, and a program from the community action agency that assists young adults 19-25 with a disability worked together to assist. He was able to get into his own apartment, finish school, and become employed.

Region 7: A house fire displaced a recently divorced mother and her two children while they had been staying with a relative. The family had no money. ECYEH staff

contacted the mother and found out she and her children, along with her mother, were staying in a local hotel. It was going to be a while before they would get any insurance benefits from the fire. ECYEH immediately provided her with everything they needed for school – clothes, backpacks, and school supplies – and informed her about transportation and free meals. After making sure the children were taken care of in school, ECYEH staff referred her to several additional support agencies. In about a month, she was able to secure temporary housing while her house was being repaired. The students did not experience any interruptions, and she was back on her feet within a couple months. This is yet another example that homelessness can happen to anyone, anytime, and anywhere.

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, identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness 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, several themes have emerged.

- Children/youth experiencing homelessness are predominately economically disadvantaged (pages 32-33).
- A majority of students experiencing homelessness attend LEAs that have high levels of poverty (page 33).
- The majority of students remain in their LEA/school of origin (pages 36).
- Transportation remains one of the most common barriers statewide (page 36).
- Despite some consistency for a large portion of children/youth, there are students who experience extreme mobility or experience barriers to enrollment.

The increase of reporting by non-LEA entities, especially through HMIS reporting and for the pre-kindergarten age/grade categories, continued to grow in 2016-17, and has contributed to the overall increase of identified children and youth even with some populations being removed from McKinney-Vento Act eligibility such as awaiting foster care, which occurred mid-year, and out-of-school youth not engaged in any LEA-operated programs for drop-out, credit recovery, or alternate graduation programs.

This increase is also related to increases in ECYEH staff outreach and new information collection methods are demonstrating 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.

Increases in the number of LEAs with schoolwide Title I schools are positively affecting the number of students experiencing homelessness who receive some type of instructional support.

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. Continue to explore creative transportation options and engage the state office to identify or support solutions that may be helpful to LEAs struggling with transportation issues.
- HMIS reporting in some regions directly contributed to an increase in reporting and more accurate representation of non-enrolled populations, especially the pre-kindergarten populations. While HMIS reporting increased in 2016-17, continue to work with local Continuum of Care contemporaries to capture this population. In instances where extracts cannot be pulled at the system level, individual shelters should be able to extract their own information. Consistent reporting of shelters through the HMIS may normalize the differences among identified children/youth especially among the non-enrolled populations.
- Students experiencing homelessness are performing lower than historically underperforming students in Pennsylvania. 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. Additionally, consider increasing professional development or technical assistance opportunities designed to assist LEAs with examining students' experiencing homelessness school attendance, participation in academic support activities, and assessment data. LEAs should be examining their homeless students much like they examine other subgroups of students in their schools.
- Continue to improve documentation of ECYEH-offered professional development, technical assistance, and engagement activities conducted by or with other entities that work or support homelessness to accurately represent the work that is occurring on behalf of the ECYEH Program. Utilize state technical assistance to monitor and assure that regions are reporting the services they provide accurately.

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, are provided to the regional coordinators and PDE program staff 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.