

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Homeless Education Program (HEP) is designed to facilitate the enrollment, attendance, and academic success of homeless students in the Dallas Independent School District (ISD). Primary program services include (a) Drop-In Centers at 15 Dallas ISD high school campuses and six middle school campuses, (b) removing enrollment barriers for homeless students, and (c) working with the Dallas ISD Transportation Department to ensure homeless students have access to transportation to their schools of origin.¹

The HEP also provides homeless students with the following resources: backpacks, clothes, hygiene items, and school supplies; mentoring services; out-of-school programs; and post-secondary school preparation. Program staff members also work to reduce the stigma and stereotypes attached to homelessness.²

The HEP is federally funded through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which is a U.S. federal law that provides funding and protections for homeless individuals. In 2023-24, the total budget was \$658,054 (\$476,160 from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and \$181,894 from Title I, Part A),³ an increase from \$544,894 during the 2022-23 school year.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation was to describe the context of the program and examine implementation of activities and outcomes of the HEP program in 2023-24. The evaluator analyzed outcomes related to program goals outlined in the 2023-24 Homeless Education Title I, Part A Project Workscope. The evaluator used program implementation data, student characteristics, attendance rates, discipline referrals data, promotion/graduation rates, assessment data, and surveys to evaluate the program.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES⁴

How was the HEP implemented in 2023-24?

Program Activities

¹ The public school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school at which the student was last enrolled.

² Program staff members provide training sessions and videos to inform school personnel and the community on homeless student rights, issues facing homeless students, and HEP services.

³ As reported by Budget Services Department on 07/19/24.

⁴ Because of the transient nature of homeless students in the Dallas ISD, this evaluation reports data for homeless students who were enrolled at any time during the school year. Thus, homeless student and districtwide analyses were conducted using the end-of-year (EOY) district demographic files.

The HEP Title I workscope goals and results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. 2023-24 HEP Title I Workscope Goals and Services Provided

Workscope Goal	Summary of Services Provided	Goal Met
Use the Roving Outreach Center to conduct intake interviews with 600 homeless students/families at three or more shelters and three or more hotels. ¹	The Roving Outreach Center completed 31 events and interviewed 1,154 students.	Yes
Offer out-of-school enrichment activities to homeless students in at least two elementary campuses, as well as provide transportation and materials/supplies to at least 500 students. ²	292 homeless students attended out-of-school activities, 604 students were transported, and materials were provided to 1,643 students.	Yes
Train at least 600 district staff members on the educational rights of homeless students under the McKinney-Vento law. ¹	1,089 district staff members completed the HEP training (562 district staff members completed the HEP online training and 527 received in-person training).	Yes

Source: ¹Data received from HEP on 05/16/24. ²Data received from HEP on 07/11/24.

Note: The Roving Outreach Center is a mobile information booth.

- In 2023-24, the HEP received 13 donations totaling \$153,075 from organizations⁵ and by sharing the HEP Amazon wish list on social media platforms at least once per month.
- The HEP collaborated with After8⁶ to operate the Fannie C. Harris Youth Center, a drop-in center supporting unaccompanied high school youth in Dallas.
- The HEP fulfilled 405 in-district transportation requests, 105 more than in 2022-23.⁷
 - The HEP also split transportation costs with other school districts to transport 604 students who either

⁵ Examples include: 4EveryKid / Soles4Souls (providing shoes for children in need), Undies For Everyone (providing underwear to children in need), and Invesco (providing backpacks and supplies), etc.

⁶ After8 provides drop-in services, tutoring, and helps students move into transitional housing or reunify with their families. For more information, see <http://after8toeducate.com/>.

⁷ The HEP worked with Dallas ISD Student Transportation Services, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), and the transportation services of nearby districts to ensure that all homeless students had consistent transportation to their school of origin.

(a) lived within the Dallas ISD boundary and attended other school districts or (b) lived within other school district boundaries and attended the Dallas ISD.

- The HEP provided Drop-In Centers⁸ at 21 Dallas ISD campuses (15 high schools and six middle schools).

Campus Administrator Survey⁹

- Seventy-two percent of administrators reported that their campus has a designated staff member to work with students experiencing homelessness. Ten percent reported that their campus did not have a designated staff member and 18 percent did not know.
- Fifty-four percent of surveyed administrators reported that they did not receive any training about supporting homeless students and only 26 percent felt that staff members at their campus had sufficient training to support these students.
- Thirty percent of respondents felt that homelessness is a significant problem at their campus, and 28 percent believed that students at their campus had experienced enrollment delays due to homelessness.
- Sixty-seven percent of administrators believed that homeless students were identified somewhat or very effectively on their campus, while 29 percent felt that identification was not very effective or not effective at all.
- The main challenges included identifying homeless students and addressing the need for extra training, securing necessary resources and supplies, facilitating transportation for homeless students, improving student attendance, and enhancing communication between campuses and homeless families.

What were the characteristics of HEP students in 2023-24?

In 2023-24, 3,514 homeless students were enrolled in the Dallas ISD, approximately three percent of the total district population. Approximately two-thirds of homeless students were in grades Early Childhood (EC)-5 (64%) (Table 2).

Table 2: 2023-24 Homeless Student and District Student Enrollment by Grade Level

Grade Levels	Homeless Students (N = 3,514)		District Students (N = 139,630)	
	n	%	N	%
EC-5	2,255	64.2	72,576	52.0
6-8	556	15.8	27,735	19.9
9-12	703	20.0	39,319	28.2

Source: PEIMS EOY demographic file dated 05/13/24.

A smaller percentage of homeless students were Hispanic (54%) compared to the district (72%), and a larger percentage were African American (38%) compared to the district (19%). Thirty-seven percent were considered Emergent Bilingual, compared to the district's 52 percent, representing a ten percent increase from last year. Other characteristics of homeless students were similar to the district overall.

What was the status of homeless students in 2023-24 compared to 2022-23?¹⁰

- Of the Dallas ISD students who were homeless in 2022-23 (N = 4,354), 73 percent graduated or stayed in the Dallas ISD in 2023-24, and 27 percent were no longer enrolled in the district.
- Of the Dallas ISD students identified as homeless in 2023-24 (N = 3,514), 11 percent were previously flagged as homeless in 2022-23, and 89 percent were newly flagged as homeless.
 - Of the 3,115 students who were newly flagged as homeless in 2023-24, 45 percent were in the Dallas ISD in 2022-23, and 55 percent were newly enrolled.

What were the discipline referral, attendance, and promotion/graduation rates for homeless students in 2023-24 compared to previous years?¹¹

Attendance

- The 2023-24 fall and spring semester attendance rates for homeless students were 91 percent and 89 percent, respectively, lower than the district overall (Table 3).

⁸ Drop-In Centers served as hubs for homeless students to access necessary materials, such as food, hygiene products, and school supplies. Leaders provided case management services, referred students to additional services (e.g., housing, medical, dental, and mental health services) as necessary, and organized presentations from outside agencies about numerous topics (e.g., college admissions, career options, etc.).

⁹ Four hundred ninety-four campus administrators answered the survey with a response rate of 33 percent. The survey was sent to Principal Assistants, Counselors, School Clerks, etc., in all DISD campuses.

¹⁰ The data from previous years is sourced from Mickelson (2023).

¹¹ EOY district demographic files were used in this section because analyses included data for homeless students who were enrolled at any time during each school year.

Table 3: 2021-22 through 2023-24 Homeless and District Overall Attendance

Year	Sem	Homeless		District	
		N	%	N	%
2021-22	Fall	3,257	87.6	150,664	91.8
	Spring	3,314	85.8	147,879	90.5
2022-23	Fall	2,517	89.5	134,378	93.0
	Spring	3,088	88.6	139,058	92.7
2023-24	Fall	2,929	90.8	133,557	94.0
	Spring	3,513	88.8	139,618	92.4

Source: District EOY demographic files dated 06/21/22 (2021-22), 05/22/23 (2022-23), and 05/13/24 (2023-24). District attendance files dated 06/29/22 (2021-22), 06/28/23 (2022-23), and 05/31/24 (2023-24).
Note: Sem = Semester.

Discipline Referral Rates

- The discipline referral rates for homeless students trended slightly upward from two-point nine percent in 2022-23 to three-point three percent in 2023-24 but remained slightly higher compared to the district overall (Table 4).

Table 4: 2021-22 and 2023-24 Homeless Student and District Overall Discipline Referral Rates

Year	Homeless Students		District Students	
	N	%	N	%
2021-22	3,904	3.8	166,832	2.6
2022-23	3,088	2.9	139,078	2.7
2023-24	3,514	3.3	139,630	3.1

Source: EOY demographic files dated 05/31/22 (2021-22), 05/22/23 (2022-23), and 05/13/24 (2023-24). District discipline files dated 07/18/22 (2021-22), 07/26/23 (2022-23), and 07/22/24 (2023-24).

Promotion Rates

Annual promotion rates for HEP students by grade level are presented in Table 5.

- From 2022-23 (EOY) to 2023-24 (BOY), the rate of homeless students who returned to the district ranged from 59 percent (grades 9-11) to 73 percent (grades 6-8), which was lower than the district (82% to 91%).
- These rates were similar to the previous year [2021-22 (EOY) to 2022-23 (BOY)], except for grades 6 to 8 and grades 9 to 11, which trended slightly downward for homeless students (78% to 73% and 65% to 59%, respectively).

Table 5: 2021-22 and 2022-23 Homeless and District Overall Promotion Rates

Year	Sem	Homeless		District	
		N	%	N	%
2021-22 (EOY) to 2022-23 (BOY)	EC-5	1,122	69.0	60,591	84.5
	6-8	422	78.3	27,080	91.0
2022-23 (EOY) to 2023-24 (BOY)	9-11	360	65.1	25,072	81.8
	EC-5	1,270	67.1	59,777	84.1
2023-24 (EOY) to 2024-25 (BOY)	6-8	374	72.8	25,586	90.5
	9-11	309	59.2	25,115	82.4

Source: District EOY demographic files dated 06/21/22 (2021-22) and 06/20/23 (2022-23). District BOY demographic files dated 08/29/22 (2021-22) and 08/28/23 (2022-23).

Note: Sem = Semester.

Graduation Rates

- Of the 171 homeless seniors enrolled at the end of the 2023-24 school year, 95 percent graduated, which was three percent higher than the district rate (Table 6).
- Annual graduation rates for HEP students trended upward over the past two years (89% in 2021-22, 92% in 2022-23).

Table 6: 2021-22 through 2023-24 Annual Grade 12 Homeless Student and District Overall Graduation Rates

Year	Homeless Students		District Students	
	N	%	N	%
2021-22	130	89.2	8,691	91.8
2022-23	131	92.4	8,789	92.2
2023-24	171	95.3	8,674	93.3

Source: EOY demographic files dated 06/21/22 (2021-22), 05/22/23 (2022-23), and 05/13/24 (2023-24). District graduation files dated 07/18/22 (2021-22), 07/17/23 (2022-23), and 07/11/24 (2023-24). Homeless students include only seniors enrolled at the end of the year.

What were the 2023-24 academic achievement outcomes for HEP students?

- Across all tests and grade levels, HEP students met Approaches+ standards at lower rates than the district (Table 7). The largest differences were for grades 6-8 readings and mathematics tests (18 percentage points).
- Across all tests and grade levels, HEP students met Meets+ standards at lower rates than the district (Table 8). The largest differences were for grades 3-5 mathematics tests, grades 6-8 reading tests, and grades 9-12 U.S. History tests (17 percentage points).

Table 7: 2023-24 Rate of Homeless and District Students at Approaches+ on STAAR and STAAR EOC

	Homeless		District	
	Tested N	App+ %	Tested N	App+ %
STAAR (Grades 3-5)				
Reading	711	57.5	29,983	68.4
Mathematics	725	47.7	29,975	65.0
STAAR (Grades 6-8)				
Reading	523	51.1	27,192	68.6
Mathematics	473	44.6	22,121	62.6
STAAR EOC (Grades 9-12)				
Algebra I	203	61.6	8,737	69.8
Biology	208	83.2	12,071	88.6
English I	269	50.9	14,311	58.8
English II	206	64.1	13,169	67.0
U.S. History	150	89.3	9,885	93.5

Source: EOY demographic file dated 05/13/24. STAAR and STAAR EOC district data files dated 06/17/24.

Note: App+ = Approaches+. Data include all versions of STAAR and first and second administrations of all versions of STAAR EOCs.

Table 8: 2023-24 Percentage of Homeless and District Students at Meets+ on STAAR and STAAR EOC

	Homeless		District	
	Tested N	Meets+ %	Tested N	Meets+ %
STAAR (Grades 3-5)				
Reading	695	27.2	29,278	40.8
Mathematics	693	22.1	29,270	38.6
STAAR (Grades 6-8)				
Reading	512	29.9	26,598	46.5
Mathematics	459	15.0	21,527	30.8
STAAR EOC (Grades 9-12)				
Algebra I	198	17.2	8,542	23.5
Biology	202	31.2	11,861	46.5
English I	264	27.7	14,108	39.5
English II	203	43.8	12,990	48.2
U.S. History	148	44.6	9,700	61.6

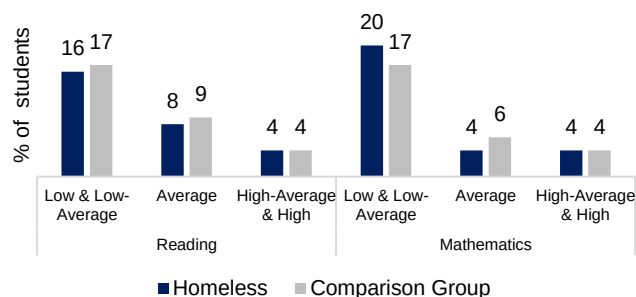
Source: District EOY demographic file dated 05/13/24. STAAR and STAAR EOC district data files dated 06/17/24.

Note: Data include all versions of STAAR and first and second administrations of all versions of STAAR EOCs.

- When analyzing EOY MAP Achievement Quintiles by comparing homeless students with matched students based on sociodemographic factors and BOY performance, there are minimal differences in Reading (English) and Mathematics (1 to 3 percentage points) (Figure 1). This suggests that

the HEP is effective in helping homeless students catch up with their matched peers.

Figure 1: EOY 2023-24 MAP Student Achievement Quintiles in Reading (English) and Mathematics by Homeless and Comparison Group



Source: District EOY MAP data file dated 05/23/24.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue identifying and providing essential services to HEP students, parents, and campuses. The HEP assisted campus staff in identifying homeless students, arranged transportation, and advocated for students when needed. These efforts helped prevent enrollment delays and other barriers to regular attendance, thus promoting student success. Furthermore, the program supplied essential hygiene items, clothing, and school supplies to help reduce the social stigma of homelessness.

Continue working with program partners that provide HEP students with quality tutoring at community and drop-in centers. Academic achievement for homeless students in Dallas ISD is generally lower than that of the district overall. However, when more precise comparisons are made, the HEP proves effective in helping these students catch up with their matched peers. Therefore, it is recommended that the HEP continues to collaborate with program partners to monitor tutoring services. Ensuring homeless students receive adequate and relevant tutoring, particularly in Mathematics where they struggle more, is essential for improving their academic performance.

REFERENCE

Mickelson, N. R. (2023). 2022-23 Evaluation of the Homeless Education Program. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

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