

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 two 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 2022-23, the total budget was \$544,894 (\$363,000 from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and \$181,894 from Title I, Part A),³ an increase from \$537,435 during the 2021-22 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 2022-23.⁴

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/RESULTS⁵

How was the HEP implemented in 2022-23?

Methodology

Program Activities

Implementation data about HEP services was collected through interviews with program staff members and review of program documents and website. Program staff members provided lists of material and transportation requested, trainings conducted, and Cornerstone HEP trainings completed in 2022-23.

Campus Administrator Survey

To assess the extent to which campus staff members understood homeless student issues and ensure students are prepared to immediately enroll, the evaluator administered a campus administrator survey in May 2023.

The survey included items about the following: staff awareness and training; student identification and enrollment; homeless service delivery; and interagency knowledge and coordination. The evaluator used frequency and crosstabs analyses to calculate the percentage of survey respondents selecting each response option.

Results

Program Activities

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

Table 1. 2022-23 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 250 homeless students/families at three or more shelters and hotels ¹	The Roving Outreach Center completed 21 events and interviewed 365 students and families.	Yes
Train at least 500 district staff members on the educational rights of homeless students under the McKinney-Vento law. ¹	419 district staff members completed the HEP online training; 760 received in-person training.	Yes
Provide out-of-school activities for at least 400 homeless students. ²	411 homeless students attended out-of-school activities.	Yes

Source: ¹Data received from HEP on 06/28/23. ²Data received from HEP on 08/16/23.

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

- In 2023-23, the HEP received 12 donations totaling \$196,815 from organizations⁶ and by sharing the HEP Amazon wish list on social media platforms at least once per month.

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 06/21/23.

⁴ Portions of this report were adapted from Mickelson (2021).

⁵ More detailed methodological considerations are also available in that report. 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.

⁶ Examples include: Undies For Everyone (providing underwear to children in need) and Soles4Souls (providing shoes for children in need).

- The HEP worked with After8⁷ to operate the Fannie C. Harris Youth Center, a drop-in center supporting unaccompanied high school youth in Dallas.
- The HEP fulfilled 300 in-district transportation requests.⁸
 - The HEP also split transportation costs with other school districts to transport 37 students who either (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.
- In partnership with Promise House⁹, the HEP provided Drop-In Centers¹⁰ at 15 Dallas ISD campuses (13 high schools and two middle schools).

Campus Administrator Survey

- Sixty-eight percent of administrators reported that their campus has a designated staff member to work with students experiencing homelessness. Thirteen percent reported that their campus did not have a designated staff member and over 18 percent did not know.
- Fifty-six percent of administrators reported that they did not receive any training about supporting homeless students.
- Twelve percent of respondents were at campuses without a staff member designated to work with students experiencing homelessness. Eighteen percent of respondents did not know.
- Forty-one percent of respondents felt that homelessness is a significant problem at their campus, and 23 percent of believed that students at their campus had experienced enrollment delays due to homelessness.
- While 51 percent of respondents reported that community-based organizations near their campus could support students experiencing homeless, only 27 percent felt that staff members at their campus had sufficient training to support these students.

What were the characteristics of HEP students in 2022-23?

Methodology

Descriptive analyses were conducted to summarize the characteristics of HEP students and district students overall using the 2022-23 end-of-year (EOY) demographic file dated 06/20/23.

⁷ 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/>.
⁸ 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.
⁹ For more information, see <https://promisehouse.org/>.

Results

In 2022-23, 4,354 homeless students were enrolled in the Dallas ISD, approximately three percent of the total district population. More homeless students were in grades Early Childhood (EC)-5 (62%) than other grade levels (Table 2).

Table 2: 2022-23 Homeless Student and District Student Enrollment by Grade Level

Grade Levels	Homeless Students (N = 4,354)		District Students (N = 139,014)	
	n	%	n	%
EC-5	2,710	62.2	71,461	51.4
6-8	723	16.6	28,266	20.3
9-12	921	21.2	39,287	28.3

Source: PEIMS demographic file dated 11/01/21 and EOY demographic file dated 06/20/23.

A larger percentage of homeless students were African American (47%) compared to the district (20%), and a smaller percentage were Hispanic (45%) than the district (71%). A smaller percentage were considered Emergent Bilingual (27%) than the district (52%). Other characteristics of homeless students were similar to the district overall.

What was the status of homeless students in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22?

Methodology

Frequency analyses were used to determine if 2021-22 homeless students¹¹ stayed within the Dallas ISD, left the district, or changed homeless status in 2022-23.

Results

- Of the Dallas ISD students who were homeless in 2021-22 (N = 3,904), 71 percent graduated or stayed in the Dallas ISD in 2022-23, and 29 percent were no longer enrolled in the district.
- Of the Dallas ISD students identified as homeless in 2022-23 (N = 4,354), 10 percent were previously flagged as homeless in 2021-22, and 90 percent were newly flagged as homeless.
 - Of the 3,932 students who were newly flagged as homeless in 2022-23, 41% were in the Dallas ISD in 2021-22, and 59% were newly enrolled.

What were the discipline referral, attendance, and promotion/graduation rates for homeless students in 2022-23 compared to previous years?

¹⁰ 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.).
¹¹ Identified in the district demographic file dated 06/21/22.

Methodology¹²

Discipline Referral Rates

Descriptive analyses were conducted using EOY district demographic file with the corresponding discipline referral file to compare the rate of homeless students and district students overall who received a disciplinary referral in 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Attendance Rates

Descriptive analyses were conducted to compare semester attendance rates for homeless students and the district overall in 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23. For each school year, the EOY district demographic file was merged with the EOY attendance file.

Promotion Rates

For promotion rates (i.e., the rate of students who stayed in the district), the evaluator merged each EOY district demographic file with the beginning-of-year (BOY) demographic file for the subsequent school year. Descriptive analyses were used to compare the 2020-21 and 2021-22 promotion rates by grade level for homeless students and the district overall.

Graduation Rates

For graduation rates, the evaluator merged each EOY district demographic file with the corresponding graduation file. Descriptive analyses were used to compare the 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 graduation rates for homeless students and the district overall.

Results

Attendance¹³

- The 2022-23 fall and spring semester attendance rates for homeless students were 90 percent and 89 percent, respectively, lower than the district overall (Table 3).

Table 3: 2020-21 through 2022-23 Homeless and District Overall Attendance

Year	Sem	Homeless		District	
		N	%	N	%
2020-21	Fall	4,289	88.3	145,056	91.2
	Spring	4,289	91.2	145,056	93.9
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

Source: District EOY demographic files dated 06/21/21 (2020-21), 06/21/22 (2021-22), and 05/22/23 (2022-23). District attendance files dated 08/20/21 (2020-21), 06/29/22 (2021-22), and 06/28/23 (2022-23).

Note: Sem = Semester. ¹Some students learned remotely during the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19.

Discipline Referral Rates

- From 2021-22 to 2022-23, the discipline referral rates for homeless students trended slightly downward from four percent to three percent, which was the same as the district overall in 2022-23 (Table 4).

Table 4: 2021-22 and 2022-23 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

Source: EOY demographic files dated 05/31/22 (2021-22) and 05/22/23 (2022-23). District discipline files dated 07/21/21 (2020-21), 07/18/22 (2021-22), and 07/26/23 (2022-23).

Promotion Rates

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

- From 2021-22 (EOY) to 2022-23 (BOY), the rate of homeless students who remained in the district ranged from 77 percent (grades 9-11) to 98 percent (grades EC-5), which was lower than the district (88% to 99%).
- These rates were similar to the previous year [2020-21 (EOY) to 2021-22 (BOY)], except for grades 9 to 11, which trended slightly upward for homeless students (72% to 77%) and the district (82% to 88%).

Table 5: 2020-21 and 2021-22 Homeless and District Overall Promotion Rates

Year	Sem	Homeless		District	
		N	%	N	%
2020-21 (EOY) to 2021-22 (BOY)	EC-5	1,541	90.7	63,640	95.4
	6-8	595	97.5	28,191	98.4
	9-11	519	72.4	28,058	82.3
2021-22 (EOY) to 2022-23 (BOY)	EC-5	1,149	90.3	55,519	93.9
	6-8	448	98.4	26,735	99.1
	9-11	519	76.5	30,585	88.1

Source: District EOY demographic files dated 06/21/21 (2020-21) and 06/21/22 (2021-22). District BOY demographic files dated 08/30/21 (2020-21) and 08/29/22 (2021-22).

Note: Sem = Semester. ¹Some students learned remotely during the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19.

Graduation Rates

Graduation rates for HEP students by grade level are presented in Table 6.

- Of the 131 homeless seniors enrolled at the end of the 2022-23 school year, 92 percent graduated, which was the same as the district rate.
- Annual graduation rates for HEP students trended slightly upward over the past two years (87% in 2020-21, 89% in 2021-22).

¹² 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.

¹³ Results should be viewed with caution because some students learned remotely due to the impact of COVID 19 during the 2020-21 school year.

Table 6: 2020-21 through 2022-23 Annual Grade 12 Homeless Student and District Overall Graduation Rates

Year	Homeless Students		District Students	
	N	%	N	%
2020-21	159	86.7	8,777	89.1
2021-22	130	89.2	8,691	91.8
2022-23	131	92.4	8,789	92.2

Source: EOY demographic files dated 06/21/21 (2020-21), 06/21/22 (2021-22), and 05/22/23 (2022-23). District graduation files dated 07/21/21 (2020-21), 07/18/22 (2021-22), and 07/17/23 (2022-23). Homeless students include only seniors enrolled at the end of the year.

What were the academic achievement outcomes for HEP students?

Methodology

The evaluator conducted frequency analyses to determine the percentage of students at the Approaches Grade Level or Above (Approaches+; Table 7) and Meets Grade Level or Above (Meets+; Table 8) standards on the *State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR; grades 3-5 and 6-8)*, and *STAAR End of Course (EOC) exams*.

Results

- 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 3-5 mathematics tests (18 percentage points).

Table 7: 2022-23 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	628	57.0	29,441	70.5
Mathematics	639	54.5	29,432	72.5
STAAR (Grades 6-8)				
Reading	488	62.9	27,577	72.5
Mathematics	456	54.6	23,434	70.3
STAAR EOC (Grades 9-12)				
Algebra I	282	58.5	14,249	75.0
Biology	229	78.2	12,629	84.6
English I	305	48.2	15,905	61.7
English II	212	50.5	14,209	65.2
U.S. History	138	89.9	9,913	92.7

Source: EOY demographic file dated 05/22/23. STAAR and STAAR EOC district data files dated 08/12/23.

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

- 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 (20 percentage points).

Table 8: 2022-23 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	611	28.0	28,737	43.9
Mathematics	611	25.2	28,728	44.8
STAAR (Grades 6-8)				
Reading	475	30.3	26,959	45.6
Mathematics	437	22.2	22,816	36.3
STAAR EOC (Grades 9-12)				
Algebra I	280	20.4	14,054	38.1
Biology	227	27.3	12,436	45.2
English I	303	26.4	15,714	40.0
English II	208	24.5	14,002	42.7
U.S. History	133	45.1	5,867	60.3

Source: District EOY demographic file dated 05/22/23. STAAR and STAAR EOC district data files dated 08/12/23.

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue identifying and providing essential services to HEP students, parents, and campuses. The HEP aided in identification of homeless students by campus staff, facilitated transportation needs, and advocated for students as necessary. These services promoted student success by avoiding enrollment delays and other obstacles to consistent attendance. Additionally, the program provided essential hygiene items, clothing, and school supplies to ease the social stigma associated with homelessness.

Continue working with program partners that provide HEP students with quality tutoring at community and drop-in centers. Academic achievement for Dallas ISD homeless students was lower than the district. The HEP should continue working with program partners to track tutoring services and ensure that homeless students receive adequate and relevant tutoring.

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