



Florida's Homeless Students Concentrated in Suburbs

This snapshot is part of a series analyzing student homelessness in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Visit www.ICPHusa.org for more information.

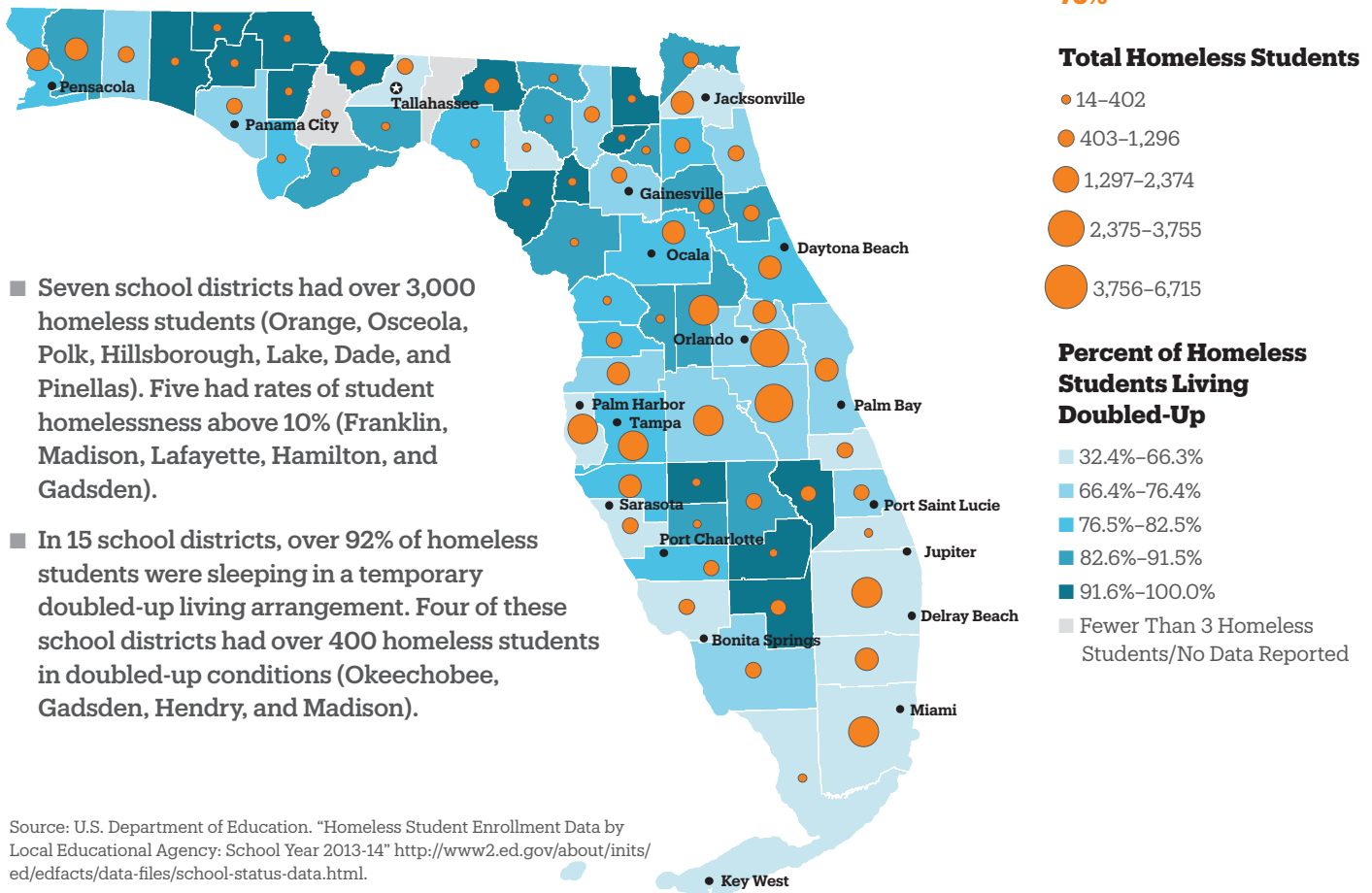
- In the 2013–14 school year, Florida had 2,720,744 students enrolled in 74 local education agencies (school districts) representing the state's 67 counties and other agencies.¹
- That year, there were 67,402 homeless students in the state, making up 2.5% of total enrollment.²
- Florida had the 4th highest number of homeless students and the 20th highest rate of student homelessness in the U.S.
- School districts with the highest rates of student homelessness were Franklin County (22%) and Madison County (21%).

FIGURE 1

Number of Homeless Students and Percent Living Doubled-Up³

By School District, SY 2013–14

In its definition of homelessness, ED includes students in shelter as well as those with no option but to stay with others in overcrowded, often unsafe living conditions.



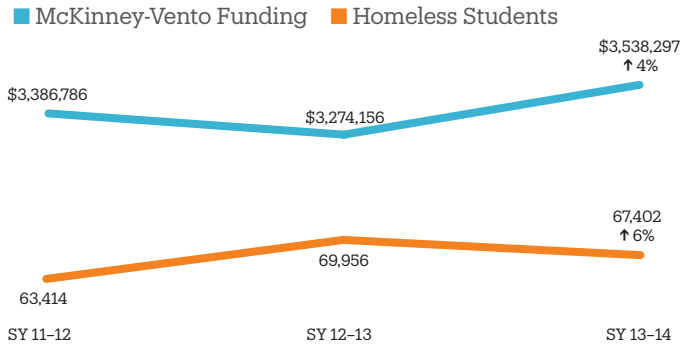
Source: U.S. Department of Education. "Homeless Student Enrollment Data by Local Educational Agency: School Year 2013-14" <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/data-files/school-status-data.html>.

FIGURE 2

McKinney-Vento Funding and Number of Homeless Students

SY 2011-12 to SY 2013-14

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, established by McKinney-Vento, is the primary source of federal funding for homeless students in elementary and secondary school.



- Since SY 2011-12, Florida's McKinney-Vento funding increased 4%, to \$3.5 million. Over the same period, the number of homeless students rose 6%, to 67,402. Florida had the 31st highest rate of growth in student homelessness nationwide during that time.
- On average, Florida received \$52.50 per homeless student in SY 2013-14, down from \$53.41 in SY 2011-12. Nationally, the per-student average for SY 2013-14 was \$49.98.

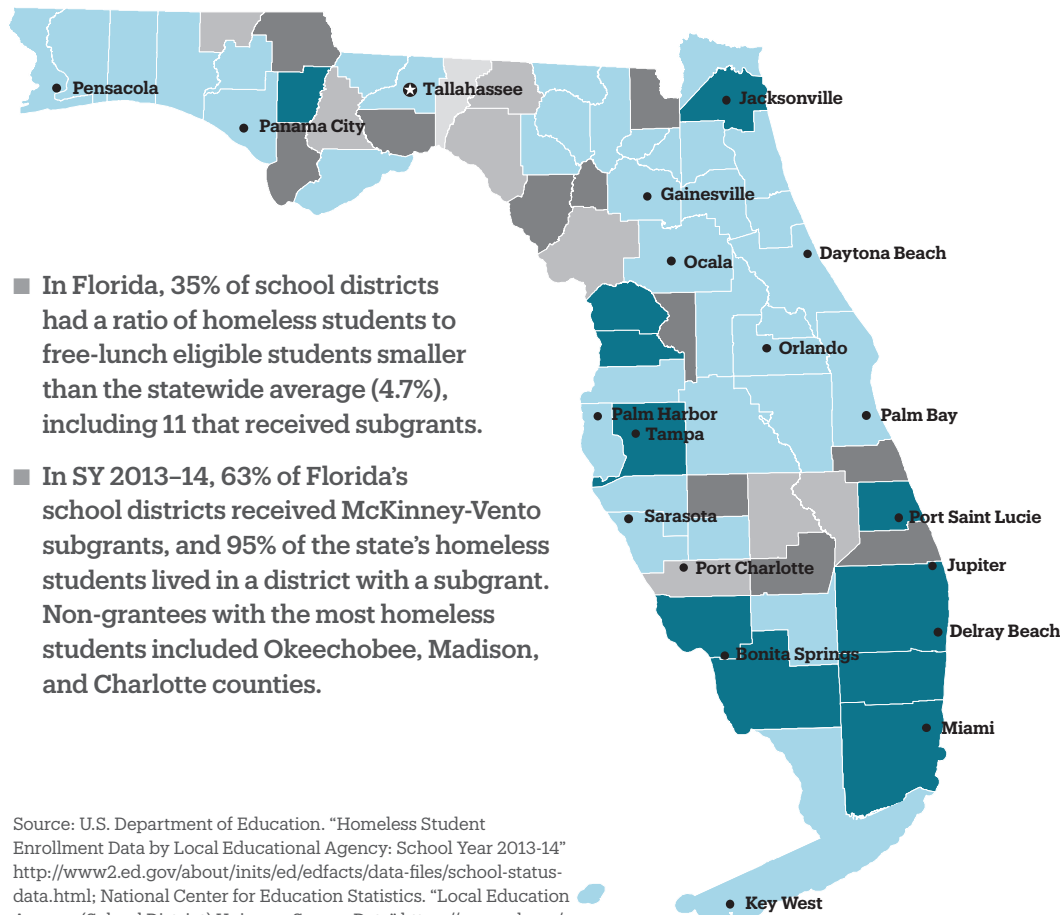
Source: National Center for Homeless Education, "McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Actual State Funding Allocations, 2001-2016"; National Center for Homeless Education, "Federal Data Summary School Years 2011-12 to 2013-14: Education for Homeless Children and Youth" <http://nche.ed.gov/downloads/data-comp-1112-1314.pdf>.

FIGURE 3

School Districts Receiving McKinney-Vento Subgrants and Ratio of Homeless Students to Free-Lunch Eligible Students

By School District, SY 2013-14

Comparing the numbers of homeless and low-income students is a way to gauge how well schools are identifying homeless students.



- In Florida, 35% of school districts had a ratio of homeless students to free-lunch eligible students smaller than the statewide average (4.7%), including 11 that received subgrants.
- In SY 2013-14, 63% of Florida's school districts received McKinney-Vento subgrants, and 95% of the state's homeless students lived in a district with a subgrant. Non-grantees with the most homeless students included Okeechobee, Madison, and Charlotte counties.

Statewide

Number of districts that received a subgrant:

48

Percent of districts that received a subgrant:

65%

Number of homeless students:

67,402

Number of students eligible for free lunch:

1,419,108

Ratio of homeless students to free-lunch eligible students:

4.7%

Received Subgrant

Ratio of Homeless Students to Free-Lunch Eligible Students

■ Below State Average (<4.7%)

■ Above State Average (>4.7%)

Did Not Receive Subgrant

Ratio of Homeless Students to Free-Lunch Eligible Students

■ Below State Average (<4.7%)

■ Above State Average (>4.7%)

■ Data Unavailable

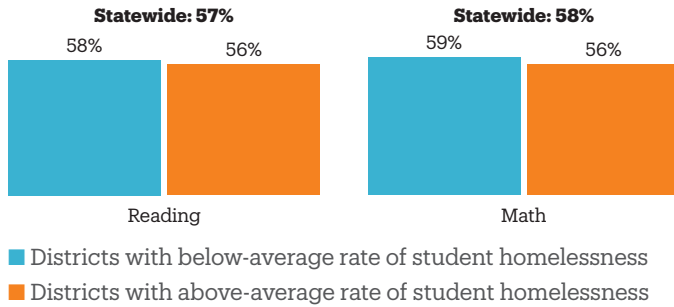
Source: U.S. Department of Education. "Homeless Student Enrollment Data by Local Educational Agency: School Year 2013-14" <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/data-files/school-status-data.html>; National Center for Education Statistics. "Local Education Agency (School District) Universe Survey Data" <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pubagency.asp>.

FIGURE 4

Proficiency in 3rd Grade Reading and Math

SY 2013-14

Student performance in third grade is a strong predictor of high school graduation, and has been shown to be affected by family and socioeconomic factors.



- The achievement gap between districts with high and low rates of homelessness was narrow. Third grade students in areas with above-average rates of student homelessness passed their state assessments at rates only 2-3 percentage points lower than in districts with below-average rates of student homelessness.
- Nassau County had the highest passing rates among districts with above-average homelessness, with 73% of students passing both math and reading. Three districts had passing rates below 50% on both tests.

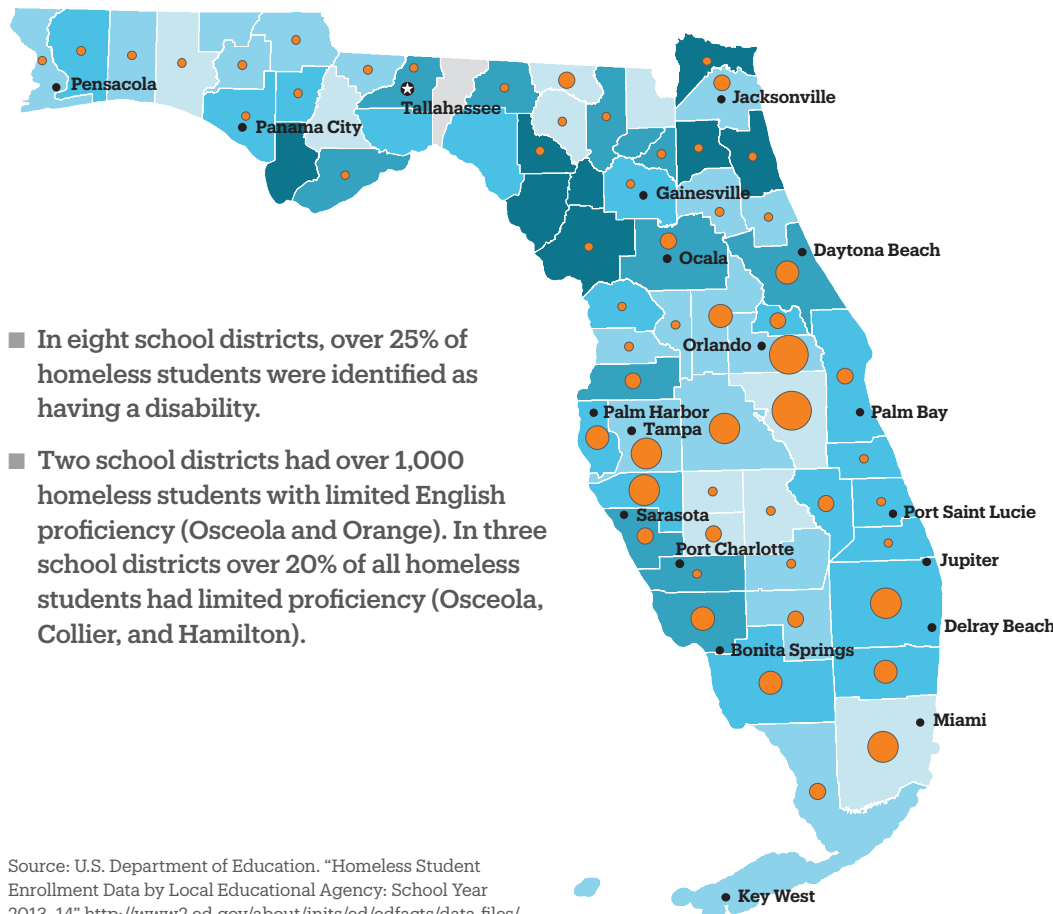
Source: U.S. Department of Education. "Homeless Student Enrollment Data by Local Educational Agency: School Year 2013-14" <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/data-files/school-status-data.html>; Florida Department of Education, "2014 State and District Scores for all Curriculum Groups" <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/results/2014.stml>.

FIGURE 5

Homeless Students with Disabilities and Homeless Students with Limited English Proficiency

By School District, SY 2013-14

Students with disabilities or limited English proficiency are eligible for additional support services but may have difficulty accessing them if they are homeless.



- In eight school districts, over 25% of homeless students were identified as having a disability.
- Two school districts had over 1,000 homeless students with limited English proficiency (Osceola and Orange). In three school districts over 20% of all homeless students had limited proficiency (Osceola, Collier, and Hamilton).

Statewide

Number of *homeless* students with disabilities:

11,979

Percent of *homeless* students with disabilities:

18%

Percent of *all* students with disabilities:

13%

Number of *homeless* students with limited English proficiency:

6,872

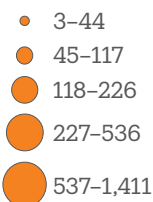
Percent of *homeless* students with limited English proficiency:

10%

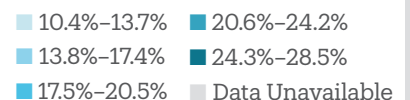
Percent of *all* students with limited English proficiency:

9%

Number of Homeless Students with Limited English Proficiency



Percent of Homeless Students with Disabilities



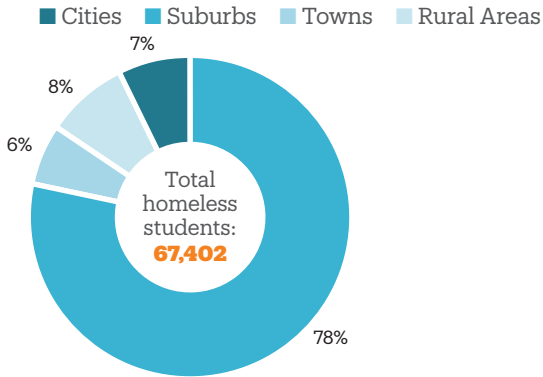
Source: U.S. Department of Education. "Homeless Student Enrollment Data by Local Educational Agency: School Year 2013-14" <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/data-files/school-status-data.html>.

FIGURE 6

Where Homeless Students Live, by Population Density

SY 2013–14

Families in rural areas or small towns often have fewer shelters or services to turn to for assistance.



Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Department of Education. "Homeless Student Enrollment Data by Local Educational Agency: School Year 2013-14" <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/data-files/school-status-data.html>; U.S. Department of Education. "NCES Common Core of Data Local Education Agency Universe Survey: School Year 2013-14" <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/pubagency.asp>.

- In Florida, 78% of homeless students lived in suburban school districts, including over 44,000 students who lived in areas of over a quarter-million people. Among mid-size suburbs, three districts had over 1,000 homeless students each (Polk, Lake, and Bay).
- Homelessness was disproportionately seen in Florida's small towns and rural areas. Despite enrolling only 7% of the total student population in the state, these districts accounted for 14% of all homeless students.

Homeless students are too often overlooked by policy-makers when talking about education policy. Improving outcomes and supports for homeless students reduces the burden on teachers, parents, and schools who struggle to help students cope with the trauma of homelessness along with the challenges of poverty.

Questions for educators and state/local legislators to consider:

- Do you know how many homeless children live in your town? In your state?
- Is your school district a McKinney-Vento grantee? How much funding does it receive? How is it used?
- What supports are being provided to help homeless children toward better educational outcomes?
- Are the challenges that homeless students face, such as chronic absenteeism and difficulty traveling to and from school, being addressed?
- Are the educational needs specific to homeless students being identified?
- Does your public school have a dedicated liaison whose priority and focus is the needs of homeless students?
- Do schools coordinate with the shelter system or service delivery system?
- Are homeless students being granted access to services to which they are entitled (e.g. transportation, tutoring, special education, health care, food)?

Data tables for the figures seen here will be available at www.ICPHusa.org starting in January 2017.

Endnotes

(1) Florida's local education agencies include laboratory schools, charter agencies, and specialized state agencies that cannot be mapped but are included in all other data analysis. (2) Unless otherwise noted, statewide data is from National Center for Homeless Education, "Federal Data Summary School Years 2011-12 to 2013-14: Education for Homeless Children and Youth" <http://nche.ed.gov/downloads/data-comp-1112-1314.pdf>; National Center for Homeless Education, "Florida" <http://profiles.nche.seiservices.com/StateProfile.aspx?StateID=11>. (3) "Doubled-up" refers to homeless students identified as staying with others when they were initially found eligible under McKinney-Vento law.

ICPH Institute for Children,
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ICPH is an independent, New York City-based public policy organization that works on the issues of family homelessness and poverty.

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