

More than 10,000 Children and Youth in Philadelphia Experienced Homelessness in School Year 2023

Part 3



**Funding for Innovative Strategies
Are About to Run Out**

Prepared by the Policy Department of HopePHL

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Introduction

In This Paper:

- Data on Students Experiencing Homelessness by Grade, Location
- Truancy
- Absenteeism
- Academic Achievement
- Evidence & Innovative Solutions

The School District of Philadelphia (SDP) supports homeless students with its Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) office, a federally funded program.

Funds allocated toward ECYEH are used for staffing to train school personnel in 300 public district and charter schools and provide direct services like uniforms, transportation, mentoring, summer programming, school supplies, and more to better support students experiencing homelessness.

This paper shares data recently published by the SDP and the Pennsylvania Department of Education using School Year (SY) 2022-23 data – the best publicly available source of data. The report offers insight for decision makers about the prevalence of student homelessness, challenges, and recommendations.

The SDP's American Rescue Plan funds (ARP) (the primary source of funding for this critical work since 2020) have expired and the new capacity and **supports for students will disappear on June 30, 2025**. No plans have been developed to build on or continue this support; the School District informed advocates¹ that available state funding is not adequate to support homeless students.

The Parker Administration and City Council can **support these essential services by allocating \$4.5 million over three years in the upcoming city budget** so that homeless students receive the support they need to learn and thrive.

¹ Meeting August 19, 2024 between School District leadership and youth advocates.



Who Should Read This?

Youth and student advocates commend the **thousands of counselors, teachers, social workers, secretaries, school administrators, and other school personnel** for their support of all children and youth experiencing homelessness. Their work is so important to stabilizing a child experiencing homelessness struggling to participate in school.

We urge the Parker Administration, the Philadelphia City Council, and private foundations to understand the data and consider continuing and expanding efforts to reach out to children and youth who experience homelessness.

Advocates recognize that the 20% increase in the numbers of children and youth experiencing homelessness (over 10,000 individuals) relates to recent socioeconomic trends but is also a factor of improved data collection and training by the School District's 'Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness' (ECYEH) office, and increased funding from the ARP.

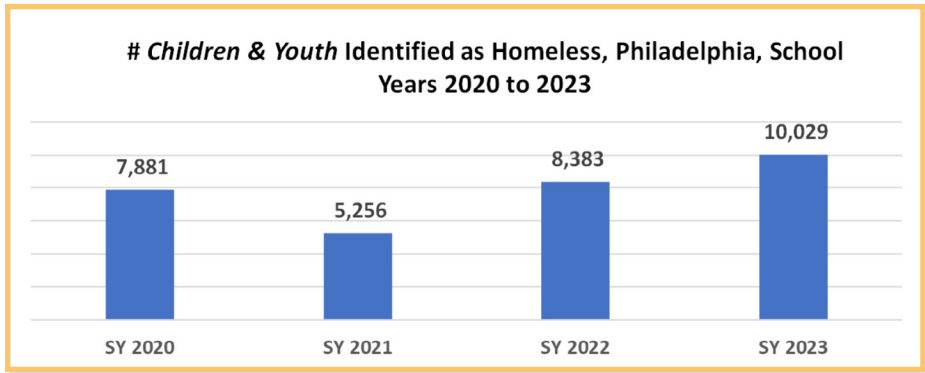
The original source for the data in this report data can be found at:

- [Education of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in SDP 22-23.](#)
- [Pennsylvania ECYEH State Evaluation Report 22-23.](#)
- [22-23 Pennsylvania ECYEH Counts By Reporting Entities.](#)

Summary of Key Findings:

- Philadelphia identified and supported 10,029 children and youth as experiencing homelessness in School Year (SY) 2023, a 20% increase since the previous year, and a 27% increase since 2020.
- Of the 10,029 children and youth:
 - 7,603 children and youth from Pre-K to Grade 12 experienced homelessness in 2023.
 - 3,233 were infants, toddlers and PreK children, or 32% of all homeless children and youth. (Of this total, there were 1,225 infants and toddlers.)
- Students identified as “doubling up,” living with others because of economic loss or hardship, increased 5% over the past year.
- Students experiencing homelessness have a higher rate of truancy and being suspended, and significantly lower academic achievement than their housed peers.
- National evidence shows outcomes of:
 - Increased identification.
 - Improved attendance and decreased chronic absence.
 - Improved academic achievement.
 - Improved high school graduation.

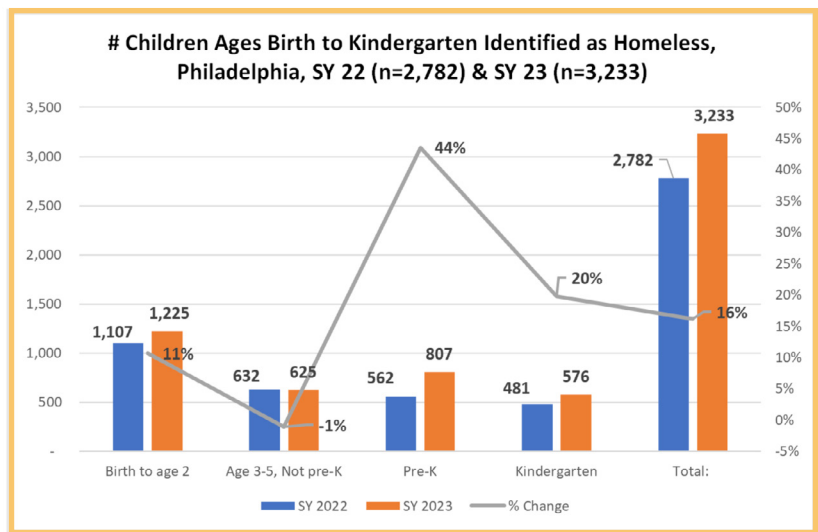
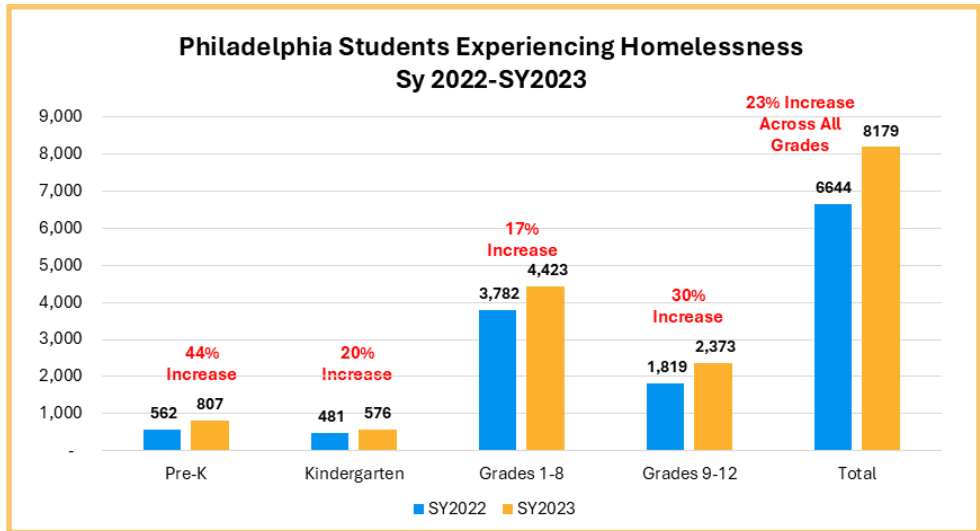


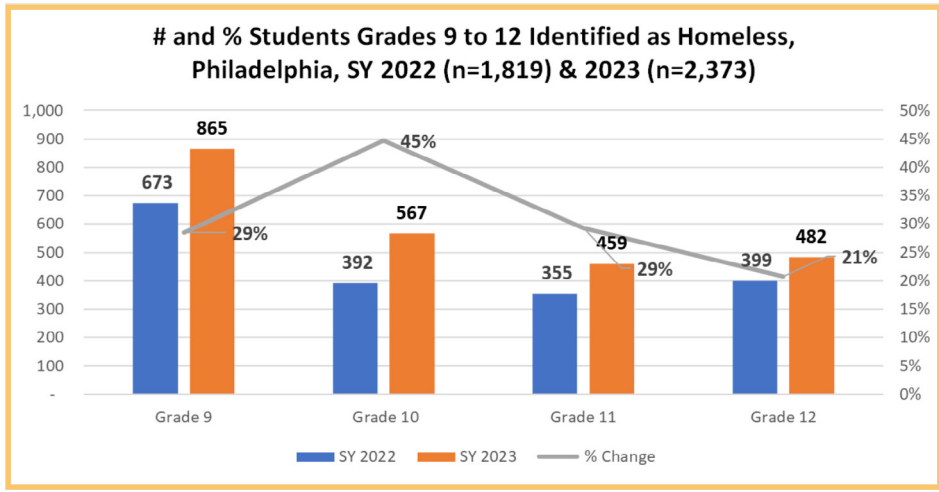
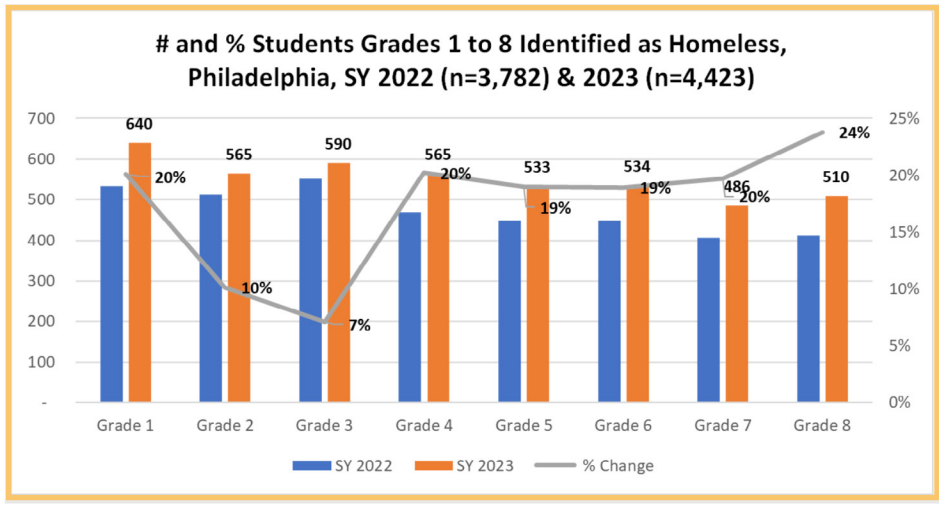


Note: Not all children and youth are students. The education system is federally required to report on all children and youth experiencing homelessness. However, the homeless housing system reports little data on the children it serves.

Children and Youth by Grade

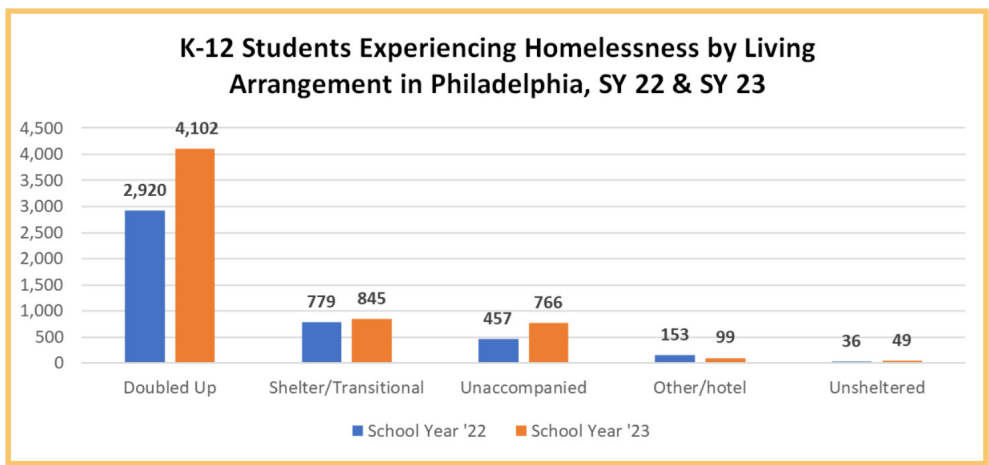
- There was a 44% increase in identifying Pre-K students (mostly in Head Start).
- There were 865 students in Grade 9, the highest among the high school grades.

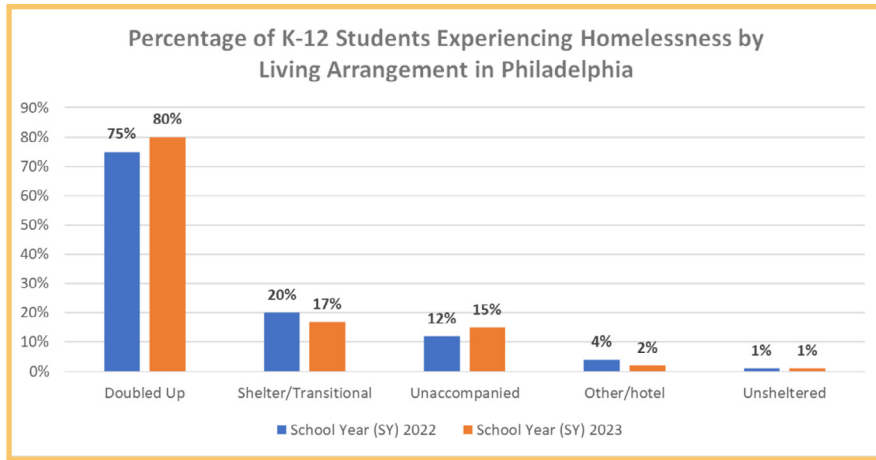




Most Students Experiencing Homelessness Are NOT in Shelter

- The SDP reviewed a subset of the total number of children and youth and found that 80% of all children and youth identified as homeless were living **doubled up in SY 2023**, a significant increase from the previous year.
- There was a 66% increase in the number of **unaccompanied** children and youth (without a parent/guardian) that were identified.

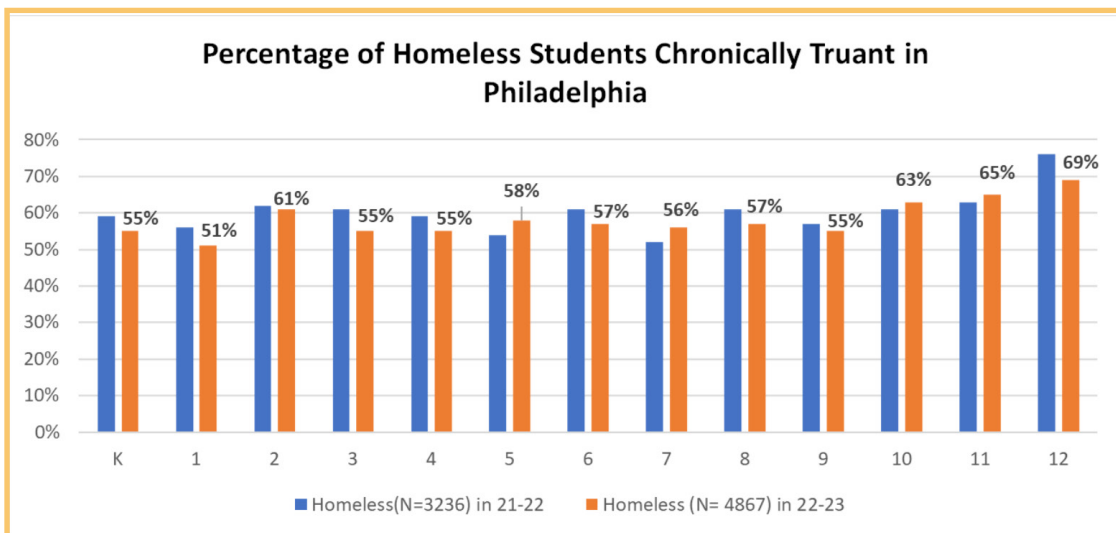




Chronic Truancy

- Students experiencing homelessness have **higher rates** of chronic truancy than their housed peers.
- Overall, there has been a decrease in truancy rates for homeless youth over the last year, in all but three grades (5th, 10th and 11th).

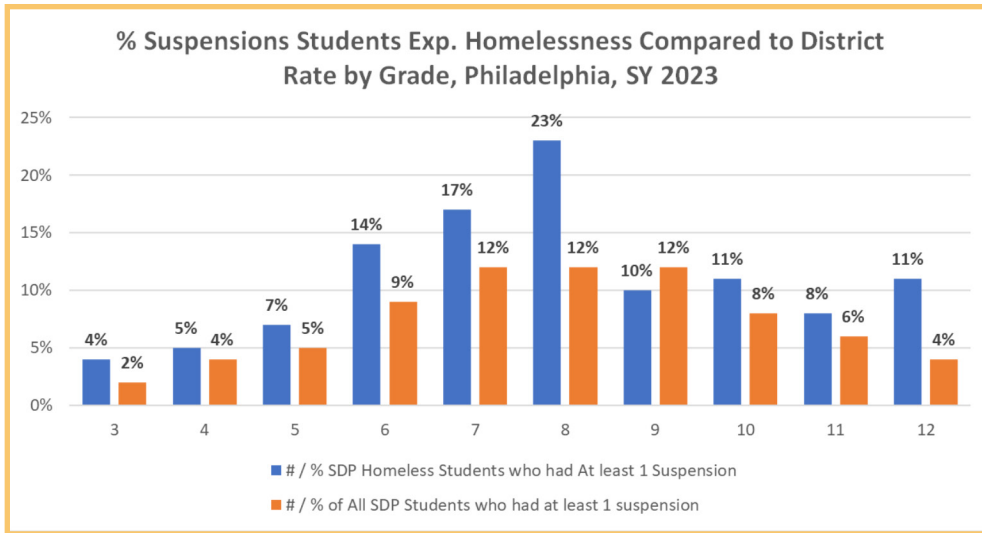
Chronic Truancy	SY 2022-23
All District Students	40%
Students Experiencing Homelessness	58%



Suspensions

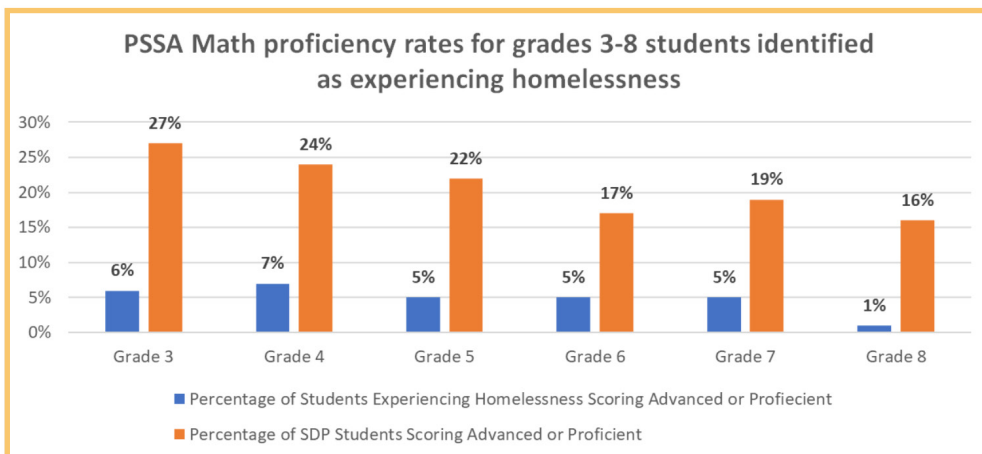
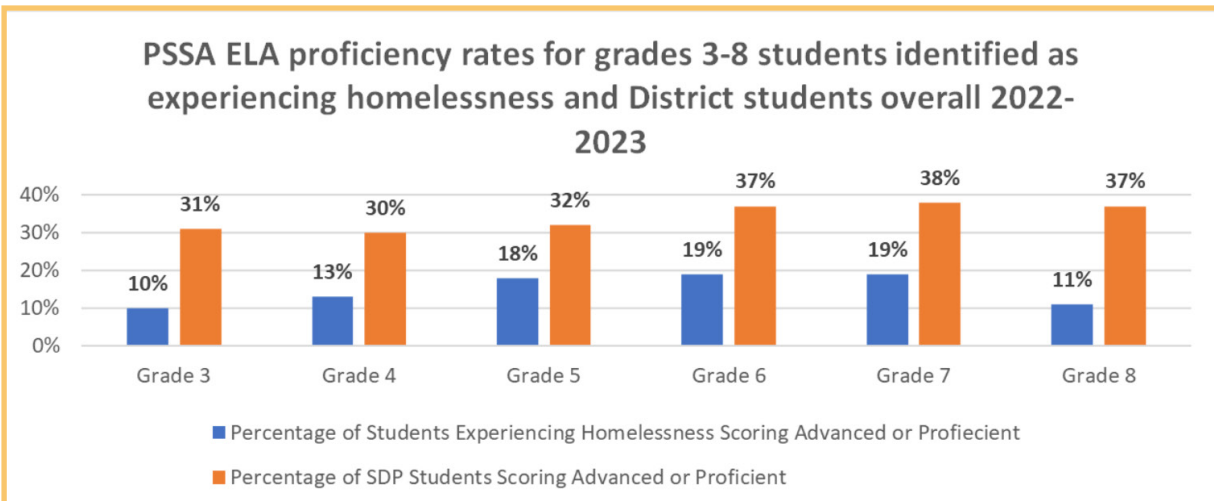
Students experiencing homelessness have **higher rates** of being suspended than their housed peers in all grades except grade 9.





Academic Achievement

Students experiencing homelessness have lower rates of achievement on standardized tests than their housed peers, with only 15% of homeless students grades 3-8 scoring proficient/advanced in English Language Arts and only 5% in Math.



Number of Students Experiencing Homelessness by School

The following table shows Philadelphia charter schools and the School District of Philadelphia as reported by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, found [here](#).

Notes:

- The data below for the School District of Philadelphia is different from above due to different reporting requirements.
- “CS” is Charter School
- A hyphen ‘-’ means that the data was not reported or is unknown for the specified School Year (SY).
- An asterisk (*) signifies that the number of homeless students was less than 10, a standard determined by federal guidelines.
- Schools that are not listed below have had fewer than 10 homeless students in each of the last 3 years.

ECYEH Region 1 - Philadelphia	SY 2021	SY 2022	SY 2023
Alliance for Progress CS	22	12	20
Aspira Bilingual Cyber CS	-	40	140
Belmont CS	99	108	104
Community Academy of Philadelphia CS	32	31	26
Esperanza Cyber CS	-	87	106
First Philadelphia Preparatory CS	18	11	25
Freire CS	-	11	16
Frederick Douglass Mastery CS	26	25	16
Imhotep Institute CS	-	16	-
John B Stetson CS	66	94	-
Keystone Academy CS	16	--	11
KIPP Dubois CS	-	13	18
KIPP North Philadelphia CS	17	20	22
KIPP Philadelphia CS	21	17	28
KIPP West Philadelphia CS	16	14	21
Lindley Academy CS at Birney	45	58	78
Mariana Bracetti Academy CS	56	92	112
Maritime Academy CS	-	13	11
MAST Community CS	12	*	11
MAST Community CS II	15	22	14
Mastery CHS Lenfest Campus	15	18	19
Mastery CS John Wister Elementary	46	42	46
Mastery CS- Cleveland Elementary	21	24	32



Mastery CS-Clymer Elementary	38	44	64
Mastery CS-Gratz Campus	62	71	62
Mastery CS-Hardy Williams	11	*	11
Mastery CS- Harrity Campus	35	30	53
Mastery CS- Mann Campus	12	12	*
Mastery CS- Pickett Campus	22	33	41
Mastery CS- Shoemaker Campus	-	23	16
Mastery CS- Smedley Campus	22	26	34
Mastery CS- Thomas Campus	25	34	30
Memphis Street Academy CS @ JP Jones	11	*	21
New Foundations CS	12	16	31
Olney Charter High School	27	80	-
Pan American Academy CS	28	44	41
Philadelphia City School District	2,140	4,518	5,867
Philadelphia Electrical & Technology CHS	16	25	23
Philadelphia Performing Arts CS	14	11	59
Southwest Leadership Academy CS	-	15	*
TECH Freire CS	15	14	26
The Philadelphia CS for Arts and Science	24	28	24
Universal Audenried CS	26	19	17
Universal Bluford CS	21	*	27
Universal Daroff CS	16	14	-
Universal Institute CS	12	*	*
West Oak Lane CS	11	12	*
Wissahickon CS	--	13	*
Youth Build Phila CS	20	16	18

Evidence

The School District of Philadelphia used its American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding to incorporate innovative strategies that improved its performance, mostly notable in the identification and support of more students experiencing homelessness, accomplishing its federal mandate better than ever. Some of these innovations included contracting with community-based housing providers and inserting a family expert in the intake center of the Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services. Community-based housing providers have built ecosystems that build trusting relationships with families and youth and other community entities that can provide a variety of supports and minimize siloed responses.

In addition, there is now national data available showing how the ARP improved how school districts identified and served students experiencing homelessness. Those outcomes include:



- Increased the **identification** of students experiencing homelessness by 25% (nationally, 2020-21 to 2022-23).
- **Attendance:** decreased chronic absence among students experiencing homelessness by 5 percentage points, from 52% to 47% (2021-22 to 2022-23).
- **Academic Achievement:** Students experiencing homelessness that received ARP-HCY funds achieved 29% proficiency in math (outpacing the national homeless student average by 6 points), 36% in reading (10 points above the national rate for homeless students), and 36% in science (a 10-point jump from previous year).
- **High School Graduation:** High school graduation rates for students experiencing homelessness surpassed pre-pandemic levels, rising to a 72.4% graduation rate in 2022-23, and outperforming national homeless student rates by nearly three percentage points.

Source: [U.S. Department of Education: National Outcome Summary, State and Local Implementation Studies of the American Rescue Plan - Homeless Children and Youth Program, 2025](#)

Moving Forward

Advocates² for children and youth experiencing homelessness strongly suggest that the Parker Administration, Philadelphia City Council, the School District of Philadelphia, and community-based housing agencies work together on the following recommendations:



- Provide \$4.5 million over the next three fiscal years to continue the innovative and promising practices now being managed by Eddie's House, HopePHL, Valley Youth House, and the Office of Homeless Services in partnership with the School District's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness office.
- Create a short-term ad hoc task force to identify and make recommendations to the Parker Administration, the City Council, the School District of Philadelphia, and private foundations of changes to how best to support students experiencing homelessness that could include no-cost improvements as well as funded efforts.
- The School District's research department should do an audit showing how key indicators were affected, including attendance, academic achievement, and graduation rates.

² Advocates associated with this work include the agencies Eddie's House, HopePHL, Philly Homes 4 Youth, Turning Points, and Valley Youth House.





About HopePHL

HopePHL™ (pronounced “hopeful”) was founded by integrating two human service organizations in Philadelphia, PA: People’s Emergency Center (PEC) and Youth Service, Inc. (YSI). Leveraging 120 years of combined service experience, HopePHL’s mission is to inspire Philadelphia’s children, youth, families, and communities to thrive by providing housing, advocacy, and trauma-responsive social services designed to promote equity, resilience, autonomy, and well-being.

HopePHL thanks the Temple Education Policy Team of Erica Breitbarth, Melissa Schepers, Madison Kerney, and Allison Htay who provided input to this paper.





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