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School on Wheels
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2020 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY:

Improving the Outcomes for Students Experiencing Homelessness in Indiana

An **overview** of Indiana youth experiencing homelessness

Homelessness creates intense challenges and barriers for children and youth, which hinders their ability to find academic, social, and financial success. Children can exhibit various academic or social difficulties that result from the trauma of homelessness, mobility, and the lack of structural consistency and security.[i]

They are at an elevated risk of frequent hunger, chronic and acute illnesses, traumatic stress, criminal victimization, and sex trafficking and exploitation. Homelessness can dramatically decrease a young adult's chances of graduating high school, enrolling in and completing postsecondary education, finding stable employment, and earning family-sustaining wages.[ii]

In the 2018-2019 academic year, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) identified 16,380 students experiencing homelessness enrolled in Indiana schools, which accounts for about 1.5% of the total student population.[1] While these students are spread across schools and communities of all types, they are concentrated primarily in urban counties (81% were in schools in counties within metropolitan areas).

These data represent achievement prior to many schools shifting to virtual instruction due to COVID-19. Because students experiencing homelessness often lack access to Wi-Fi or technology necessary for online learning or a quiet, consistent place in

which to learn, these gaps may worsen. Indiana students experiencing homelessness were more likely to be Black than the general student population (27% of homeless students compared to 12% of all students), and homeless students were more likely to be enrolled in special education (23% of students experiencing homelessness compared to 16% of all students).

To ensure that students experiencing homelessness have equitable opportunities to achieve success and

economic prosperity in their futures, this white paper recommends three key priorities for stakeholders, including the State, school districts, and community organizations, to center interventions and attention over the next three years: identification, discipline practices, and educational proficiency and attainment.

PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND OVERALL CHILD POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, INDIANA: 2019[2]

Race/Ethnicity	Homeless Students	All Students
Asn/Am Ind/Nat Haw or Pac Isl	2.0%	2.8%
Black	27.4%	12.3%
Hispanic	11.2%	12.4%
Multiracial	7.5%	5.0%
White	51.8%	67.5%
Spec Ed	22.6%	15.6%

■ Homeless Students   ■ All Students

Practical recommendations to identify who is homeless, support those in need, and educate them for future success

The white paper outlines the data and impact, as well as recommendations for improvement, associated with each priority:

IDENTIFY

Broaden efforts to identify students experiencing homelessness
- Align staffing resources towards the areas with higher concentrations of students experiencing homelessness
- Coordinate community assessments
- Create greater awareness and connection of local ecosystems' resources and supports for homeless youth and families
- Provide targeted outreach through information-gathering and sharing

SUPPORT

Improve disproportionate discipline practices of students experiencing homelessness
- Focus professional learning on trauma-informed disciplinary practices
- Address the disproportionality of race and ethnicity and special education in discipline practices
- Adapt current resources to meet the needs of students experiencing homelessness
- Provide ongoing support and understanding after homelessness

EDUCATE

Increase educational attainment and economic prosperity for students experiencing homelessness
- Expand access to early learning
- Align services with all types of postsecondary attainment
- Concentrate supports towards the greatest gaps
- Ensure students experiencing homelessness earn at least a Core 40 diploma
- Expand data collection to include longitudinal studies and additional metrics

[1] All K-12 education data reported in the white paper was provided by the Indiana Department of Education using the federal McKinney-Vento definition. This white paper builds off the State's annual report reviewing statewide data for students experiencing homelessness as prescribed in IC 20-19-3-18.
[2] The racial/ethnic categories of Asian, American Indian or Native American, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander are combined throughout this report to address privacy issues associated with small n sizes for each group.

2x Black youth are twice as likely to be homeless. 27% of students experiencing homelessness are Black, compared to 12% of all students.

81% Students experiencing homelessness are spread across the state, but 81% were in schools in counties within metropolitan areas.

IDENTIFY
Broaden efforts to identify students experiencing homelessness

Currently, homeless student enrollment is highly concentrated in urban areas of the state. Half of the homeless student enrollment in public schools was represented by 23 corporations. Almost one-third of students experiencing homelessness were enrolled in ten districts. Five of the school corporations are in Marion County, and two are in Allen County.

Indiana's process for identifying and counting students experiencing homelessness has improved over the past decade. To illustrate, in 2009, the IDOE reported enrollments of 8,974 children and youth experiencing homelessness compared to 16,380 students in 2019. Likely a major contributor to the 82.5% increase over the past decade was in the early 2010s the IDOE began systematically collecting data on students experiencing homelessness on a yearly basis, as opposed to periodic ad hoc data collections.

Based on 2017-2018 national data (the most recent available), Indiana's per-1,000 rate of students experiencing homelessness is the lowest among neighboring states. When examining a neighboring state with a similar population size, Indiana's rate of students experiencing homelessness is nearly twice as low as Kentucky's rate per 1,000.[iv]

STATE	HOMELESS STUDENTS	RATE PER 1,000 (PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT)
Indiana	18,625	18.2
Illinois	52,978	25.8
Kentucky	23,964	36.2
Michigan	35,193	24.0

While this may suggest that Indiana has a less significant homeless problem, it may also indicate a problem with Indiana's rate of identification.

In 2017, a national report ranked Indiana 34th in the nation for identifying students experiencing homelessness, with the underidentification of students in K-12 denoted as most pronounced. Within the Midwest region, Indiana ranked 10th out of 12 states for identification.[v]

It is difficult to definitively know if Indiana is under-identifying and undercounting students experiencing homelessness, as quantifying those unreported is improbable. The fluctuations in Indiana's homeless student population rates and the proportional discrepancies in figures signify that there may be a portion of students experiencing homelessness who are going unreported. Several factors may contribute to underreporting:

DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS OF HOMELESSNESS: Schools are governed by McKinney-Vento, which has a broad definition of homeless youth. Community-based programs working on rehousing and social services may fall under different definitions from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development or Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. These federally mismatched definitions could lead to students and their families being overlooked due to varying eligibility and differences in Indiana's homeless population figures.

MISALIGNMENT OF STAFFING RESOURCES: McKinney-Vento liaisons are often stretched too thin to ensure identification, advocacy, and support for every current and potential homeless student, especially in areas of high concentration. Staffing resources are currently not allocated based on where the need is highest. Marion County, for example, has the largest proportion of students experiencing homelessness and five of the top ten districts with the highest enrollment. Each of Marion County's school districts, though, has only one McKinney-Vento liaison to provide all services to students, which limits their capacity to also identify new students experiencing homelessness.

LACK OF STRUCTURED SYSTEMS: Often, the burden of maintaining historical context and institutional knowledge of families and children may fall to individual McKinney-Vento liaisons. Turnover in this role could lead to swings in the number of students experiencing homelessness reported year-to-year. In some areas of the State, there is an overreliance of individual knowledge about students and families rather than a structured system to maintain consistency.

THE STIGMA OF HOMELESSNESS: Homelessness can be highly stigmatizing for those experiencing it, with correlative feelings of shame and guilt. Families may want to avoid feeling pitied or victim-blamed or they may not feel homeless despite meeting the federal definitions. This stigmatization may lead to many choosing not to self-identify as homeless.

To truly know how this subgroup is performing academically or if their outcomes are improving, we need to ensure identification and reporting of homeless youth is comprehensive. If a large swath is missing, our data could be skewed and misrepresentative of this issue's full scope. We may also miss the students facing housing instability challenges, trauma, and stress in the rural parts of our state. Under-identification will distort the picture of true need.

For students, the McKinney-Vento Act provides those experiencing homelessness with specific, legal educational rights, such as immediate school enrollment, even if lacking paperwork normally required, continued attendance at the school of origin, even if they have moved outside the school's residential zone, and automatic eligibility for free school meals. Without accurate identification, those rights cannot be ensured. Additionally, identification is also the first step to connecting students in homeless situations with the information, resources, and supports necessary to ensure their success.

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, INDIANA: 2018-2019
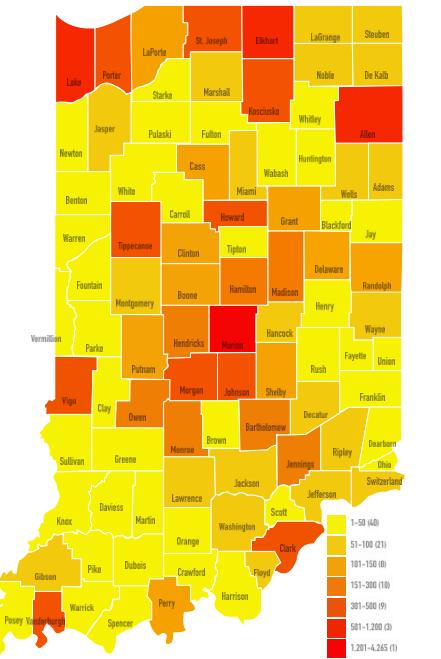
RECOMMENDATIONS
To broaden efforts to identify students experiencing homelessness

ALIGN STAFFING RESOURCES TOWARDS THE AREAS WITH HIGHER CONCENTRATIONS OF STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS:
Students experiencing homelessness need an equitable distribution of resources to ensure their needs are met and identification and reporting of additional homeless students is consistent.

Because the McKinney-Vento subgrants are competitive and awarded based on need and quality of the application, the State can re-evaluate allocations to ensure the locales with greater density receive the resources necessary to identify and support this population.

Distributing McKinney-Vento funding towards those areas with high enrollment would increase the resources, supports, and services delivered to our highest density of homeless youth and provide additional capacity to identify and report other potential students.

Aligning staffing capacity with more concentrated areas would allow McKinney-Vento liaisons higher touch points for training and raising awareness with school and community personnel, increasing the consistency of identification throughout the year. Districts could also expand resources for consistent identification and reporting by increasing the involvement of their data teams.

The IDOE has taken steps in this direction by encouraging district and regional consortia to address inter-district transience and collaborative interventions, though additional intentionality is needed in aligning funding and staffing resources where the need is highest.

CREATE GREATER AWARENESS AND CONNECTION OF LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS' RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS FOR HOMELESS YOUTH AND FAMILIES:
Siloed social services and educational systems have often led to a lack of awareness of the full spectrum of school and/or community resources available to homeless youth and families. As students and families experiencing homelessness receive social services and support from a range of government and philanthropic funds, there is an opportunity and need for our State and districts to generate coordinated, comprehensive wraparound services from multiple providers to support students' access to education and academic resources.

Coordination of the entire ecosystem of resources can include community- and faith-based organizations, preschool through postsecondary education, and other social service programs, such as SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid. By connecting information, services, and resources for students and families via a coordinated system, various stakeholders can focus on what they do best.

COORDINATE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENTS:
As there are federal and state programs and resources outside of the educational system assisting Indiana students, identifying children and families experiencing homelessness can be coordinated locally and regionally.

Through coordination of existing community assessments regarding homelessness, community organizations and schools can collaborate to examine the demographics of the local populations. This can include

- Local data on homelessness,
- Levels of poverty among families,
- Student mobility,
- The trends in foreclosures and evictions, and
- The availability of affordable housing.

As part of these collaborative community assessments, the State and local communities may need to develop strategies to navigate legal and safety concerns to understand the full scope of homelessness.

PROVIDE TARGETED OUTREACH THROUGH INFORMATION-GATHERING AND SHARING:
Stakeholders can develop and share strategies to proactively obtain information about a student's potential housing insecurity, such as:

- Providing a housing questionnaire as part of the school enrollment packet to identify McKinney-Vento eligibility;
- Asking about younger siblings when a homeless K-12 student enrolls in school, which also increases access to Pre-Kindergarten programs;
- Posting information about the rights of McKinney-Vento students in easy-to-see locations; and
- Sharing information about McKinney-Vento eligibility and services on school websites and in student handbooks and other informational materials distributed at school and in the community.

SUPPORT

Improve disproportionate discipline practices of students experiencing homelessness

The experience of homelessness can increase children's chances of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) through everyday exposure to various stress and trauma that can have lasting negative effects on their health and wellbeing.

These traumatic experiences potentially include: experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect; witnessing violence in the home or community; substance abuse in the family; emotional or physical neglect; and instability due to parental separation.[vi] Students experiencing homelessness often have high ACE scores, which indicates they are more likely to experience anxiety and depression, negative cognitive and socioemotional health, academic challenges, and specialized health needs during childhood. Long-term outcomes of high ACE scores include an increased likelihood of not having a college degree, being unemployed, living below the poverty line, and experiencing homelessness as an adult.[vii]

The trauma and stress due to their housing situation, in addition to other distressing and compounding factors, such as being forced out of the house due to sexual orientation or preference, can manifest at school through adverse behavioral outcomes.[viii] Students experiencing homelessness were suspended and expelled at rates higher than all students – suspension rates for homeless students were more than two times higher than those for all students, and expulsion rates are just under twice as high.[3] Black students experiencing homelessness were suspended at a rate 4.5 times higher than all White students (and about 1.4 times higher than all Black students). Male students experiencing homelessness were more than twice as likely to be suspended than all males, and students experiencing homelessness in special education were suspended at a rate 1.8 times higher than all students in special education.

While expulsion rates for students experiencing homelessness were relatively low, they were higher than expulsion rates overall; 0.5% of homeless students were expelled compared to 0.2% of all students. Removing students experiencing homelessness from school via suspension or expulsion can exacerbate the stress and trauma of housing insecurity and put them further behind their peers academically.

Suspending or expelling a student lacking consistent housing takes on a different meaning for these students versus their non-homeless peers because: they are removed from a place of structure, safety, and stability, and they may not have a safe place to spend that time out-of-school. Many homeless students rely on school to receive consistent meals, thus out-of-school suspension of these students can also exacerbate food insecurity. Sending students experiencing homelessness out-of-school may not be experienced in a traditional disciplinary way because of their homelessness. Out-of-school discipline may cause additional trauma and stress to a homeless student, aggravating the behaviors the disciplinary approach was meant to correct.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO ARE HOMELESS AND OVERALL SUSPENSIONS RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, GENDER, AND SPECIAL EDUCATION, INDIANA: 2018-2019

Category	Homeless Students	All Students
Asn/Am Ind/Nat Haw or Pac Isl	10.5%	3.6%
Black	30.0%	20.8%
Hispanic	14.8%	8.4%
Multiracial	22.0%	12.1%
White	15.6%	6.7%
Spec Ed	27.3%	15.1%
Male	25.9%	11.9%
Total	19.8%	8.8%
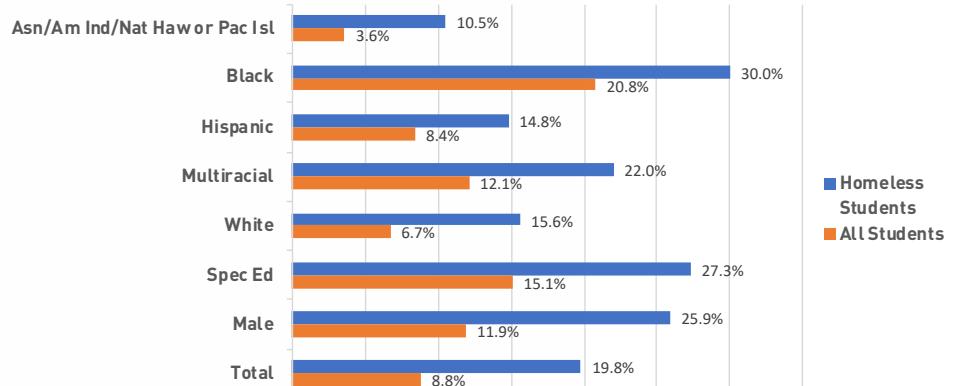
RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve disproportionate discipline practices of students experiencing homelessness

FOCUS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ON TRAUMA-INFORMED DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES:
Out-of-school discipline practices may not take into consideration the trauma and stress induced by a student's lack of permanent housing. Students often mask their pain and trauma with disruptive or difficult behavior. Identifying the symptoms of trauma, as well as effective ways to manage those symptoms, can help educators understand these behaviors and develop strategies for appropriate response.

To meet the needs of students experiencing homelessness and ensure all students are able to learn, the State and local districts can develop guidance on trauma-informed discipline practices to:
- Identify disciplinary actions that foster awareness of behavioral patterns and triggers and restore relationships with peers and adults in the school community;
- Build positive, respectful relationships with students and refer students to appropriate mental health supports when needed; and
- Avoid re-traumatizing students by eliminating the use of potentially traumatic or shaming disciplinary practices.

ADDRESS THE DISPROPORTIONALITY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION IN DISCIPLINE PRACTICES:
While all students experiencing homelessness are suspended at rates higher than their peers, suspension rates are particularly high for students experiencing homelessness who are Black or Multiracial, as well as those who are in special education. Homelessness compounds existing disproportionality in discipline rates of Black and Brown students and those with disabilities.[ix] The State and school districts must address the intersection and disproportionality of these subgroups.

For example, Individual Education Plans (IEPs) should include interventions to prevent the needs for more extreme disciplinary methods. Additionally, parents experiencing homelessness with a child of a racial or ethnic minority or special needs may require additional support and resources to advocate for their child.

ADAPT CURRENT RESOURCES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS:
Indiana has implemented social-emotional learning standards for grades K-12. Because these standards are designed to meet the needs of most children, they may not accurately respond to the trauma and stress of homelessness.

Exposure to adversity and trauma may interfere with homeless students' ability to regulate their emotions and behaviors, which increases the risk for disciplinary issues, thus requiring different or more intensive social-emotional learning.

The State and local districts can adapt and differentiate existing programs and resources specifically to the social and emotional needs of students experiencing homelessness.

PROVIDE ONGOING SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING AFTER HOMELESSNESS:
The long-term effects of homelessness may continue even after a student finds consistent housing, and so many previously homeless students may continue to need behavioral and social-emotional supports even during periods when they have housing.

Further, school administrators, teachers, counselors, and other stakeholders must understand the intersection of systemic racism and the root cause of homelessness, which can be situational, chronic, or generational, each one impacting a child in a different way. Analyzing the cause, as well as additional underlying trauma or factors contributing to the youth's behavior, can contribute to determining the right kinds of supports to help that child be successful.

> Of the 220 school corporations that enrolled at least 10 students experiencing homelessness, 84% had suspension rates for students experiencing homelessness that exceeded all students in the district.

Students experiencing homelessness in special education suspended
1.8x
more than all students

Students experiencing homelessness are suspended or expelled
2x
more than all students

Black students experiencing homelessness are suspended at rates
4.5x
higher than all White students

[3] Suspension and expulsion rates are based on taking unduplicated count of suspensions or expulsions/total enrollment.

EDUCATE
Increase educational attainment and economic prosperity for students experiencing homelessness

To break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and housing insecurity and support a successful future for students experiencing homelessness, we must build stronger paths to postsecondary attainment.

"We know that when children experience a positive environment and healthy living conditions, they are more likely to reach their full potential. However, students experiencing homelessness face a myriad of challenges compounded by the stress and trauma of housing insecurity. Through greater collaborations and partnerships between our education and social services programs, we can ensure all the needs of our youth are met."

— Dr. Tami Silverman, President and CEO of Indiana Youth Institute

Similar to the influence trauma induced by homelessness may have on behavioral outcomes, structural factors of communities and society also affect the well-being of students experiencing homelessness and impact their educational outcomes.

Critical to increasing homeless students' educational attainment and proficiency is the understanding of how housing instability and poverty limit the resources and opportunities available for students to find success.

Currently, the data show Indiana homeless students leave high school behind their peers academically. In all education-related measures examined, students experiencing homelessness performed worse than Indiana students overall; this includes grade retention, academic performance on standardized assessments, and graduation rates and diploma earning.

Compared with the general student population, students experiencing homelessness face the following outcomes:

- Less likely to be promoted to the next grade;
- More likely to be disciplined (suspended or expelled);
- Less likely to be proficient on state Reading, English/Language Arts, and Math assessments;
- Less likely to graduate; and
- If they do graduate, more likely to obtain a lower-quality diploma (General or waiver).

State standardized assessments measure the extent to which students have mastered grade-level content. Students experiencing homelessness passed assessments in Reading, English/Language Arts, and Math at lower rates than all students; in most cases, passing rates were two or more times lower.

Pervasive resource gaps and contexts that contribute to enduring achievement disparities by race, ethnicity, and class are compounded by the trauma and stress of homelessness. Gaps in proficiency on state assessments in Reading, English/Language Arts, and Math for grades 3-8 and 10 are present at every grade level and within all subgroups examined, including racial/ethnic categories, gender, socioeconomic status, special education/general education designation, and English Language Learner status. These resource gaps have resulted in proficiency gaps between homeless and all students that exist for every assessment, in every grade level, and within every subgroup analyzed. Gaps in homeless student achievement generally were present across the state, regardless of school corporation type, size, or urban/rural location. The gaps in academic proficiency begin in the early grades for children experiencing homelessness. Only 72% of homeless students passed the IREAD-3 assessment (a third-grade measure of reading skills), compared to 87% of all students, and homeless students trailed their peers within all subgroups examined. Students experiencing homelessness who are Asian/Am. Indian or Native American/Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Black had IREAD-3 passing rates of less than 70%, as did male students experiencing homelessness, those in special education, and those who were English Language Learners.

When accounting for other factors, homelessness deepens academic gaps, even at early ages. As gaps in proficiency continue from grade to grade, it becomes increasingly difficult for children experiencing homelessness to catch up to their peers. Because reading is fundamental to the academic curriculum, the nearly 30% of homeless youth who do not meet Indiana's 3rd grade literacy standards will have a much harder academic journey, and their academic gaps will increase as they move through school, resulting in lower graduation rates and less likelihood of obtaining college/career ready diplomas.[x] Third grade literacy is one of the most important predictors for high school graduation, thus the IREAD-3 passage rates for students experiencing homelessness are mirrored in their graduation rates.

Students experiencing homelessness graduated at a rate ten percentage points lower than all students (77% of students experiencing homelessness compared to 87% of all students).

In addition, homeless students were far less likely to earn rigorous, college and career diplomas (Core 40 or Honors) than their peers. Homeless students met graduation requirements through the waiver process at a rate nearly twice that of all students, and over 21% of homeless graduates received General diplomas, compared to just 10% of all graduates.

Students earning General diplomas are far less likely than those earning Core 40 or Honors diplomas to enroll in postsecondary education, and those who do enroll are more likely to require remediation.[xi] The rates of students experiencing homelessness earning lesser diplomas signify that fewer youth struggling with homelessness are set up to find success in postsecondary education and long-term economic prosperity.

ASSESSMENT PASSING RATES (OVERALL AND STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS)

Assessment	Homeless Students	All Students
IREAD-3	37.5%	87.2%
ILEARN (Gr 3-8) E/LA	61.6%	74.2%
ILEARN (Gr 3-8) Math	60.3%	78.1%
ISTEP+ (Gr 10) E/LA	75.2%	87.0%
ISTEP+ (Gr 10) Math	79.9%	91.6%

I-READ 3 PASSING RATES (OVERALL AND BY RACE/ETHNICITY)

Group	Homeless Students	All Students
Asn/Am Ind/Nat Haw or Pac Isl	37.5%	87.2%
Black	61.6%	74.2%
Hispanic	60.3%	78.1%
Multiracial	75.2%	87.0%
White	79.9%	91.6%
ELL	51.6%	73.4%
Spec Ed	44.5%	60.9%
Male	68.1%	85.3%
All Grade 3	71.6%	87.3%

I-READ 3 *fail* rates among students experiencing homelessness

28%

compared to 13% of all students

10th grade ISTEP+ Math portion *pass* rate

31.4%

compared to 62.4% of all students

Students experiencing homelessness receiving a general HS diploma

21%

compared to 10% of all students

Graduation rate among students experiencing homelessness

77%

compared to 87% of all students

RECOMMENDATIONS
To increase educational attainment and economic prosperity for students experiencing homelessness

EXPAND ACCESS TO EARLY LEARNING:
To ensure students experiencing homelessness begin their academic careers at the same readiness levels as their peers, establishing a framework that better supports equitable access to quality early learning programs is imperative. A key piece of this access is identification of younger children experiencing homelessness, as highlighted in the first priority. The IDOE is prioritizing access to early learning through its Education Leads Home initiative, but other state agencies must collaborate to ensure the enrollment process for early education is accessible to homeless families. Key to this recommendation is adequate access to transportation options. The symbiosis of educational programs and access to transportation corresponds with the first priority to Identify homeless families and the need for all available resources and supports to be coordinated and aligned.

ALIGN SERVICES WITH ALL TYPES OF POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT:
To boost the postsecondary educational attainment and economic prosperity of students experiencing homelessness, caseworkers, McKinney-Vento liaisons, and other adults who work with these students must orient their services towards all types of postsecondary attainment, including a technical certification or credential, a registered apprenticeship, or an Associate's or Bachelor's degree. Reorienting services towards postsecondary education should also include greater awareness and emphasis on available resources, such as FAFSA, 21st Century Scholars, and Workforce Ready Grants.

Through local ecosystems as recommended in our first priority, schools and community organizations can partner to expand summer-bridge programs and other supports to ease students' transitions from K-12 to adulthood. This type of program also enables schools to prevent skill regression and keep students on-track to reaching their postsecondary goal, as community partners assist with securing permanent housing and other basic needs to support the students' studies or career goals.

CONCENTRATE SUPPORTS TOWARDS THE GREATEST GAPS:
While gaps exist overall and for all subgroups of students experiencing homelessness, in many cases, gaps are particularly pronounced for homeless students of color (particularly those those who are Black), male, in special education, or English Language Learners. As such, it will be valuable to provide particular focus, attention, and support for these students.

ENSURE STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS EARN AT LEAST A CORE 40 DIPLOMA:
Because students experiencing homelessness are more likely to receive a General diploma, their potential enrollment and completion of postsecondary education is hindered. Those students who earn a waiver or General diploma, rather than a Core 40 or Honors diploma, are less likely to enroll

in postsecondary education without needing remediation, complete all their attempted college coursework, and persist to their second year of college. A more rigorous diploma can also increase future earning potential, which will break the cycle of poverty.[xii]

The long-term strategy to ensuring higher quality diplomas are earned includes improving academic proficiency in earlier grades, reiterating the importance of expanded early learning access. In the near-term, students experiencing homelessness in high school should have greater access and opportunity to complete more rigorous coursework, including dual credit, AP, and advanced CTE work. This may require that supports and resources be aligned towards these students to ensure their success.

EXPAND DATA COLLECTION METRICS TO INCLUDE LONGITUDINAL STUDIES AND ADDITIONAL METRICS:
This white paper, as well as IDOE's annual report, focused on the components included in IC 20-19-3-8. Additional descriptive data points of homeless students may be useful for analysis:

- Enrollment in Pre-K programs,
- Attendance rates,
- Inter- and intra-district mobility,
- College- and career-readiness metrics (e.g., completion of dual credit and AP courses, industry-recognized certifications, college-readiness exams),
- 21st Century Scholars enrollment and FAFSA completion rates,
- 5th and 6th year graduation cohorts,
- Dropout rates, and
- Information on postsecondary enrollment and completion and workforce outcomes.

These additional metrics will provide longitudinal data to identify characteristics and contributing factors for homeless students that continue into postsecondary education and/or obtain gainful employment.

Using the Management Performance Hub, the State can understand the long-term outcomes of students experiencing homelessness, connecting McKinney-Vento designation with higher education and wage records data sets. The IDOE has also collected data on homeless students for multiple years, which they can use to conduct longitudinal studies. These could include analyses on factors that may contribute to academic success for students experiencing homelessness; longitudinal performance for homeless and formerly homeless students; and other studies that may contribute to Indiana's understanding and support of its homeless student population.

CONCLUSION
Identify, Support, and Educate

Success in K-12 education can be a critical factor for future educational and economic outcomes.

Indiana homeless students, however, lag behind their non-homeless peers overall and within nearly all subgroups across all metrics examined.

Improvements in educational achievement for current and former homeless students will require collaboration within and across State agencies, local districts, and wraparound systems of support, focusing on:

- **Identify**: Broaden efforts to identify students experiencing homelessness
- **Support**: Improve disproportionate discipline practices of students experiencing homelessness
- **Educate**: Increase educational attainment for students experiencing homelessness

Quantifiable data metrics are critical for examining and assessing our policies and outcomes, but equally important are the voices of young people experiencing homelessness.

Their stories tell us which practices make a difference and help them feel valued, cared for, and optimistic about their future. One next step of our work is to share these findings and recommendations with young people who have previously, or who are currently, experiencing homelessness in order to pressure test these ideas with their lived reality. More attention needs to be placed on ensuring students who experience homelessness are supported to succeed.

Further, additional studies on other related educational factors may be useful, as well as further analysis on outcomes for homeless students after K-12, including postsecondary enrollment and degree attainment, as well as employment status and wage earning.

Our youths' and communities' future economic mobility and prosperity will hinge upon improvements increasing our homeless students' educational attainment.

> "Children experiencing homelessness and housing instability are at greater risk of repeating the cycle of poverty as adults when the gaps in academic proficiency aren't addressed. By providing proven academic interventions and support, together we can help increase educational attainment and success. Assisting Indiana's most vulnerable population is a community responsibility. Addressing the academic obstacles unhoused families face today is critical to a stronger, more vibrant, prosperous community in the future."
> — Sally Bindley, Founder and CEO, School on Wheels

i Indiana State Board of Education (2020). Annual Report on Homeless Youth Educational Outcomes Statutory Authority (IC 20-19-3-18).

ii America's Promise Alliance (2016). Hidden in Plain Sight: Homeless Students in America's Public Schools.

iii The 74 Million (2020). Reaching 'Our Most Invisible Population' During a Pandemic: How Schools Are Scrambling to Protect Homeless Students as Coronavirus Disrupts Lives.

iv United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (n.d.) Homelessness Statistics.

v Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness (2017). Out of the Shadows: A State-by-State Ranking of Accountability for Homeless Students.

vi Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (n.d.) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES).

vii National Health Care for the Homeless Council (2019). Homelessness & Adverse Childhood Experiences: The health and behavioral health consequences of childhood trauma.

viii Society for Research in Child Development (2016). Children's social, academic functioning is impeded when their families move more often.

ix Child Trends (2019). Black students and students with disabilities remain more likely to receive out-of-school suspensions, despite overall declines.

x The Children's Reading Foundation (n.d.). Third Grade Reading Success Matters.

xi Indiana Commission for Higher Education (2020). Indiana College Readiness Report 2020.

xii Ibid.

INDIANA YOUTH INSTITUTE

Championing Kids. Strengthening Communities.

Our mission is to improve the lives of all Indiana children by strengthening and connecting the people, organizations, and communities that are focused on kids and youth.

Our vision is to be a catalyst for healthy youth development and for achieving statewide child success. We strive to create best practices models, provide critical resources, and advocate for policies that result in positive youth outcomes.

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www.iyi.org

School on Wheels

Inspire Learning • Empower Kids • End Homelessness

School on Wheels' mission is to provide one-on-one tutoring and educational advocacy for school- aged children impacted by homelessness.

Our vision is to equip these children with the tools they need to achieve success in life and break the cycle of homelessness.

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2020 Educational Attainment and Economic Prosperity:
Improving the Outcomes for Students Experiencing Homelessness in Indiana

2020 Educational Attainment and Economic Prosperity: Improving the Outcomes for Students Experiencing Homelessness in Indiana

Appendix

This appendix utilizes data provided by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) to complement <u>2020 Educational Attainment and Economic Prosperity: Improving the Outcomes for Students Experiencing Homelessness in Indiana</u> with a more in-depth look at educational outcomes for homeless students and youth, including comparing homeless students with peers in various subgroups (e.g., racial/ethnic, gender, and different programmatic groupings), as well as examining available data at the public school corporation level. The data featured in this report build on the annual report produced by the IDOE, which reviews statewide data on homeless student educational outcomes. The study was sponsored by School on Wheels, a nonprofit organization located in Indianapolis, Indiana, with the mission of providing one-on-one tutoring and educational advocacy for school-aged children impacted by homelessness.

Among the key findings:
- Homeless students in Indiana are disproportionately Black or African American and are overrepresented in special education.
- Enrollment of homeless students is concentrated in school corporations in urban counties; however, gaps in achievement between homeless students and their peers were present statewide, independent of school corporation type, size, or location.
- Homeless students performed worse than Hoosier students overall. In nearly all subgroups, in all educational outcomes examined: grade retention, discipline rates, performance on standardized assessments, graduation rates, and diploma earning. Gaps were particularly prevalent for homeless students of color, homeless male students, and those in special education or English Language Learners.

Children and youth experiencing homelessness are more likely than their peers to have mental and physical health issues and have experienced trauma and instability. Homeless students tend to have higher rates of grade-level retention and discipline than their peers, lower academic achievement and graduation rates, and lower rates of earning rigorous, college-ready diplomas, which may hinder their ability to pursue and succeed postsecondary college and job opportunities. This, in turn, may limit their chances for meaningful career pathways and economic stability.

Additional resources and support for Indiana schools to address persistent achievement gaps and prepare homeless students for success are needed at all grade levels, across all types of schools, and for all groups of homeless students and youth.

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Homelessness in Indiana

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homeless students as those who lack a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence, including students 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 campgrounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; and are abandoned in hospitals.[i]

As of January 2019, nearly 5,500 Hoosiers were experiencing homelessness on any given day; of that total, 544 were family households, and 258 were unaccompanied young adults (ages 18-24)[ii] The number of Indiana students reported as experiencing homelessness has increased – in 2009, a reported 8,974[iii] students experiencing homelessness were enrolled in school in Indiana. By 2019, that number had grown to 16,380[iv], an increase of 82.5%. In addition, while not necessarily homeless, many Hoosier children live in unstable housing situations – in 2018, 50% of children in low-income households lived in places with a high housing cost burden, and nine% of children were living in crowded housing.[v]

Homeless Student Education

Children and youth experiencing homelessness are more likely than their peers to have mental and physical health issues and have witnessed or experienced violence, contributing to emotional trauma.[vi] Homeless students and their families also deal with the stigma often associated with homelessness and poverty, both outside and within school.[vii] While research is somewhat mixed on whether homelessness specifically, or poverty in general, impacts educational outcomes, and robust research on children meeting the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness is limited, studies have found that children experiencing homelessness tend to underperform academically compared to the general population.[viii]

Further, national data on academic achievement suggest that children and youth experiencing homelessness perform worse than all economically disadvantaged students on state assessments. To illustrate, based on a 2018 report from the National Center for Homeless Education, while 37% of economically disadvantaged students passed state standardized English/Language Arts assessments, only 29% of homeless students did. Homeless students also trailed behind all economically disadvantaged students on state standardized Math assessments, with 24% of homeless students passing compared to 33% of those who were economically disadvantaged.[ix]

Research and data show that education, including obtaining a high school diploma (rather than a high school equivalency only) and postsecondary education (industry certification, college, or university), can be strong contributors to later economic success, including higher earnings, lower poverty levels, and a lower likelihood of unemployment.[x] However, data on educational outcomes for Hoosier children and youth experiencing homelessness suggest that they are behind their peers in every educational component measured in this report.

These gaps exist not only when comparing homeless students with the overall student population, but also when comparing within racial/ethnic subgroups (e.g., White homeless students compared to all
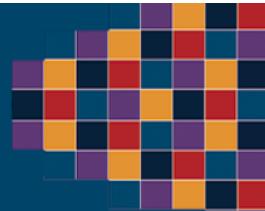
White students) and when comparing within programmatic subgroups (e.g., homeless students eligible for special education compared to all students in special education). The remainder of this report provides information on homeless student enrollment (including demographics and concentrations of enrollment by county and school corporation); retention and discipline; academic achievement (as measured by state standardized assessments); and graduation rates and diploma types.

Homeless Student Enrollment and Demographic Composition

Based on data provided by the Indiana Department of Education as part of an independent data request for this report, 16,380 homeless students were enrolled in Indiana in the academic year 2018-2019 (AY2019), representing about 1.5% of the State's enrollment.

While White students make up a slight majority of homeless students (52%), Black students are greatly overrepresented in the homeless student population and are nearly three times likelier to be homeless than White students.

Based on academic year (AY) 2018-19 enrollment data, about one in 10 Indiana students (12%) was Black or African American. Still, Black or African American students comprise more than one in four homeless students (27%). Multiracial students were slightly overrepresented, making up 7.5% of homeless students than 5% of all students. White students were greatly underrepresented in the homeless student population – White students are 67.5% of the overall student population, but 52% of homeless students.

Figure 1: Demographics by Race and Ethnicity[1]

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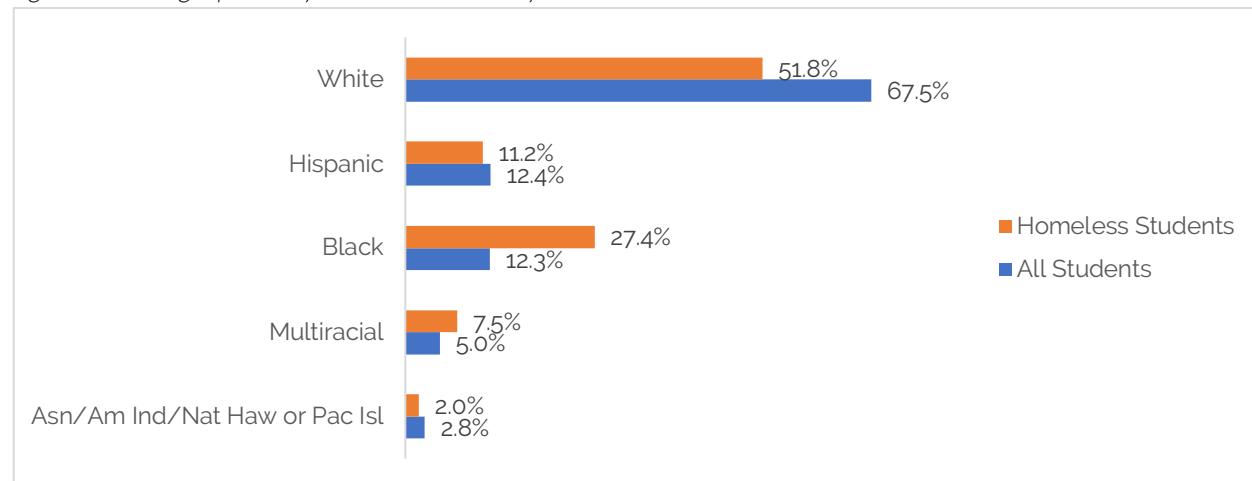
[1] The racial/ethnic categories of Asian, American Indian or Native American, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander are combined throughout this report to address privacy issues associated with small n sizes for each group.
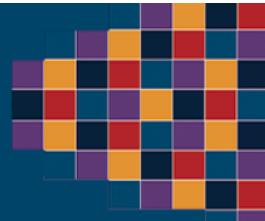
Homeless students are categorically eligible for free meals,xi and about 86 % of homeless students received free or reduced lunch, compared to 47% of all students.[2] The rate of homeless students in special education was about seven percentage points higher than all students (23% compared to 16%). The percentages of homeless students that were male, female, English Language Learners, and not English Language Learners were about the same as the overall population.

Figure 2: Demographics by Other Student Characteristics
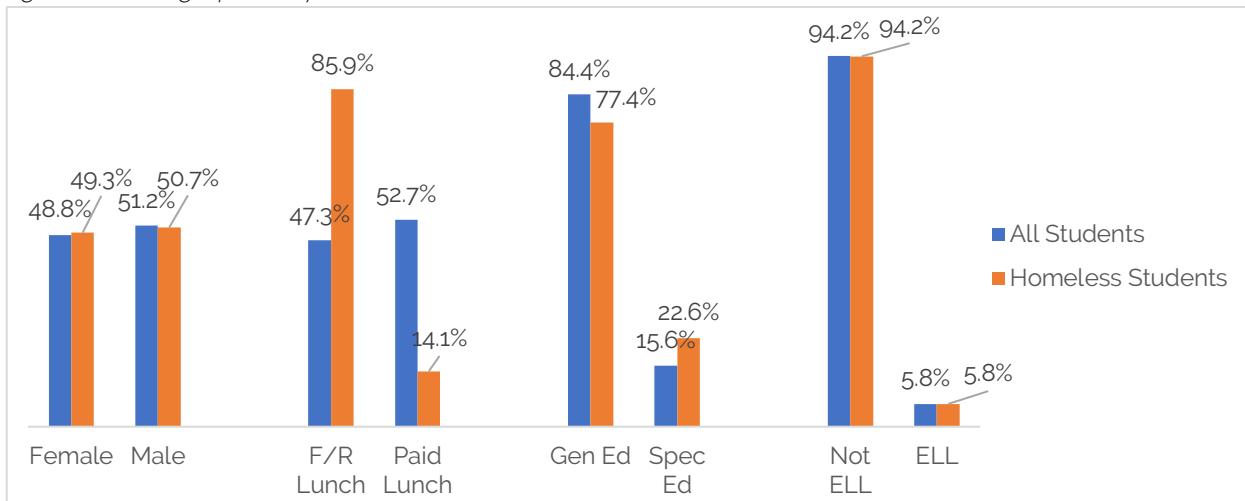
District- and County-Level Enrollment[3]

Over 16,300 homeless students were enrolled in public school corporations - traditional public, charter public, turnaround, university, and state-run - in AY2019. Homeless student enrollment was highly concentrated, compared to overall public enrollment. To illustrate, half of the homeless student enrollment in public schools was represented by 23 corporations across the State (about 6% of all public school corporations). These districts made up only 27% of total public school enrollment. Almost one-third (31%) of homeless students were enrolled in ten districts. (These districts represent only about 16% of overall public school enrollment.) Five of the school corporations are in Marion County, and two are in Allen County.

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[2] Because homeless students are categorically eligible for free lunch, the 14% of homeless students not flagged as receiving free lunch may be a timing issue, as free/reduced lunch status from DOE reporting is based on October 1 while school reporting on homeless status is for the entire academic year.

[3] All district/school-level analysis in this report excludes nonpublic schools, because homeless data was not available at the district or school level for all nonpublic schools. County-level analyses are based on the county in which the school district, charter, or turnaround school is physically located. County-level totals exclude university schools, virtual charters, and state-run schools that may be physically located in these counties, because these typically serve students statewide. While other traditional public and charter schools may serve students outside of their counties of physical location, it is more likely that the majority of students served reside in that county.
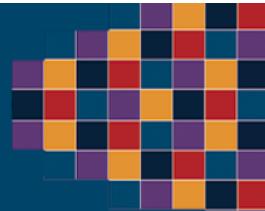
Table 1: Homeless Student and Total Enrollment: Top Ten Corps. by Number of Homeless Students

School Corp.	% of total Homeless Students	% of All Public Students
Indianapolis Public Schools	6.4 (1,043)	2.5 (26,410)
Fort Wayne Community Schools	5.0 (812)	2.8 (29,404)
MSD Warren Township	3.2 (528)	1.2 (12,188)
MSD Wayne Township	2.9 (476)	1.6 (16,484)
Evansville-Vanderburgh Sch. Corp.	2.7 (446)	2.1 (22,601)
MSD Lawrence Township	2.5 (404)	1.5 (16,035)
Vigo County Sch. Corp.	2.1 (340)	1.4 (14,722)
East Allen County Schools	2.0 (334)	0.9 (9,946)
MSD Washington Township	2.0 (333)	1.1 (11,140)
Lafayette Sch. Corp.	1.9 (312)	0.8 (7,996)

Homeless students tend to be concentrated and slightly overrepresented in urban counties (those located in metro areas) – 81% of homeless students enrolled in AY2019 were in public schools in metro counties (while metro counties made up 77% of total public enrollment). Marion County alone represented more than one-quarter (26%) of homeless student enrollment but only 14.5 % of total public enrollment. Allen County represented 7% of homeless student enrollment and only 5% of total public enrollment. Lake County rounded out the top three – however, although Lake County represented 5% of homeless student enrollment, this is a slight underrepresentation, as Lake County accounts for about 8% of total public enrollment. Collectively, seven counties – Marion, Allen, Lake, Elkhart, Johnson, Morgan, and Vanderburgh – represented half of the homeless student population. The top ten counties based on enrollment represent 57.5% of homeless student enrollment, but only 45% of total public enrollment. See Table 2.

Table 2: Homeless Student and Total Enrollment: Top Ten Counties by Number of Homeless Students

County	% of total Homeless Students	% of All Public Students
Marion	26.1 (4,261)	14.3 (151,235)
Allen	7.3 (1,199)	5.2 (55,112)
Lake	5.1 (827)	7.6 (80,491)
Elkhart	3.3 (537)	3.4 (36,244)
Johnson	2.9 (474)	2.6 (27,225)
Morgan	2.8 (461)	1.0 (10,838)
Vanderburgh	2.7 (446)	2.2 (23,191)
Tippecanoe	2.6 (427)	2.3 (24,107)
St. Joseph	2.3 (378)	3.7 (38,902)
Porter	2.3 (376)	2.6 (27,041)

In terms of concentration of homeless students (homeless students as a percentage of total enrollment), about 6% of school corporations (25) had homeless student concentrations of 5% or higher, and 4% (15) had ratios of 6% or higher. Of the 15 schools with rates 6% or higher, nine were charter schools, four were traditional public, and two were turnaround schools.
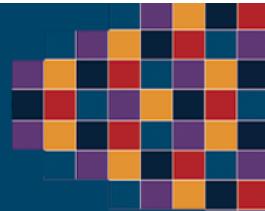
Table 3: Homeless Student Ratio: Sch. Corps. with Ratios Six % or Higher

School Corp.	School Type	Number of Homeless Students	Number of Total Students	Homeless Student Concentration
Excel Center – Anderson	Charter	33	313	10.5%
CSUSA Manual	Turnaround	66	695	9.5%
Vanguard Collegiate of Indy	Charter	5	57	8.8%
Kindezi Academy	Charter	24	276	8.7%
Excel Center – Muncie	Charter	24	293	8.2%
Allegiant Preparatory Academy	Charter	3	37	8.1%
Ignite Achievement Academy	Charter	43	534	8.1%
Spencer-Owen Com. Schools	Trad. Public	200	2,503	8.0%
CSUSA Howe	Turnaround	46	577	8.0%
Perry Central Com. Sch. Corp.	Trad. Public	91	1,267	7.2%
Matchbook Learning	Charter	39	567	6.9%
Tindley Renaissance Academy	Charter	26	399	6.5%
Cannelton City Schools	Trad. Public	18	279	6.5%
Tindley Genesis Academy	Charter	13	211	6.2%
Mooresville Con. Sch. Corp.	Trad. Public	266	4,436	6.0%

No county had a higher concentration of homeless students than 8% (Owen County), though nine counties did have homeless student enrollment of 2.5% or higher. Six of these counties were located in or adjacent to metro areas, and there were three rural counties with ratios over 2.5 %: Perry, Jennings, and Switzerland. This suggests that while homeless student enrollment does tend to be more prevalent in counties located in metro areas, some rural counties have relatively large proportions of homeless students compared to their overall enrollment. See Table 4.

Table 4: Counties with Homeless Student Enrollment Ratios of 2.5 % or More

County	Number of Homeless Students	Number of Total Students	Ratio of Homeless Students
Owen	200	2,503	8.0%
Ohio	43	797	5.4%
Perry	135	2,971	4.5%
Cass	300	6,629	4.5%
Morgan	461	10,838	4.3%
Jennings	168	4,187	4.0%
Switzerland	59	1,522	3.9%
Marion	4,261	151,235	2.8%
Putnam	144	5,517	2.6%

Homeless Student School Performance and Outcomes

Students living in poverty, especially those experiencing homelessness, tend to perform academically worse than their peers. Barriers, including the transience associated with lack of housing and inadequate transportation, can impact attendance, contributing to lower academic achievement and a higher
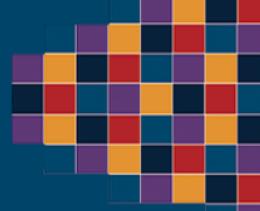
likelihood of repeating a grade. Lack of shelter and stability and issues related to poor nutrition and health also impact homeless students' ability to focus on school. Trauma and exposure to violence may contribute to behavioral issues, resulting in higher suspension or expulsion rates.[xii] Further, homeless youth face many barriers to completing high school and are less likely than their peers to graduate. An analysis of national data found that only 64% of homeless students graduated, compared to 78% of low-income students and 84% of all students.[xiii] Indiana appears to mirror many of these trends in terms of achievement gaps, as described in this section of the report.

Grade Retention Rates

Overall, just over 2% of homeless students in grades K-11 were retained in grade from AY2019 to AY2020, a rate twice as high as all students.

More than 2% of homeless students were held back across all but two racial/ethnic subgroups (Multiracial and the clustered Asian/Am. Indian or Native Am./Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group). Comparatively, each racial/ethnic subgroup of all students had a retention rate of 1.6% or lower. See Figure 3.

Homeless students in special education had the highest retention rates of all other subgroups (2.5% compared to 2% for all special education students). Female homeless students, those in general education, and non-English Language Learners had retention rates two or more times higher than their peer groups. See Figure 4.

Figure 3: Retention Rates (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)
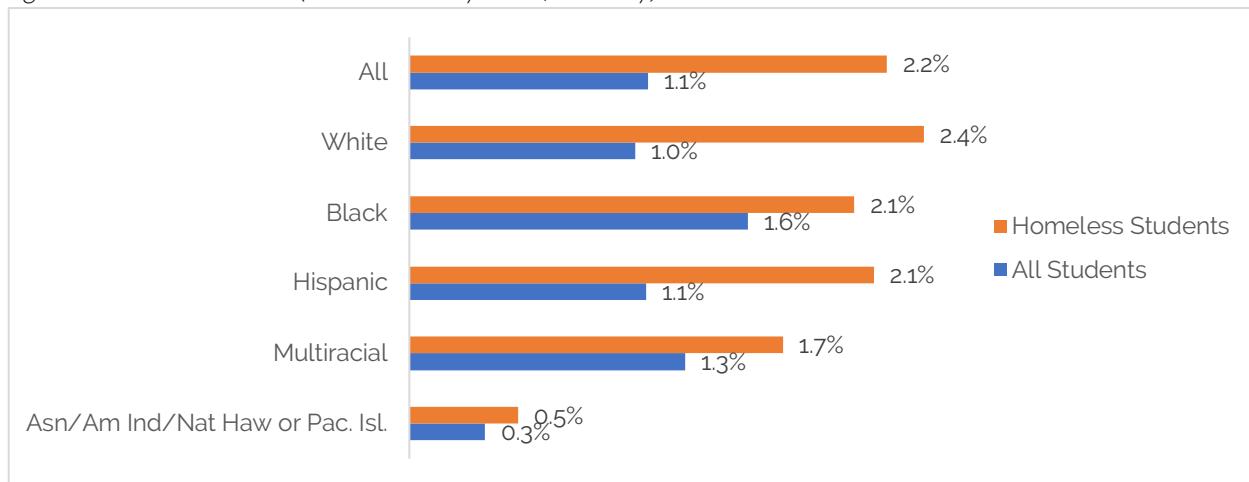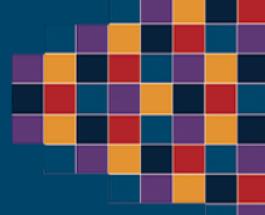
Figure 4: Retention Rates by Selected Student Characteristics
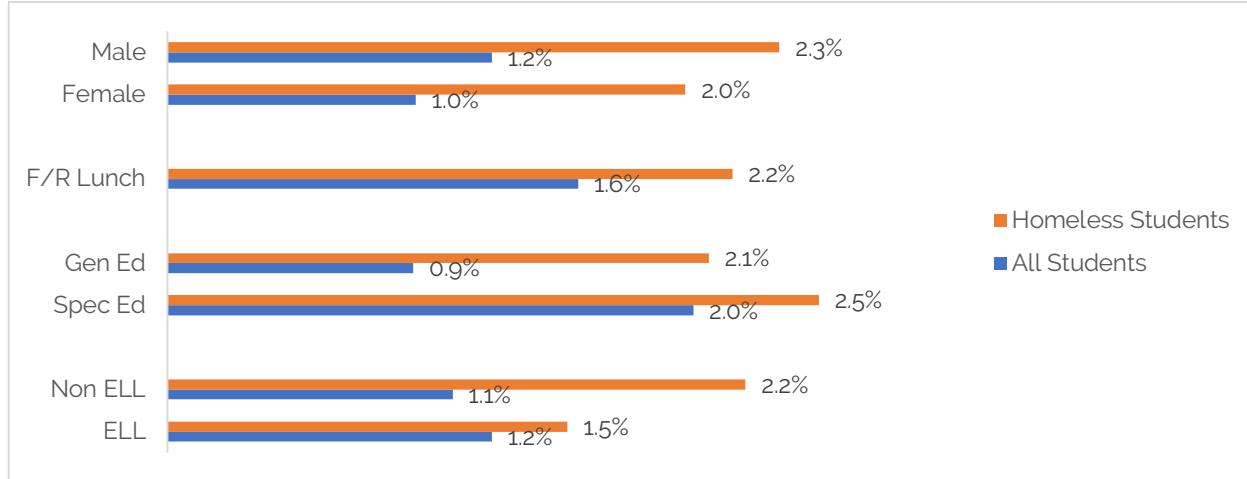
Of the school 215 corporations with available data in AY19,[4] just over half (52%) retained zero homeless students, and 58% of districts had retention rates for homeless students at or below the state rate for all students (1.1% or less). However, about 15% retained 5% or more of their homeless students, and 3% retained 10% or more. Comparatively, only 4% of corporations retained 5% or more of all students. See Figure 5

Figure 5: Homeless Student Retention Rates by %age of Sch. Corps.

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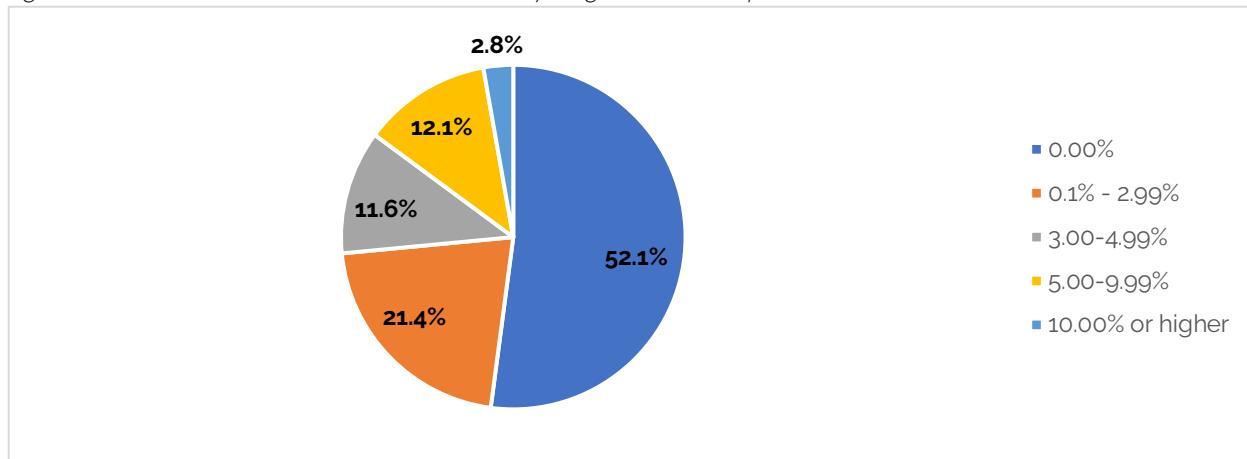
[4] Schools that had at least 10+ homeless students enrolled and reported retention rates.
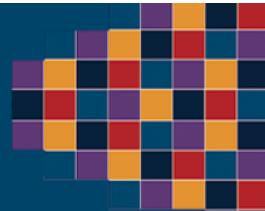
Discipline

Homeless students were suspended and expelled at rates higher than all students – suspension rates for homeless students were more than two times higher than those for all students, and expulsion rates were just under twice as high.[5]

Within racial/ethnic subcategories, three in ten Black or African American homeless students were suspended, compared to 21% of all Black students. Black homeless students were suspended at a rate 4.5 times higher than all White students (who had a suspension rate of only 7%), and White homeless students were suspended at a rate more than two times higher than all White students. Though homeless students in the clustered Asian/Am. Indian or Nat. Am./Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group had the lowest suspension rate (10.5%); it was nearly three times higher than all students within that subgroup.

Figure 6: Homeless Student Suspension Rates (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)
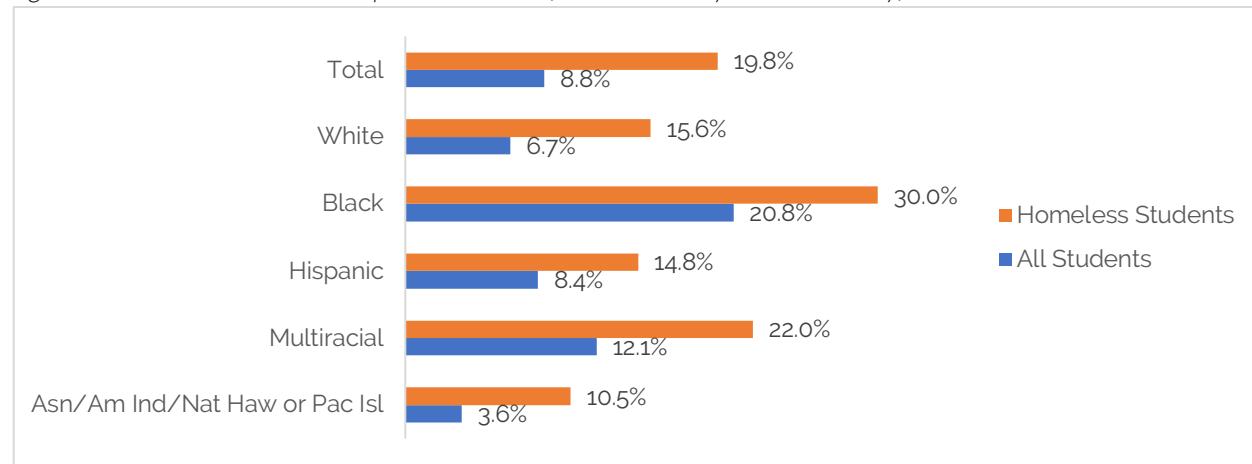
Homeless students in special education and male homeless students had the highest suspension rates among other subgroups (27% and 26%, respectively, compared to 15% of all students in special education and 12% of all male students). The suspension rate for homeless male students was more than two times higher than that of all male students. While female students had a relatively low suspension rate (compared to other subgroups), at 13.5%, it was nearly 2.5 times as high as the suspension rate for all female students.

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[5] Suspension and expulsion rates are based on taking unduplicated count of suspensions or expulsions / total enrollment. However, because enrollment is based on an October 1 date and suspension/expulsion counts represent the entire academic year, it is possible that rates are over or underrepresented.
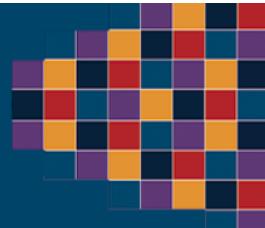
Figure 7: Homeless Student Suspension Rates by Selected Student Characteristics

Chart data:
- Male — Homeless Students: 25.9%, All Students: 11.9%
- Female — Homeless Students: 13.5%, All Students: 5.6%
- F/R Lunch — Homeless Students: 20.3%, All Students: 12.7%
- Gen Ed — Homeless Students: 17.6%, All Students: 7.7%
- Spec Ed — Homeless Students: 27.3%, All Students: 15.1%
- Non ELL — Homeless Students: 21.0%, All Students: 9.3%
- ELL — Homeless Students: 0.9%, All Students: 1.4%
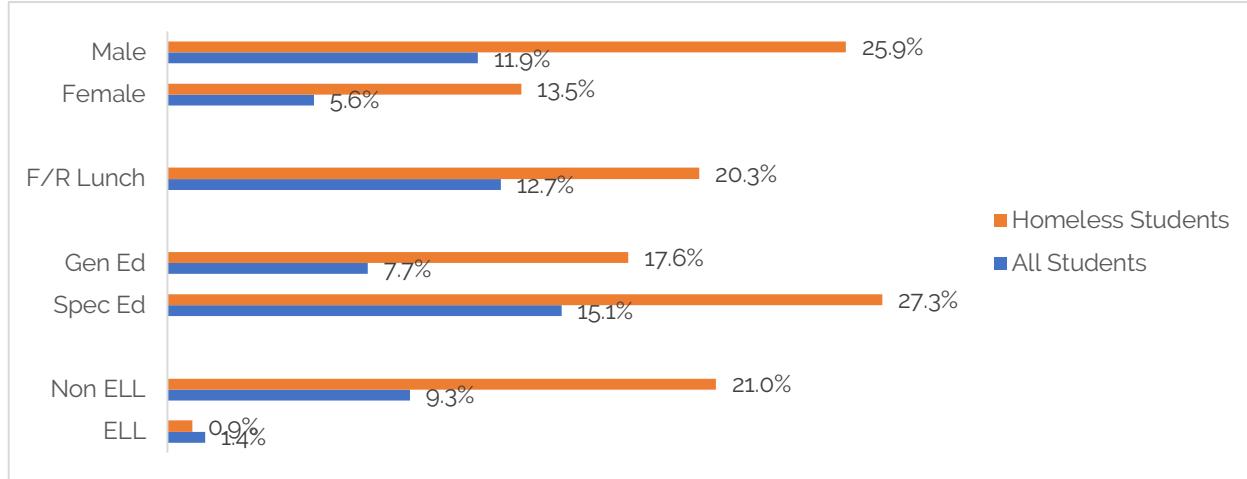
At the district level, for the 220 school corporations that enrolled at least 10 homeless students in AY2019, a large majority (84%) had suspension rates for homeless students that exceeded those of all students in the district. Just under three in ten corporations (29%) had suspension rates of 25% or more for homeless students, and 10 corporations had 50% or more rates. Only 24% of corporations had suspension rates for homeless students at or lower than the rate for all students (8.8%).

Figure 8: Homeless Student Suspension Rates by Percentage of Sch. Corps.

Pie chart data:
- <5%: 9.5%
- 5%-14.9%: 33.6%
- 15%-24.9%: 27.7%
- 25%-49.9%: 24.5%
- 50% or more: 4.5%
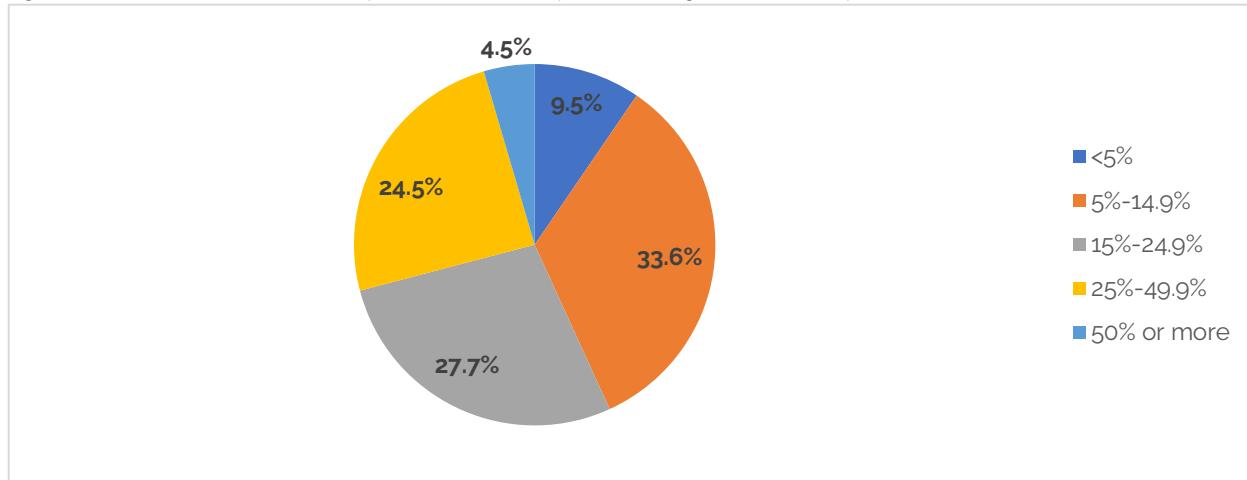
While expulsion rates for homeless students were relatively low (0.5% overall, and less than 1% for all racial/ethnic subgroups), they were higher than expulsion rates overall. Expulsion rates for Multiracial homeless students were two times higher than rates for all Multiracial students and four times higher than rates for all White students.
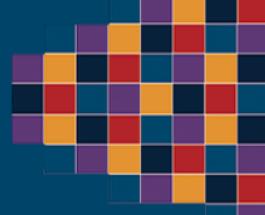
Figure 9: Homeless Student Expulsion Rates (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)
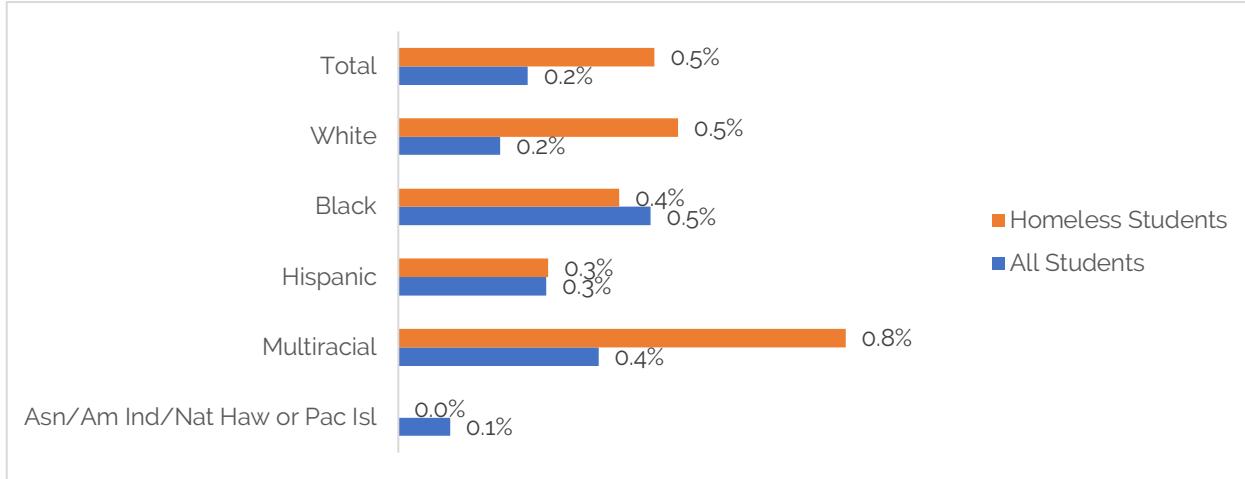
The expulsion rate for homeless male students was the highest (0.7%) within other student subcategories, more than two times higher than the rate for all male students.

Figure 10: Homeless Student Expulsion Rates by Selected Student Characteristics
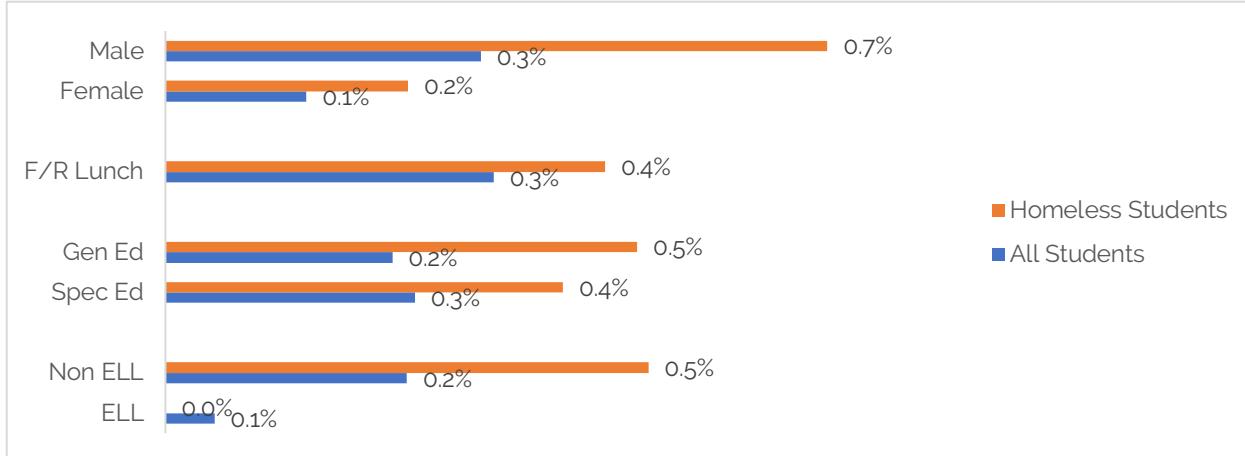
At the district level, of the 220 corporations enrolling at least 10 homeless students in AY2019, just under 80% expelled zero homeless students (and 79.5% had expulsion rates for homeless students at or below the overall rate of 0.2%). However, 9% had expulsion rates of 2.5% or more for homeless students, and 6% expelled 4% or more. In comparison, only one of the 220 school corporations had an expulsion rate higher than 2% for all students.
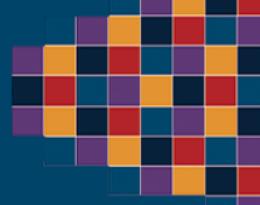
Figure 11: Homeless Student Expulsion Rates by %age of Sch. Corps.
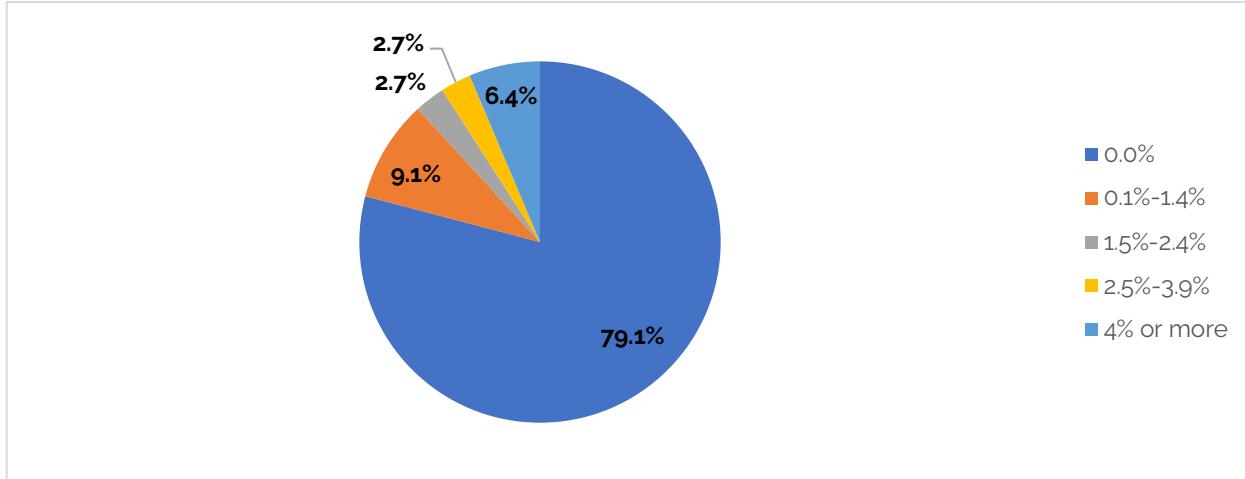
Academic Proficiency

In AY2019, academic proficiency was measured by three statewide assessments: ILEARN, administered to students in grades 3-8; ISTEP+, administered to students in grade 10; and IREAD-3, administered to students in grade 3. In all tested grades and subjects, Indiana's homeless students passed all three of these assessments at lower rates than all students. Homeless students' passing rates for both ILEARN English/Language Arts (E/LA), ILEARN Math, and ISTEP+ E/LA were less than half the rates of all students. For ISTEP+ Math, passing rates for homeless students were more than three times lower.

Figure 12: Assessment Passing Rates (Overall and Homeless Students)
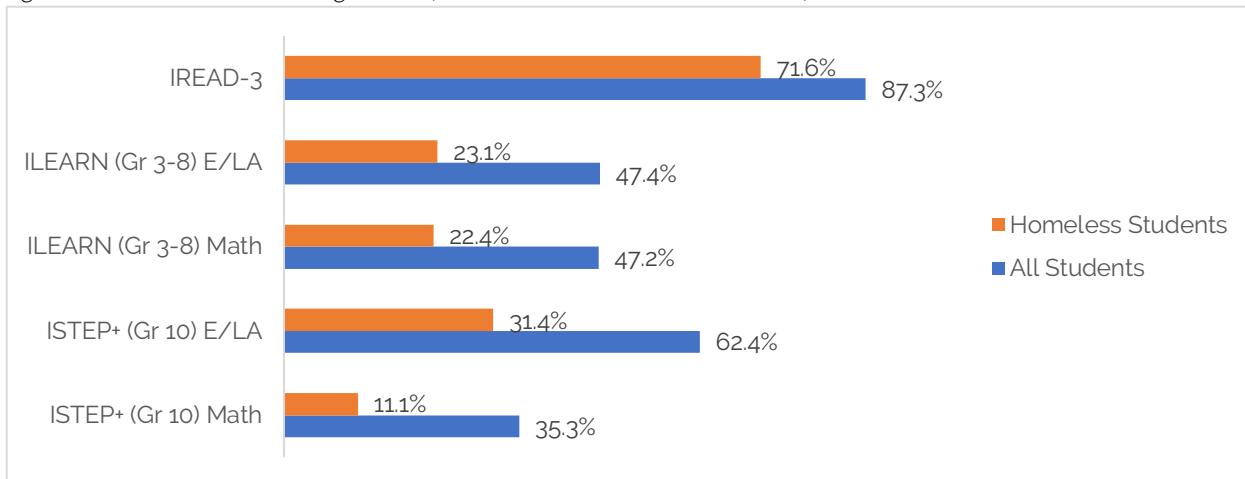
IREAD-3

While just under three-quarters (72%) of homeless students passed the IREAD-3 assessment, 87% of all students passed, a 15-percentage point gap. Homeless students trailed all students in all racial/ethnic categories in IREAD-3 passing rates, particularly in the clustered Asian/Am. Indian or Nat. Am./Native
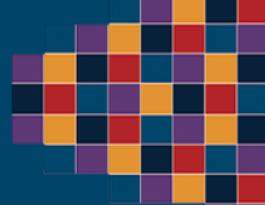
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group. This group had the lowest passing rate across racial/ethnic categories, with only 37.5% passing (vs. 87% of all students in this category), a rate more than 2.3 times lower.

Figure 13: IREAD-3 Passing Rates (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)
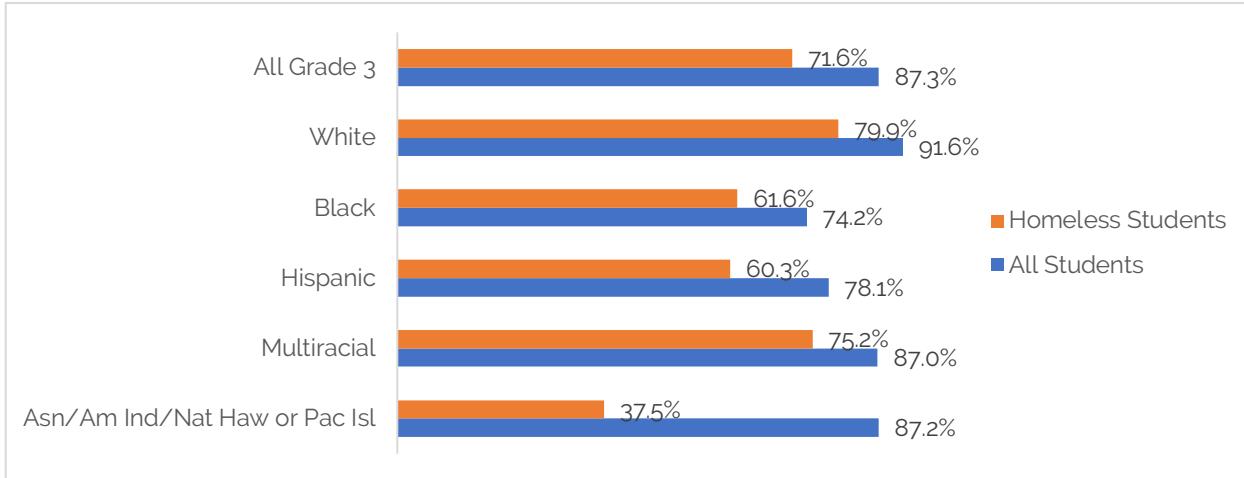
Homeless students in special education had the lowest IREAD-3 passing rates (44.5%, compared to 61% of all special education students, a rate of about 1.4 times lower). Just over half of homeless students who were English Language Learners passed, compared to 73% of all English Language Learners, also about 1.4 times lower).

Figure 14: IREAD-3 Passing Rates by Selected Student Characteristics
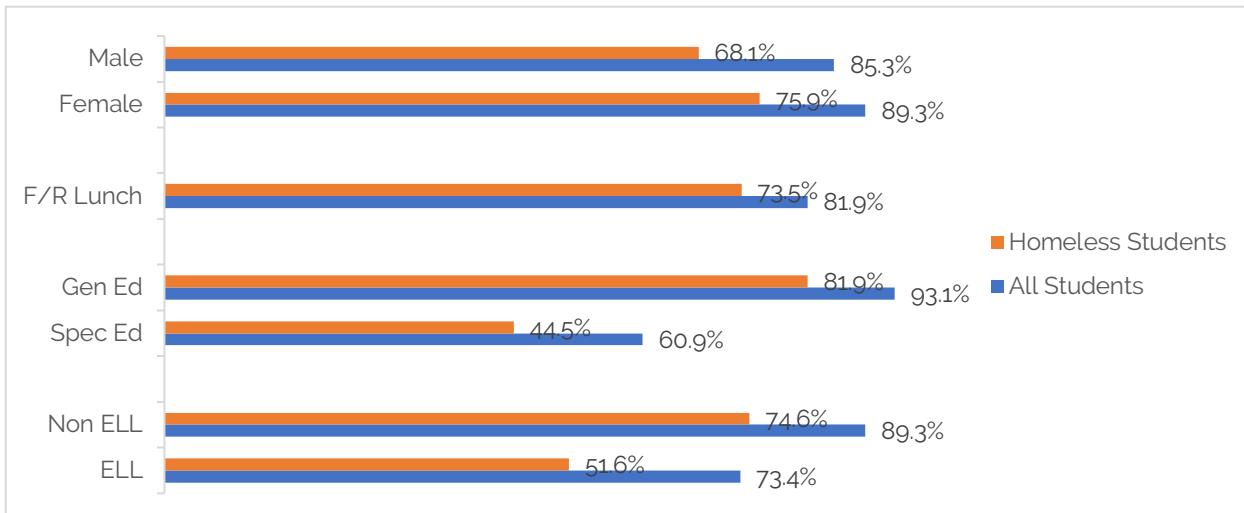
Of the 43 school corporations that administered the IREAD-3 to 10 or more homeless students, the highest passing rate was 100 %, and the lowest was 29%. Less than half of homeless students tested passed IREAD-3 at four corporations; comparatively, only one corporation had less than half of all students pass IREAD-3. The largest passing rate gap was 44 percentage points (the district with 29% of homeless students
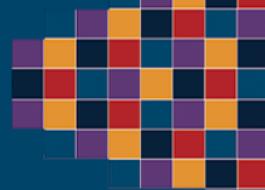
passing had 73% of all students passing). Homeless students at nine of the 43 school corporations outperformed all students, and the passing rate gap was less than three percentage points at three others. In 23% of corporations, homeless students passed at or above the passing rate for all students (87.3%).

Figure 15: IREAD-3 Passing Rates by Percentage of School Corps. Testing 10+ Homeless Students


Legend:
- ■ <50% — 9.3%
- ■ 50%-74.9% — 48.8%
- ■ 75%-89.9% — 20.9%
- ■ 90% or higher — 20.9%
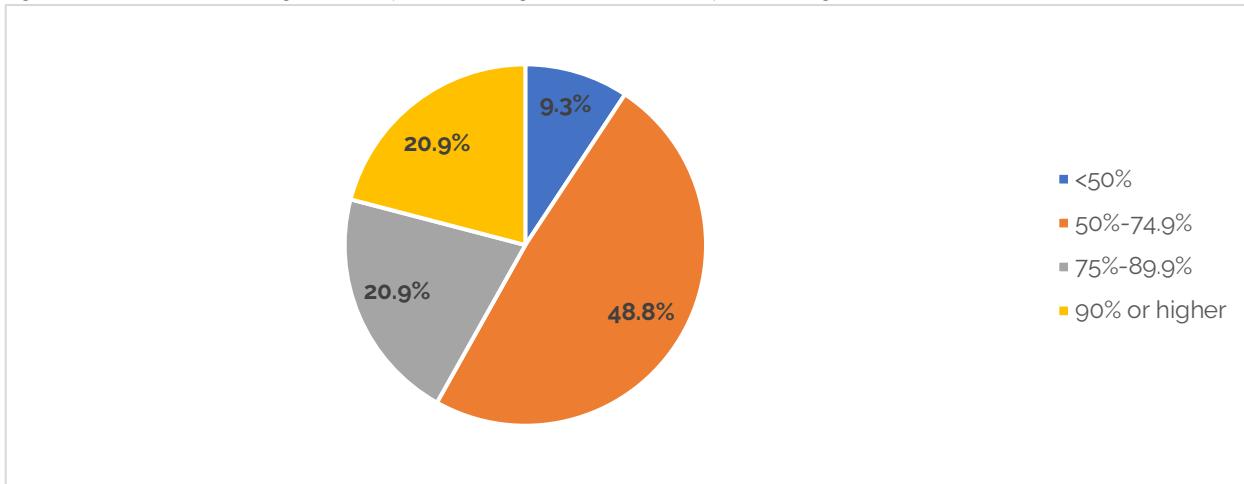
ILEARN Grades 3-8 English/Language Arts

Less than one-quarter of all tested homeless students passed the ILEARN E/LA assessment in AY2019, a passing rate more than twice as low as that of all students. While passing rates for homeless students were relatively similar across grade levels (between 22-24%), homeless students in Grade 3 had the lowest passing rates, and homeless students in Grade 7 had the highest passing rates. Passing rates for homeless students in each grade level were two or more times lower than all students, with the largest gaps in Grade 5 and Grade 8.

Figure 16: ILEARN E/LA Passing Rates by Grade

	All Grades	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
All Students	47.4%	45.8%	45.3%	47.0%	47.3%	49.1%	50.1%
Homeless Students	23.1%	22.1%	22.7%	22.3%	23.6%	24.2%	24.0%
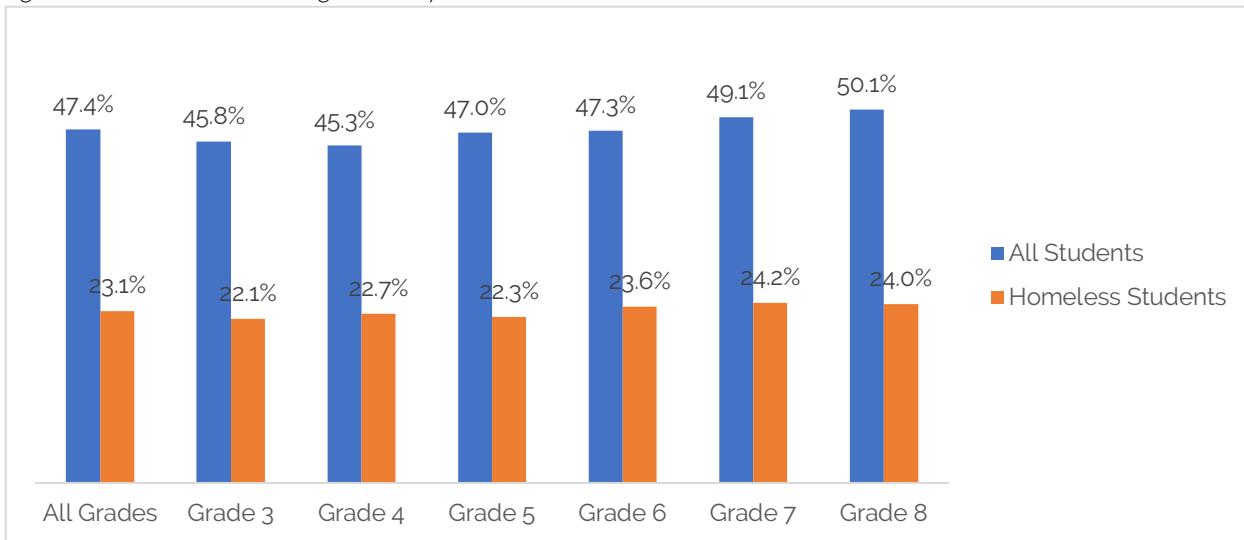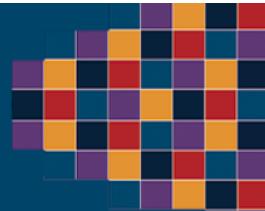
Among racial/ethnic subgroups, only 12% of Black or African American homeless students passed ILEARN E/LA, a rate nearly two times lower than all Black students and nearly 4.5 times lower than all White students. Hispanic/Latinx homeless students had a passing rate of 18.5%, almost two times lower than all Hispanic students, and nearly three times lower than all White students. Homeless students in the clustered Asian/Am. Indian or Nat. Am./Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander had a passing rate of 21%, nearly three times lower than all students in this subgroup, and 2.5 times lower than all White students.

Figure 17: ILEARN E/LA Passing Rates by Race/Ethnicity
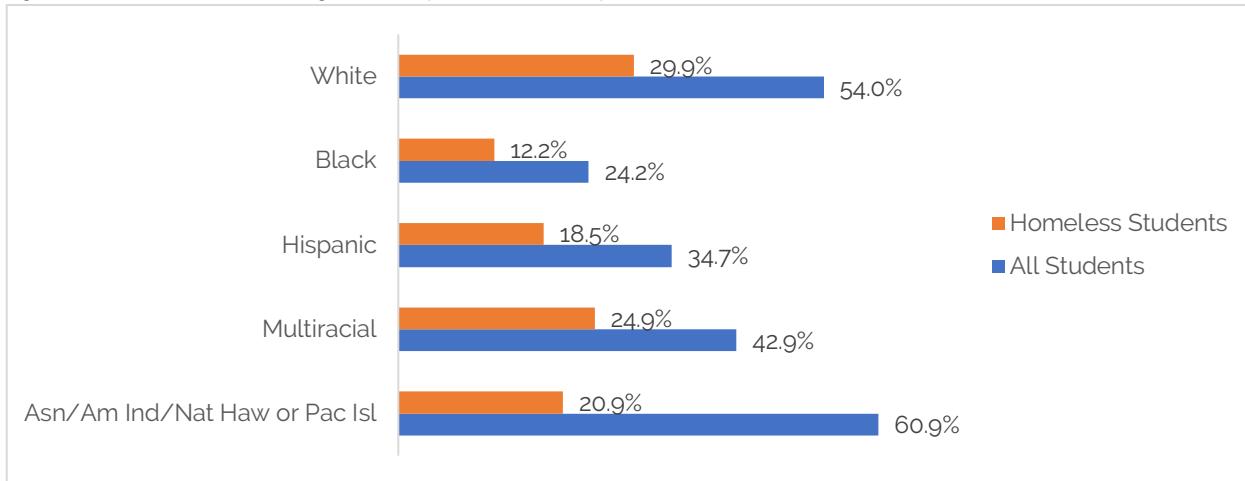
Homeless students in special education and English Language Learners had the lowest passing rate among other student subgroups (6.5% and 10%, respectively). Homeless students in special education had E/LA pass rates nearly 2.5 times lower than all students in special education. Male homeless students had a passing rate of more than twice as low as all male students (19% compared to 43%).

Figure 18: ILEARN E/LA Passing Rates by Selected Student Characteristics
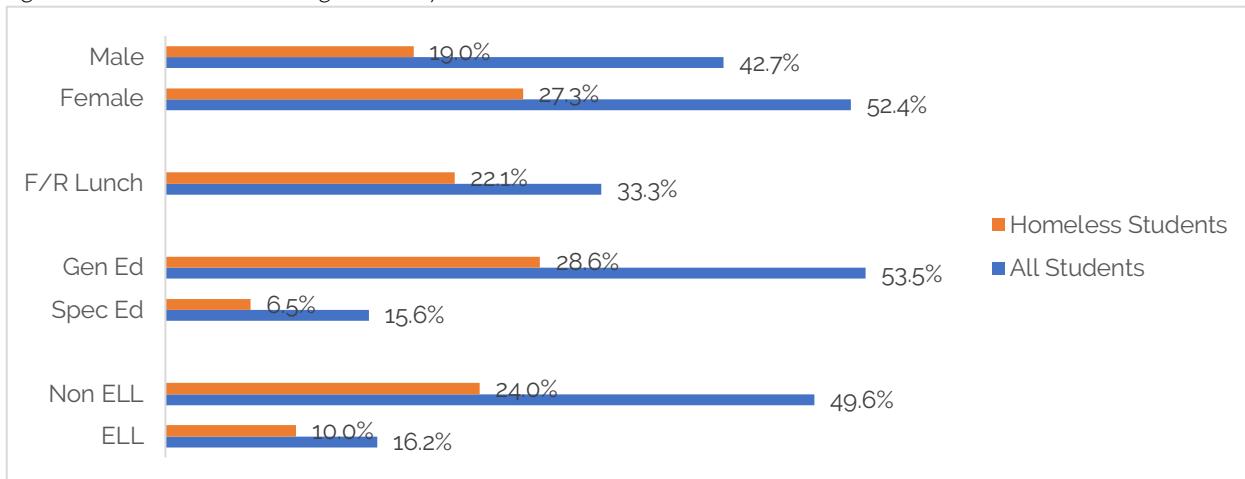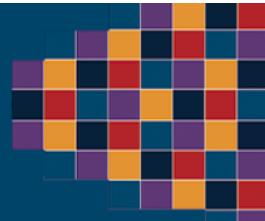
For school corporations that tested at least 10 homeless students (140 total), passing rates ranged from a low of 0% to a high of 61.5%. The highest gap in passing rates was 64 percentage points at one district (11% of homeless students passing E/LA compared to 75% of all students).

There were eight corporations (6% of those testing 10 or more homeless students) where homeless students outperformed all students, with E/LA passing rates ranging from 10.5% (compared to 6% for all students) to 61.5% (compared to 51% for all students). In 45% of school corporations that tested at least 10 homeless students, less than one-quarter of homeless students passed ILEARN E/LA. Comparatively, only 9% of these school corporations had less than 25% passing rates for all students. Only 7% of corporations (10 of the 140) had passing rates for homeless students at or above the rate for all students (47.4%).

Figure 19: ILEARN E/LA Passing Rates by %age of School Corps. Testing 10+ Homeless Students
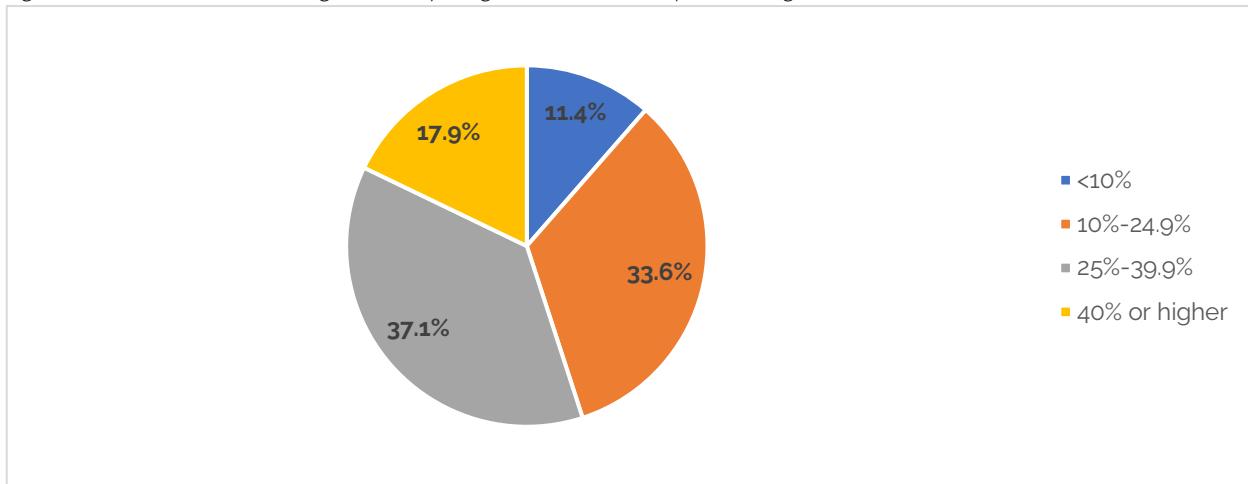
ILEARN Grades 3-8 Math

Passing rates for homeless students in ILEARN Math were more than two times lower than all students (22% versus 47%). At each grade level, homeless students in Grade 3 had the highest passing rate (34%), though still trailing all third graders by about 24 percentage points. ILEARN Math passing rates were lowest for the higher grades (in line with overall student population trends). Less than 15% of homeless students in Grade 7 and Grade 8 passed ILEARN Math, passing rates more than 2.5 times lower than all seventh and eighth-grade students.

Figure 20: ILEARN Math Passing Rates by Grade
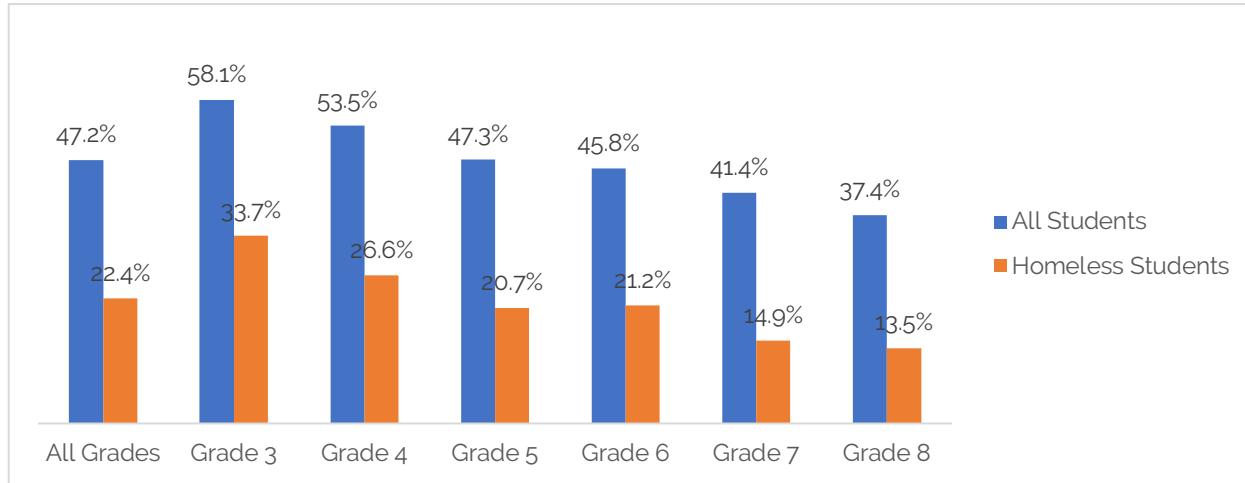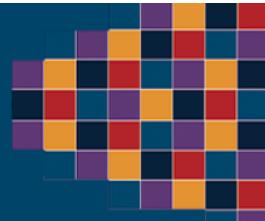
Within racial/ethnic subgroups, Black or African American homeless students had the lowest passing rate (11.5%), nearly two times lower than all Black students, and more than 4.5 times lower than all White students. Only 17% of Hispanic/Latinx homeless students passed ILEARN Math, a rate nearly two times lower than all Hispanic/Latinx students and over three times lower than all White students. Homeless students in the clustered Asian/Am. Indian or Nat. Am./Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group had a passing rate of 19%, more than three times lower than all students in this group, and about 2.8 times lower than all White students.

Figure 21: ILEARN Math Passing Rates by Race/Ethnicity
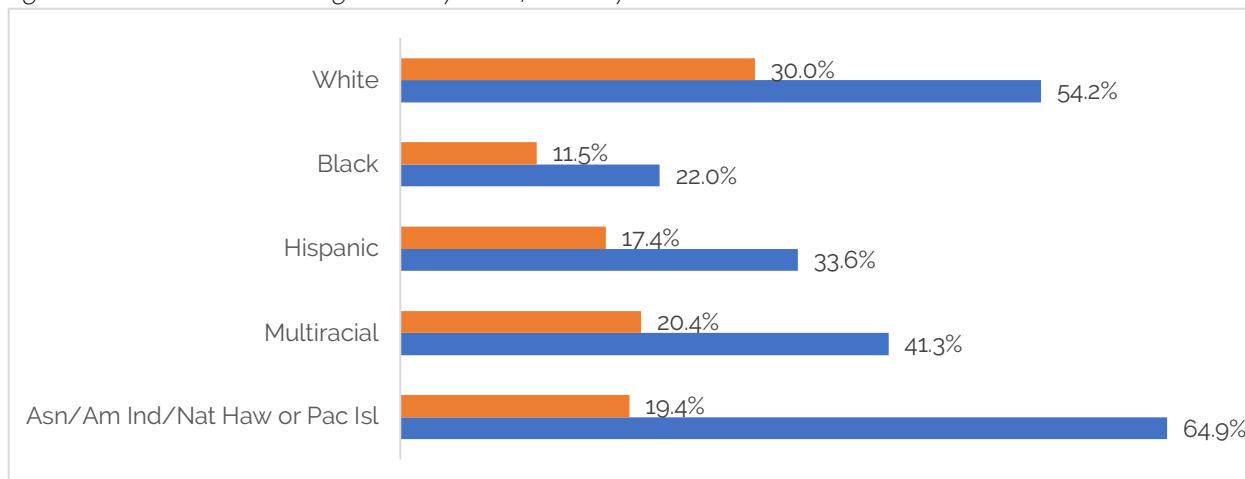
Only 8% of homeless students in special education passed ILEARN Math, compared to 18% of all special education students, a passing rate nearly 2.3 times lower. Just 11% of homeless students who were English Language Learners passed, a rate about two times lower than all English Language Learners (23%).
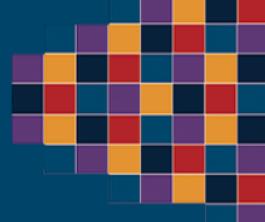
Figure 22: ILEARN Math Passing Rates by Selected Student Characteristics
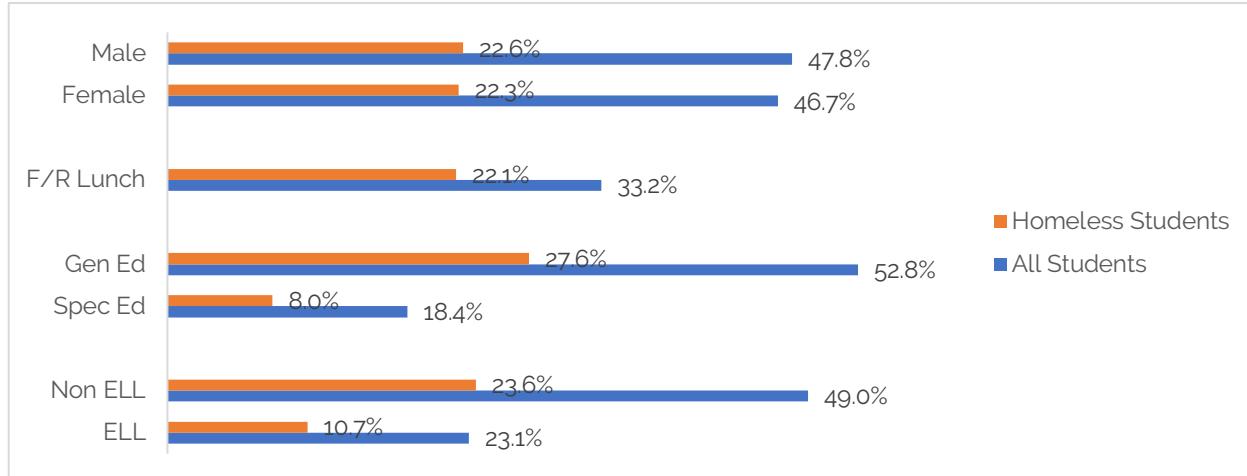
Of the 140 school corporations that tested at least 10 homeless students in Math, 54% had less than 25% passing rates for homeless students, while only 9% of these districts had passing rates of less than 25% for all students. Math passing rates for homeless students ranged from 0% (four school corporations) to 69%. The largest gap was 59% at one school corporation (17% of homeless students passing Math compared to 76% of all students). There were 11 school corporations where homeless students outperformed all students, with passing rates ranging from 17% for homeless students (compared to 11% for all students) to 69% for homeless students (compared to 58% for all students). Three of these school corporations also saw homeless students outperform all students in E/LA. Only 9% of corporations (13 of the 140) had passing rates for homeless students at or above the passing rate for all students (47.2%).

*Figure 23: ILEARN Math Passing Rates by %age of School Corps. Testing 10+ Homeless Students*
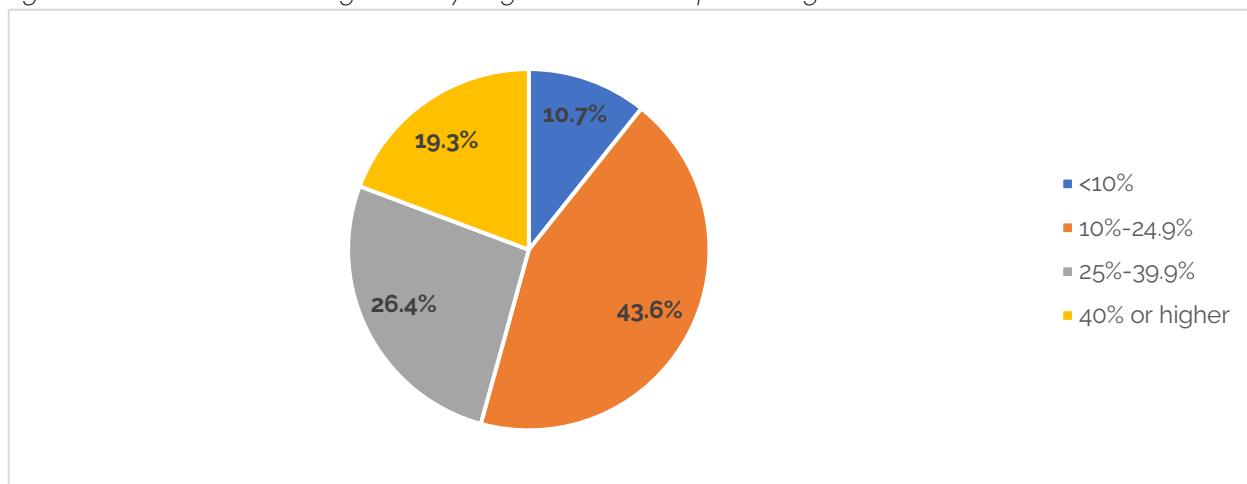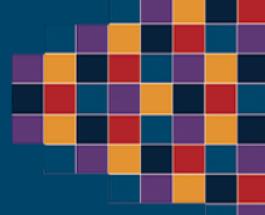
## ISTEP+ Grade 10 English/Language Arts (E/LA)

Just under one-third of homeless students (31%) passed ISTEP+ Grade 10 E/LA, a rate about two times lower than all students. Homeless students had gaps in all racial/ethnic subgroups. Less than 20% of Black or African American homeless students passed E/LA (nearly two times lower than the 37% of all Black students who passed, and more than 3.5 times lower than the 68% of all White students passing). Gaps within racial/ethnic subgroups were particularly pronounced for the clustered Asian/Am. Indian or Nat. Am./Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, whose 26% passing rate for homeless students was 2.7 times lower than the passing rate for all students in this group (70%), as well as the Multiracial subgroup (24.5% of homeless students passing compared to 59% of all students, a rate nearly 2.5 times lower).

Figure 24: ISTEP+ Grade 10 E/LA Passing Rates (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)
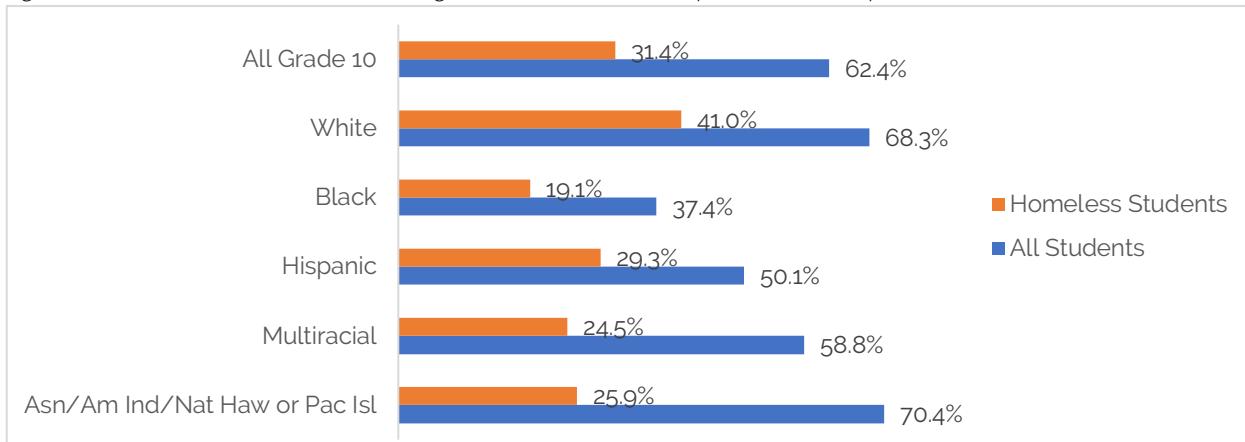

Just 8% of homeless students who were English Language Learners passed ISTEP+ E/LA (compared to 11% of all ELL students). Only 9% of homeless students in special education passed (compared to 20% of all students in special education). Male homeless students had the largest gap with their subgroup peers – 23% passing than 56%, 2.4 times lower.

Figure 25: ISTEP+ Grade 10 E/LA Passing Rates by Selected Student Characteristics
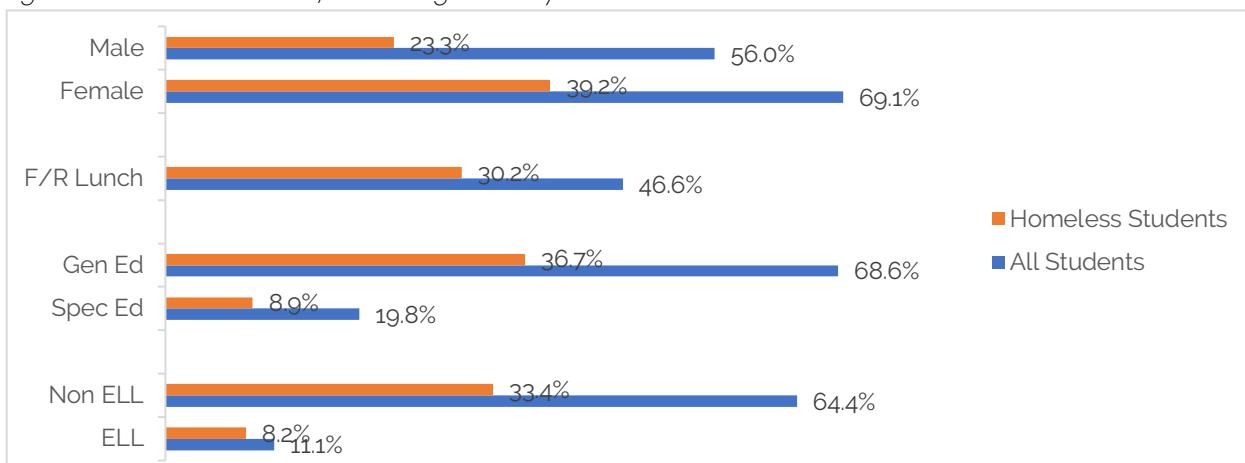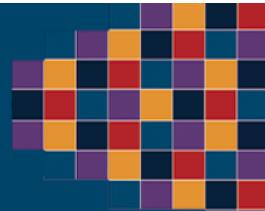
Only 20 school corporations tested 10 or more homeless students in ISTEP+ E/LA. For those districts, passing rates for homeless students ranged from 14% to 77%. The highest passing rate gap was 49.5 percentage points (15% of homeless students passing compared to 64.5% of all students). At one school corporation, homeless students slightly outperformed all students (77% passing compared to 74% of all students). This was the only district among the 20 with a passing rate for homeless students at or above the overall passing rate (62.4%). Nine of the 20 corporations (45%) had homeless students passing rates of less than 25%, and none of these corporations had a rate of less than 25% for all students.

Figure 26: ISTEP+ E/LA Passing Rates by %age of School Corps. Testing 10+ Homeless Students

Legend:
- <10%
- 10%-24.9%
- 25%-39.9%
- 40% or higher

Values shown: 0.0%, 45.0%, 30.0%, 25.0%
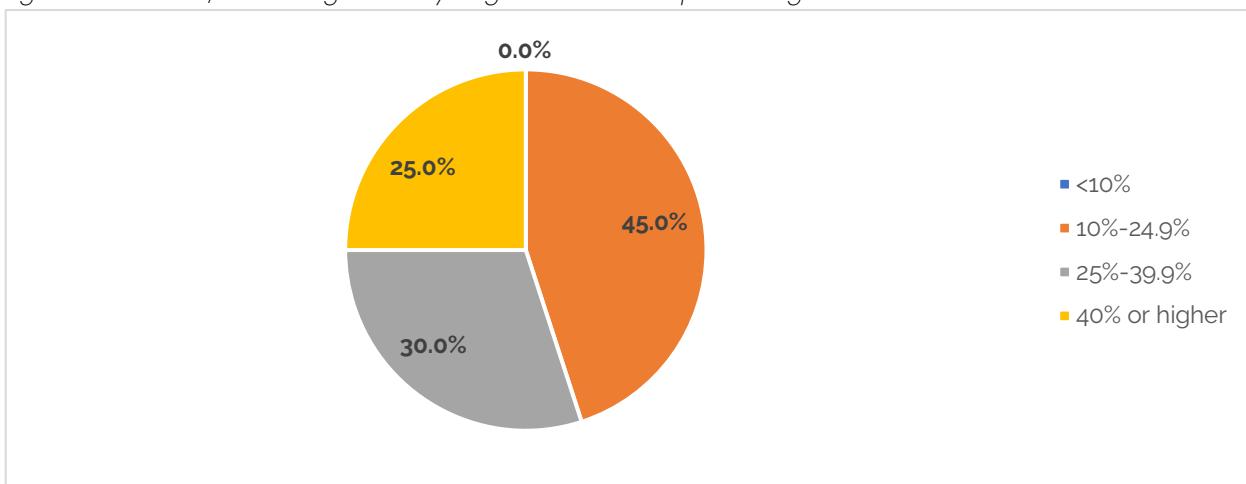
ISTEP+ Grade 10 Math

Homeless students passed ISTEP+ Grade 10 Math at a rate three times lower than all students (11% of homeless students passing, compared to 35% of all students). Gaps existed within all racial/ethnic subgroups. Only 4% of Black or African American homeless students passed, three times lower than all Black students (who still had a relatively low passing rate of 12%), and nearly ten times lower than all White students. Only 8% of Hispanic/Latinx homeless students passed Math, compared to 20% of all Hispanic/Latinx students (about 1.7 times lower, and five times lower than all White students). Only 8% of Multiracial homeless students passed, a rate more than 3.5 times lower than the 29.5% of all Multiracial students passing and five times lower than all White students.
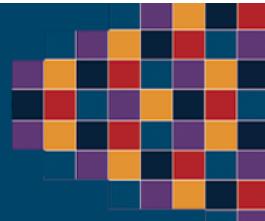
Figure 27: ISTEP+ Grade 10 Math Passing Rates (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)
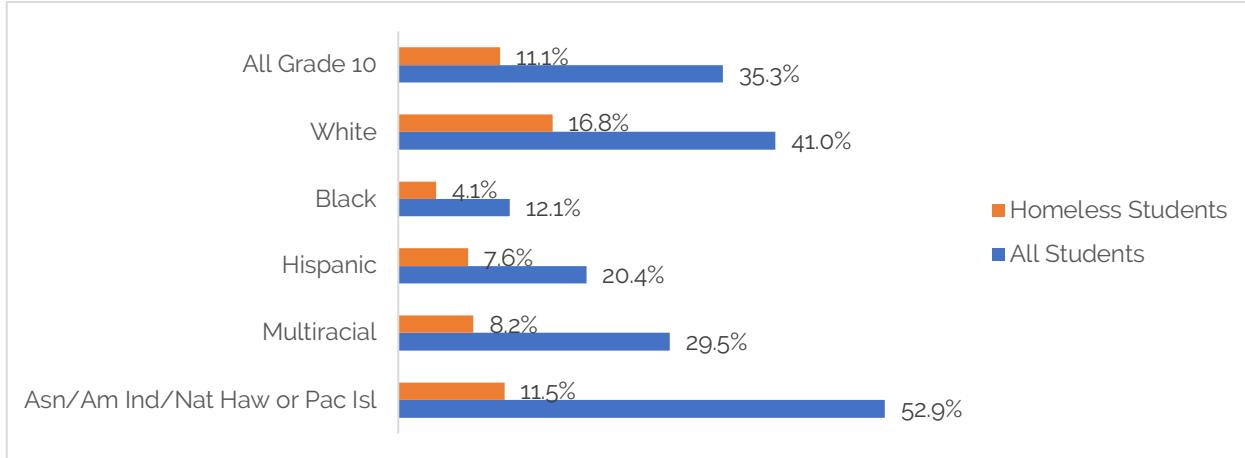
Within other student categories, Math passing rates were particularly low for homeless students who were English Language Learners (2% passing, compared to 5% of all ELL students) and homeless students in special education (3% passing compared to 8% of all students in special education). Again, homeless male students had the largest gaps with their peers – only 9% passed, compared to 34% overall, a rate 3.7 times lower.

Figure 28: ISTEP+ Grade 10 Math Passing Rates by Selected Student Characteristics
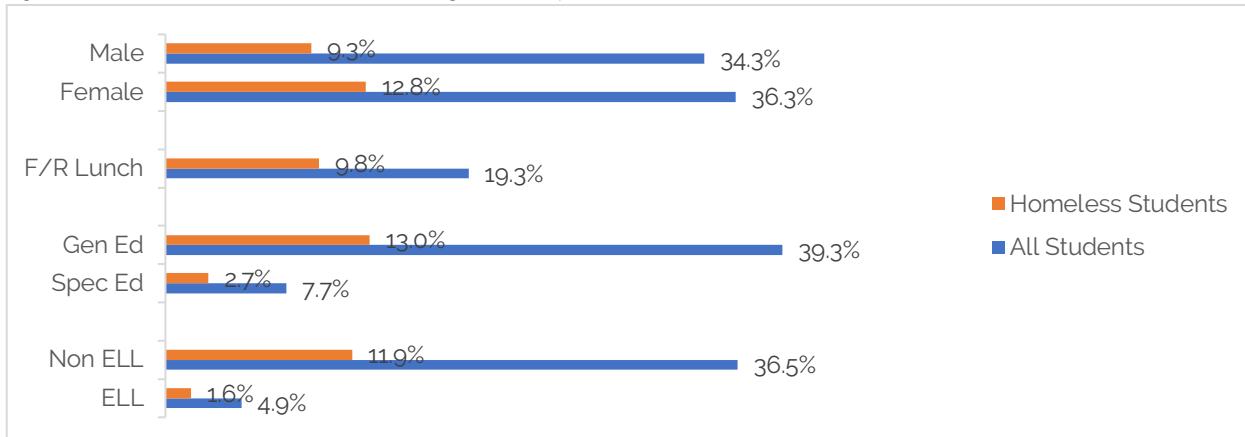
Only 19 school corporations tested at least 10 homeless students in Math. In five corporations (26%), no homeless students passed, and less than 10% of homeless students passed in 63% of corporations. Comparatively, only three corporations (16%) had less than 10% pass rates for all students. The largest gap was 27 percentage points (10% of homeless students passing than 37% of all students). Homeless students slightly outperformed all students at just one corporation (38.5% of homeless students passing compared to 37% of all students); this corporation and one other were the only two in which homeless students passed at a rate equal to or higher than the overall passing rate (35.3%).
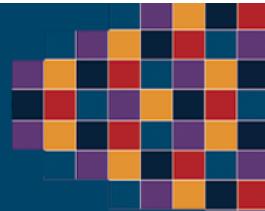
Figure 29: ISTEP+ Math Passing Rates by Percentage of School Corps. Testing 10+ Homeless Students

- **63.2%** <10%
- **21.1%** 10%-24.9%
- **10.5%** 25%-39.9%
- **5.3%** 40% or higher
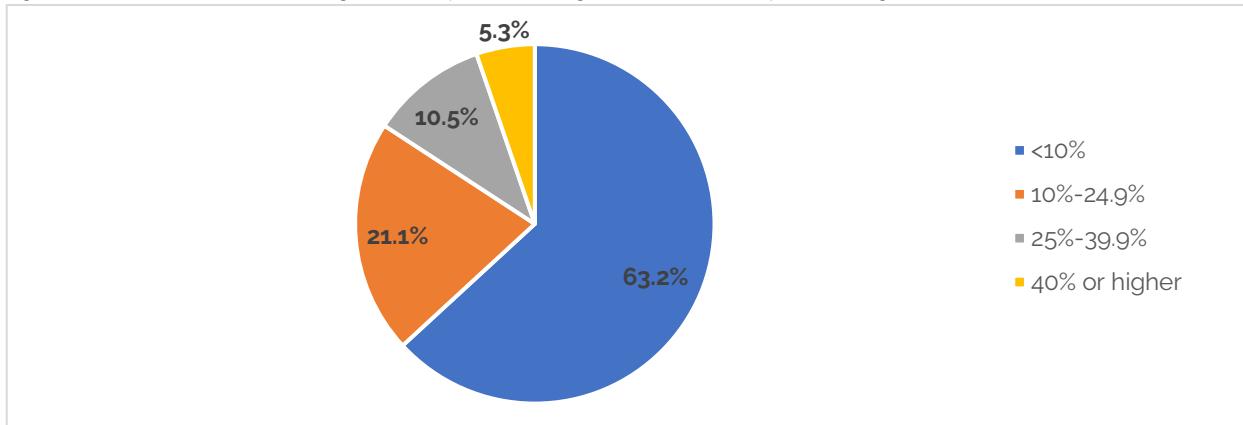
Graduation and Graduates

Overall and within nearly all racial/ethnic and other subcategories, students experiencing homelessness tend to have higher grade retention levels and discipline, coupled with lower levels of academic achievement as measured by state standardized assessments. These challenges culminate in lower graduation rates for homeless youth and the receipt of less rigorous diplomas, which may impact students' abilities to pursue postsecondary education opportunities and viable career pathways.

Four-Year Graduation Rate

More than three-quarters of homeless youth graduated on-time (within four years) from high school in AY2019, but this rate was ten percentage points lower than the statewide graduation rate of 87%. Graduation rates were relatively similar for homeless students across racial/ethnic groups, except for the clustered Asian/Am. Indian or Native Am./Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group, which had 90% of homeless students graduating on time. (The graduation rates for all students in this clustered race/ethnicity group were still higher than homeless peers, at 93.5%). Black or African American homeless students had the lowest graduation rate of all racial/ethnic subgroups (75%), but White homeless students had the largest gap with their peers (12 points).

Figure 30: Graduation Rates (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)

|	Homeless Students	All Students
Overall Rate	77.1%	87.3%
White	76.9%	89.2%
Black	75.4%	78.2%
Hispanic	78.9%	84.6%
Multiracial	76.8%	82.9%
Asn/Am Ind/Nat Haw or Pac Isl	90.4%	93.5%
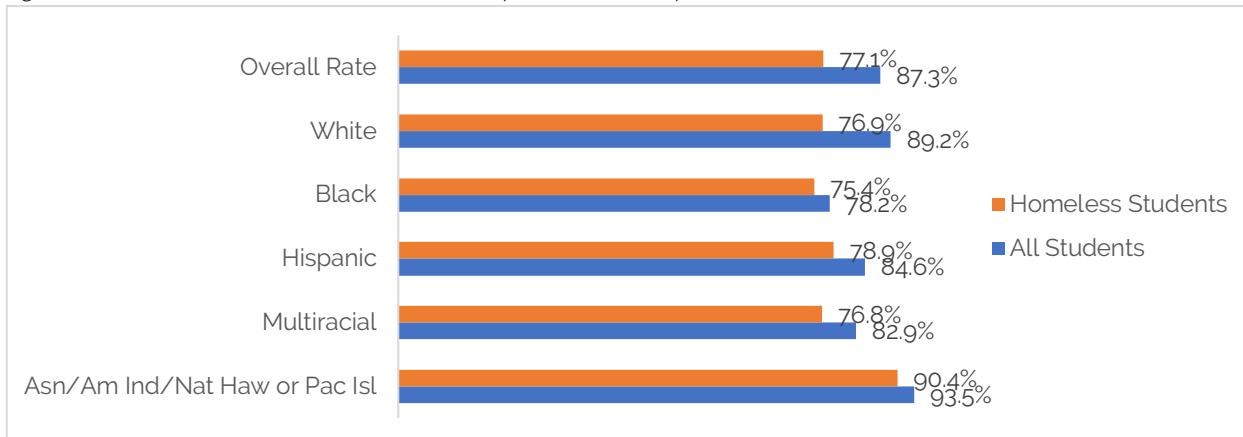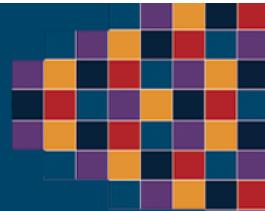
Homeless students also trailed their peers in every other examined subgroup. Graduation rates were particularly low for homeless students in special education (62%, compared to 71% for all students in special education) and homeless students who were English Language Learners (72%, compared to 78% for all English Language Learners). The largest gap was for homeless male students, who trailed all male students by 12 percentage points (73% graduation rate compared to 85% graduation rate).

Figure 31: Graduation Rates by Selected Student Characteristics
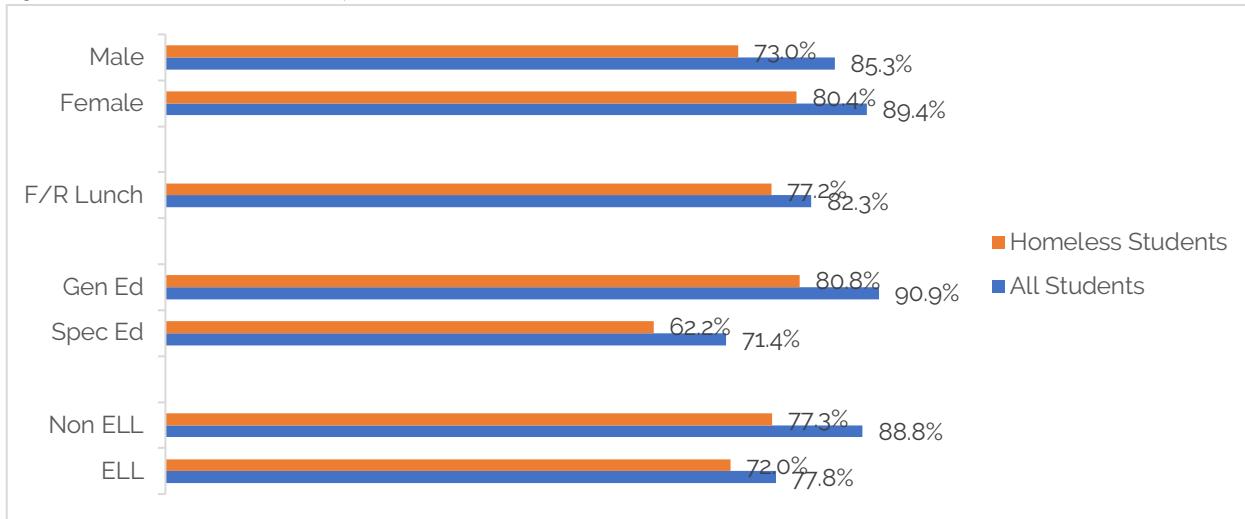
There were 19 corporations with at least 10 homeless graduates in AY2019. Of these, graduation rates for homeless students ranged from 65% to 100%, and 42% of these school corporations had cohort graduation rates of less than 80% for homeless students. On a positive note, however, 26% (five of 19) had graduation rates of 90% or higher, and homeless students had higher graduation rates than all students in all five of these corporations.

Figure 32: Graduation Rates by Percentage of School Corps. with 10 or More Homeless Graduates
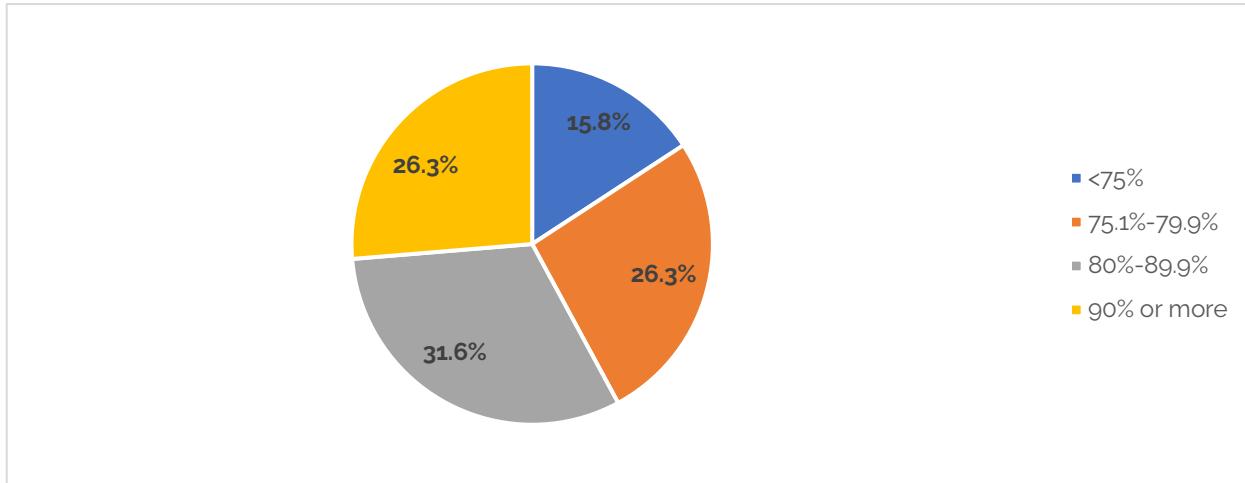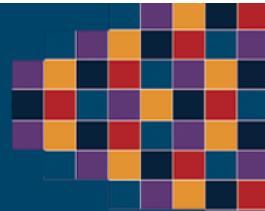
Diploma Status

Homeless students were more likely than all students to receive a waiver diploma (meaning they did not meet state-defined graduation requirements and earned their diplomas with a waiver of those requirements) and are less likely to earn rigorous diplomas like Honors and International Baccalaureate or even the state default diploma, the Core 40.

This hinders actions that may contribute to better economic outcomes, such as enrolling in postsecondary education. According to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, Indiana students who earned Honors diplomas were far more likely to enroll in postsecondary immediately after high school than those earning only a General diploma (91% of Honors recipients compared to just 15% of General diploma recipients). Further, only 22% of students graduating with waivers enrolled in postsecondary immediately after high school, compared to 65% of those who did not graduate with waivers.[xiv] Lack of postsecondary opportunities can contribute to lower lifetime wages – the Commission reports that even completing some college, but no degree, is related to more than $150,000 in additional lifetime earnings compared to those holding only a high school diploma, and completing a Bachelor's degree can result in more than $1M in additional lifetime earnings.[xv]

Waiver Diplomas

Just under one-quarter of homeless students received waiver diplomas (23%) compared to only 12% of all students, meaning that homeless youth were nearly twice as likely to receive a waiver than all students. Homeless students also were more likely to get waiver diplomas than their peers within every racial/ethnic subgroup. Nearly 35% of Black or African American homeless graduates, and 31% of Hispanic/Latinx homeless graduates, received waiver diplomas, compared to 24.5% of all Black or African American graduates and 17% of all Hispanic/Latinx graduates. As such, Black or African American homeless graduates were 3.7 times more likely to get waiver diplomas than all White students, and Hispanic/Latinx homeless graduates received waivers at rates 3.3 times higher than all White students.

Figure 33: %age of Graduates Receiving Waivers (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)

|	Homeless Students	All Students
Overall Rate	23.4%	12.1%
White	16.5%	9.4%
Black	34.9%	24.5%
Hispanic	30.7%	17.4%
Multiracial	25.6%	14.4%
Asn/Am Ind/Nat Haw or Pac Isl	14.3%	11.4%
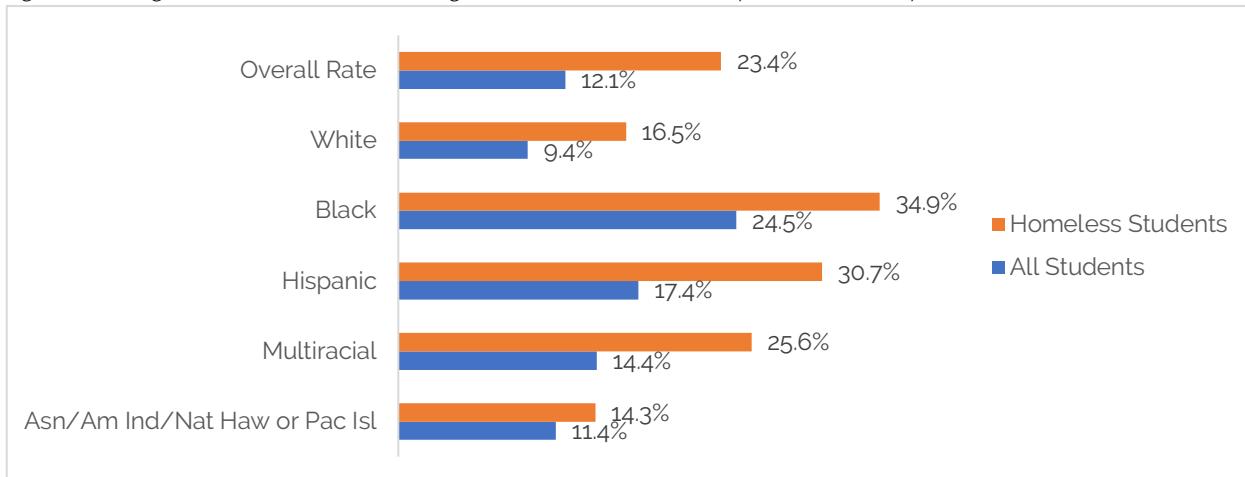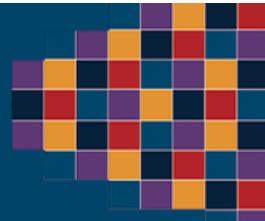
Again, within all other subgroups, homeless students were more likely than their peers to receive diploma waivers. More than half of homeless students who were English Language Learners (53%) and half of homeless students in special education received waivers, compared to 47% of all ELL students and 35% of all special education students. Male homeless students received waivers at a rate more than two times higher than their male peers (25% for homeless male students compared to 12% of all male students).

Figure 34: Percentage of Graduates Receiving Waivers by Selected Student Characteristics
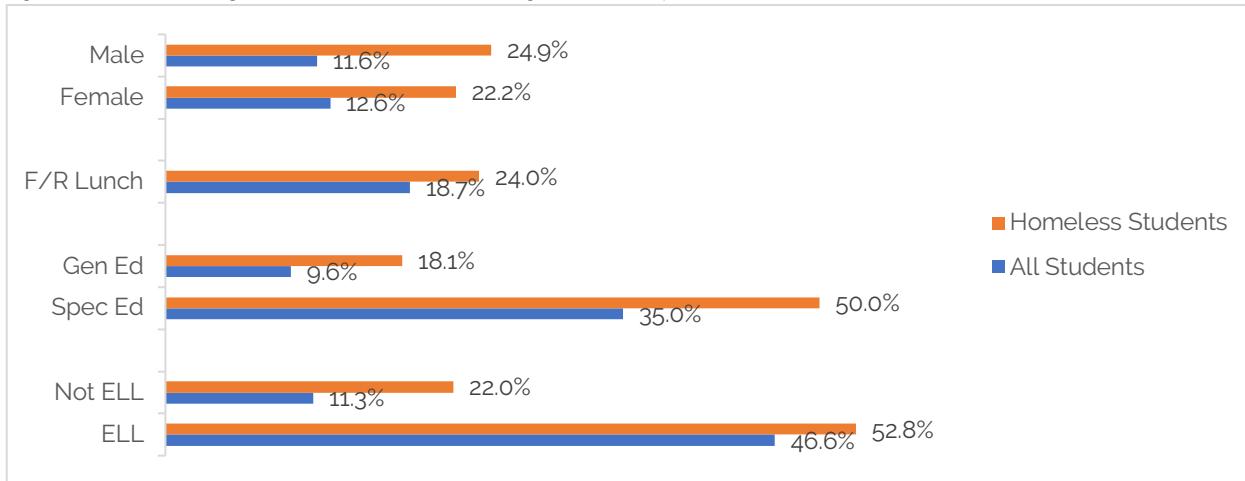
In the 19 districts with at least 10 homeless graduates at the corporation level, waiver rates for homeless students ranged from a low of 0% (at two corporations) to a high of 73%. While 21% of corporations had waiver rates for homeless students of less than 10% (and 32% had waiver rates for homeless students that were at or below the overall rate of 12.1%), more than one-quarter of corporations (26%) had waiver rates of 40% or higher for homeless graduates. Comparatively, no corporation had a waiver rate of more than 30% for all graduates.

*Figure 35: Homeless Student Waiver Rate for Corporations with 10 or More Homeless Graduates*
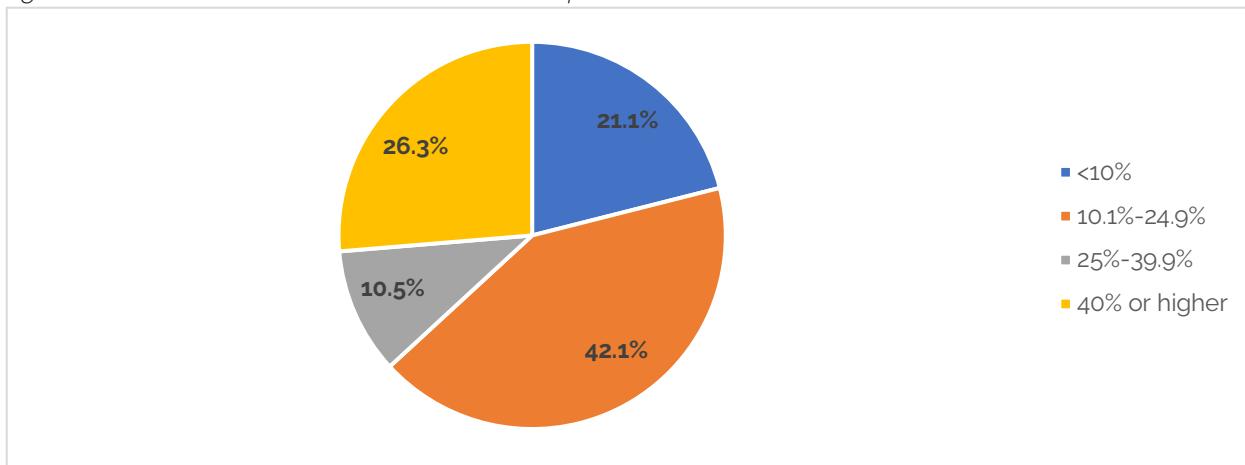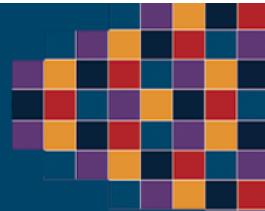
Diploma Type

Homeless graduates are far more likely than all graduates to obtain General diplomas and far less likely to earn rigorous Honors diplomas. Among the class of 2019 overall, 90.5% of students earned Core 40 (50.5%) or Honors6 (40%) diplomas. Comparatively, only 79% of homeless students earned Core 40 (63%) or Honors (16%) diplomas. In other words, homeless graduates were 2.5 times less likely than all graduates to earn rigorous, college-ready Honors diplomas.

Within each racial/ethnic subgroup, close to or above 90% of all students earned a Core 40 or Honors diploma, ranging from 88% of all Black or African American students (69% Core 40 and 19.5% Honors) to 94% of all students in the clustered Asian/American Ind. or Native Am./Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group (35% Core 40 and 59% Honors). Comparatively, rates of homeless students earning Core 40 or Honors diplomas were 82% or less in each racial/ethnic subgroup, except for the clustered racial/ethnic group, in which 95% of homeless students earned Core 40 or Honors diplomas.

Overall, 21% of homeless graduates received General diplomas (less rigorous diplomas that are less likely to prepare students for postsecondary education) than 10% of all graduates. Nearly three in ten Hispanic/Latinx homeless graduates (28%) received General diplomas, compared to 11% of all Hispanic/Latinx graduates (a rate nearly 2.5 times higher) and just nine % of all White graduates (a rate more than three times higher).

Figure 36: Diploma Type (Overall and by Race/Ethnicity)
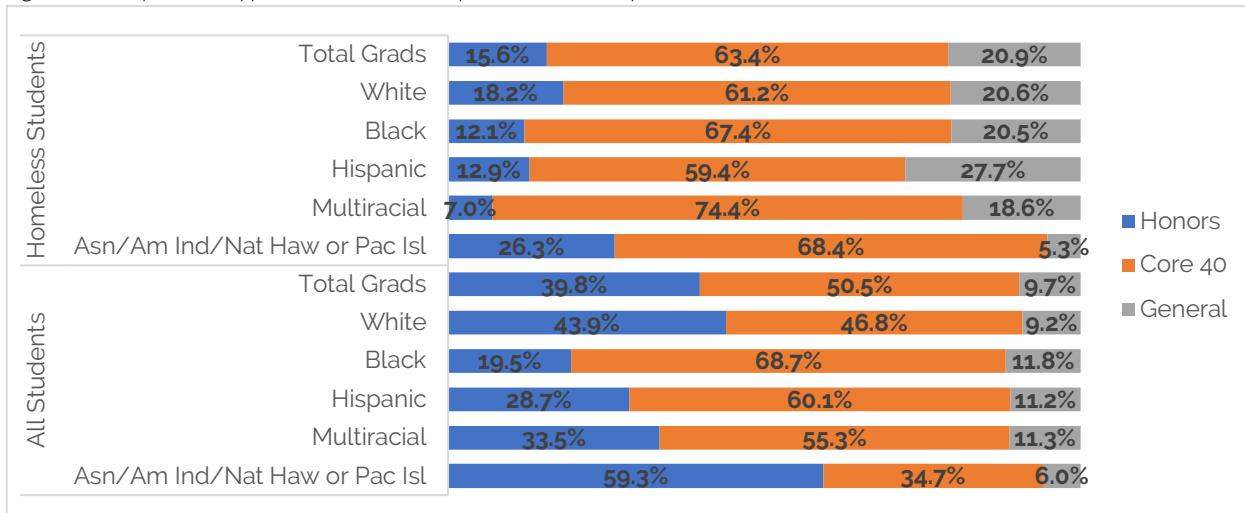
Half of homeless students in special education received General diplomas, compared to 32% of all special education students. Nearly three in ten homeless male students (28%) received General Diplomas, compared to just 12 % of all students, a rate 2.3 times higher.

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6 Includes Core 40 with Academic Honors, Core 40 with Technical Honors, Core 40 with Academic and Technical Honors, and International Baccalaureate.
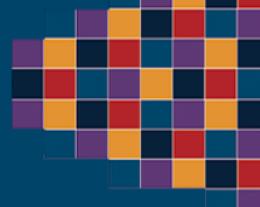
Figure 37: Diploma Type by Selected Student Characteristics
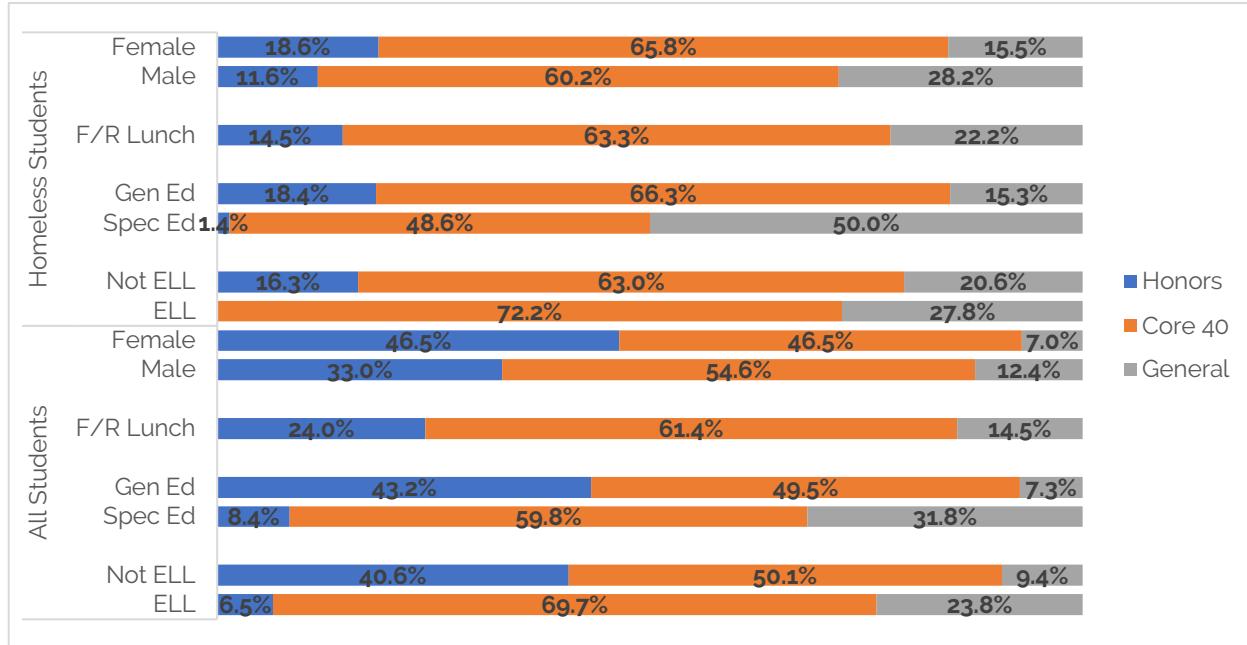
For the 19 corporations with at least 10 homeless graduates, rates of homeless students receiving general diplomas ranged from a low of zero (at two corporations) to a high of 70%. Six corporations (32%) had homeless students earn general diplomas at the same level or below the overall rate (9.7%). However, seven corporations had 25% or more homeless graduates receiving general diplomas; comparatively, only one corporation had general diploma rates of 25 % or more for all graduates.

Figure 38: Percentage of Homeless Students Receiving Gen. Diplomas by Corps. with 10 or More Grads
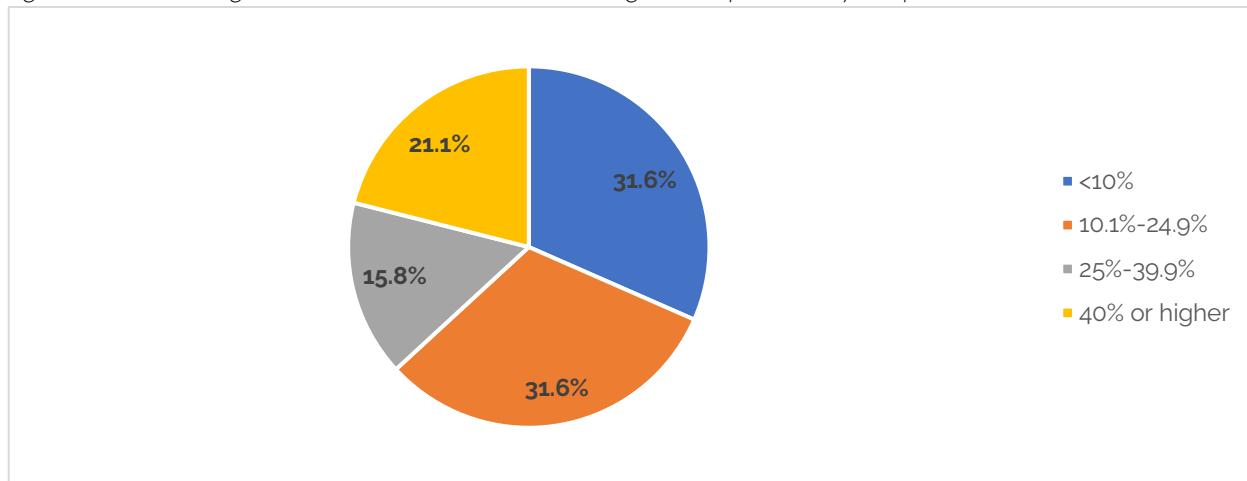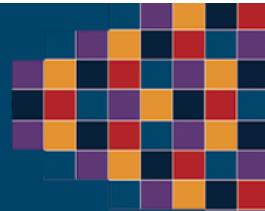
Conclusions

Success in K-12 education can be a critical factor for future educational and economic outcomes—however, Hoosier students experiencing homelessness lag behind their non-homeless peers overall and within nearly all subgroups. More attention needs to be placed on ensuring students who experience homelessness are supported to succeed. Additional studies on other related educational factors may be useful, and further analyze outcomes for homeless students after K-12, including postsecondary enrollment and degree attainment, employment status, and wage earning.

[i] Indiana Department of Education. Indiana Education for Homeless Children & Youth (INEHCY). https://www.doe.in.gov/elme/indiana-education-homeless-children-youth-inehcy

[ii] United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. Indiana Homelessness Statistics. https://www.usich.gov/homelessness-statistics/in/

[iii] Kids Count Data Center. *Homeless or housing unstable students in Indiana.* https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/9353-homeless-or-housing-unstable-students?loc=16&loct=2#detailed/2/any/false/870,573,869,36,868,867,133,38,35,18/any/18472

[iv] Indiana Department of Education. Data request.

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