



# Georgia Has More Homeless Students in Rural Areas Than in Cities

*This snapshot is part of a series analyzing student homelessness in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Visit [www.ICPHusa.org](http://www.ICPHusa.org) for more information.*

- In the 2013–14 school year, Georgia had 1,723,909 students enrolled in 218 local education agencies (school districts) representing the state's 159 counties and 59 other agencies.<sup>1</sup>
- That year, there were 37,963 homeless students in the state, making up 2.2% of total enrollment.
- Georgia had the 7th highest number of homeless students and the 25th highest rate of student homelessness in the U.S.
- School districts with the highest rates of student homelessness were Hancock County (32%) and Fannin County (16%).

FIGURE 1

## Number of Homeless Students and Percent Living Doubled-Up<sup>2</sup>

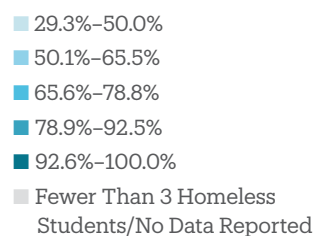
By School District, SY 2013–14

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

### Total Homeless Students



### Percent of Homeless Students Living Doubled-Up



- Eight school districts had over 1,000 homeless students (Atlanta Public Schools, Gwinnett, DeKalb, Fulton, Muscogee, Clayton, Cobb, and Polk counties). Seven school districts had rates of student homelessness above 10%.
- In 28 school districts, over 93% of homeless students were sleeping in a temporary doubled-up living arrangement. Six school districts had over 1,000 homeless students in doubled-up conditions (Atlanta Public Schools, Gwinnett, DeKalb, Muscogee, Clayton, and Polk counties).

### Statewide

Total homeless students:

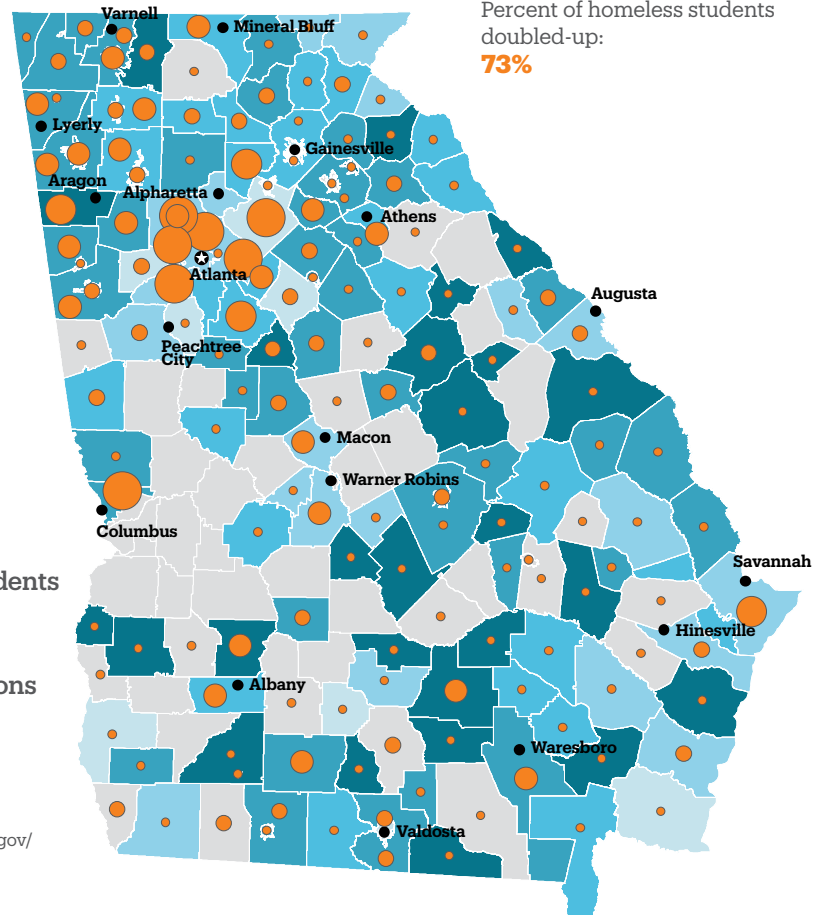
**37,963**

Number of students doubled-up:

**27,686**

Percent of homeless students doubled-up:

**73%**



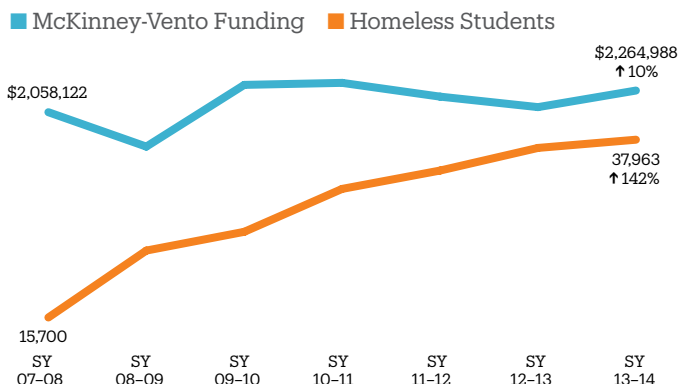
Source: U.S. Department of Education. "Homeless Student Enrollment Data by Local Educational Agency: School Year 2013-14" <http://www2.ed.gov/about/its/ed/edfacts/datafiles/school-status-data.html>.

FIGURE 2

## McKinney-Vento Funding and Number of Homeless Students

SY 2007-08 to SY 2013-14

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



Source: National Center for Homeless Education, McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Actual State Funding Allocations, 2001-2016; U.S. Department of Education, "ED Data Express," <http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov>.

- Since SY 2007-08, Georgia's McKinney-Vento funding increased 10%, to \$2.3 million. Over the same period, the number of homeless students rose 142%, to 37,963. Georgia had the 9th highest rate of growth in student homelessness nationwide during that time.
- On average, Georgia received \$59.66 per homeless student in SY 2013-14, down from \$131.09 in SY 2007-08. Nationally, the per-student average for SY 2013-14 was just under \$50.

FIGURE 3

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

By School District, SY 2013-14

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

### Received Subgrant

#### Ratio of Homeless Students to Free-Lunch Eligible Students

- Below State Average (<3.9%)
- Above State Average (>3.9%)

### Did Not Receive Subgrant

#### Ratio of Homeless Students to Free-Lunch Eligible Students

- Below State Average (<3.9%)
- Above State Average (>3.9%)
- Data Unavailable

- In Georgia, 41% of school districts had a ratio of homeless students to free-lunch eligible students smaller than the statewide average (3.9%), including 19 that received subgrants.
- In SY 2013-14, one-quarter of Georgia's school districts received McKinney-Vento subgrants, and 78% of the state's homeless students lived in a district with a subgrant. Non-grantees with the most homeless students included Coffee and Fannin counties.

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

### Statewide

Number of districts that received a subgrant:

**54**

Percent of districts that received a subgrant:

**25%**

Number of students eligible for free lunch:

**967,234**

Ratio of homeless students to free-lunch eligible students:

**3.9%**

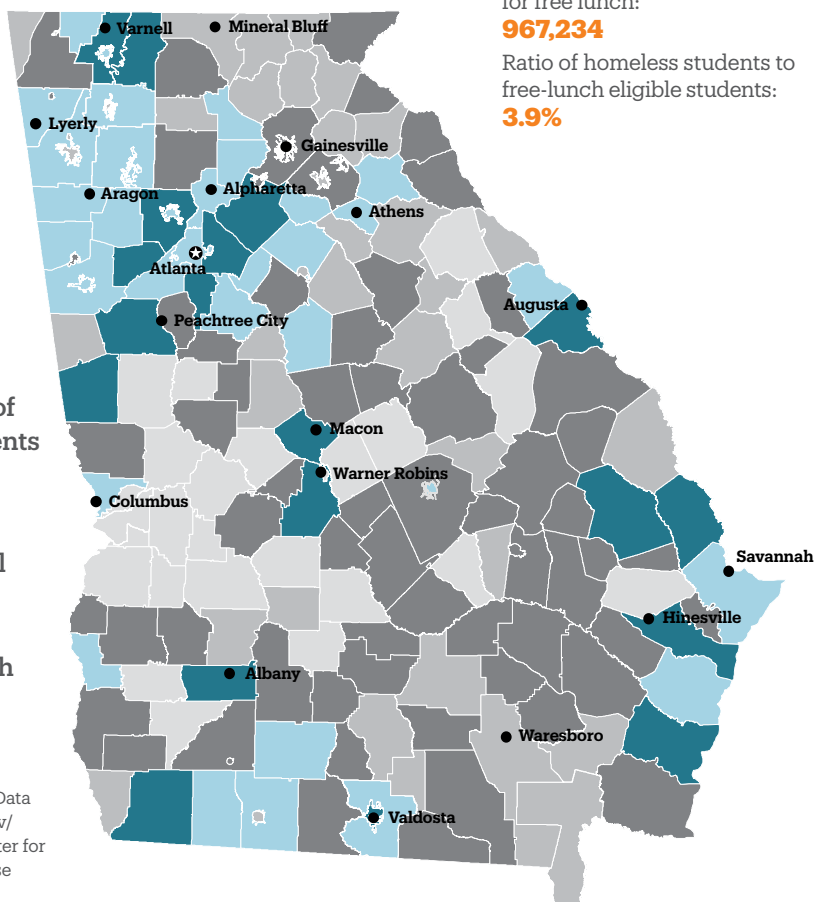
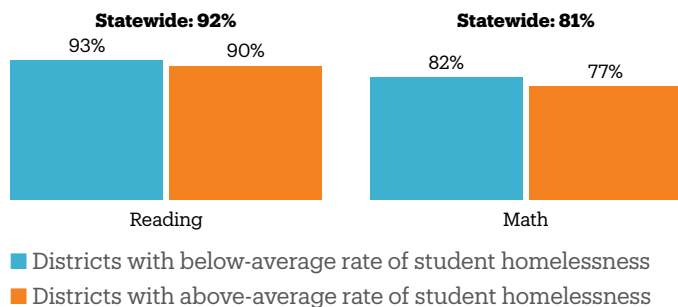


FIGURE 4

## Proficiency in 3rd Grade Reading and Math

SY 2013-14

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



Source: U.S. Department of Education. "Homeless Student Enrollment Data by Local Educational Agency: School Year 2013-14" <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/ed-facts/data-files/school-status-data.html>; Georgia Department of Education, "CRCT 2014, All Students by System Grade 3" <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/CRCT-Statewide-Scores.aspx>.

- The achievement gap between districts with high and low rates of homelessness was narrow. Third grade students in areas with above-average student homelessness passed their state assessments at rates only 3-5 percentage points lower than in districts with below-average rates of student homelessness.
- Berrien County had the highest passing rates among districts with above-average homelessness, with 100% of third graders passing reading and 95% of students passing math. Four districts had passing rates below 70% on both tests.

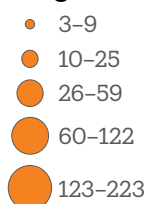
FIGURE 5

## Homeless Students with Disabilities and Homeless Students with Limited English Proficiency

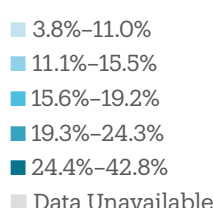
By School District, SY 2013-14

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

### Number of Homeless Students with Limited English Proficiency

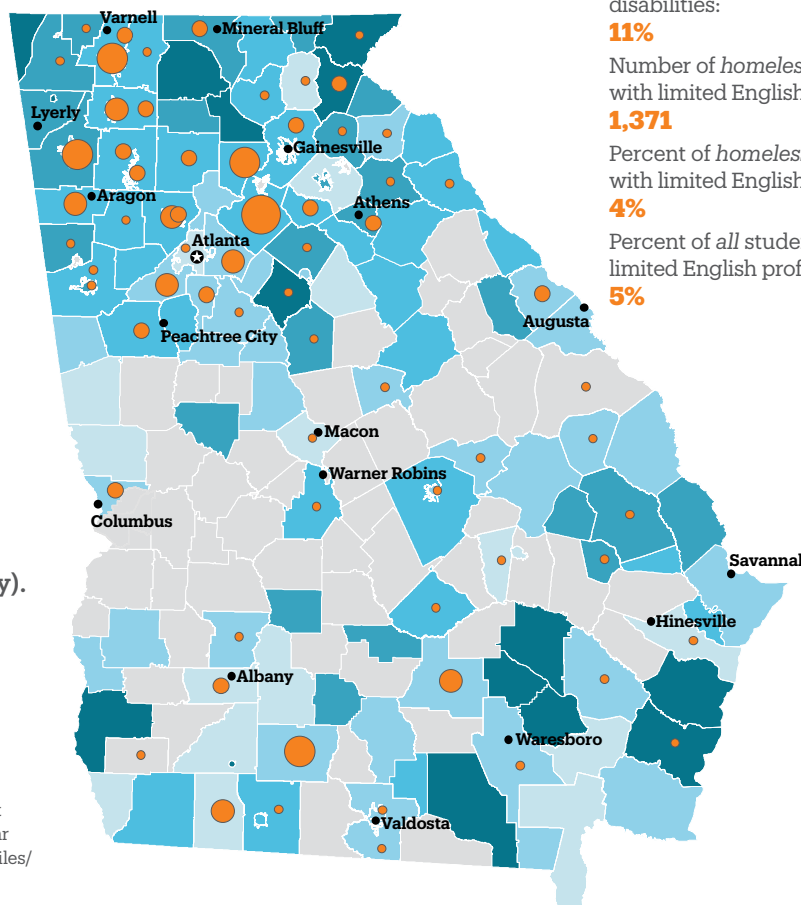


### Percent of Homeless Students with Disabilities



- In 16 school districts, over 24% of homeless students were identified as having a disability.
- Three school districts have over 100 homeless students with limited English proficiency (Dalton City, Gwinnett County, and Forsyth County). In six school districts over 20% of all homeless students had limited proficiency (Rome City, Dalton City, Calhoun City, Wayne County, Evans County, and Burke County).

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



### Statewide

Number of *homeless* students with disabilities:

**5,947**

Percent of *homeless* students with disabilities:

**16%**

Percent of *all* students with disabilities:

**11%**

Number of *homeless* students with limited English proficiency:

**1,371**

Percent of *homeless* students with limited English proficiency:

**4%**

Percent of *all* students with limited English proficiency:

**5%**

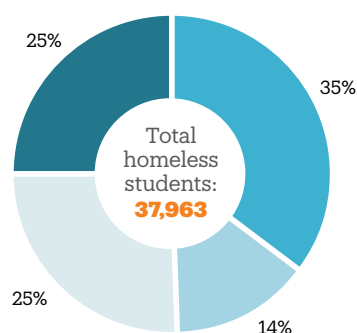
FIGURE 6

## Where Homeless Students Live, by Population Density

SY 2013–14

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

■ Cities ■ Suburbs ■ Towns ■ Rural Areas



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

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

- In Georgia, 35% of homeless students lived in suburban school districts, including 12,990 students who lived in areas of over a quarter-million people. Among cities, five districts each had over 500 homeless students.
- Homelessness was disproportionately seen in Georgia's small towns and rural areas. Despite enrolling only 32% of the total student population in the state, these districts accounted for 40% of all homeless students.

### Endnotes

1 Georgia's local education agencies include charter agencies, regional education service agencies, and others that cannot be mapped but are included in all other data analysis.

2 "Doubled-up" refers to homeless students identified as staying with others when they were initially found eligible under McKinney-Vento law.

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

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