

In Oregon, 18,902 K-12 students experienced homelessness at some point during the 2013-14 school year, an increase of 737 students over the previous year. New data shows that students of color were more likely than their peers to experience homelessness. These numbers are yet another reason why the state is placing increased emphasis on programs that target achievement gaps and support stable and attached families for our youngest learners so that we can start to reduce the number of children, and the over representation of children in color, experiencing homelessness each year.

You can access data on homeless student counts, percentages, and night time residence on the ODE website at: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1976>.

Homeless count highlights racial disparities

ODE now has the ability, due to changes in federal reporting requirements, to compile race/ethnicity data for our homeless students. This data reveals that students of color are overrepresented in our homeless student population. Numbers and percentages by race/ethnicity are provided below.

| Race/Ethnicity | Homeless student count K-12 by race | Percent of homeless student population by race | Percent of overall student population by race |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Asian | 206 | 1.01% | 3.94% |
| Black / African American | 996 | 5.26% | 2.42% |
| Hispanic / Latino | 5217 | 27.60% | 21.99% |
| Native American/Alaska Native | 538 | 2.84% | 1.62% |
| Multi-Racial | 1201 | 6.35% | 5.20% |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific islander | 255 | 1.35% | 0.69% |
| White | 10489 | 55.49% | 64.15% |

A closer look at homeless students in Oregon

In addition to providing services to K-12 homeless students, Oregon communities are also working to provide assistance to preschool-age homeless children and their families. There were 1,114 homeless children enrolled in public preschools and Head Start programs during 2013-14. Because these counts are limited to enrolled children only, the total number of homeless children in this age group (3-5 years old) is unknown.

One of the categories tracked by school district homeless liaisons is that of “unaccompanied” minors, homeless students who are not living with parents or legal guardians. This number has remained steady at approximately 3,100. While the majority of these students were in grades 8-12, over 300 “unaccompanied” minors were counted in grades K-7 last year. These students may be living with unrelated adults and family friends after their parents have been deported or incarcerated. Older unaccompanied youths have often been abandoned or have run away from home for safety or personal reasons.

What are the living situations of homeless students in Oregon?

Oregon’s homeless students have a variety of living/housing situations including: unsheltered, homeless shelters, motels, inadequate housing, or sharing housing with another family or relatives due to economic hardship. As in the past, less than 10% of Oregon’s homeless students were in shelters, while over 75% were sharing the homes of relatives or friends due to economic hardship, domestic violence, or similar circumstances. Counts by nighttime residence are included below.

| Shelter | Unsheltered | Sharing Housing | Motels | Total |
|----------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1,836 | 1,842 | 14,275 | 949 | 18,902 |

For more information on homeless education, please contact Dona Bolt at Dona.Bolt@ode.state.or.us.

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