

Student Homelessness in Nevada:

Trends, Disparities, and Educational Outcomes

A research brief from the UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools

Mayra Cazares-Minero, PhD

Grace Ha Eun Kim, PhD

Joseph P. Bishop, PhD



Disclaimer

The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (Department). The Department does not mandate or prescribe practices, models, or other activities described or discussed in this presentation. The contents of this presentation may contain examples of, adaptations of, and links to resources created and maintained by another public or private organization. The Department does not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of this outside information. The content of this presentation does not necessarily represent the policy of the Department. This presentation is not intended to represent the views or policy of, or be an endorsement of any views expressed, or materials provided by, any Federal agency.

Introduction

9,727

students identified as experiencing homelessness in Nevada, school year (SY) 2025–26

2.1%

of total statewide enrollment

22.6%

decrease from SY 2018–19 to SY 2025–26

78.9%

of Nevada students experiencing homelessness were doubled up in SY 2022–23.

Source: Nevada Department of Education (NDE); SchoolHouse Connection (2026).

Student homelessness in Nevada has generally declined over time, with some fluctuations, while remaining an important educational challenge.

Despite the decline, Nevada's student homelessness rate remains higher than the national average, with 3.6% of school-age children experiencing homelessness in SY 2022–23 compared to 3.0% nationwide.

Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, homelessness includes students without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including shelters, motels, cars, campgrounds, doubled-up housing, and couch-surfing situations. Nevada does not require a standardized statewide housing questionnaire, leaving identification practices to districts and schools.

Introduction

Geographic and Regional Disparities

- Student homelessness varies substantially across Nevada. In SY 2022–23, Pershing County (9.2%), Nye County (7.4%), and Mineral County (5.6%) reported higher rates than Clark County (4.0%).
- Nearly 80% of students experiencing homelessness statewide were doubled up. Only 2.9% attended rural-designated schools, but rural homelessness was highly concentrated in Pershing and Nye counties.

Drivers of Youth Homelessness

- Housing unaffordability is a central driver of student homelessness in Nevada. A modest two-bedroom rental costs about \$1,713 per month and requires a housing wage of \$32.94/hour, compared with a \$22.73 median wage and \$12 minimum wage.
- Nevada has only 16 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 extremely low-income renter households. Rural communities also have fewer youth-specific housing and service options.

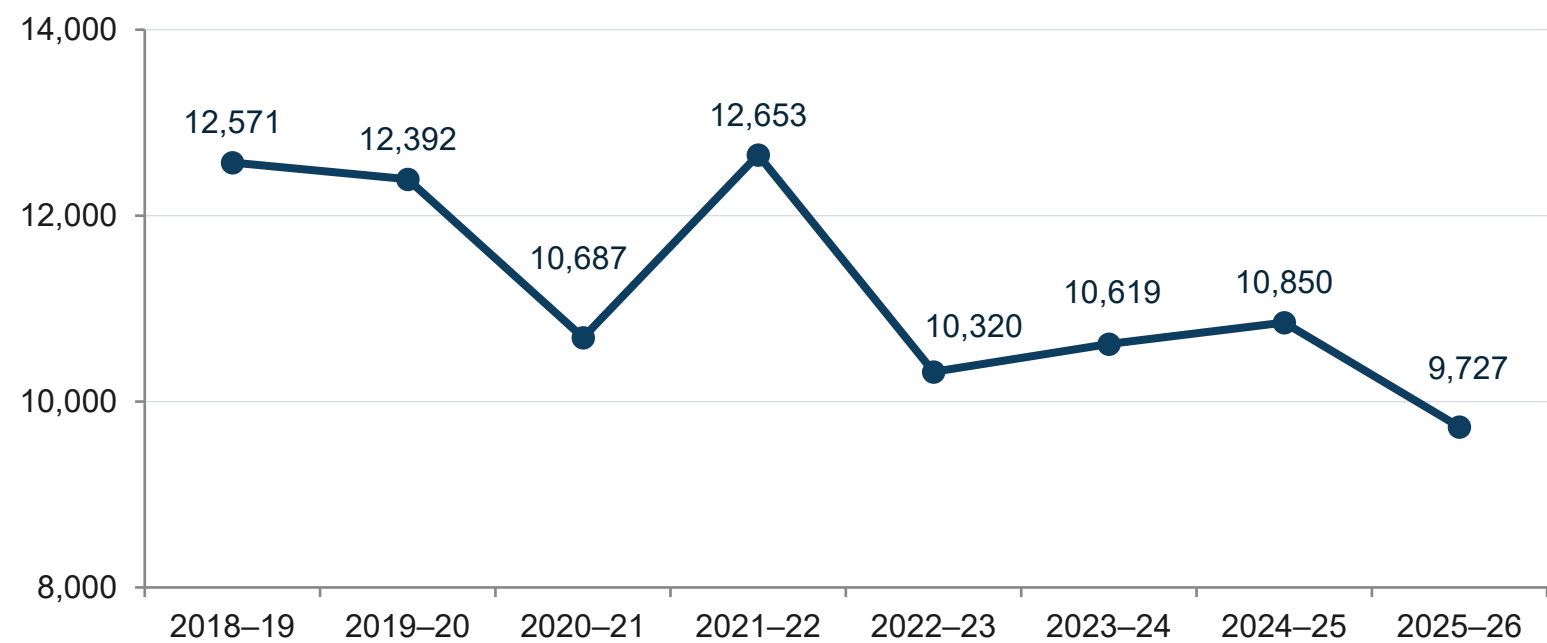
Note. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC, 2026), “low-income renters” are defined as households with incomes at or below the federal poverty guideline or 30% of the area median income, whichever is higher. Extremely low-income renters often include seniors and people with disabilities, working adults with low wages, single parents and caregivers, and students and families with unstable incomes.

Source: SchoolHouse Connection (2026); Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS, 2025).

Finding 1. Student homelessness has declined, with sharp fluctuations.

Nevada identified 9,727 students experiencing homelessness in SY 2025–26, down 10.4% from the prior year and 22.6% from SY 2018–19. The recent decline should be interpreted cautiously because changes in identification and reporting capacity may affect reported counts.

Number of Students Experiencing Homelessness in Nevada From SY 2018–19 to SY 2025–26



2.1%

of total enrollment in SY 2025–26

–10.4%

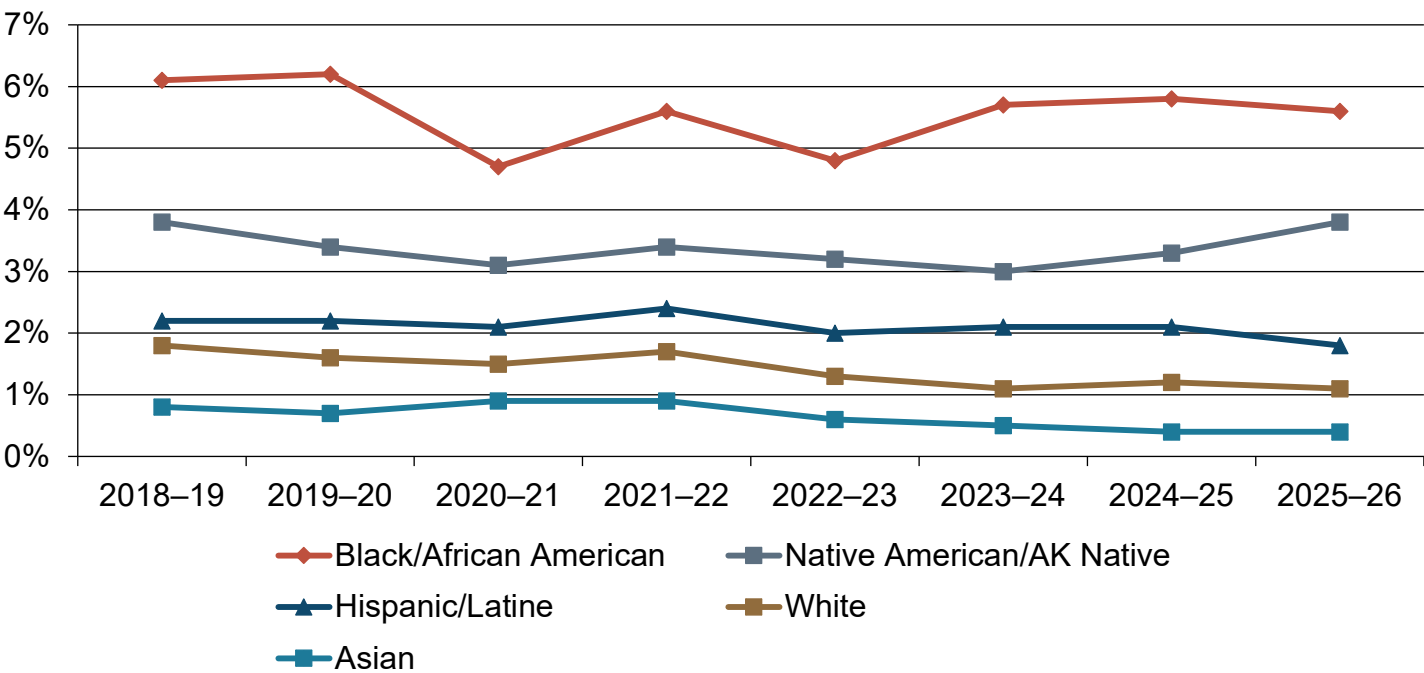
year-over-year change from SY 2024–25

Note. Data from NDE, SY 2018–19 through SY 2025–26. Counts exclude adult students.

Finding 2. Racial disparities in student homelessness persist.

Black and Native American/Alaska Native students consistently experienced the highest rates of homelessness in Nevada, while Hispanic students represented the largest number of students affected statewide.

Percentage of Students Experiencing Homelessness in Nevada From SY 2018–19 to SY 2025–26, by Race/Ethnicity



In SY 2025–26

5.6%

Black/African-American students experienced homelessness at more than double the statewide rate.

Persistent disparity

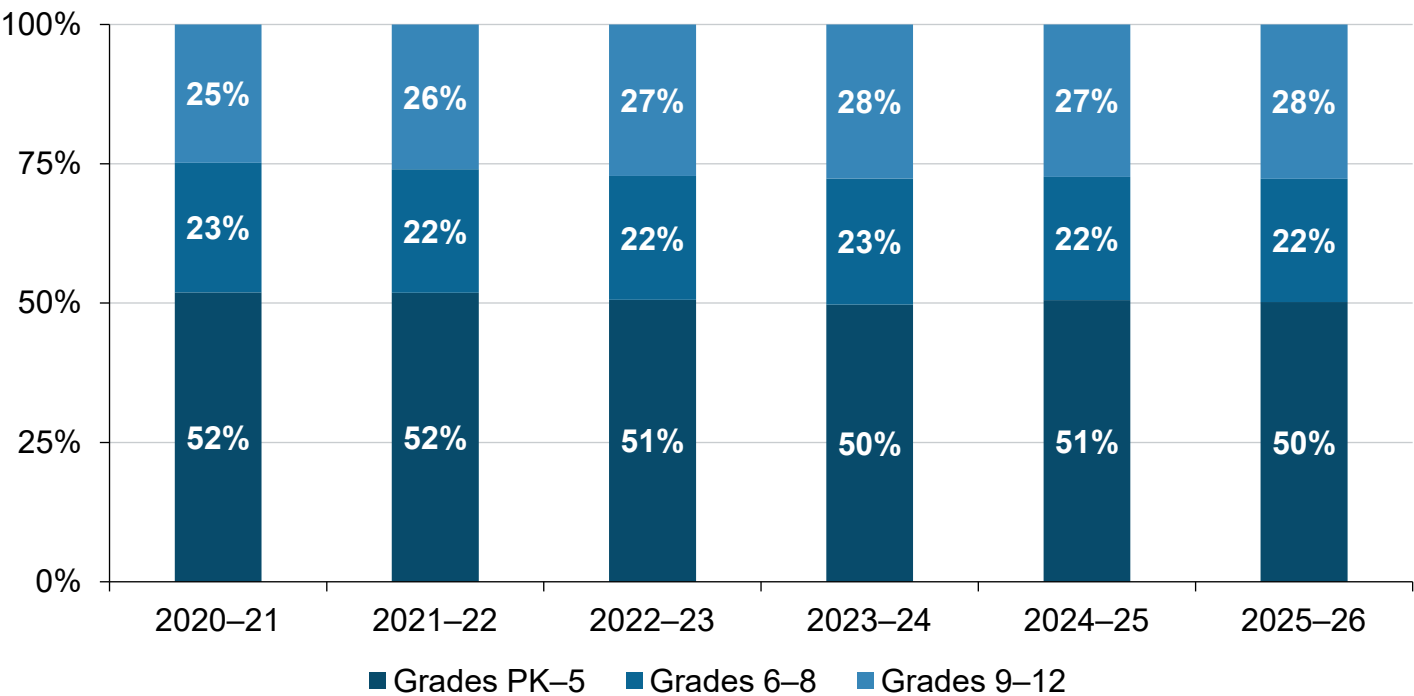
Native American/Alaska Native students reached 3.8% in SY 2025–26, matching the highest level observed during the period.

Note. Demographic data from NDE, SY 2018–19 through SY 2025–26. Native American/Alaska Native counts are small and should be interpreted cautiously.

Finding 3. Housing instability affects every grade level.

Elementary students continue to make up the largest share of Nevada students experiencing homelessness, while the high school share has gradually increased.

Grade Distribution Among Students Experiencing Homelessness in Nevada



SY 2025-26

28% Grades 9-12

22% Grades 6-8

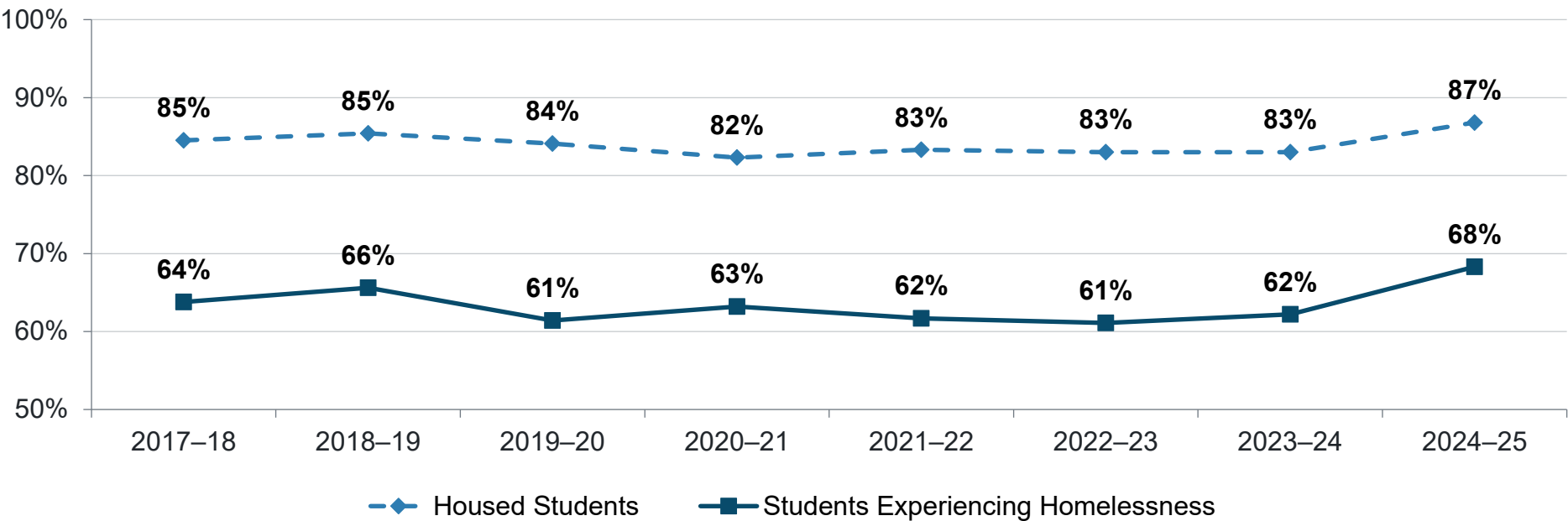
50% Grades PK-5

Note. Bars sum to 100% within each school year. Data from NDE, SY 2020-21 through SY 2025-26.

Finding 4. Graduation rates are improving; significant gaps persist.

Graduation rates for students experiencing homelessness have remained well below those of housed students. In SY 2024–25, the gap narrowed to nearly 19 percentage points as both groups improved.

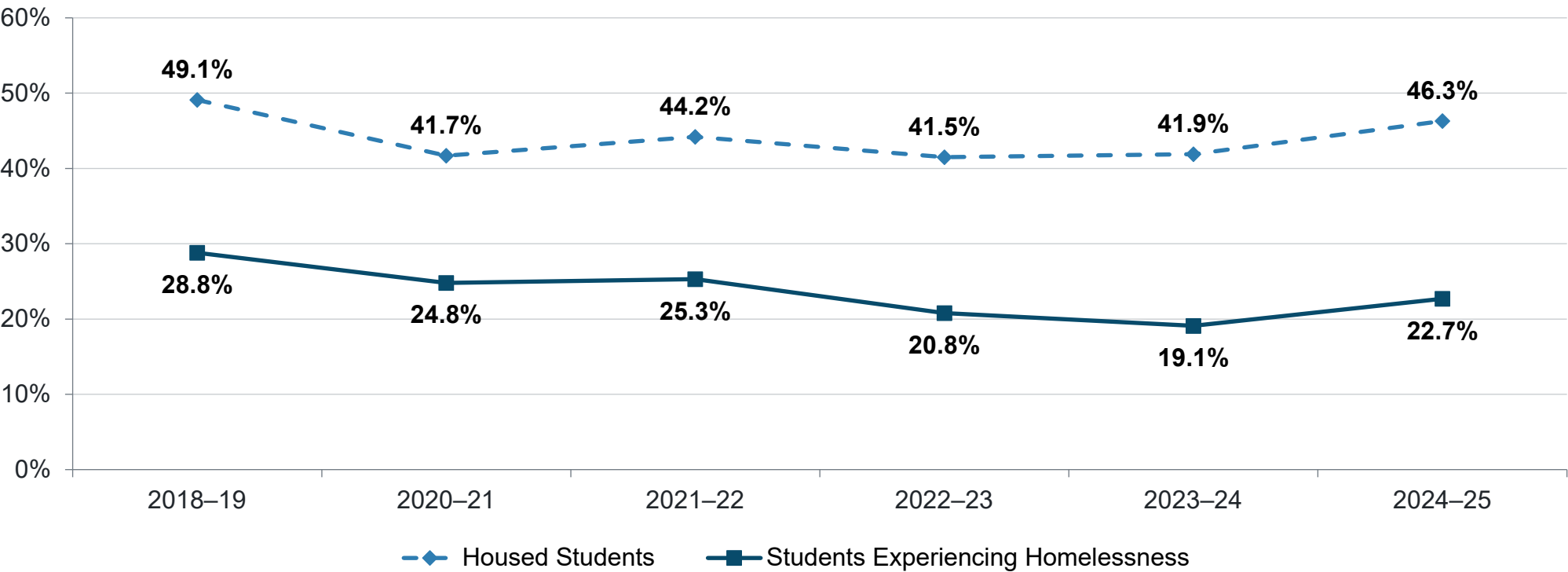
Graduation Rates of Students Experiencing Homelessness Versus Housed Students in Nevada



Finding 5. A persistent achievement gap in ELA

Nevada students experiencing homelessness consistently trail housed students in meeting or exceeding English language arts (ELA) standards. In SY 2024–25, the gap was 23.6 percentage points, the largest in the series.

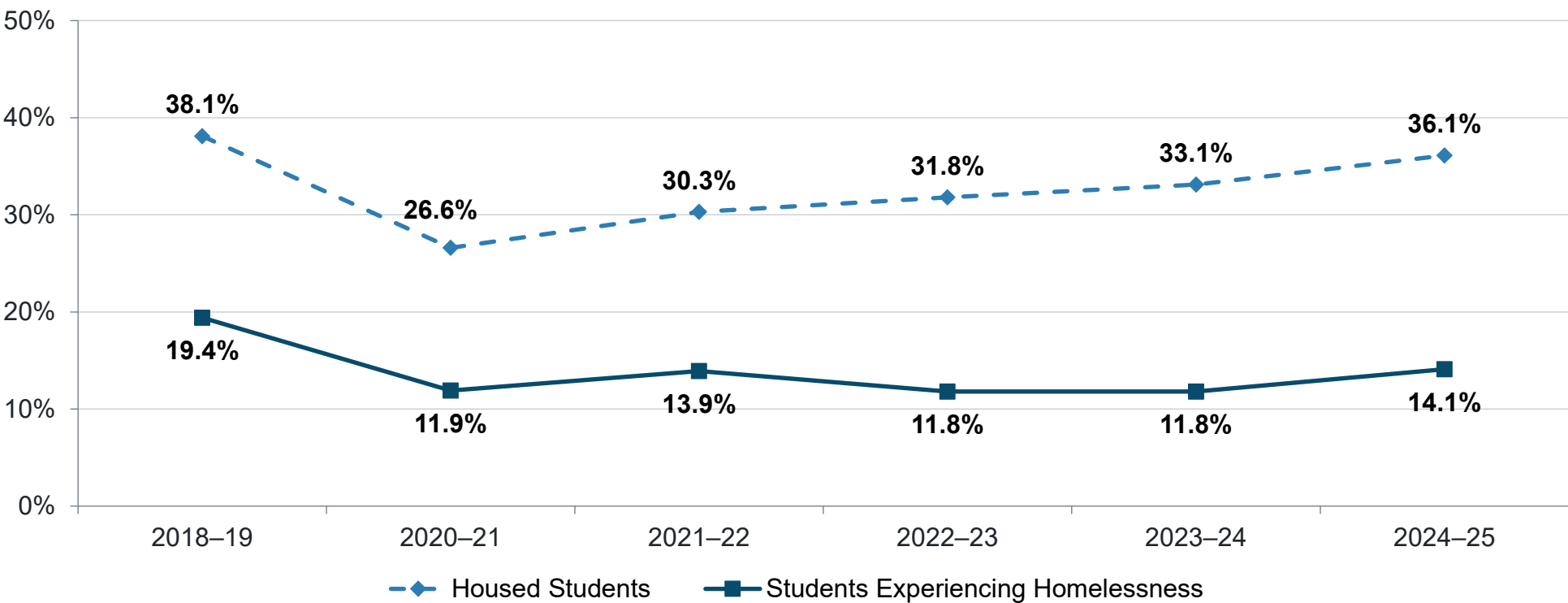
Percentages of Students Experiencing Homelessness Versus Housed Students Meeting or Exceeding ELA Standards in Nevada



Finding 6. A growing achievement gap in math

Nevada students experiencing homelessness trail housed students in meeting or exceeding math standards. In SY 2024–25, the gap was 22 percentage points, the largest in the series.

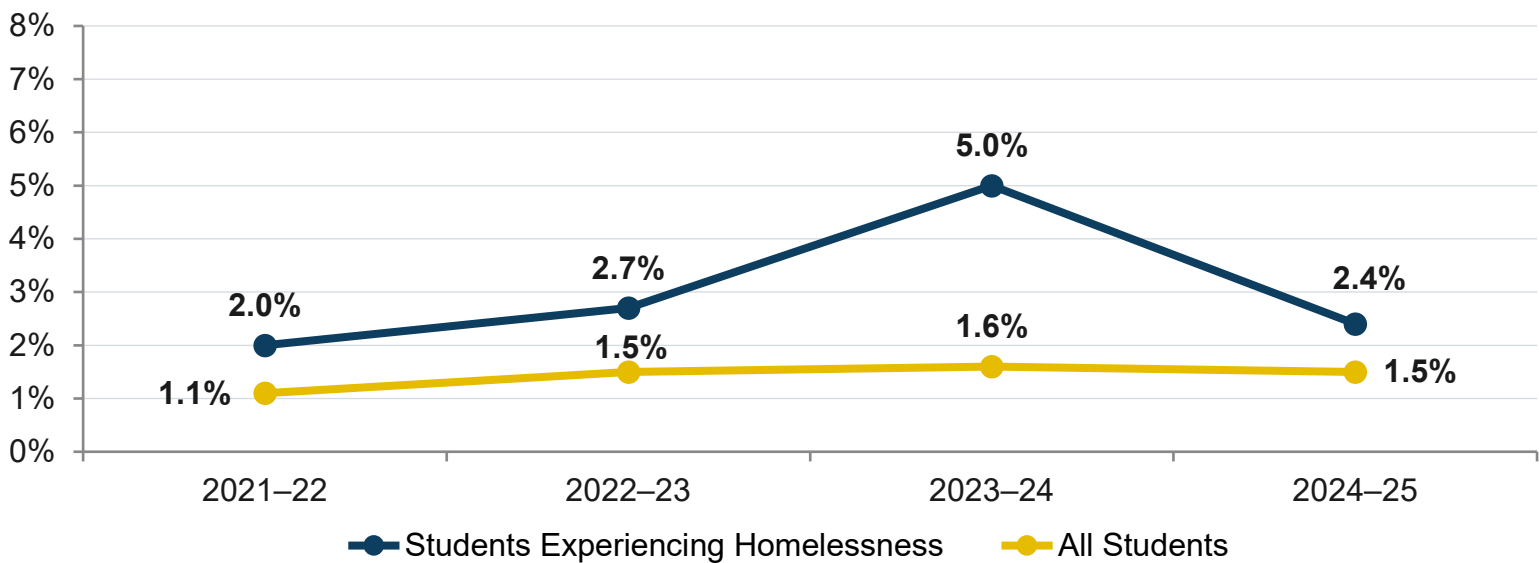
*Percentages of Students Experiencing Homelessness Versus Housed Students Meeting or Exceeding **Mathematics** Standards in Nevada*



Finding 7. Students experiencing homelessness face higher suspension rates.

Students experiencing homelessness were suspended at higher rates than all students in every year with available data. The gap spiked in SY 2023–24 before narrowing in SY 2024–25.

Suspension Rates for Students Experiencing Homelessness Versus All Students in Nevada



Note. Suspension rate calculated by sum of numbers of All Students Suspended Due to Battery to School Employee; Due to Sale of Controlled Substances; Due to Distribution of Controlled Substances; Due to Being Deemed Habitual Disciplinary Problems; Bullying; Cyber Bullying; and Discrimination Based on Race. Discipline data from SY 2021–22 to SY 2024–25 retrieved from NDE (n.d.-e). Data prior to SY 2021–22 are not available.

SY 2024–25 Suspension Rates

2.4%
students experiencing homelessness

1.5%
all students

The 2023–24 rate for students experiencing homelessness reached 5.0%, more than triple the all-student rate. This increase was driven by a spike in bullying incidents that resulted in student suspensions, which occurred at more than twice the rate observed in other years.

Considerations for policymakers and practitioners

Four priorities emerged from the Nevada analysis:

1

Standardize statewide student housing identification practices.

Adopt a standardized housing questionnaire during enrollment and annual registration to improve consistency and equitable access to supports.

2

Strengthen statewide, cross-sector coordination.

Position education as a central partner across housing, child welfare, behavioral health, Tribal governments, workforce development, and community organizations.

3

Improve identification and services for rural and disproportionately affected youth.

Expand rural outreach, strengthen partnerships with Tribal communities and local education agencies, and improve identification and data-sharing systems.

4

Build trauma-informed, strength-based supports to improve school engagement.

Center school connectedness, relationship building, proactive identification of needs, restorative practices, and prevention rather than absence or removal.

References

Nevada Department of Education. (n.d.-c). Demographic profile: Enrollment and student characteristics (Humboldt County) [Data set].

https://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/di/report/summary_5?report=summary_5&scope=e44.y20&organization=c2719&scores=EnrCnt%2Cethnicity_AI%2Cethnicity_AS%2Cethnicity_HS%2Cethnicity_BL%2Cethnicity_WH%2Cethnicity_PI%2Cethnicity_MR%2CGender_M%2CGender_F%2CGender_UN%2CSpecialPopulations_IEP%2CLEP_YES%2CSpecialPopulations_FRL%2CSpecialPopulations_Mig%2CSpecialPopulations_HM%2CSpecialPopulations_FS%2CSpecialPopulations_Mil%2CEnrCntELContr_YES%2CEnrCntELProf_YES%2CGrades_PK%2CGrades_KG%2CGrades_01%2CGrades_02%2CGrades_03%2CGrades_04%2CGrades_05%2CGrades_06%2CGrades_07%2CGrades_08%2CGrades_09%2CGrades_10%2CGrades_11%2CGrades_12%2CGrades_13&num=20&page=1&pagesize=20&domain=de-moprof2015fwd

Nevada Department of Education. (n.d.-d). Demographic profile: Race/ethnicity and student homelessness [Data set].

https://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/di/report/summary_5?report=summary_5&scope=e44.y14.y15.y16.y17.y18.y19.y20.y21.y22.y23&organization=c2269&scores=ethnicity_AI%2Cethnicity_AS%2Cethnicity_HS%2Cethnicity_BL%2Cethnicity_WH%2Cethnicity_PI%2Cethnicity_MR%2CSpecialPopulations_HM&subgroups=ethnicity&filterrelation=and&num=20&page=1&page-size=20&domain=demoprof2015fwd

Nevada Department of Education. (n.d.-e). Discipline data [Data set]. Nevada Report Card.

https://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/di/report/reportcard_1?report=reportcard_1&scope=e40.y19.y20.y21.y22&organization=c2269&fields=309%2C310%2C311%2C313%2C318%2C320&hiddenfieldsid=309%2C310%2C311%2C313%2C318%2C320&scores=1634%2C1635%2C1636%2C1637%2C1649%2C1657%2C1665&num=160&page=1&pagesize=20&domain=discipline2022fwd

Nevada Department of Health and Human Services. (2025). Youth Experiencing Homelessness Statewide Study: Summary report.

https://www.dss.nv.gov/siteassets/dwss.nv.gov/content/energy/YEH_Statewide_Study.pdf

SchoolHouse Connection. (2026). Child and youth homelessness data profiles.

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/schoolhouseconnection/viz/ChildandYouthHomelessnessDataProfiles/National>

Learn more and stay connected.

Read the full brief:

Download the UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools factsheet on student homelessness in Nevada.

Contact:

UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools

School of Education and Information Studies

Web: transformschools.ucla.edu

Email: ctschoools@ucla.edu

Mayra Cazares-Minero, PhD

Research Analyst and lead author, UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools

Email: minero@gseis.ucla.edu



Scan for the full brief.

Citation: Cazares-Minero, M., Kim, G. H. E., & Bishop, J. P. (2026). *Student homelessness in Nevada: Trends, disparities, and educational outcomes*. Center for the Transformation of Schools, School of Education & Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles.