2012

Educational practices to support homeless students

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EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES TO SUPPORT HOMELESS STUDENTS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

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June 2012

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my two intelligent and beautiful daughters, Ariel and Miranda Galan, for their unconditional love, patience, and belief in me as their mother. Thank you for loving and believing in me. You made this academic and life journey worth every moment. I could not have been blessed with two more inspiring daughters who each day encouraged me to strive for success. I love you both dearly.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank my family for their encouragement and understanding. Thank you to my mother who taught me resiliency and determination to survive even when life greets you with challenges. I would also like to thank the professional mentors who have supported me as I continue to grow as a leader and an advocate of all children. Dr. Ruth Perez and Wayne Shannon have been pivotal in my leadership development along with my extraordinary Pepperdine professors, Dr. Robert Barner, Dr. Devin Vodicka, Dr. Linda Purrington, Dr. Anthony Collattos, Dr. Molly McCabe and Dr. Linda Jungwirth. I also wish to thank a dear friend who has been with me the entire three years listening to my thoughts as I write my dissertation. Thank you Sue Jin for being such a wonderful friend supporting me through my incredible unbelievable experiences. You too are an inspiration. To my dear friend, Santos Gonzalez, thank you for your friendship and encouragement.

VITA

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ABSTRACT

This study intends to determine to what extent, if at all, the practices used in one urban school district in Southern California servicing high populations of socioeconomically disadvantaged students have on the academic achievement of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. A quantitative analysis of the academic performance of homeless students in both English Language Arts and Mathematics on the California Standards Test was used. In addition, a survey was used to capture the perceptions of existing practices in schools. Interviews were conducted to gain the perceptions of site principals and district administrators to learn what they believe are the existing practices contributing to the academic performance of their homeless student population.

The following areas provided background and understanding of the academic needs of homeless students: (a) history of federal legislation (b) federal and state funding and national effort to end the cycle of homelessness (c) accountability for academic achievement (d) successful academic practices as well as the best practices to support the social-emotional needs of homeless students, and, (e) the perceptions of educators and administrators who work with students in homeless situations. Based on the research, the important factors to consider are the needed socialization and relationship-building component that provides homeless students with stability and a connection with the school as well as the teacher and staff awareness and sensitivity needed when working with homeless students.

The results demonstrated three significant areas to consider when educating homeless students; having an awareness of homeless students, accountability and

monitoring of homeless students, and the social-emotional organizational practices in place to support these learners.

Recommendations included district level professional development focused on the special needs of homeless students as well as providing school principals with academic data on their homeless student population. Secondly, identifying homeless students in a web based data system for teacher review. Thirdly, site based professional development for both certificated and classified staff to provide strategies in working with student who face homelessness. Finally, to develop a district wide counseling partnership with outside consultants or city resources to allow for more on-site counseling services.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Education in the United States has become a cornerstone to success and is critical to the overall advancement of the nation. The United States has pride itself on the ideals of freedom and equality and the importance of education (U.S. Const., pmbl). In April of 1983, the National Commission on Excellence created by the Secretary of Education released a research study that reviewed the current state of education at that time. The research was titled, *A Nation at Risk, The Imperative for Education Reform* and it reviewed the risk the United States was under if the nation does not improve its educational system. This document sent the following message to the citizens of the United States:

> Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world. This report is concerned with only one of the many causes and dimensions of the problem, but it is the one that undergirds American prosperity, security, and civility. We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur--others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments. (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 9)

Due to reports such as the Nation at Risk, policy makers have been prompted to sign in legislation to hold states accountable for the academic achievement of all students as well as those learners considered homeless. The Federal government signed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 that provides federal money for homeless shelter programs. This act was a direct response to support Americans challenged by homelessness and was later revised to protect the educational rights of homeless students.

In 1994, the McKinney-Vento Act was included in the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), adding key components that include "adding preschool services, greater parental input, and emphasis on interagency collaboration" (United States Department of Education [DE], EHCY, 2011, p. 2). The Act was then reauthorized under Title X, Part C of ESEA as the McKinney-Vento Act that required that all school districts designate a Liaison to ensure all laws and policies are being implemented for the well being of all homeless and foster students with the upmost of respect and sensitivity (DE, 2004, p. 10).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Federal Act was enacted by President George W. Bush in 2002 to attain accountability standards to ensure equal opportunity and student performance for all students (Smydo, 2006). NCLB brought accountability to all states within the United States and required them to develop and agree on standardized tests that would act as measuring assessment tools to ensure academic performance and learning takes place within their schools and for all subgroup of learners including students challenged by homelessness. The new mandates required by No Child Left Behind prompted the reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Act to add new requirements (DE, 2004).

The United States Department of Education in July of 2002 revised Title1 Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged to include accountability for students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. Title 1, Section 200.6, specifies the inclusion of all students in state academic assessments including homeless students.

To ensure equal opportunity to education is extended and secured by all homeless students, it is imperative to understand what practices are in place to advance the education of our homeless student population and how they contribute to the basis of academic triumph or failure within this targeted group.

The increasing academic accountability measures No Child Left Behind has placed on schools along with the economic issues school districts are facing is revamping the way in which districts are viewing effective practices that support specifics groups of learners. There are many challenges to overcome in implementing school reform within cultures that have not been able to improve the academic achievement of minority-impoverished children specifically with McKinney-Vento students.

Building a comprehensive and collaborative homeless education program at the district and site level will increase the likelihood of a smooth transition and successful school experience for homeless students. Common themes have arisen in the research that brings the following components as important to implement regular and consistent practice in a learning environment that can support the education of homeless students. Based on existing literature, the following components are effective when working with this target population:

1. Building community partnerships and collaborate resources

2. Community awareness activities
3. Designate and train homeless education liaisons at each school
4. Provide ongoing staff development for teachers and office staff
5. Incorporate enrichment extracurricular activities to build socialization and relationship building opportunities.

Statement of the Problem

The goal of this research study is to determine to what extent, if at all, the practices used in one urban school district in Southern California have on the academic achievement of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. The instructional and social-emotional practices implemented are key factors in understanding the effectiveness and capacity of how schools can support the education of students who are faced with the challenge of homelessness.

The Federal Government has invested considerable amount of funding and resources to provide students in homeless situations with access to school and to support their attendance and academic performance. However, the recent economic downturn due to the foreclosures and state and federal budget deficits has impacted the amount of homeless students falling under the McKinney-Vento Act who may or may not have been identified. Based on new information gathered by the National Center of Homeless conducted in June of 2011, there are 939,903 homeless represented nationally in the United States. California has 20.6% of the homeless student population in the nation indicating a number of 224,249 identified students just in this state (National Center of Homelessness, 2011).

Additionally, there is limited research available on how to monitor the academic performance of homeless students at the district and local school levels as well as how to support homeless students' social emotional and academic needs. There seems to be a lack of coordinated resources and self-efficacy among the teaching staff to support this particular subgroup in the area of academics and meeting the social emotional needs of students. Therefore, there is an opportunity to study the existing practices in place to support students considered homeless under the McKinney -Vento Act in one school district in Southern California with high populations of socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

One of the five standards and goals of the McKinney-Vento federal legislation includes an academic standard focused on the need to support homeless students with educational services in order to meet the state proficiency standards (NCHE, 2001). The Five Specific standards included in the Federal Act are:

1. Immediate School Enrollment
2. Children and youth experiencing homelessness must have stability in school.
3. Homeless children and youth will receive specialized services when eligible.
4. Parents or those acting as parents of homeless children and youth must be encouraged to participate meaningfully in their child's education.
5. Homeless children and youth in grades 3-12 will meet their states' academic standards (DE, 2004, pp. 33-36).

Funds from the Act must assist homeless students meet the demands of the state content standards that all students are held to by the No Child Left Behind initiative. In order to understand the impact schools are having on the academic performance of

homeless students, research must be conducted to determine what impact, if any, are the existing practices having on the academic achievement of homeless students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to (a) examine the ELA and Math CST achievement data of 2nd-8th grade students considered homeless, (b) identify the practices perceived as contributing to the academic achievement of homeless students, and to (c) examine the perceived needs of teachers of homeless students in an one school district in Southern California.

Research Questions

The following research questions are at the forefront of this mixed methods study:

1. What are the California Standards Test (CST) achievement data of 2nd -8th grade students considered homeless in both English Language Arts and Mathematics disaggregated by demographics in an urban school district in Southern California servicing a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students?
    a. What are the overall mean CST scale score in the last three years for English Only homeless students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?
    b. What are the overall mean CST scale score disaggregated by homeless students that are English Language Learners, Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) and Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) in the last three years for students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?
    c. What are the overall mean CST scale score disaggregated by Special Education for homeless students in the Resource Specialist Program (RSP)

and Special Day Class (SDC) students in the last three years for students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?

2. What are the identified practices perceived as contributing to the academic achievement of students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act in a school district in Southern California servicing a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students?
    a. What do teachers and instructional coaches identify as the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless?
    b. What do principals and district administrators identify as the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless?
3. What are perceived needs of teachers of homeless students in one urban school district in Southern California?

Research Setting

The research setting includes fifteen Title 1 schools within one Urban School District in Southern California servicing students identified as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Program. The data for this study will come from approximately 12 elementary schools, three middle schools along with district instructional coaches and district administrators working directly with this target population. Surveys were distributed to over 250 participants and collected for analysis for the impact current practices have on the academic performance of homeless students. The number of

teachers varied from site to site, however, all were part of a school environment that services students considered homeless.

Importance of this Study

This study provides information on the practices used to support the education of homeless students identified under the McKinney-Vento program. It also identifies the best practices to support the academic growth of these learners. This study will focus on (a) examining the ELA and Math CST achievement trends of 2nd-8th grade students considered homeless, (b) identifying the practices perceived as contributing to the academic achievement of homeless students (c) examining the perceived needs of teachers of homeless students in an one urban school district in Southern California.

This study adds to the body of literature and research on educating students challenged by homelessness. The information from this research is important because the number of homeless students enrolling in schools has increased due to the economic problems affecting Americans across the nation. Therefore, it is critical for school districts to understand the best practices and the perceived needs of educators to support the education of homeless students.

Assumptions and Limitations

California Standards Test data developed by Educational Testing Services (ETS) will be used to gain the data necessary for the quantitative portion of this study. The quantitative portion of this research study assumes that the California Standards Testing (CST) data results are an accurate assessment of student performance and that the data has been uploaded to the Data Director system accurately for all homeless students identified under the McKinney-Vento program. According to the ETS Standards for

Quality and Fairness (2002), "Validity is one of the most important attributes of assessment quality. Programs must provide logical and/or empirical evidence to show that each assessment is capable of meeting its intended purpose(s)" (p. 27). It is assumed that such validity measures have been taken when creating the California Standards Tests (CST). This study also assumes that the principals, teachers, instructional coaches, and district administrators participating in this study responded truthfully and accurately regarding the practices used to support the education of homeless students they serve.

Due to the nature of this study, the California Standards Test data trends that will be examined are limited to Title 1 schools in one urban Southern California school district servicing a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students. The student achievement data will be compiled from 12 Title I elementary schools, and three Title I middle schools.

In addition, this study examined the perceptions of principals and educators in the area of practices that impact student achievement of homeless students. These perceptions are limited to Title 1 schools servicing homeless students in one Southern California Urban school district. The survey was limited to those educators, principals, and instructional coaches within the selected fourteen schools servicing students under the McKinney-Vento Program.

The study was also limited to principals who agreed to participate in the interview and survey process. It was limited to the educators and instructional coaches that agreed to take the survey and participated in the study.

Operational Definitions of Terms

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. A United States

Federal Law that provides federal money for homeless shelter programs. This act was a direct response to support Americans challenged by homelessness.

Homeless children and youth. The Mckinney-Vento Act gave a the following definition for children who were considered homeless:

> Defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2002, Subtitle B of Title VII, Section 725 as homeless children and youths which—(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. According to the McKinney Vento Act, Children are considered homeless when in the following living situations" (California Dept. of Ed, 2002, p. 23):
>
> 1. Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
> 2. Children living in "motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations";
> 3. Children living in "emergency or transitional shelters";
> 4. Children "awaiting foster care placement";
> 5. Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.);
> 6. Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train" (DE, 2002).

Title I- Improving The Academic Achievement Of The Disadvantaged. "The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on

challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments" (CDE, 2012a, p. 1)

Extended learning opportunities. Emery (2002) states "the practice of providing children and youth with extended learning opportunities (before- and after-school, weekend, and summer) to expand their learning and participate in a variety of extracurricular activities is long standing" (p. 4).

No Child Left Behind. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act is a federal program "to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach proficiency on state academic achievement standards and academic assessments" (CDE, 2007b, p. 2).

California Standards Test (CST). Testing tools agreed on by the state as supported by Education Code section 60642.5 were developed to review the academic progress of student performance. Standardized Testing and Reporting (2009) states "the exam scores are reported based on five performance levels are used for reporting the CSTs and CMA (grades three through five only) results: advanced; proficient; basic; below basic; and far below basic. The state target is for all students to score at the proficient level or above (advanced). The percentages of students scoring at each performance level are reported by grade and subject for all students and for student subgroups" (p. 1).

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction

In order to best understand why it is imperative for a school district in Southern California to monitor the academic performance of students considered homeless as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, this chapter examines the literature in the following key areas: (a) The history of current federal legislation for homeless education (b) federal and state funding and the national effort to end the cycle of homelessness (c) accountability for academic achievement for numerically significant subgroups of learners (d) successful academic practices to support students in homeless situations as well as a review of best practices to support the social-emotional needs of homeless students, and, (e) the perceptions and self-efficacy of educators who work with students in homeless situations.

Based on new information gathered by the National Center of Homelessness conducted in June of 2011, there are 939,903 homeless students represented in the United States nationally with California having 20.6% of the homeless student population. Numerically this is a number of 224,249 identified homeless students just in California. A negative two percent drop nationally was observed in the number of homeless students counted with California showing a negative 33% drop of homeless students represented in the state. Twenty out of the 26 states listed in this report show an increase in the number of homeless students and six of the 26 show a decrease. Table 1 below displays a three-year comparison of the total number of homeless students enrolled nationally and includes the percentage of the total national number of homeless students represented just in the state of California (National Center of Homelessness, 2011).

Table 1

Three-Year Comparison of the Number of Homeless Students in the United States

	Total Enrolled SY078	Percent of Total Enrolled SY0708	Total Enrolled SY0809	Percent of Total Enrolled SY0809	Total Enrolled SY0910	Percent of Total Enrolled SY0910	Percent Change Between SY0708 and SY0809	Percent Change Between SYO0809 and SY0910	Percent Change Between SY0708 and SY0910 (3 Years)
Total Enrolled All States in LEAs with and without Subgrants	794,17	100	956,914	100	939,903	100	20	-2	18
California	224,249	28.2	288,233	30.	193,796	20.6	29	-33	-14

One explanation for the drop in the homeless student population in California can be due to the economic constraints California is now experiencing which has impacted the resources in terms of personnel to identify and account for this subgroups of learners. Nevertheless, the numbers represented in the chart above makes it imperative for states and local school districts to develop plans to support this group of learners.

The History of Current Federal Legislation for Homeless Education

An estimated 1.5 million American children are considered homeless (National Center on Family Homelessness, 2009). Data gathered by the United States Department of Education shows that the identification of homeless students in public schools have increased by 41% in the last two years (DE, 2010). Schools have the power to support the educational experience of homeless children and can help to end the cycle of poverty

and homelessness in the United States. Nelson Mandela, an anti-apartheid activist who also served as the President of South Africa from 1994 to 1998, believed "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" as he said in his speech the day of his release from Cape Town on February 11, 1990. His words are undeniably true. The identified number of children impacted by homelessness promoted legislatures to set forth federal law to protect the educational rights of children impacted by poverty and homelessness. The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NPEYH) asserts the need to provide self-sufficiency skills to our homeless children population. Alliance stated the following view:

> Unlike adults who have often lived independently prior to experiencing homelessness, most youth who become homeless have never lived on their own. Lacking financial means, marketable skills, maturity, and independent living skills, this is a task for which they are almost invariably ill prepared (NPEYH, May 2006, p. 2).

The NPEYH believes "preventing and ending youth homelessness demands policies and practices at the federal, state, and local levels that close service gaps" (NPEYH, May 2006, p. 3). The NPEYH continues to promote the need for policymakers to acknowledge the following characteristics about homeless youth:

1. For many youth, independence at 18 is unrealistic.
2. Homeless youth need self-sufficiency and independent living skills training.
3. Homeless youth have special service needs, including mental and physical health issues.
4. Relationships and connections to trusted adults, family, and social networks

are important. (NPEYH, May 2006, p. 3)

The federal government has realized the importance of taking a national approach to the issue of educating our homeless youth through written federal legislation. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 is a United States Federal Law that provides federal money for homeless shelter programs. This act was a direct response to support Americans challenged by homelessness. Since 1987, the act has undergone many revisions. The Act initially was named the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and was signed into law requiring states to revise the residency requirements for enrolling students considered homeless. Table 2 below briefly provides the modifications made to this Federal Act since 1987.

Table 2

History of McKinney Vento Assistance Act of 1987

History of McKinney Vento Assistance Act of 1987	
1987 Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act Changed the residency requirement for enrolling homeless students	1990 Subtitle VII of the Act amended to include Education of Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) to ensure FAPE
1994 Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) (preschool, parental input, interagency collaboration)	2002 Title 1, Section 200.6 Accountability Assessments Title X, Part C to ESEA School District appointment of local Liaison

The original McKinney-Vento Act did not give many protections to homeless children in providing a stable and equitable public education. The Act was amended to include specific protections for children due to the push from the State of Illinois who passed the Education for Homeless Children Act in 1995 (California Dept. of Ed, 2002). The advocacy and work accomplished by Illinois helped to incorporate their initiative into the McKinney-Vento Federal Act.

The Mckinney-Vento Act gave the following definition for children who were considered homeless:

> Defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2002, Subtitle B of Title VII, Section 725 as homeless children and youths which—(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. According to the McKinney Vento Act, Children are considered homeless when in the following living situations (California Dept. of Ed, 2002):
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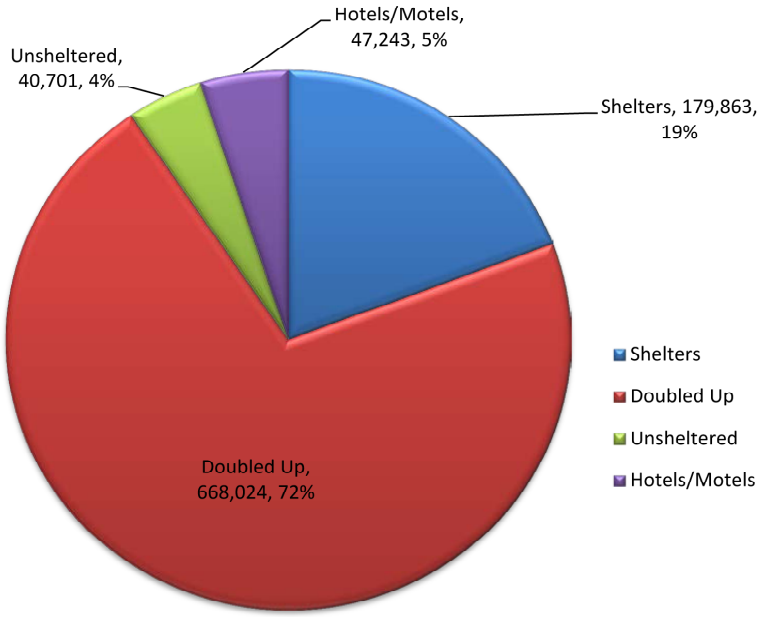
> 1. Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
> 2. Children living in "motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations";
> 3. Children living in "emergency or transitional shelters";
> 4. Children "awaiting foster care placement";
> 5. Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.);
> 6. Children living in "cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train" (p. 23).

Based on new information gathered by the National Center of Homeless conducted in June of 2011, the graphic Table 3 below shows the number of students living in homeless conditions according to McKinney-Vento Act.

Figure 1

Number of Students Living in Homeless Conditions According to McKinney-Vento Act



Note. Adapted from the National Center of Homelessness, 2011 representing the number of students living in homeless conditions according to the McKinney-Vento Act.

In 1990, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act was once again amended to include the removal of any enrollment barriers that may exist within school districts. Schools and Districts were mandated to provide access and support for academic success for all students experiencing homelessness. The funds tied to the McKinney-Vento Act are to be specifically used to provide direct educational services for eligible students.

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act has nine titles that provide access to a number of different services to support homeless families. The most important of these titles to education is Subtitle VII authorizing the implementation of

four programs. The Education of Homeless children and Youth (EHCY) program is one of the four that was enacted by Congress to ensure that homeless children receive and have access to the same Free and Public Education (FAPE) as those students not challenged by homelessness. This particular mandate was prompted by the statistics showing that half of homeless children were not attending school regularly.

The United States Department of Education in July of 2002 revised Title1 Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged to include accountability for students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. Title 1, Section 200.6, specifies the inclusion of all students in state academic assessments. The following student subgroups must be included per Title 1:

1. Students eligible under IDEA and Section 504
2. Limited English proficient students otherwise known as English Language Learners (ELL)
3. Migratory and other mobile students
4. Students experiencing homelessness (Title 1, Section 200.6)

The No Child Left Behind initiative revised the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program to serve primarily to meet the following components to protect the rights of homeless children:

1. Enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.
2. Ensure homeless children have equal access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and to a public preschool education.
3. Provide services to support homeless children to meet the

academic achievement standards.

4. Including and not separating children from the mainstream school environment.
5. Providing transportation if needed (NCHE, 2001)

One of the five standards and goals of this federal legislation includes an academic standard focused on the need to support homeless students with educational services in order to meet the state proficiency standards. Funds from the Act must assist homeless students meet the demands of the state content standards that all students are held to by the No Child Left Behind initiative. Funds can be used for the following academic support programs:

1. Tutoring, supplemental instruction, and other educational services that support homeless students meet academic state standards.
2. Academic enrichment programs for disadvantaged students as indicated by NCLB must follow state standards.
3. All support academic programs must be scientifically based research to ensure academic success (NCHE, 2001)

The McKinney-Vento Act states that it is the responsibility of the school district and school site to enroll homeless students immediately. This includes all activities such as "attending classes and participating fully in school activities" (42 U.S.C. 11434a(1) p. 2). School activities can include before and after school programs and extracurricular activities such as sports, music and other programs available.

As the needs for homeless students increased and the public awareness of the severity and inequities that exist for homeless students grew, the greater protections the

federal government assigned for the academic success and access to education of this subgroup. In 1994, the McKinney Act was included in the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), adding key components that include adding preschool services, greater parental input, and emphasis on interagency collaboration. The Act was then reauthorized under Title X, Part C of ESEA as the McKinney-Vento Act that required that all school districts designate a Liaison to ensure all laws and policies are being implemented for the well being of all homeless and foster students with the upmost of respect and sensitivity.

Current Federal and State Funding and the Financial Implications

The federal government provides funding to states to carry out the conditions of the McKinney-Vento Act. States who do not apply for the grant do not have to implement the Act. Based on the requirements of the federal act, each state educational agency interested must submit an application requesting funds for the purposes of serving their homeless student population before any of its Local Education Agencies (LEA) can have access or be eligible to receive funding. The following describes the allocations as indicated in the federal legislation:

> ALLOCATION- (A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary is authorized to allot to each State an amount that bears the same ratio to the amount appropriated for such year under section 726 that remains after the Secretary reserves funds under paragraph (2) and uses funds to carry out section 724(d) and (h), as the amount allocated under section 1122 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to the State for that year bears to the total amount allocated under section 1122 of such Act to all States for that year, except that no State shall receive less than the greater of (i) $150,000; (ii) one-fourth of 1 % of the amount

> appropriated under section 726 for that year; or (iii) the amount such State received under this section for fiscal year 2001. (ESEA, SEC. 722, par 2)

Other funding supports for homeless education included funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that was signed into law on February 17, 2009. ARRA provided funds to be spent on school improvement programs that included subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The amount allotted totaled $70,000,000 in grant monies to each state that is in proportion to the number of homeless students identified by the state during the 2007-2008 school year weighed against the number of homeless students identified nationally. Each state will then sub-grant to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) on a competitive basis or according to a formula based on the number of homeless students identified by the LEAs in the state. Table 4 below shows the funds expended for the past five years.

Table 3

Federal Funds Expended for Homeless Education for the Past Five Years

Year	Funding
2007	$61,871,000
2008	464,067,000
2009	$65,427,000
Recovery Act	$70,000,000
2010	$65,427,000
2011	$65,427,000

The budget proposal for 2012 is contingent on the reauthorization of ESEA. According to a current policy brief in December 2011, the administration is requesting the same amount of $65.4 million dollars to be allocated for the Homeless Children and

Youth Education program as in 2011(December, 2011). The reauthorization of ESEA would include some changes to the way services are provided to homeless children. According to the policy brief on December 2011, certain revisions will take into effect that include the following:

- More directly target resources to homeless children and remove barriers to serving them effectively
- Program funds would be allocated to States based on the most recent State-reported data on the number of homeless children and youth available to the Department rather than on State shares of Title I, Part A funds, a change that would help ensure that program funds flow to States on the basis of need
- Eliminate the exemption to the prohibition against operating separate schools for homeless youth; this change is needed because homeless students are unlikely to receive a high-quality education in a segregated environment and because of the stigma attached to groups of students placed in segregated schools.
- The reauthorization proposal would also better align the uses of funds under the program with the reforms promoted in general through the ESEA reauthorization (HCYEP, 2011).

The National Effort to End the Cycle of Homelessness

The McKinney-Vento program is one element to the national response to end the cycle of homelessness. The United States Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, nominated by President Barack Obama addressed the nation on January 20, 2009 stating

that “education is the most pressing issue facing America” (Duncan, 2009, p. 1) and “preparing our young people for success in life is not just a moral obligation of society, but also an economic imperative” (Duncan, 2009, p. 1). He continued to addressed the nation with the following:

> Education is also the civil rights issue of our generation. The only sure path out of poverty and the only way to achieve a more equal and just society… to enhance education in America, to lift our children and families out of poverty, to help our students learn to contribute to the civility of our great American democracy and to strengthen our economy by producing a workforce that can make us as competitive as possible. (Duncan, 2009, p. 1)

Former United States President, Ronald Reagan, in April of 1983 supported an extensive research on public education titled A Nation at Risk, the Imperative for Educational Reform. This document reinforced the idea that “a high level of shared education is essential to a free, democratic society and to the fostering of a common culture, especially in a country that prides itself on pluralism and individual freedom.” (NCEE, 1983, p. 10). The study prompted the United States to address education through legislation and most importantly acknowledges the demands placed on schools that go beyond teaching that include “providing solutions to personal, social, and political problems that the home and other institutions either will not or cannot resolve” (NCEE, 1983, p. 9). It further asserts the need to “understand that these demands on our schools and colleges often exact an educational cost as well as a financial one” (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, DE, April 1983, p. 9).

Unfortunately the federal government is dealing with the national deficit that continues to cut federal dollars to many of the federal programs that will help address homelessness in the United States. The chart below shows the projected cuts to federal homeless assistance programs that will take into effect in January of 2013 due to the new Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA). The Table 5 below shows the proposed cuts and the number of individuals that will not be served due to the cuts.

Table 4

Proposed Cuts and Impact on Homelessness

Impact of Sequestration on Homelessness through Selected Programs

Program	Est. FY 2013 Funding Level (Millions)[2]	Est. FY 2013 Sequestration Cut (Millions)	Est. # People Not Served because of Cuts
HUD's McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants	$1,901	$173.0	27,758
HUD's Section 8 Tenant-Based Rental Assistance	$18,914	$1,721.2	202,491
HHS' Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) Basic Center and Transitional Living Programs	$98	$8.9	4,950
HHS' Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness	$65	$5.9	18,684
HHS' Health Care for the Homeless (HCH) Program	$137	$2.7*	11,587

Note. Under the BCA, community health centers, including HCH programs, are limited to a 2 percent cut in 2013

Homeless children face many barriers and challenges that impact their access to education and to be successful in school such as the lack of transportation and immunization. Programs providing services to homeless students help to reduce and eliminate those barriers and give homeless children access to academic services available to other children, such as preschool programs (Brief 9, Dec 2011). However, the financial impact due to current political and economic factors will end some of the resources available to address the issue of educating homeless youth and the overall national goal to end homelessness in general.

The Institute for Children on Poverty developed a report on homelessness and

proposed the following reasons for the continued cycle of homelessness and poverty:

> They never received guidance toward a quality education, adequate family counseling, or a job paying a living wage. They never learned to live independently. Instead they learned to accept the instability, displacement, and dependence on poverty while in the institutions of foster care, shelters, and welfare. (ICP, p. 2)

The Institute for Children on Poverty continued to report "fifty percent of heads-of-households who are homeless today grew up in families that spent time on welfare. Sixteen percent spent time in foster care, group homes, shelters or welfare hotels before they turned eighteen" (ICP, 1997, p. 1). Current and former Presidents as well the United States Secretary of Education have believed in education as a source to support the progression of society and to end the cycle of poverty and homeless from a national perspective. According to the Children's Defense Fund (2008):

> Businesses pay when poor children grow up with less education and become less productive workers-workers who require more training, cannot work as fast or learn new orders or valuable equipment. Everyone pays when a child grows up in poverty. (p. 3)

The issue of educating our homeless youth extends deeper than one school district, one community, or one state; it impacts the nation as a whole.

Accountability of Numerically Significant Subgroups of Learners

The achievement targets mandated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001 have significantly changed the context in how schools are pushing forward initiatives to increase student achievement. School districts and sites are intensely focused on aligning

curriculum and district benchmark tests to the state assessments and thus attempting to help all students meet achievement targets. School Districts must report the academic progress of "numerically significant" groups of learners. The main subgroups include economically disadvantaged, special education, Limited English Proficient students, English Language Learners (ELL), and students from major racial and ethnic groups. According to the CDE's State Accountability Progress Reporting (APR) system, in order to be under the umbrella of being numerically significant, the subgroup must represent "at least 50 students with valid test scores who make up at least 15% of the total valid scores or at least 100 students with valid test scores" (CDE, May 2011, p. 1). Currently there are 11 subgroups monitored in the API and AYP results, they include: Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Filipino, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, White, Two or More Races, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Students with Disabilities.

California Department of Education does not disaggregate data for the homeless student population and categorizes all socioeconomically disadvantaged in one group. California's State Accountability Progress Reporting (APR) System has established three data sets used to measure the academic achievement of schools; Academic Performance Index (API) and a federal required report called Academic Yearly Progress (AYP) and Program Improvement (PI) reports (CDE, May 2011, p.1). According to the overview of California's Accountability Progress Reporting System, API measures, "the academic performance and growth of schools ranging from a numeric scale from 200 to 1000" (CDE, May 2011, p.1). AYP is a federal system mandated by No Child Left Behind that measures four sets of requirements:

> (1) Student participation rate on statewide tests; (2) percentage of students scoring at the proficient level or above in English Language Arts and mathematics on statewide tests; (3) Growth API; and (4) graduation rate if in grade twelve. "Numerically significant" subgroup results are calculated for both API and AYP. (CDE, p.1)

Students considered homeless are not represented above and based on the increasing numbers of students being identified as homeless, there is a unique opportunity to analyze how school districts are monitoring the academic achievement of students in this particular subgroup.

The main goal of NCLB is to hold all states accountable for academic achievement of all students. The reauthorization of NCLB has mandated all school districts to monitor the academic progress of homeless students making it imperative that schools understand the academic needs of all students they serve including students in homeless situations.

In order to meet the demands of accountability NCLB sets, school educators must monitor the progress of homeless students to determine if their instruction is impacting student achievement. According to Nancy Safer and Steve Fleishcman (2005), "Student progress monitoring is a practice that helps teachers use student performance data to continually evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and make more informed instructional decisions" (p. 81). Fuchs and Fuchs (2002) conducted an analysis of research on student progress monitoring and found that

> When teachers use systematic progress monitoring to track their students' progress in reading, mathematics, or spelling, they are better able to identify students in need of additional or different forms of instruction,

> they design stronger instructional programs, and their students achieve better. (p. 1)

Applying the ideals of progressing monitoring allows educators to view the data of homeless students through a different lens. There are unique needs homeless students have that educators should be aware and support through a system of progress monitoring to increase their effectiveness in working with this target population.

Successful Academic Practices and Unique Needs of Homeless Students

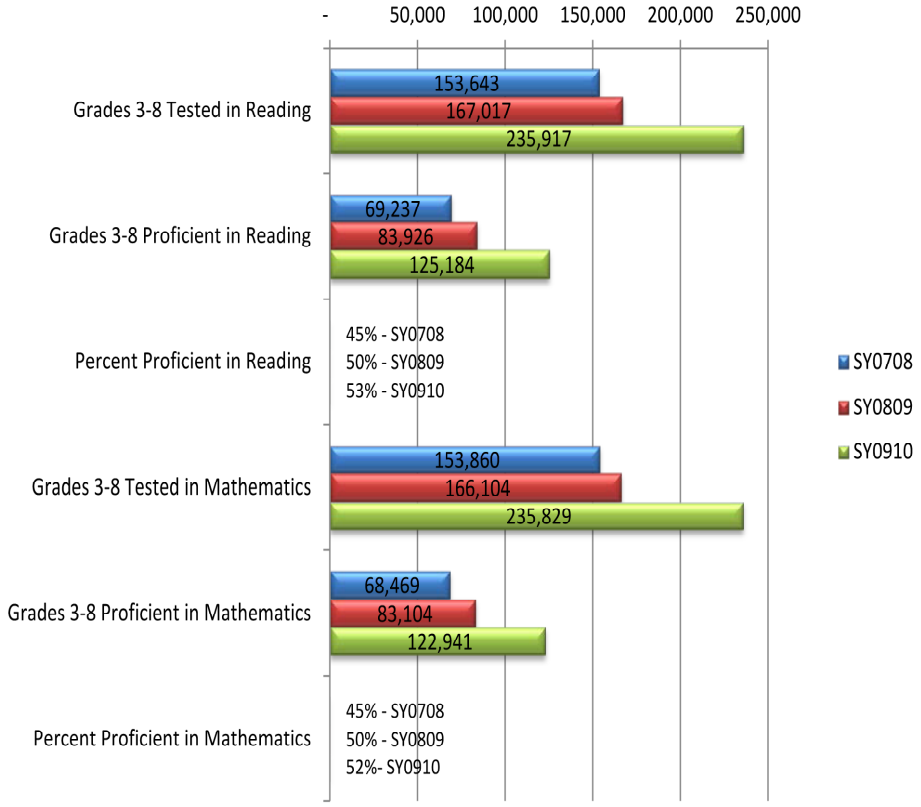
Academic performance of homeless students. Students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act are most likely to have academic problems at school than do students who are not. The impact of an unstable home coupled with an unstable school can significantly impact the academic performance and social emotional needs of these students. High transience is one of the main determents to academic achievement and can impact a child's self-esteem and classroom behavior (Hendershott, 1989; Vail, 1996). The literature on highly mobile students indicates that it can take students "four to six months to recover academically after changing schools" (DE, 2004, p. 1). Highly mobile students have also been found to have lower test scores and overall academic performance than peers who do not change schools. In the years between 2008 and 2009, the national homeless student academic performance data for students in grades third through eighth as reported by the United states Department of Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program, only 50% of the 83,926 homeless students who took the state assessment test scored at proficient in Reading and 50% scored proficient on the math state test of the 83,104 who took the exam (DE, 2002). The National Center

for Homeless Education released updated data in June of 2011 reflecting the most current academic performance data for homeless students.

Chart 6 below shows the data representing the number of homeless students in grades third through eighth scoring proficient in reading and in mathematics for the last three years.

Figure 2

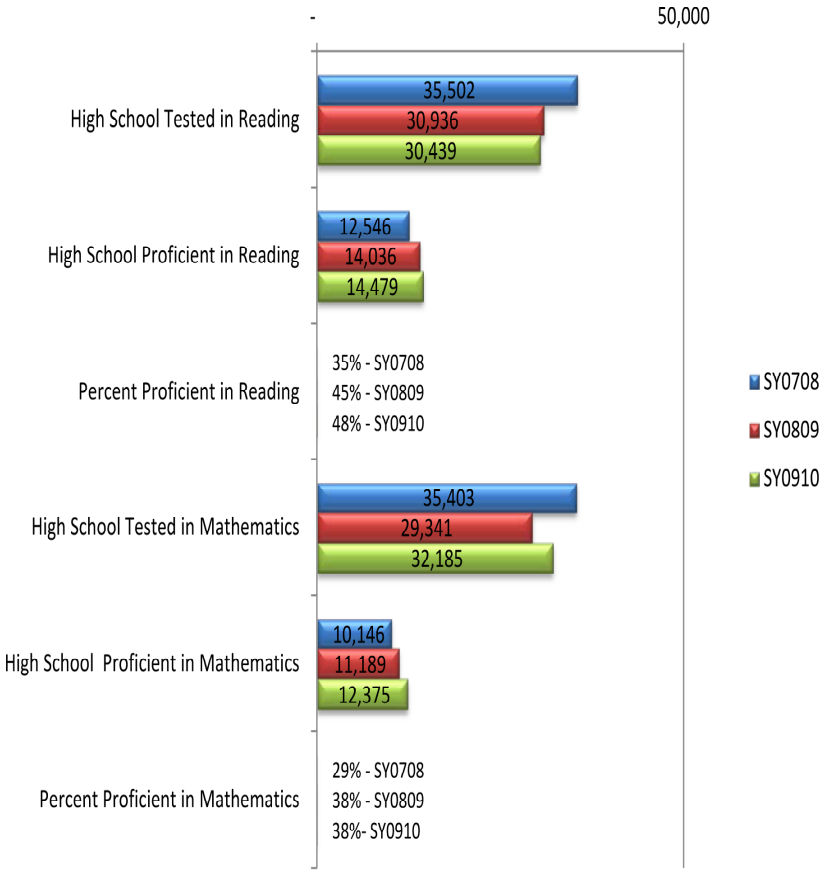
Third through Eighth Grade Achievement Data in Reading and Math for the Last Three Years



The chart below shows the data representing the number of homeless students in high school scoring proficient in reading and in mathematics for the last three years.

Figure 3

High School Grade Achievement Data in Reading and Math for the Last Three Years



The high school performance data shows there is a decrease in amount of students identified as homeless. One reason for this decrease can be due to students dropping out at the high school levels. The California Superintendent, Tom Torlakson, in his News Release dated August 11, 2011 reports the following on the status of California's dropout rate:

> The graduation and dropout rates continue to show a significant achievement gap between students who are Hispanic, African American, or English learners and their peers. The 74.4% statewide graduation rate and 18.2% statewide dropout rate—as well as rates calculated for counties,

> districts, and schools across California—were for the first time based on four-year cohort information collected about individual students using the state's California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System. (CDE, 2011, p. 1).

Torlakson continues to explain that "consistent with the graduation rates, the dropout rates also illustrate that African American students 30.1% and English learners 31.1 % are more likely to drop out than their peers" (CDE, 2011, p. 1). In thinking of our homeless student population, how many are dropping out in middle and high school? This is a question that remains to be answered as research was not found providing that information.

Supplemental services after school programs. Schools and districts are exploring different avenues of instructional support that will help the academic achievement of struggling students. One viable source of extended support for homeless students includes the implementation of programs during after school hours. According to research, the practice of expanded time for students to learn content in core academic areas through after-school programs has significant promise to support students in reaching academic achievement (Stonehill et al., 2009; Vandell, Reisner, & Pierceet, 2007). As published in after school legislation advocating for after school programs, relevant studies from the University of California Los Angeles and the University of California Irvine are embedded in the legislation to address the need for after school programs that support academic achievement (California Education Code 8482, Section 1b and 1c). According to these studies, "existing after school programs in California have a major positive impact on the education of our children by increasing school

attendance, reducing suspensions, and improving standardized test scores" (California Education Code 8482, Sections 1b and 1c, p. 1).

Collaborations and partnerships are key in designing supplemental programs that meet the needs of students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. The role of the principal in collaborating and partnering with the on-site after school program is an essential element in providing the necessary academic support for students performing at below basic levels. The After School Corporation (TASC) reviews the benefits and importance of building a partnership between the school site principal and the after school program.

> A strong, sustainable relationship between school and after-school leaders grows from the combined efforts of the principal, the site coordinator, and the nonprofit organization that sponsors the TASC project. Together, these partners establish the values, priorities, and rules that will shape their partnership. As the project matures, they help the program grow and improve while keeping it efficient and vital. And when challenges arise, successful partners turn them into positive experiences by solving problems with honesty and tact. (TASC, 2000, p. 1)

Researchers and educators in the field believe high quality well organized out-of-school-time activities have the potential to support and promote youth development, providing students with the skills needed to engage in the regular day instructional program. The National Research Council & Institute of Medicine (2004) identified the following benefits of such activities:

1. Situate youth in safe environments;

2. Prevent youth from engaging in delinquent activities;
3. Teach youth general and specific skills, beliefs, and behaviors; and
4. Provide opportunities for youth to develop relationships with peers and mentors (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2004).

Supplemental programs such as after school and summer extended programs have been implemented to support the academic success of students. After School and summer programs can teach skills that students challenged with homelessness need to better adjust in a school setting. Well-developed and effectively implemented supplemental programs support students' academic performance through a variety of ways. Specifically, they can:

1. Connect youth to quality learning opportunities and to learning itself and keep youth engaged in school.
2. Help youth practice social and interpersonal skills and gain from positive youth development models.
3. Give youth more access to environments that support academic achievement, particularly in the current higher stakes educational environment. Summer programming, in particular, can help address the opportunity gap that occurs during this extended period when lower income children and youth have less access to enrichment opportunities than their more affluent and advantaged peers.

Academic learning time (ALT). Children experiencing homelessness tend to have lower self-efficacy because of the unstable nature of their environment. According to Pajares (2002), "self-efficacy is defined as people's judgments of their capabilities to

organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. Self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for human motivation, well-being, and personal accomplishment" (p.1). Providing additional academic learning opportunities will provide an opportunity to accelerate and provide the added time homeless students need to understand concepts and learning they may have missed due to high mobility from school to school. Academic learning time (ALT) is defined as "the amount of time a student spends attending to relevant academic tasks while performing those tasks with a high rate of success" (Caldwell, Huitt, & Graeber, 1982, p. 471).

After school expanded learning time is important for the success of all students especially homeless students who need additional time to understand content introduced during the regular day program or when transitioning from one school to another. Expanded time allows for reinforcement of perquisite skills and prior knowledge and the time needed to process information. Prior research supporting programs offered after-school have provided evidence in regards to the positive effects such programs have on student achievement when they increase students' academically engaged learning time (; Durlak & Weissburg; Stonehill, 2009; Vandell, 2007).

Schema theory of learning. The Schema theory of learning derived from a psychologist in the 1980s named R.C. Anderson. The main idea of the Schema learning theory is that "learning organizes knowledge as an elaborate network of abstract mental structures, which represent one's understanding of the world" (Anderson, 1984, p. 415). What is most important about this theory is the idea of teaching prerequisite skills for learning. For example, "prior knowledge is essential for the comprehension of new information, teachers either need to help students build the prerequisite knowledge, or

remind them of what they already know before introducing new material" (p. 416). Miller, the author of *Critical hours: After-school programs and educational success* reviews the research in regards to in school and out of school time as it relates to youth development, specifically to the outcome of learning (Miller, 2003). Programs offered after school as it is referred to by Miller provides support for the idea that such extended learning programs offered after school indeed provide the necessary elements to increase prerequisites skills to support learning "in terms of both academic achievement and long-term competence and success" (Miller, 2003, p. 2).

The implication of ALT for after school programs is the idea that providing the extra time will help build self-efficacy in which learners will begin to equate more time and persistence with successful outcomes. ALT in an after school setting for below basic performing students and homeless students must be guided otherwise it can also be true that if a student is not successful and have spent the time and persistence, they may be negatively impacted and equate time with failure.

Academic practices and programs. Participation in after school programs includes both attendance and student engagement measures. The operational definition of an after school program also known as extended learning opportunities (ELO) is "the practice of providing children and youth with extended learning opportunities (before- and after-school, weekend, and summer) to expand their learning and participate in a variety of extracurricular activities" (Emery, 2002, p. 1).

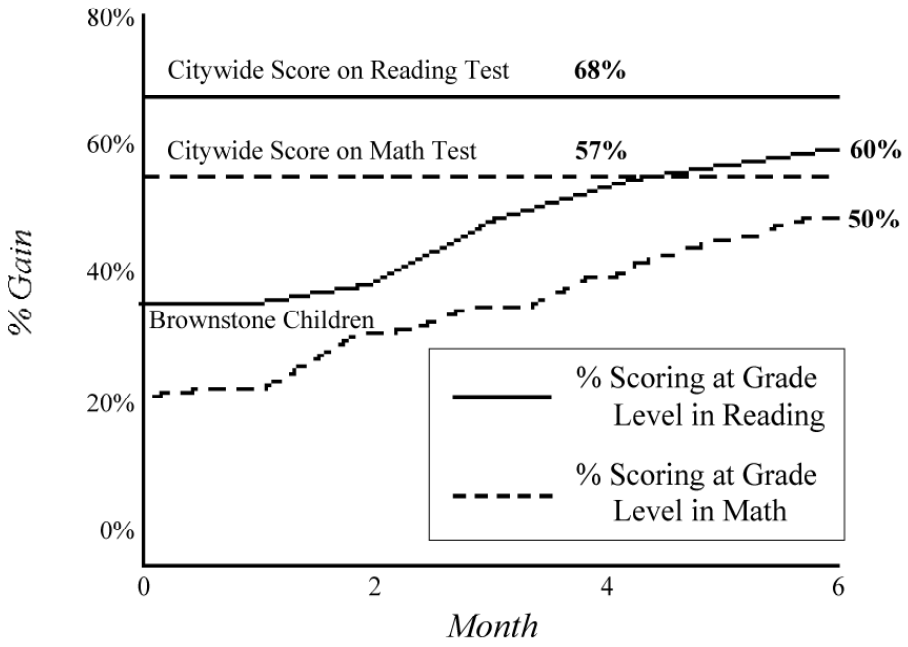
Chalk Board Project described the use of after school programs in their 2008 online publication titled, A Review of Research of Extended Learning Time in K-12 Schools,

> After-School Programs are separate from the regular school day. After-school programs can be offered for the purposes of providing extra academic support, enrichment, or a combination of both. After-school programs also can be offered to promote the well being of "latchkey" children and to increase community safety by keeping children out of trouble. They can be targeted to specific populations that need extra support, or can be offered to all students. (Chalk Board Project, 2008, p. 1)

One particular program in New York City has helped to improve the self-efficacy and success rate of students in their schooling called Homes for Homeless (HFH) incorporating a family-based approach to education. The HFH instituted an accelerated after school program called the Brownstone School to combat the poor academic performance experienced by their student homeless population. The Brownstone School for children works with students who are between the ages of five and thirteen. Data shows that students enrolled in the Brownstone School have increased their academic achievement in "as little of six months and the children's reading scores rose by 50% while their math scores more than doubled" (Institute for Children and Poverty, 1993, p. 3). The chart below reviews the academic growth and success of this target group of learners. According to the chart below, 68% of students citywide are scoring at grade level in reading and 57% students citywide scored at grade level in math. Brownstone students made a 20% growth in ELA and in mathematics. The Brownstone accelerated learning program has worked for homeless students in New York attending the Brownstone After School Program.

Figure 4

Academic Gains of School-Aged Homeless Children Attending Brownstone After School



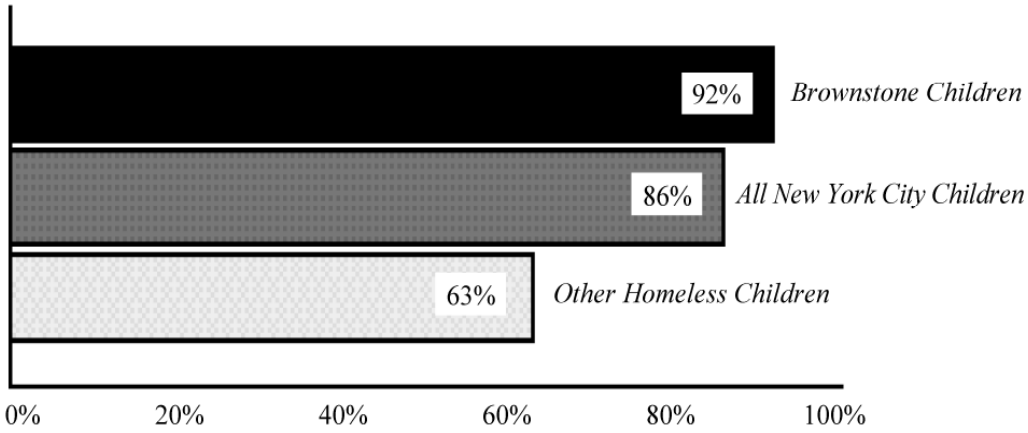
The Brownstone School incorporates the following academic and social components:

1. Innovative teaching techniques,
2. Educational programs in literacy and mathematics
3. Field work and field trips
4. Computer learning applications
5. Activities promoting bonding encouraged between students and teachers,
6. Community garden and mother-teen workshops
7. Parent and school partnership fostering collaboration
8. Enrichment Programs

The Brownstone program incorporates extracurricular activities to support the social development of homeless children that have been identified as a necessary component to academic success. The program has also been effective in increasing attendance rates of homeless students in their regular day academic program.

Figure 5

Comparative Daily Attendance Rates for School-Aged Children Attending Brownstone



The Santa Cruz Homeless Education Program is another example of supplemental services provided through one-on-one in-class tutoring to help homeless students meet state achievement assessments through literacy and math skills. The Santa Cruz Homeless Education Program uses the following implementation plan to support homeless students:

> The tutoring program uses work-study students from the University California at Santa Cruz (UCSC), who assists homeless students during the school day. Pulling students out of the regular classroom was not only disruptive, but also served to stigmatize the students as having problems. According to the homeless outreach program director, avoiding the stigma of being homeless is essential to the

program's success. (DE, 2002, 5)

Douglass Reeves reviews the research conducted at the Center for Performance Assessment on the 90/90/90 Schools. Schools considered 90/90/90 schools were identified because they are at least 90% combined minority, at least 90% free or reduced lunch qualified students, and at least 90% successful on standardized assessments (Reeves, 2006). Reeves listed five strengths or commonalities seen in these particular schools that can inform the way in which school learning communities and school districts can address the needs of their homeless student population.

The five areas are:

1. There is a strong emphasis and focus on achievement
2. There are clear curricular choices
3. There are frequent assessment and multiple chances for students to show improvement
4. There is a strong emphasis on writing in all academic area
5. External scoring of student work must be in place (Accountability in Action, Reeves, 2004).

Reeves identified a model for schools to mirror their instructional focus in order to reach academic success and educational reform. These include:

1. Ongoing and focused professional development
2. Modeling of effective teaching and assessment practices
3. Ongoing professional collaboration
4. Effective communication between school staff, parents, and

students

5. Visible tracking of student progress on a frequent and regular basis (Reeves, 2004).

One particular elementary school that has faced challenges in supporting students in a high poverty area researched under the 90/90/90 schools is Mead Valley School in Riverside, California. More than 95% of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunches, more than 70% are English Language Learners. It is one of the poorest areas in the country located in Riverside. It is an area high in crime and drug abuse. The environment is debilitated and depressing. Many homes lack proper plumbing and other utilities. Children often go hungry. Nevertheless, the "environment this school has managed to maintain a level of academic excellence that transcends student demographics, transitions in teaching staff, and changes in school leadership" (Reeves, 2007, pp. 86-87).

Schools who are most impacted by the responsibility to educate a large number of homeless students must be collaborative and systematic in the way in which they educate homeless students. One example of an effective approach to educating our student homeless population is reviewed in a case study of the Lennox School District at Moffett Elementary School located in the city of Los Angeles. What is most interesting about this case study is the systematic approach used to address the needs of all students. According to the research study, Lennox School District is made up of "53% of their residents who have resided in the United States less than five years and 85% are solely Spanish speaking or Spanish language dominant" (Franke, 2003, p. 2) with over 96% of the student population eligible for free and reduced lunches and have the "highest number

of children living in poverty" (p. 2). The most astonishing characteristic of this district is that they have "in any given month throughout the year, four to 10 new students enter the school as transfer students from other schools, from both within and outside of the school district" (p. 2).

The four examples reviewed earlier of successful programs supporting the academic and social success of homeless students have common threads observed in their programs. The Brownstone After School Program, the Santa Cruz Education Program, Mead Valley School and Lennox School District at Moffett Elementary all have included the following common strategies:

1. Provided supplemental academic tutorial support to accelerate learning and fill gaps
2. Provided a social setting to build relationships
3. Enrichment programs
4. Developed a form of in take interview process to assess student needs.
5. Monitored the success of their students

Maslow's Theories on Motivation and Hierarchy of Needs

Homeless students have a world of challenges when thinking of their social and emotional needs. A certain stigma and stereotype lingers over homeless students that ignites a certain fear and worry about how to best meet the needs of this population. The opportunity to build relationships is very important to the development of children especially for homeless students who are considered students at-risk living in poverty and who are faced with constant worry in regards to where they will sleep each night. Ruby Payne in her work of understanding poverty reinforces the idea that the "key to

achievement for students from poverty is in creating relationships with them" (Payne, 1996, p. 111) and building the support systems needed to be successful in school.

When considering the basic needs of human beings, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs comes to the forefront of many teacher credentialing programs and psychology courses. Maslow is a psychologist who developed a theory around the basic needs of human beings and wrote a paper in 1943 titled A Theory of Human Motivation. Maslow believed that human beings have needs that impact and motivate human behaviors. Maslow observed human nature as having foundational basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. The secondary level is the need for safety and the feeling of love and belonging. Once these basic needs are met, then children are able to *self-actualize* themselves as individuals by reaching one's potential. Maslow's hierarchy is seen as a pyramid where the first three basic needs of physical, safety, love and belonging must be fulfilled before esteem and self-actualization can occur (Steere, 1988).

An argument regarding Maslow's theory by Manfred Max-Neef, Chilean economist and philosopher, refutes Maslow's hierarchy of needs contending that the human needs are non-hierarchical and just are basic human needs and independent of one another. He continues to argue that one need is not contingent on another and uses poverty as an example where any given human need has been denied to the individual experiencing poverty and otherwise has gone unfulfilled (Neef, Elizalde, & Hopenhayn, 1991).

Nevertheless, both Maslow and Max-Neef believe that all humans have needs and among them are the ideas of belonging or participation in a community. Homeless students lack the basic needs of consistent food, clothing, shelter, and a home. These

challenges pose a very important responsibility for schools all across the United States. Understanding the challenges faced by homeless students makes it even more important for the learning community and the school's to offer opportunities for social interactions, school uniforms, a healthy breakfast and lunch, before and after school programs to support the development and success of homeless students.

Social Cultural Theory and Vygotsky

Social cultural theory is another important perspective to consider when educating our homeless population and developing programs to enhance the learning and social emotional well-being among this population of learners. Tharp and Gallimore (1988) share the following view on sociocultural perspective:

> This view [the sociocultural perspective] has profound implications for teaching, schooling, and education. A key feature of this emergent view of human development is that higher order functions develop out of social interaction. Vygotsky argues that a child's development cannot be understood by a study of the individual. We must also examine the external social world in which that individual life has developed...Through participation in activities that require cognitive and communicative functions, children are drawn into the use of these functions in ways that nurture and "scaffold" them. (pp. 6-7)

Vygotsky (1978) adds to this thought with the following view:

> Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of

> concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals. (p. 57)

Vygotsky's work directly informs the idea that an after school program can feasibly support a social environment to begin the first level of learning. Homeless students may not always have opportunities to interact with other students within the regular day instructional program. This interpsychological interactions can occur in an after school setting so that students are better prepared to perform intrapsychological learning when in the day instructional program.

Social cultural theory makes it imperative that school systems become proactive in developing a learning environment that fosters and enhances opportunities for social interactions. The life of a homeless student does not allow for stable social interactions because of their constant movement. The impact the development of social interactions and relationships on a child's academic performance and future is critical to their success.

As school districts and schools sites plan for implementation of effective programs servicing homeless students, the social relationship implications and student basic needs must be addressed in some fashion. Incorporating and building into the school's infrastructure such programs as enrichment clubs is important in order to support homeless or highly mobile students become successful in forging a place where they feel a sense of "belonging and connection to the school community" (Walker-Dalhouse & Risko, 2008, p. 84).

The chaotic lives of homeless students and the challenges of abuse, lack of food and shelter are overwhelming feelings that often go without consideration by the teacher. According to Polakow (1993, 2007), teachers should take the time to understand the

social needs and hardships their students encounter daily. Expressing genuine care and support can help ease the mind of a homeless child and bring down the walls they have built as a self-mechanism and in turn engage students in learning (Noddings, 1992).

Practices to Support Social Emotional Needs

In a final report on educating homeless children in 2002 by the United States Department of Education, key strategies have been identified that schools, districts, and states can implement to support students of homelessness be successful in school. Implementing these basic strategies can also provide access to their educational rights as well as help reduce the emotional challenges involved with homelessness. In this particular study the California Department of Education looked at the practices implemented in three states and six school districts. The study found several challenges that presented barriers to educating our homeless youth. These include the following:

1. Awareness raising: The study showed that educators and the general public are unaware of the challenges of our homeless student populations (DE, 2002).
2. Transportation: Transportation to and from school is another barrier to gaining access to an education if they are unable to get to school from where they might be living. According to the study, "often homeless students cannot immediately get access to district transportation because shelters, motels, campgrounds, the homes of relatives and friends, and other temporary housing are not on regular district bus routes" (DE, 2002, p. 6).
3. In school and related services: Students also have challenges in

receiving educational services such as gifted and special education resources as well as Headstart, preschool, and before and after school services. Students do qualify, but unfortunately can't always take advantage of these supplemental services because of transportation (DE, 2002).

4. Outreach to Youth: It is difficult to help homeless youth who are between 12 and 18 years of age that do not want to be found and are considered runaways (DE, 2002).

BethAnn Berliner is a Senior Reseracher at WestEd who has developed her research and work on strengthening school and community-based efforts for student success (Berliner, 2001). Berliner has identified key teacher strategies that will help to support with the transition of homeless students into a new school believes it essential to establish a welcoming environment. Homeless students often meet unsuccessful situations such as having trouble making friends and interacting with the rest of the learning community along with the many challenges they face at home. In order to be sensitive to the plight of homeless students it is recommended to find ways in which to help students feel successful. In doing so, Berliner (2001) recommends the following teacher strategies:

1. Assess a students "readiness-to-learn" skills such as listening, following directions, and asking for help.
2. Due to a child's lack of regular attendance, teachers can develop lessons that are short units they can master as well as provide

regular progress reports that provide information on attendance and social and academic performance.

3. Modify the homework requirement for homeless students that may include the necessary materials along with a portable desk, making it easier for homeless students to complete their homework and does not require adult supervision.
4. Revising classroom management and discipline plans to modify certain behaviors most observed in homeless students to include "self imposed time-outs" student generated class rules, and class problem-solving meetings". (p.1)

The socialization opportunities begin when teachers provide a safe environment and students are supported through their emotional and social challenges. School counselors can help support students of homelessness (Strawser, Markos, Yamaguchi, & Higgins, 2002). Counselors can inform the families regarding available resources and supports as well as provide teachers a different lens or perspective when thinking of classroom management plans and discipline for homeless students. Counselors can support teachers understand the possible reasons why some classroom policies and procedures work and why others may not work for this target population. Counselors can meet with students to help them cope with the obstacles they may face at home and at school as well as provide them with strategies to become successful in school and with friendships.

Building a comprehensive and collaborative Homeless Education Program at the district and site level will increase the likelihood of a smooth transition and successful

school experience for homeless students. A best practice that has been identified by the Baltimore County of Homeless Education includes the implementation of five key components.

These include:

1. Enlist key school and community leaders to participate in a homeless education steering committee;
2. Conduct ongoing awareness raising activities throughout schools and the community;
3. Train and designate homeless education liaisons at each school to serve students and educate staff;
4. Provide ongoing staff development;
5. Collaborate continuously with homeless service providers and other civic groups.

Teacher Perceptions and Professional Development

Teachers have a false understanding or lack the information regarding the reality of homeless children. Educators are not aware of who may be considered homeless in their own classrooms and make assumptions about their students when behaviors seem odd, are withdrawn, overly aggressive, or lack the socialization skills. There seems to exist the need for cultural proficiency around this group of learners. According to leading experts in this field,

> Cultural proficiency is the policies and practices of an organization or the values and behaviors of an individual that enable that agency or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Cultural proficiency is reflected

> in the way an organization treats its employees, its clients, and its community. (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrel, 1999, p. 21)

There continues to be a need in facilitating the professional development that supports teachers in participating in structured and informed conversations that will shed light on the areas of need homeless students have and then making that data operational with meaningful actions that produces results.

The work of Douglas Reeves can inform how we can approach the need for awareness and professional development to bring about a sense of self-efficacy in teachers that work with homeless students. Reeves (2009) makes a connection between the meaning of *accountability* and the use of data to improve low performing schools. Reeves as based on the definition from Webster's Tenth Edition, suggests that educational accountability is connected to "an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account to one's actions" (p. 7). Schools must recognize and be informed about their obligation to educate their homeless student population.

One viable approach reviewed by such experts as Mike Schmoker and Douglas Reeves is to include the implementation of collaborative teams to have structured conversations around the operational use of the data and making each other accountable for the results. According to Schmoker, there exists a "need to be more disciplined and systematic in our professional collaboration-and be single minded in our concern with identifying and then solving particularly difficult instructional and learning problems" (Schmoker, 1999, p. 15). The increasing academic accountability measures No Child Left Behind has placed on schools along with the economic issues school districts are facing are revamping the way in which districts are viewing effective practices for their

site level. Having effective collaboration among teachers and members of the school community is important when tackling the challenge of how to most effectively support the academic and social emotional needs of our homeless population that all schools are being held accountable to under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

A connection between low academic expectations and teacher quality has been made in regards to the academic achievement of student with the greatest needs. McKinney-Vento homeless student population is included. "No matter how much we improve the quality of teachers, we allocate this precious resource in a perverse manner, giving the most effective teachers to economically advantaged students and denying those teachers to impoverished students" (Reeves, 2006, p. 63). Understanding the best practices of high achieving schools with similar demographics and challenges is imperative to the education of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney Vento Act. School district must understand their homeless population and the schools they attend so the most qualified teachers can be assigned to the neediest areas.

Conclusion

The Federal Government has invested considerable amount of funding and resources to provide homeless students with access to school and to support their attendance and academic performance. However, the recent economically downturn due to the foreclosures and sate and federal budget deficits has increased the amount of homeless students falling under the McKinney Vento Act. Additionally, there is limited research available on how to monitor the academic performance of homeless students at the district and local school levels as well as how to support homeless students' social emotional and academic needs. There seems to be a lack of coordinated resources and

self-efficacy among the teaching staff to support this particular subgroup. Therefore, there is an opportunity to study the practices in place to monitor the academic performance of students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act at a school district in Southern California with high populations of socioeconomic disadvantaged students.

The increasing academic accountability measures No Child Left Behind has placed on schools along with the economic issues school districts are facing is revamping the way in which districts are viewing effective practices that support specifics groups of learners. There are many challenges to overcome in implementing school reform within cultures that have not been able to improve the academic achievement of minority-impoverished children specifically with McKinney-Vento students.

Common themes have arisen in the research that brings the following components as important to implement regular and consistent practice in a learning environment that can support the education of homeless students. Based on the above research and literature, the following are the components that are effective when working with this target population:

1. Build community partnerships and collaborate resources;
2. Conduct ongoing awareness raising activities throughout schools and the community;
3. Designate and train homeless education liaisons at each school;
4. Provide ongoing staff development for teachers and office staff;
5. Incorporate Enrichment extracurricular activities to build socialization and relationship building opportunities.

Chapter 3: Design and Methodology

Overview

This research study determined to what extent, if at all, the practices used in one urban school district in Southern California servicing high populations of socioeconomically disadvantaged students had on the academic achievement of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. This study used a mixed methods approach beginning with a quantitative analysis of the academic performance of students in homeless situations in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics on the California Standards Test (CST) in second to eighth grades. The CST data was disaggregated by homeless students identified as English Language Learners (ELL), Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP), Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), homeless students in the Resource Specialist Program (RSP) and Special Day Class (SDC). In addition, a survey tool was used to capture the perceptions of existing practices used by schools. Interviews were conducted to gain the perceptions of administrators to learn what they believed are the existing practices contributing to the academic performance of their homeless student population.

Statement of the Problem

The Federal Government has invested considerable amount of funding and resources to provide students in homeless situations with access to school and to support their attendance and academic performance. However, the recent economic downturn due to the foreclosures and state and federal budget deficits has impacted the amount of homeless students falling under the McKinney-Vento Act who may or may not have been identified. Based on new information gathered by the National Center of Homeless

conducted in June of 2011, there are 939,903 homeless represented nationally in the United States. California has 20.6% of homeless student indicating a number of 224,249 identified students in just this state (National Center of Homelessness, 2011).

Additionally, there is limited research available on how to monitor the academic performance of homeless students at the district and local school levels as well as how to support homeless students' social emotional and academic needs. There seems to be a lack of coordinated resources and self-efficacy among the teaching staff to support this particular subgroup in the area of academics. Therefore, there was an opportunity to study the existing practices in place to support students considered homeless under the McKinney -Vento Act in one school district in Southern California with high populations of socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

One of the five standards and goals of the McKinney-Vento federal legislation includes an academic standard focused on the need to support homeless students with educational services in order to meet the state proficiency standards (NCHE, 2001). Funds from the Act must assist homeless students meet the demands of the state content standards that all students are held to by the No Child Left Behind initiative. In order to understand the impact schools are having on the academic performance of homeless students, research must be conducted to determine what impact, if any, are the existing practices having on the academic achievement of homeless students.

Research Questions

The following research questions are at the forefront of this mixed methods study:

1. What are the California Standards Test (CST) achievement data of 2nd -8th grade students considered homeless in both English Language Arts and Mathematics

disaggregated by demographics in an urban school district in Southern California servicing a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students?

a. What are the overall mean CST scale score in the last three years for English Only homeless students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?
b. What are the overall mean CST scale score disaggregated by homeless students that are English Language Learners (EL), Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) and Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) in the last three years for students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?
c. What are the overall mean CST scale score disaggregated by Special Education for homeless students in the Resource Specialist Program (RSP) and Special Day Class (SDC) students in the last three years for students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?

2. What are the identified practices perceived as contributing to the academic achievement of students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act in a school district in Southern California servicing a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students?
    a. What do teachers and instructional coaches identify as the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless?
    b. What do principals and district administrators identify as the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless?

3. What are perceived needs of teachers of homeless students in an one school district in Southern California?

Research Study Design

The study used a mix methodology research approach. This method combined an analysis of achievement data of mean scaled scores from 2009-2011 for students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento program. This study included a qualitative factor through an online survey tool collecting data of the perceptions of teachers, instructional coaches, and principals and their practices to support homeless students in 2nd through 8th grades. Finally, principals and district administrators participated in interviews to identify perceived practices contributing to the academic and social emotional needs of students.

First, a quantitative research approach was preferred for this type of study because it allowed for an analysis of the collected student achievement data. The researcher constructed a quantitative result to identify if existing practices are impacting student achievement as measured by the California Standards Test. The California Department of Education (CDE) does not disaggregated the achievement data of homeless students within the Academic Performance Index (API) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) that is available online to the public. In order to gain access to CST data for this particular subgroup, data of homeless students will be collected through the Assessment and Evaluation department at one Southern California School District. The student achievement data was compiled from 12 Title I elementary schools and three Title I middle schools totaling a sample size of approximately 397 participants.

Secondly, a qualitative research approach was used in this study because it is

specific to the unique perceived practices in one particular urban school district located in Southern California that has a sizeable McKinney-Vento student population and in which no other previous research has been conducted. In addition, data was collected regarding the perceived needs teachers who work with homeless students may have. According to Patten (2010), the purpose of qualitative research is to gain an in-depth understanding of purposively selected participants perspective" (p. 29). The use of qualitative research design method "requires the researcher to have access to particular types of participants who are especially likely to help in gaining an understanding of a phenomenon" (p. 29). Creswell (2007) also asserts that the researcher must be familiar with the "philosophical assumptions" in order to select the right individuals to interview (p. 16). In this research for example, the goal is to understand the perceptions of schools, specifically teachers, instructional coaches, and principals on the practices used to work with students experiencing homelessness as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act and its impact on the academic achievement of one school district's homeless student population. This data will be collected through the use of an online survey protocol. Principals and district level administrators were contacted to participate in an interview regarding the specific practices they use to support the academic achievement and needs of students in homeless situations.

A phenomenological research study is one that reviews the lived experiences of more than one individual (Creswell, 2007). This perspective reviews the common patterns, behaviors and experiences of a group in order to understand a particular phenomenon like self-efficacy, resiliency, depression, or anger. According to existing literature, "qualitative research is typically used to answer questions about the complex

nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants point of view" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 94). This approach seeks to understand the "phenomenon or the essence of the experience" (Creswell, 2007, p. 58). Phenomenological research is different from other qualitative approaches. For example, Narrative research focuses on the experience of one; grounded theory focuses on the process, action, or interaction of many; ethnography study's a group shared culture, and case study studies the even or activity of more than one person (Creswell, 2007).

Phenomenological research stems from the German Mathematician, Edmund Husserl in the 1850s and is most helpful in the social and health sciences according to Creswell (2007) because the research is focused on the experiences of the group to explain certain feelings of a group, which can inform policy or educational programs. This approach is helpful to explain or find patterns or signs of a phenomenon among a group of individuals and is used in the fields of therapy, education and the development of policy. According to Creswell (2007) "the basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence" (p. 58).

There are two types of phenomenological studies possible for this research; hermeneutic and empirical transcendental. For the purposes of this study, I will use Moustakas's empirical transcendental research approach that is focused on two types of descriptions, textual and structural. First the researcher must *braket* one's own experience with the proposed research phenomenon (Creswell, 2007, p. 62). A textual description looks at the participants involved while the structural focuses on the context

of their situation. The researcher then analyzes the collected data from both textual and structural such as statements and/or quotes and gathered information for analyzing emergent themes. The main focus of phenomenological research is to understand what the participants experience and how they experience it.

Objective

The purpose of this research study intended to determine to what extent, if at all, the practices used in one urban school district in Southern California servicing high populations of socioeconomically disadvantaged students have on the academic achievement of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. This study captured the perceptions of teachers and administrators in order to gain a better understanding of the practices they believe contribute to the performance of this subgroup of learners. In addition, data was collected regarding the perceived needs teachers who work with homeless students may have.

According to a segment on MSNBC focusing on homelessness in school districts across the nation, there were more than 780,000 homeless students counted in the years between 2007 and 2008. One of the five standards and goals of this federal legislation includes a standard that is focused on the academic achievement of McKinney-Vento students. The academic achievement standard focuses on the need to support McKinney-Vento students in 3rd to 12th grades in order to meet the state proficiency standards (NCHE, 2001).

Twelve elementary schools and three middle schools along with district instructional coaches and district administrators working directly with this target population were selected to participate in this study. Participants are part of the same

school district in Southern California servicing a high population of low socioeconomic students who currently have a McKinney-Vento Program. This setting allows the researcher to use a mixed method research design. Quantitatively, it aimed to determine the relationship between one thing (existing practices) and another (academic achievement of homeless students) in a population. This quantitative study did not seek causality as in experimental quantitative research, but tried to establish associations between the two variables. Qualitatively, the research also allowed the researcher to gather the perceptions of the existing practices of teachers, instructional coaches and administrators that support students in homeless situations. In this research study, selecting the above mentioned sites allowed for data collection to research and analyze for the purposes of understanding the impact existing school practices have on the academic performance of homeless students. The goal of this research was not to change behavior or the experience, but primarily to measure the existing condition.

Human Subjects Protections

In order to be in compliance with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and procedures of Pepperdine University Graduate and Professional Schools, the researcher gained the approval of the human subjects who were the teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators selected to be involved in the study. Protection of participant privacy is very important.

Each participant was notified with the purpose of the study and survey instrument format through an email invitation. Participants granted permission to participate in the study by clicking on the link embedded in the survey email indicating that they have read and understood the information provided regarding the study and willingly agreed to

participate. Children and parents were not involved as participants in this research study nor animal subjects. The only risk to the participation was the fear that names would be provided to their immediate supervisors or to the Superintendent; however, the online survey tool was anonymous in order to secure the names of the participants.

The survey distribution process was sent electronically utilizing an online survey tool called Zoomerang. The online survey responses were anonymous. Participants' identity are not known or identifiable. In this way, the researcher did not have access to identity of participants completing the only survey. No personally identifying information was requested on the survey itself and no identifiers were used that link a participant's identity to her/his data. Upon the completion of obtaining the online survey responses, each response was coded by identified patterns in preparation for data analysis. The online survey responses were deleted from the zoomerang tool used to gather the data three years after the conclusion of the study. All data was saved on a file memory stick and locked in a filing cabinet along with any printed copies of the survey responses and will be shredded after three years. A reminder email was sent each week if more responses are needed and until participation rate has been reached.

Participant selection included gaining the permission from the selected school district for this study. The school district superintendent was contacted for permission to gather the necessary student data and to survey teachers, instructional coaches, and principals who serve McKinney-Vento students. Superintendent or Designee Permission to Conduct Study (see Appendix A) was sent to the Superintendent of selected district for signed approval. The students in the McKinney-Vento program were defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2002, Subtitle B of Title VII,

Section 725, the term "homeless children and youths"—(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Teacher participants must work in a school serving Mckinney-Vento students and have a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students in Southern California. Once the district approved the study, a meeting with the McKinney-Vento District Coordinator was conducted to identify the participants to be selected.

Once permission was granted by the Superintendent to move forward with the study, selected principals were contacted via email and/or over the phone to inform them of the study. Surveys were emailed to approximately 250 participants working directly with Mc-Kinney Vento students inviting them to participate in this voluntary study (see Appendix B). The survey was available for a two week period with a reminder email sent after the first week. An Onine Survey Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities forms (see Appendix C) was embedded in the online survey sent to them via email. Participants granted permission to participate in the study by clicking on the link embedded in the survey email indicating that they have read and understood the information provided regarding the study and willingly agree to participate. They were also informed they may withdraw their consent at any time and discontinue participation at any time. Teachers, Instructional Coaches, and Principals completed the survey at this time (see Appendix D). An email reminder was sent after one week to remind participants requesting them to complete the online survey (see Appendix E). Protection of participant privacy is very important which is the reason the online survey tool was anonymous in order to secure the names of the participants. Children and parents were not involved as participants in this research study nor animal subjects.

The human subjects in the interview portion of this study included principals or designees who serve students who are considered homeless. In addition to the online survey, principals and district administrators were contacted via email with an attachment cover letter (see Appendix F) along with the informed consent form (see Appendix G) to request their permission to participate in the study. A follow up phone call (see Appendix H) was made to review the cover letter, the interview protocol, answer any questions they may have, gain their willingness to participate in a 50 minute to an hour interview, and to request a time to schedule the interview in person or over the phone. Administrators were interviewed using an interview protocol (See Appendix I). Those participants that agreed to participate were asked to fax the signed consent form to the researcher's office or to send it by district mail. The researcher reviewed the informed consent for participation in research activities. A Thank You Letter was sent at the completion of the study (see Appendix J).

Each administrator interviewed was assigned a research identification number known only to the researcher. The interviews were recorded on audio recording device and transcribed into text documents. Interview notes were only available to the researcher. All individual interview responses were consolidated for reporting purposes only in aggregate form. At the conclusion of the data collection, patterns and themes were identified in the interviews and were sent electronically to the participants to allow them to review for accurate representation. All information along with any signed documents was stored in a locked cabinet. All information was stored in a password protected computer for confidentiality.

The researcher interviewed selected principals and district administrators to understand their experience in working with McKinney-Vento students and their perceptions of the contributing practices that impact their academic performance. Interviews were conducted with administrator participants that match the criteria across the selected district. Interviews were approximately 15-20 in length depending on their responses. The interview protocol is the best form of data collection for this qualitative phenomenological study (Creswell, 2007). Interview responses were audio recorded during the interview with participant's permission and transcribed to a text document for analysis. Interview notes were coded and analyzed for themes within each interview question. A professional colleague with expertise on homeless education reviewed interview responses and themes in order to ensure an unbiased interpretation and to increase research credibility. A follow up thank you email letter was sent to participants following the interview that summarized the studies key findings.

Data Collection and Sampling Method

The researcher surveyed teachers who were selected to gather their input on practices currently implemented to support the academic performance of their McKinney-Vento students along with their perceived needs to support students in homeless situations. The online survey protocol is the best form of data collection for this qualitative portion of this study. The survey distribution process was sent electronically utilizing an online survey tool called Zoomerang. Permission from the Superintendent was asked to access the district wide email system in order to email the Zoomerang survey. Surveys were distributed to approximately 250 participants and collected for analysis for the impact current practices have on the academic performance of homeless

students. The survey was available for a two week period with a reminder email sent after the first week.

In addition to the survey, principal and district administrator interviews took place in person or over the phone and were recorded and transcribed into a word document categorized by themes regarding their specific practices affecting the academic performance of their homeless student population as well as their overall perceptions of how they are meeting the needs of this target group of learners.

Instrumentation

The quantitative instruments in this research study was the collection of pre-existing California Standards Achievement Test (CST) data which measures the academic achievement of students in both English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science, however, for the purposes of this research only ELA and Math data was used in this study.

An online data system called Data Director was used to gather ELA and Math data specifically for students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. Student data in Data Director comes from the California Department of Education (CDE). The online web-based Data Director program is able to create programs to allow for the instant review of student data for specific groups of students.

The instrumentation for the qualitative section of this study was in the form of an online survey. Table 10 below shows the correlation between the research study questions and the survey protocol that were used to collect the necessary data for the qualitative portion of this study.

Table 5

Correlation Between Research Questions and Interview Questions

Research Question	Survey Questions
1. "What do teachers and instructional coaches identify as the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless?"	3."What are perceived needs of teachers of homeless students in one school district in Southern California?" 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
2."What do principals and district administrators identify as the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless?"	5, 7, 8, 9, 10 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

Table 6

Correlation Between Survey Questions and Literature Review

Concept	Questions	Source/Literature
Instruction and accountability	1. How often do you review academic data to support the needs of students in homeless situations? (1: Once a Week; 2: Once a Month; 3: Once a Trimester; 4: Never)	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009
Continuous Improvement	2. List the academic supports you implement when a McKinney-Vento student does not perform well in your class? District Administrators, what academic supports do you provide when students considered homeless are not performing well in school? (open ended question)	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009
Instruction and accountability	3. Describe the data practices you have in place for students considered homeless to monitor the performance of this group of learners? (open ended question)	Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2004; Douglas, 2009
Instruction and accountability	4. What are some additional indicators of academic proficiency that you measure? (open ended question)	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009
Organizational Structures	5. Select all supplemental academic and social supports available to support students in homeless situations improve academic achievement. ○ Before school tutoring ○ after school tutoring ○ Extracurricular clubs such as sports and music ○ Other, please specify	Bolman and Deal, 1992; Fullan, 2007; Stonehill, 2009; Durlak & Weissburg; Vandell, 2007; Miller, 2003; Chalk Board Project, 2008
Instruction	6. Describe how you modify homework requirements for your homeless students represented in your classroom or school? Are specific supplies and materials provided to them to complete the homework?	Berliner, 2001.

(Continued)

Table 6

Correlation Between Survey Questions and Literature Review

Concept	Questions	Source/Literature
Socialization and emotional	7. How are counselors used to support the socialization and emotional well being of students experiencing homelessness? (open ended question)	Strawser, Markos, Yamaguchi, Higgis, 2002
Classroom Management and Student Behavior	8. Are there certain behaviors you have observed in homeless students that have influenced you to modify your classroom discipline management plan to best support your homeless student population? What modifications have you made?	Strawser, Markos, Yamaguchi, and Higgis, 2002; Berliner, 2001.
Teacher Collaboration	9. How much time has been dedicated to collaborate with your colleagues to discuss the best instructional strategies and data Monitoring system to use with McKinney-Vento students to increase their academic performance? (1: Once a Week; 2: Once a Month; 3: Once a Trimester; 4: Never)	Reeves, Douglas B., 2010; Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Fullan, 2007
Professional Development	10. How often do you have opportunities for professional development specifically to learn about the academic and social-emotional needs of students in homeless situations? (1: Once a Week; 2: Once a Month; 3: Once a Trimester; 4: Never)	Reeves, Douglas B., 2010; Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Fullan, 2007
Instruction	11. Briefly describe any innovative teaching strategies you implement to support students considered homeless. (Open-ended question)	Institute for Children and Poverty, 1993
Professional Development	12. How might the district meet your needs in order to effectively work with students in homeless situations? (open-ended question)	Carey, 2004; Haycock, 1998
Learning Theory & Self-efficacy	13. Do you believe you make a difference in the lives of children living in homeless situations? ❍ Yes ❍ No	Pajares, 2002; Payne 1996
Setting High Expectations for Student Learning	14. Do you feel that all students can learn even when met with the challenges of homelessness? ❍ Yes ❍ No	Ormrod, 1999; Bruner, 1996; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Fullan, 2007

Along with the fourteen survey questions listed above, the following two additional basic questions were asked of each participant: (a) Please state if you serve as a teacher, instructional coach, principal, or district administrator; and (b) What school level do you work with?

In addition to the above survey questions, interviews were conducted with site principals and district level administrators to understand their experience in working with McKinney-Vento students and their perceptions of the contributing practices that impact their academic performance. The following are ten interview questions that were asked of selected principals and district administrators:

Table 7

Correlation Between Principal Interview Questions and Literature Review

Concept	**Questions**	**Source/ Literature**
Organizational Structures	1. Briefly describe how your school or school district provide for on going training on the special issues and needs of children and youth without homes for all professional and classified staff that interact with this group of learners.	Bolman and Deal, 1992; Fullan, 2007
Organizational Structures	2. Describe the school and/or school district's procedure for making professional staff aware of the living arrangements of children and youth experiencing homelessness?	Bolman and Deal, 1992; Fullan, 2007
Instruction and accountability	3. Describe the strategies implemented at your site that help students in homeless situations achieve success?	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009

(Continued)

Concept	Questions	Source/ Literature
Instruction and accountability	4. Describe the provisions made to ensure there are accessible tutorial services adequate to meet the needs of students in homeless situations? If so, please describe the programs available.	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009
Setting High Expectations for Student Learning	5. Describe how teachers demonstrate academic and behavioral expectations for students in homeless situations that are generally equal to the expectations held for other students.	Ormrod, 1999; Bruner, 1996; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Fullan, 2007
Continuous Improvement	6. Describe how the school (or school district) has conducted an assessment of the needs of each student experiencing homelessness?	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009
Instruction and accountability	7. Describe the school's (or school district) process for ongoing evaluation of the academic progress of each child experiencing homelessness.	Marzano, 2003; Reeves, Douglas, 2009
Continuous Improvement	9. Is the academic proficiency of homeless students in your school (or school district) increasing? How do you know?	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009
Continuous Improvement	10. What percentage of identified homeless students in your school (or school district) are grade-level proficient in reading and math?	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009
Continuous Improvement	11. What other indicators, in addition to academic achievement scores, do you measure? (e.g. attendance, grade-level promotion/retention, graduation rates, disciplinary referrals)	Schmoker, Mike, 1999; DuFour & DuFour, 2008; Reeves, 2004; Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2009

Instrument Validity and Reliability

The validity of this research methodology came from an extensive review of the literature on successful practices to support students in homeless situations. California State Test data developed by Educational Testing Services (ETS) was used to gain the

data necessary for the quantitative portion of this study. ETS is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to developing reliable and valid test instruments in education, government, and in business across the world. According to the ETS Standards for Quality and Fairness (2002), "Validity is one of the most important attributes of assessment quality. Programs must provide logical and/or empirical evidence to show that each assessment is capable of meeting its intended purpose(s)" (p. 27). In a letter from the STAR Executive Director of ETS, George Powell, Ph.D., explained the following regarding the validity of California State Test:

> Independent groups of content experts reviewed the test items to ensure content alignment. Content experts in each subject were also recruited to assure that the new CST test items were developed in accordance with the rationale for establishing a sound content validity foundation as specified in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. The final CSTs meet professionally accepted criteria for content validity. (CDE, 2003, p. 1)

ETS has also set standards for developing reliable testing products. According George Powell, Ph.D., reliability of the CST was measured in two distinct ways:

> First, the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20), an index of internal consistency, was calculated for each test. Next, asymptotic conditional standard errors of measurement (CSEM) were calculated via item response theory to supplement the KR-20 reliabilities. The CSEM provides an indication of measurement

> precision at various levels along the ability continuum. CST forms developed for 2003 have been constructed to similar statistical specifications as forms developed in the past. It is anticipated that CST KR-20 coefficients will range in the high .80s and low .90s, which is a generally acceptable level of reliability for tests of these lengths, and comparable to the values observed for previous CST forms. The CSEMs will be lowest in the intervals of the reported score scale where the majority of the test-takers are located. It is expected that the KR-20s and CSEM for the CSTs will meet the intended statistical specifications, and that the CSTs will set an example for desirable psychometric properties. (CDE, 2003, p. 1)

The qualitative portion of this study included an online survey tool and an in person or phone interview of principals working in schools servicing students considered homeless. In order to gather information regarding the perception of teachers, principals, and district instructional coaches around the practices that support the academic performance of students experiencing homeless, an online survey tool was developed based on the major themes found in the literature. In addition, a principal interview protocol was also developed to gather the perceptions of principals regarding what they feel are the best practices to support this subgroup of learners. In order to determine the reliability and validity survey and interview instruments, three educators who were not be part of the research study were asked to pilot both the survey and the interview protocol. The purpose of the pilot was to determine if the tools are aligned to the research questions and format is appropriate and clear. Necessary adjustments were made to both the

survey and the interview protocol.

Data Reporting and Analysis

The quantitative portion of this research study utilized California State Test data from fifteen Title 1 Schools ranging from 2nd to 8th grades in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. The schools in the study had identification codes to protect the identity of the schools, students, and those educators working at the sites. Test data is displayed in different tables and box plots. NCSS is a computer based software program for statistical and data analysis and was used to calculate the mean and ANOVA results for this study.

The ANOVA compared the means of the three years studied (2009, 2010, 2011) to determine if the means of these groups are similar or different. This was completed for both content areas, ELA and Math. The ANOVA is considered the best tool to compare means of multiple groups. Assumptions based on the results and findings were reviewed and explained in a summary written narrative form and visuals were also included for the descriptive analysis and the ANOVA results to determine statistically significant values.

The qualitative section of this research involved processing and coding interview and survey responses. Both the survey responses and the interviews with the principals and administrators were the form of qualitative analysis. Charts and narratives were used to share the data result findings.

Procedures

The following procedures were used to conduct the study:

1. Created an Excel spreadsheet listing the 12 Title I elementary schools and three Title I middle schools that serve students considered homeless. Assigned each

school an identification code to ensure confidentiality.

2. Gathered CST data for students within the McKinney-Vento program in grades 2nd through 8th grades in the area of English Language Arts and Mathematics. The mean scale score data was displayed in charts, histograms, and box plots. All data showed the academic achievement performance CST results between the 2009-2011 school years in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. CST data was collected in such a manner that the human subjects were not identified directly. The CST data was gathered from the District Central office and sent to the principal investigator in the format of an excel spreedsheet. The excel spreedsheet did not have student names, student identification numbers, or school of attendance. The principal investigator did not receive any information other than CST and specific demographic data that only included whether homeless students are English Only, English Language Learners, Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP), Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), Resource Specialist Program (RSP), or Special Day Class (SDC) students. Therefore, study was exempt based on 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2). All information was stored in a computer protected with a password for confidentiality.
3. Superintendent or Designee permission to Conduct Study (see Appendix A) was sent to the Superintendent of the selected school district for district approval of participation in the online survey and in person or phone interviews.
4. Once district approval was received, principals of the selected schools were

notified of the study via email or phone.

5. An email invitation to participate in the online survey was sent along with the Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities embedded in the survey sent to all those who wish to participate in the study. Clicking on the link in the survey indicated that the participants have read and understood the information provided and were willingly agreeing to participate, and understood they may withdraw their consent and discontinue participation at any time.
6. In addition, principals and district administrators were also contacted via email with an attachment letter and a follow up phone call was made to gain their willingness to participate in the study.
7. Principals and district administrators willing to participate in the study who gave their approval were contacted to schedule a time to interview via email and phone. Principals were interviewed using an interview protocol.
8. Interview responses were audio recorded during the interview with participant's permission and transcribed to a text document for analysis.
9. Interview notes were coded and analyzed for themes within each interview question. A professional colleague with expertise on homeless education reviewed interview responses and themes in order to ensure an unbiased interpretation and to increase research credibility.
10. A follow up thank you letter was sent to participants following the interview that summarized the studies key findings.

Summary

This chapter described the research methods used in this study. This study intended to determine to what extent, if at all, the practices used in one urban school district in Southern California servicing high populations of socioeconomically disadvantaged students have on the academic achievement of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. This study used a mixed methods approach beginning with a quantitative analysis of the academic achievement data trends in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics on the California State Test (CST). In addition, a survey tool was used to capture the perceptions of best practices used by schools and perceived needs to support educators in working with homeless students. Principal and district administrator interviews were also conducted to gain the perceptions of administrators to learn what they believe are the existing practices contributing to the academic performance of their homeless student population.

Chapter 4: Results

Overview

This study examined the achievement performance of fifteen (15) California public Title I elementary schools in Southern California within one school district that serve McKinney-Vento students. The study looked at achievement data and the practices and needs of educators who work with this group of learners. Three primary research questions guided this research study. The first question examined the statewide achievement on the California Standards Test (CST) for the last three years. Student academic data was collected in 2nd through 8th grades. Academic data consisted of California Standards Tests (CST) in English Language Arts and in Mathematics for homeless students who meet the following demographic categories:

Table 8

Demographic Categories of Homeless Students

Demographic Categories Homeless Students
English Language Learner
Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP)
Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)
Resource Specialist Program (RSP)
Special Day Class (SDC) students

The last two questions examined the practices and needs of educators working with this population.

The following research questions are at the forefront of this mixed methods study:

1. What are the California Standards Test (CST) achievement trends of 2nd to 8th grade students considered homeless in both English Language Arts and Mathematics disaggregated by demographics in one urban school district in

Southern California servicing a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students?

a. What are the overall mean CST scale score in the last three years for English Only homeless students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?
b. What are the overall mean CST scale score disaggregated by homeless students that are English Language Learners, Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) and Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) in the last three years for students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?
c. What are the overall mean CST scale score disaggregated by Special Education for homeless students in the Resource Specialist Program (RSP) and Special Day Class (SDC) in the last three years for students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011?

In addition to the CST academic data collected for students in homeless situations, research question two and three collected survey data from 130 participants that included teachers, principals, district administrators, and instructional coaches at 15 different public Title I schools who serve homeless students. The survey included questions regarding the practices currently implemented to support the academic performance of McKinney-Vento students along with their perceived needs to support this group of learners. Finally, interviews were collected from twelve participants that included responses from principals and district administrators to understand their experience in working with McKinney-Vento students and their perceptions of the contributing practices that impact their academic performance. The last two questions are listed below.

2. What are the identified practices perceived as contributing to the academic achievement of students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act in a school district in Southern California servicing a high population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students?
    a. What do teachers and instructional coaches identify as the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless?
    b. What do principals and district administrators identify as the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless?
3. What are perceived needs of teachers of homeless students in one urban school district in Southern California?

This chapter presents the data collected after reviewing the results from the CST academic data, surveys, and interviews. The first section is quantitative in nature representing the mean scale score for English Language Arts and Mathematics disaggregated by specific demographics for three consecutive years. In addition, an analysis of variance along with a box plot is displayed to show how performance is different across the variables for year 2009, 2010, and 2011. The next two sections include descriptive data related to perceptions of the contributing practices and needs that impact the academic performance of homeless students.

Research Question One: Quantitative Analysis

The first question focused on the quantitative analysis of numeric achievement data for three years with four specific areas of data analysis. This research looked at the

measure of central tendency such as the mean, median, and mode using descriptive analysis. Measuring the descriptive data such as central tendency (mean, median, and mode) helped to understand the numeric variable as well as the distribution between specific variables. It will also provide some understanding of the different performance between groups.

In addition, an ANOVA analysis of variance was conducted to determine statistical significance between the independent variable, an attribute, and the dependent variable, numeric. For the purposes of this research, the next step was to determine if there was a statistical significance between the achievement scale scores (dependent) and the language status as well as special education status of students (independent) for the 2009, 2010, and 2011 school years.

Presentation of Data and Reports of Finding in ELA

Research questions A-C looked at disaggregated English Language Arts and Math achievement data for English Only (EO), English Language Learners (EL), Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP), Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), and special education students in the last three years for students in 2nd through 8th grades from 2009-2011.

Table 9

2009 English Language Arts Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency

2009 English Language Arts Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency								
Yr	Demographics	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range
09	ALL	825	337.0049	56.86989	1.979955	189	527	338
	EO	284	346.5493	60.05875	3.563832	189	527	338
	EL	244	294.8566	36.65982	2.346905	217	405	188
	IFEP	102	353.5588	54.54103	5.400367	241	503	262
	RFEP	195	367.1846	42.61149	3.051472	245	527	282

Figure 6

2009 English Language Arts Histograms

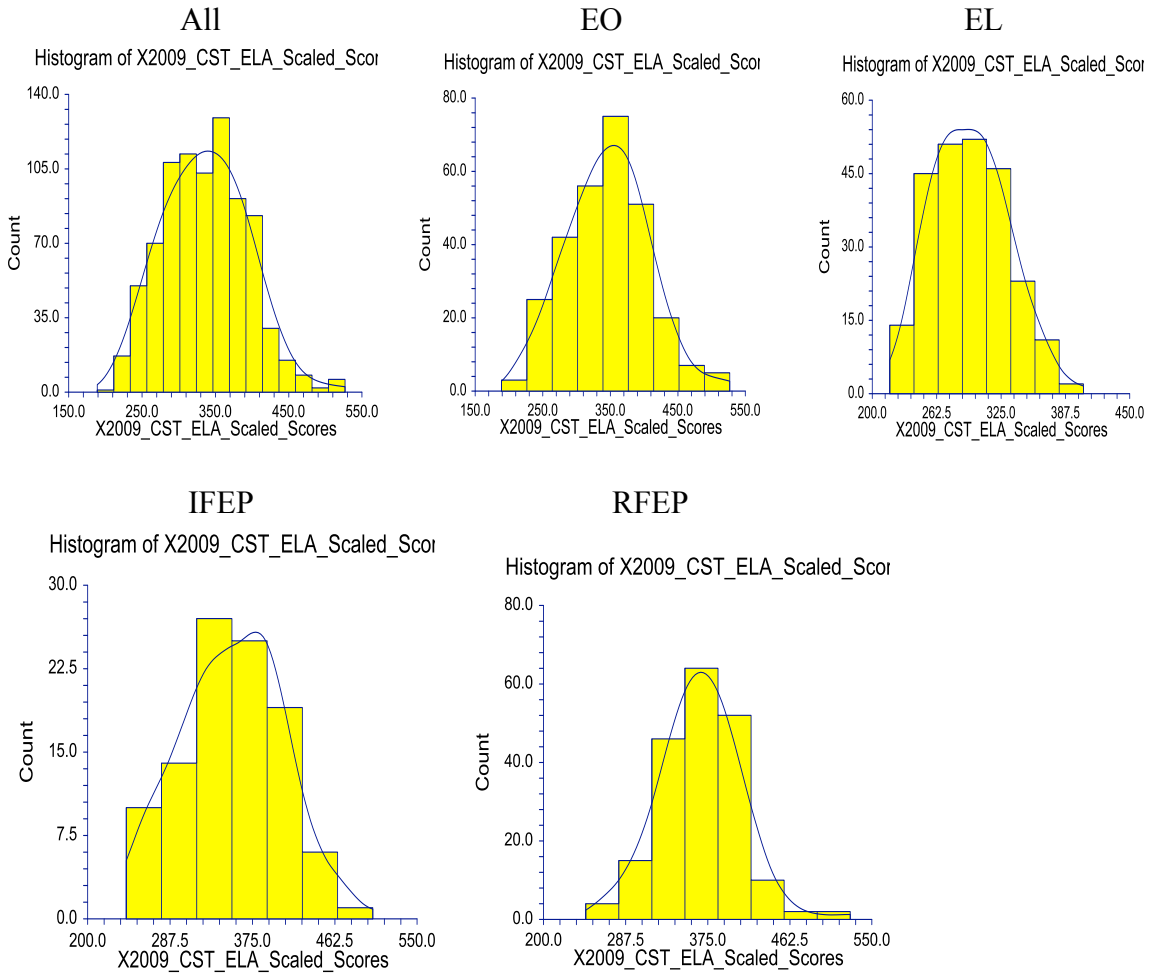


Table 10

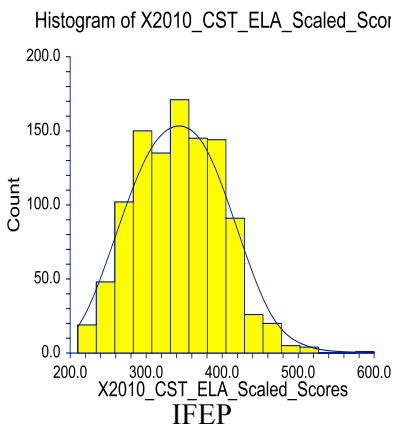
2010 English Language Arts Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency

2010 English Language Arts Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency								
Yr	Demographics	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range
10	ALL	1061	343.2403	57.49792	1.765202	210	600	390
	EO	386	351.0933	57.72804	2.93828	210	524	314
	EL	336	305.0089	43.08357	2.350401	210	491	281
	IFEP	112	355.4375	50.04552	4.728858	239	461	222
	RFEP	227	380.4582	45.86959	3.044472	272	600	328

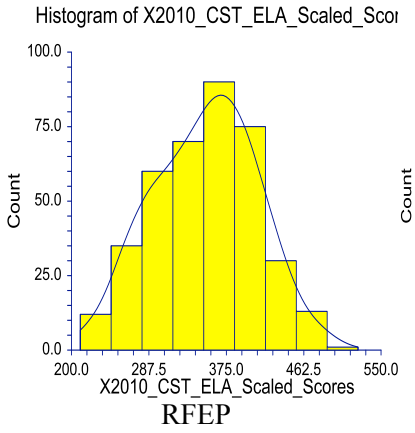
Figure 7

2010 English Language Arts Histograms

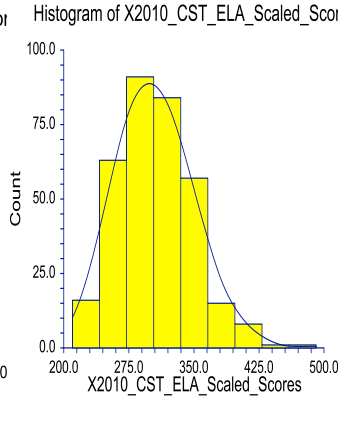
All



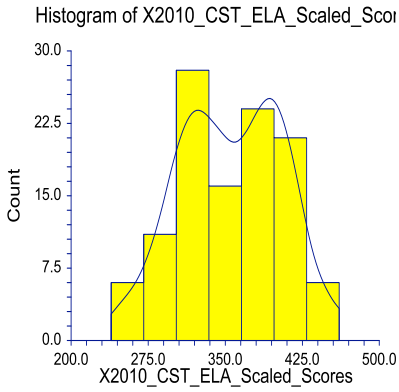
EO



EL



IFEP



RFEP

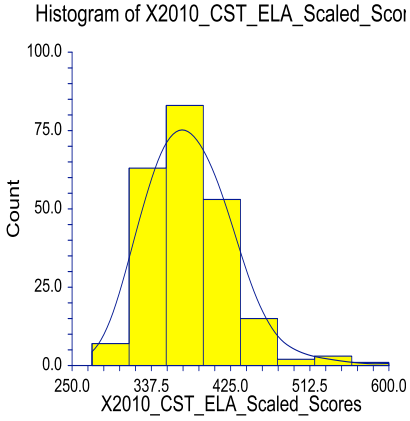


Table 11

2011 English Language Arts Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency

2011 English Language Arts Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency								
Yr	Demographics	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range
11	ALL	1261	345.1594	55.249	1.555847	194	600	406
	EO	469	350.7143	57.20752	2.641598	209	527	318
	EL	445	321.8764	47.7849	2.265222	228	489	261
	IFEP	119	354.9832	52.31861	4.796039	194	462	268
	RFEP	228	374.0482	47.86971	3.170249	264	600	336

Figure 8

2011 English Language Arts Histograms

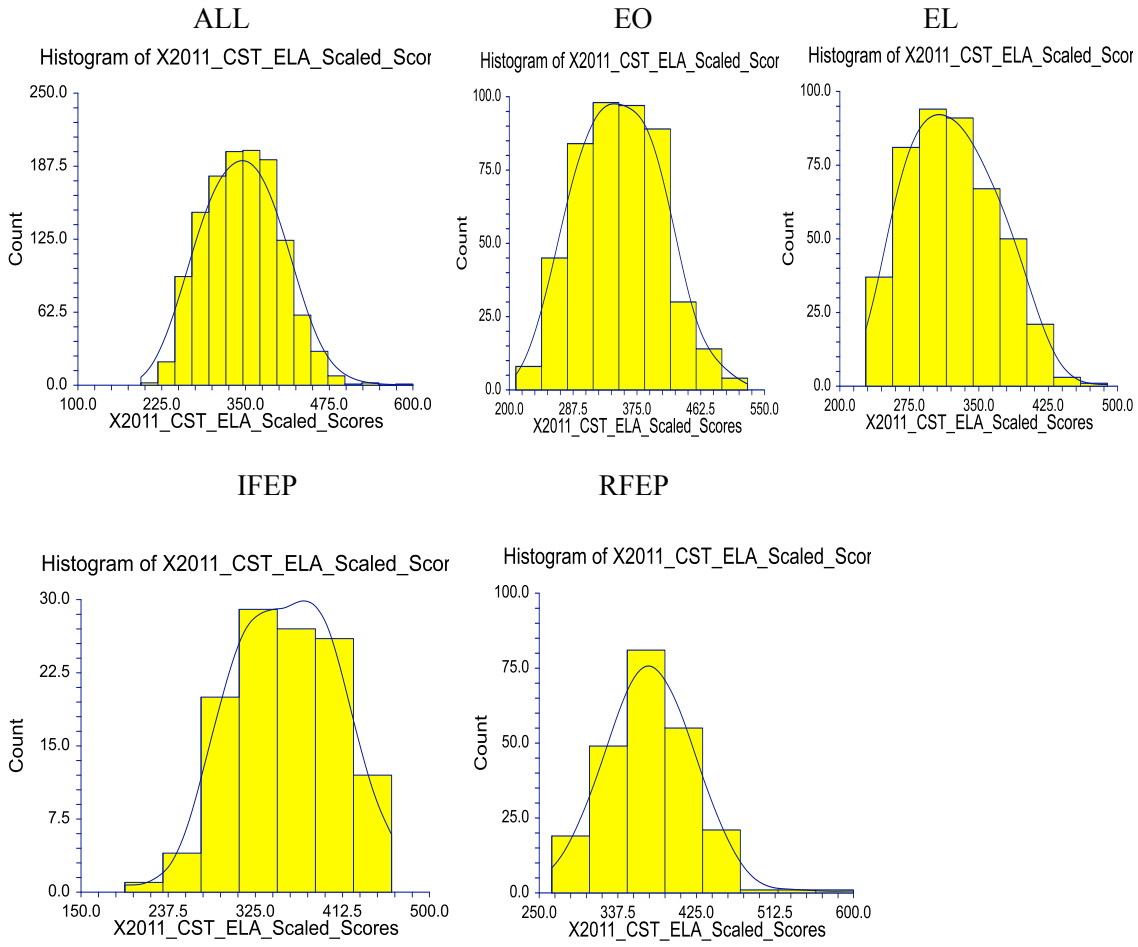


Table 12

Special Education 2009-2011 ELA Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency

Special Education 2009-2011 ELA Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency								
Yr	Demographics	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range
09	RSP	74	272.446	35.41269	4.116642	189	387	198
	SDC	19	251.8947	21.44993	4.920951	226	323	97
10	RSP	76	277.5921	37.52268	4.304146	210	364	154
	SDC	15	253.6	19.98499	5.160103	220	298	78
11	RSP	63	294.8095	39.15513	4.933083	230	427	197
	SDC	4	261	19.44222	9.721111	238	282	44

Figure 9

Special Education 2009-2011 ELA Histograms

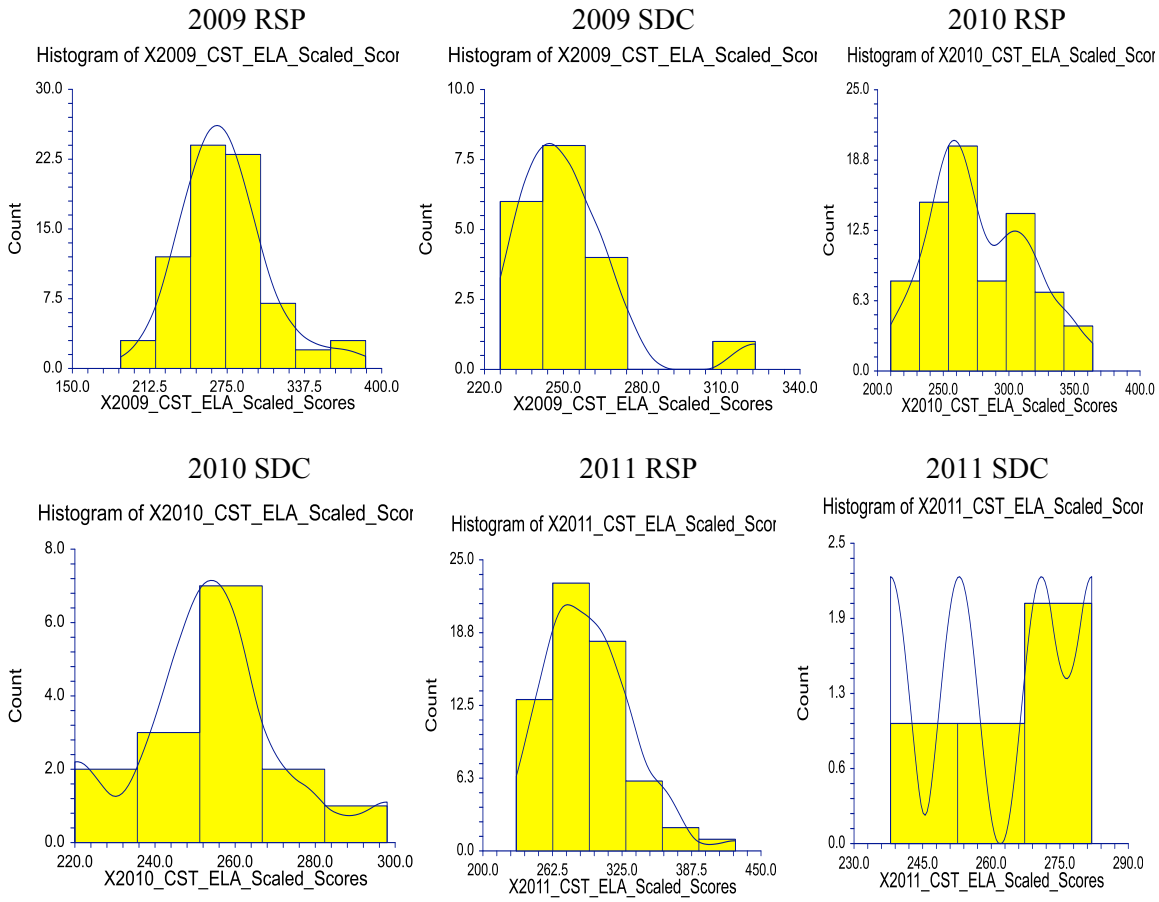


Table 13

2009 Test of Assumptions in ELA CST Data for Homeless English Language Learners

2009 ELA CST Data for Homeless Students who are EO, EL, IFEP, RFEP			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	2.4050	0.016174	Reject
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	3.3048	0.000951	Reject
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	16.7052	0.000236	Reject
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	19.0396	0.000000	Reject

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 Statistically Significant

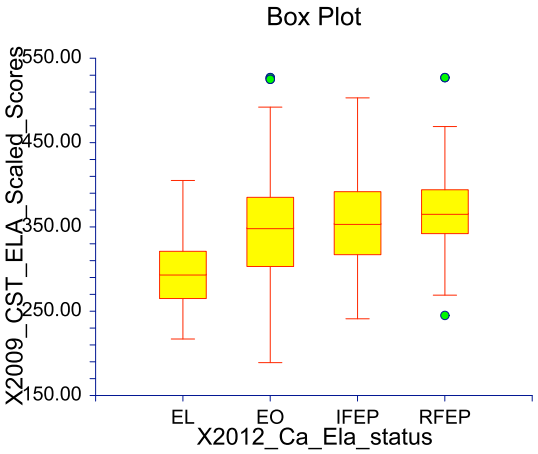
The Rejects under decision (0.05) tells us it resembles a normal curve. There is a statistically significant relationship between these two variables and the variation in terms

of the outcome is definitely influenced by this independent variable that is English Language Status (E0, EL, IFEP, RFEP). This is true for data represented for the 2010 and 2011 school years.

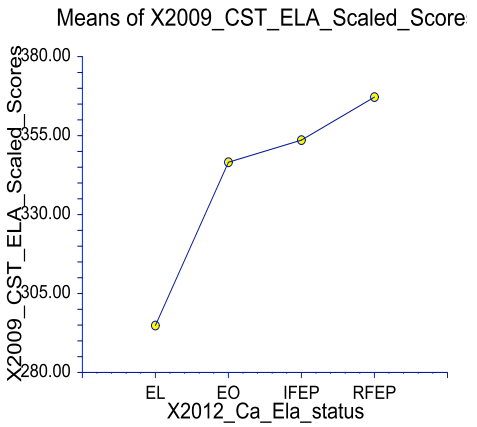
Figure 10

EL Demographic 2009 ELA Histograms

2009 ELA Box plot



2009 ELA Mean



Based on the Box Plot and Means graphs above, the mean for English Language Learners is lower than the mean for EO, IFEP and RFEP homeless students. RFEP students had a higher mean score followed by IFEP, EO, and then ELLs. The descriptive central tendency data reviewed earlier also confirms RFEP performance.

Table 14

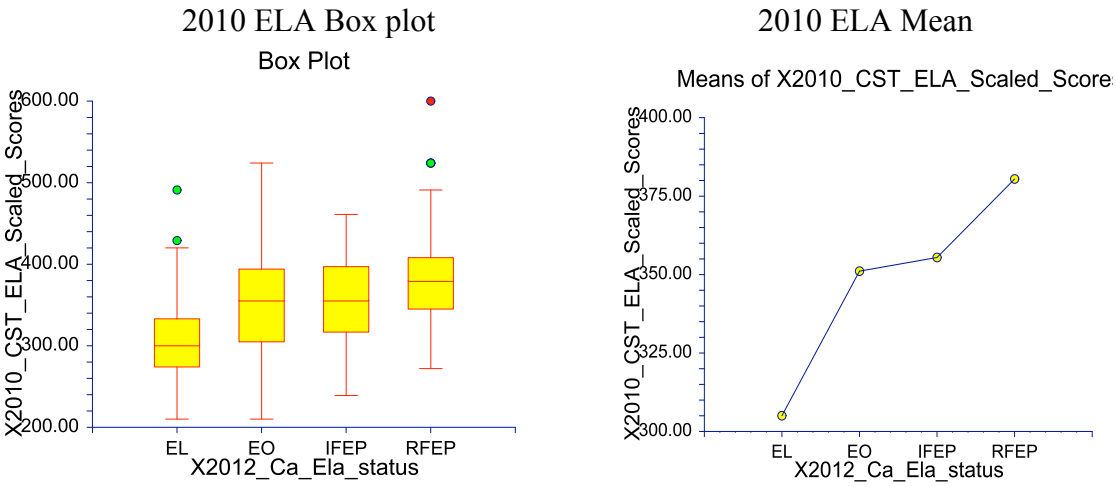
2010 Test of Assumptions in ELA CST Data for Homeless English Language Learners

2010 Analysis of Variance- Test of Assumptions for ELA CST Data for Homeless Students who are EO, EL, IFEP, RFEP			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	2.5182	0.011794	Reject
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	1.6410	0.100799	Accept
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	9.0344	0.010919	Reject
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	13.3049	0.000000	Reject

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 Statistically Significant

Figure 11

EL Demographic 2010 ELA Histograms



Based on the Box Plot and Means graphs above, RFEP students continue to have a higher mean score than IFEP, EOs, and ELs. In fact, the mean scores for English Language Learners in 2010 is much lower than in 2009.

Table 15

2011 Test of Assumptions in ELA CST Data for Homeless English Language Learners

2011 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for ELA CST Data for Homeless Students who are EO, EL, IFEP, RFEP*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	2.9890	0.002799	Reject
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	-0.5007	0.616561	Accept
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	9.1847	0.010129	Reject
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	7.8048	0.000037	Reject

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 Statistically Significant

Figure 12

EL Demographic 2011 ELA Histograms

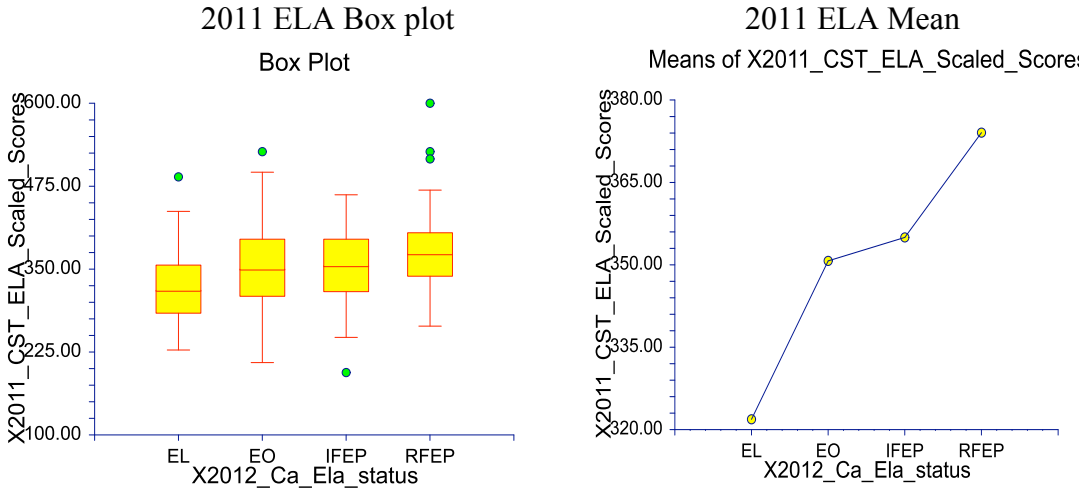


Table 28

2009 ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report – Special Education in ELA

2009 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for ELA CST Data for Homeless Students in Special Education*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	3.3035	0.000955	Reject
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	2.7312	0.006310	Reject
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	18.3725	0.000102	Reject
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	2.8362	0.063733	Accept

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 Statistically Significant = 0.000946*

Figure 13

SPED Demographic 2009 ELA Histograms

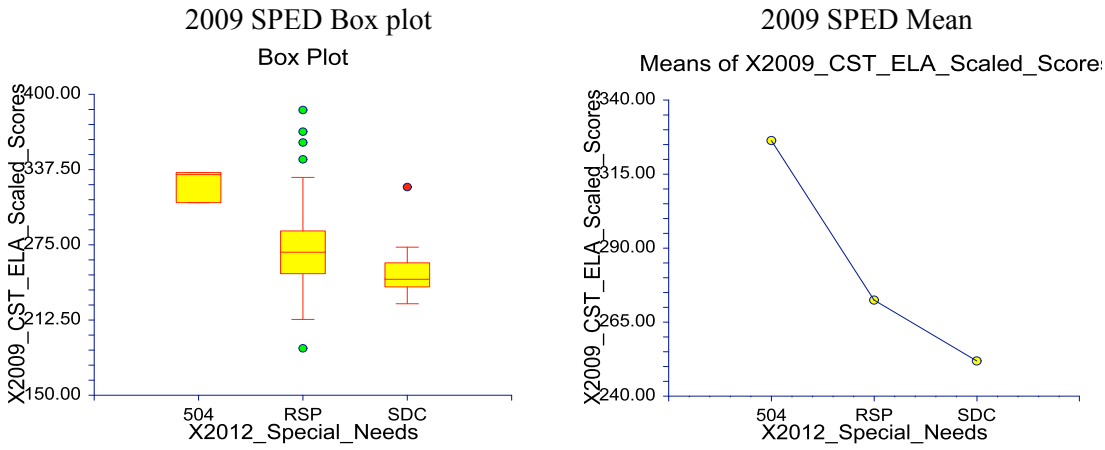


Table 17

2010 ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report – Special Education in ELA

2010 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for ELA CST Data for Homeless Students in Special Education*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	1.4316	0.152253	Accept
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	-1.0745	0.282600	Accept
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	3.2041	0.201486	Accept
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	5.3417	0.006386	Reject

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 = 0.002873*

Figure 14

SPED Demographic 2010 ELA Histograms

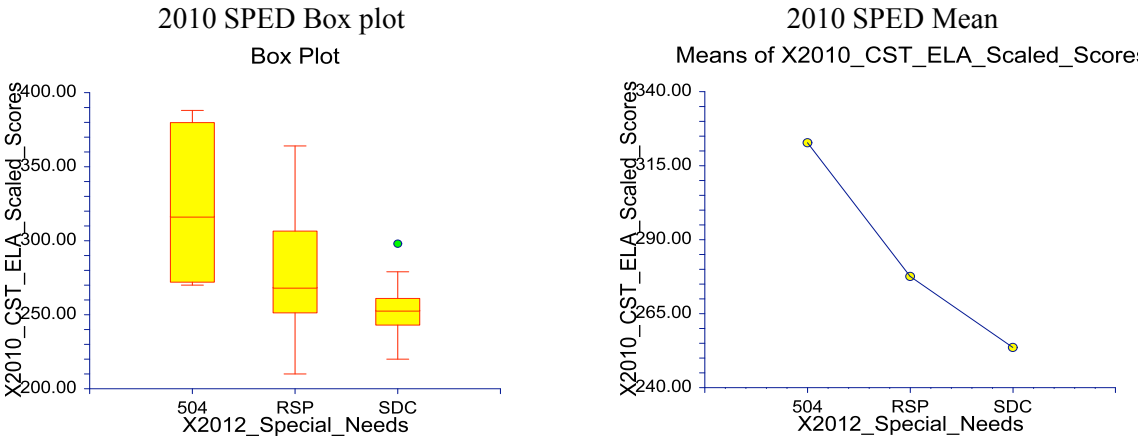


Table 18

2011 ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report – Special Education in ELA

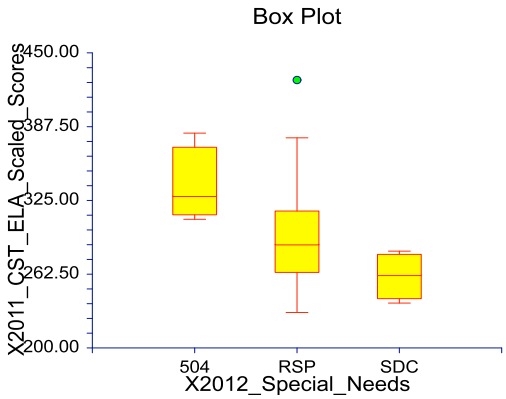
2011 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for ELA CST Data for Homeless Students in Special Education*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	2.5573	0.010548	Reject
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	1.6822	0.092531	Accept
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	9.3697	0.009234	Reject
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	0.9361	0.397168	Accept

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 - 0.022146* Statistically Significant

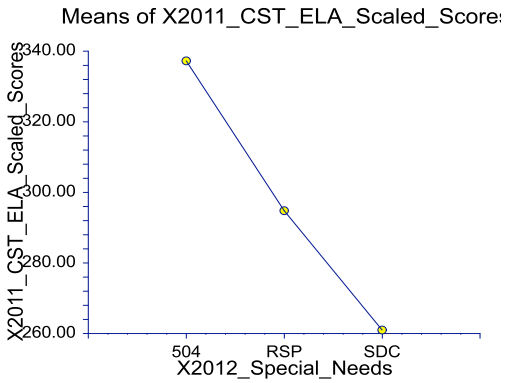
Figure 15

SPED Demographic 2011 ELA Histograms

2011 SPED Box plot



2010 SPED Mean



Based on the histograms above and the charts measuring central tendency for the 2009, 2010, and 2011 school years, the following means were determined for students considered homeless:

1. All Homeless Students Performance on the ELA CST

Table 34

All Homeless Students Performance on the ELA CST

Year	ALL Homeless Students	
	Count	Mean
2009	825	337
2010	1061	343
2011	1261	345

a. The number of students identified homeless in grades 2nd through 8th grades have increased by 435 students in the last three years.

b. The average mean score in English Language arts is 341 out of 600. The highest mean score was observed in 2011 with only two points over the

mean score for 2010.

c. The minimum average score in the last three years ranges from 189 in 2009 with the maximum score of 600 in the last two years.

d. Although there was an increase of the number of homeless students in the last three years, the mean score remained the same.

e. ANOVA Data findings show there is a statistically significant relationship between the achievement data and the English Language Status.

2. Homeless Students by Demographics Performance on the ELA CST

Table 20

Homeless Students by Demographics Performance on the ELA CST

Year	EO		EL		IFEP		RFEP	
	Count	Mean	Count	Mean	Count	Mean	Count	Mean
2009	284	347	244	295	102	354	195	367
2010	386	351	336	305	112	355	227	380
2011	469	351	445	322	119	355	228	374

a. The number of students identified EO homeless students in grades 2nd through 8th grades have increased in the last three years by 185 students.

b. The average mean score for EO has increased since 2009 from 284 to 469. There is also growth for English Language Learners (EL) with a mean score of 295 in 2009 to 322 in 2011. A 13-point gain is observed for RFEP homeless students. Minor growth is observed for IFEP students with only a one-point gain.

c. RFEP homeless are performing better than EO, EL, and IFEP homeless students.

3. Special Education Homeless Student Performance on the ELA CST

Table 21

Special Education Homeless Student Performance on the ELA CST

Year	Special Education			
	Count		Mean	
	RSP	SDC	RSP	SDC
2009	74	19	272	252
2010	76	15	278	254
2011	63	4	295	261

a. The number of students identified as RSP has reduced since 2009 and the average mean score in 2011 has increased by 23 points since 2009. The number of SDC students has also decreased and the average mean has also increased by 9 points.

b. Based on the low number of RSP and SDC students represented as taking the CST in ELA may indicate that special education students could have taken the CMA, the California Modified Assessment.

4. Statistically Significant

   a. The Rejects under decision (0.05) tells us it resembles a normal curve. There is a statistically significant relationship between these two variables and the variation in terms of the outcome is definitely influenced by this independent variable that is English Language Status (E0, EL, IFEP, RFEP). This is true for data represented for all three school years.

5. The descriptive data between 2009-2011 shows minimal growth with the most growth seen in the data for homeless students who are English Language Learners.

Research Question 1 A-C: Mathematics Achievement Data

The following section represents the performance of homeless students in the area

of mathematics disaggregated by the specific demographic categories mentioned earlier.

Table 22

Mathematics Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency - 2009

2009 Mathematics Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency								
Yr	Demographics	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range
09	ALL	824	347.8604	75.9674	2.64645	150	600	450
	EO	284	352.1902	76.16302	4.519444	150	600	450
	EL	243	300.963	52.9473	3.39657	176	470	294
	IFEP	102	360.951	74.01142	7.328223	218	600	382
	RFEP	195	393.1487	68.82926	4.928966	251	600	349

Figure 16

Mathematics 2009 Histograms

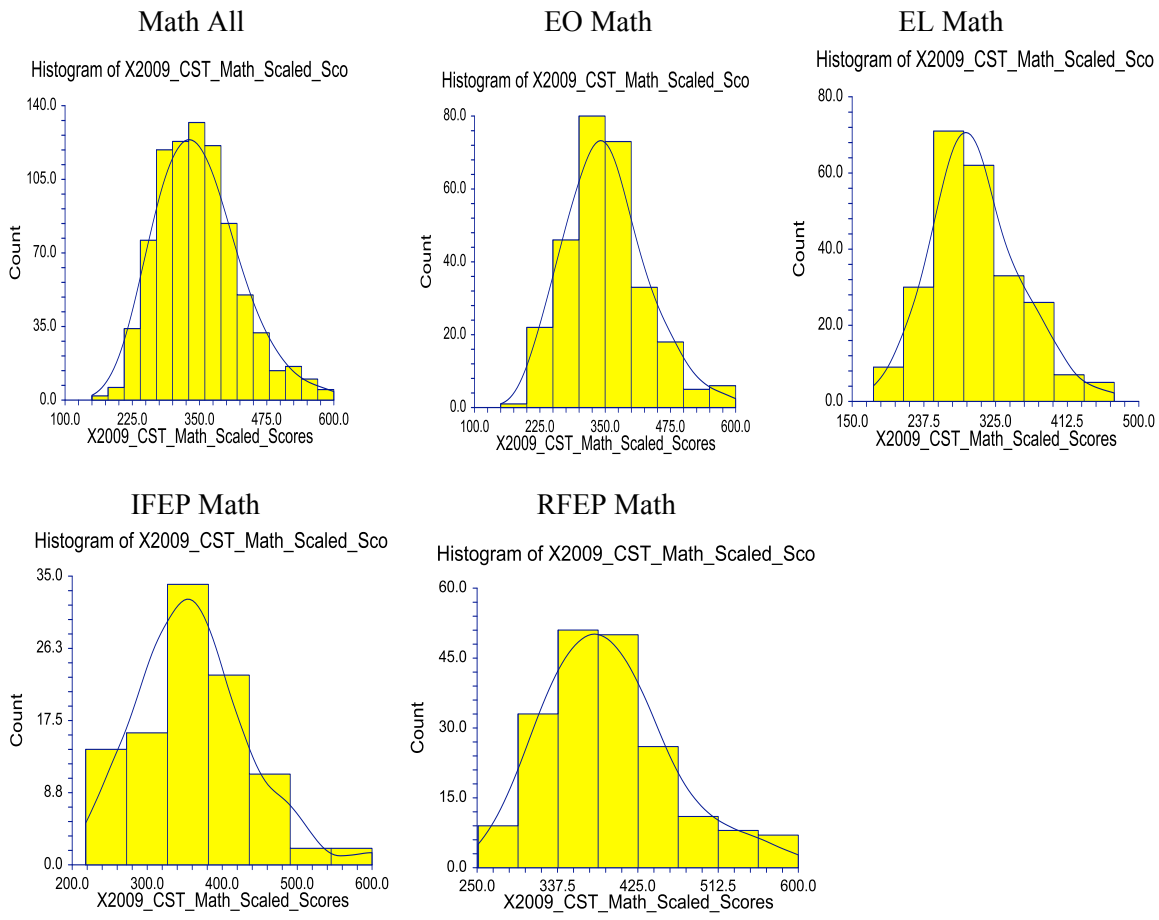


Table 23

Mathematics Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency 2010

2010 Mathematics Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency								
Yr	Demographics	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range
10	ALL	1064	357.5357	80.15989	2.457459	175	600	425
	EO	387	360.4341	80.26745	4.080224	184	600	416
	EL	338	320.4704	67.88147	3.692265	175	600	425
	IFEP	112	367.0268	80.45451	7.602236	203	600	397
	RFEP	227	403.1013	70.49511	4.678925	261	600	339

Figure 17

Math Demographic 2010 Histograms

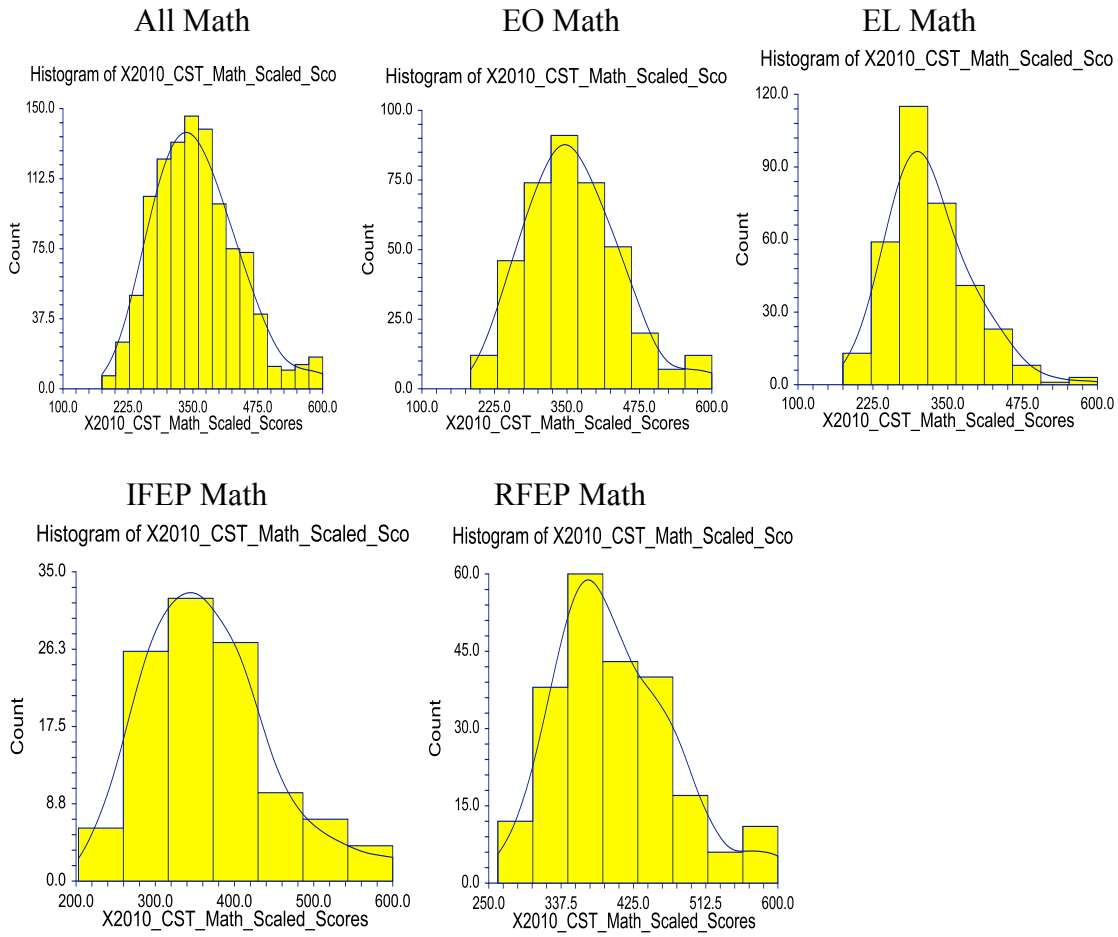


Table 24

Mathematics Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency 2011

2011 Mathematics Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency								
Yr	Demographics	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range
11	ALL	1263	369.4418	79.36594	2.233225	165	600	435
	EO	465	373.6968	77.8924	3.612173	165	600	435
	EL	450	343.6956	71.43473	3.367465	182	600	418
	IFEP	120	375.95	80.40254	7.339715	229	600	371
	RFEP	228	408.1535	79.09509	5.238201	219	600	381

Figure 18

Math Demographic 2011 Histograms

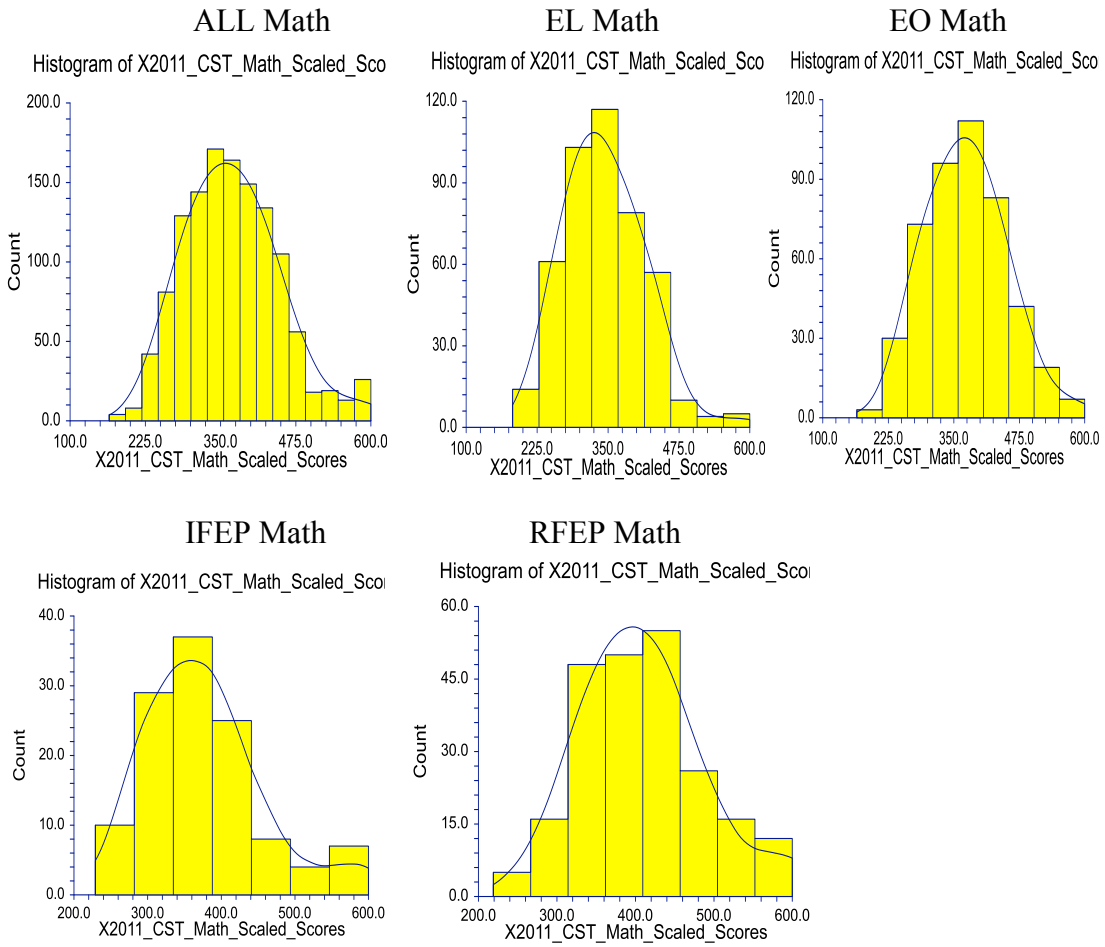


Table 25

Descriptive Analysis 2009-2011 Central Tendency -Special Education

2009-2011 Special Education Mathematics Descriptive Statistics Central Tendency								
Yr	Demographics	Count	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Minimum	Maximum	Range
09	RSP	74	276.973	42.02868	4.885735	150	394	244
	SDC	18	235.3889	29.38615	6.926382	176	291	115
10	RSP	80	285.0375	52.23158	5.839668	191	413	222
	SDC	15	236.2667	33.48233	8.645102	175	303	128
11	RSP	67	304.0895	59.69918	7.293416	182	438	256
	SDC	5	235.8	61.64171	27.56701	185	338	153

Figure 19

Math Demographic 2011 Special Education Histograms

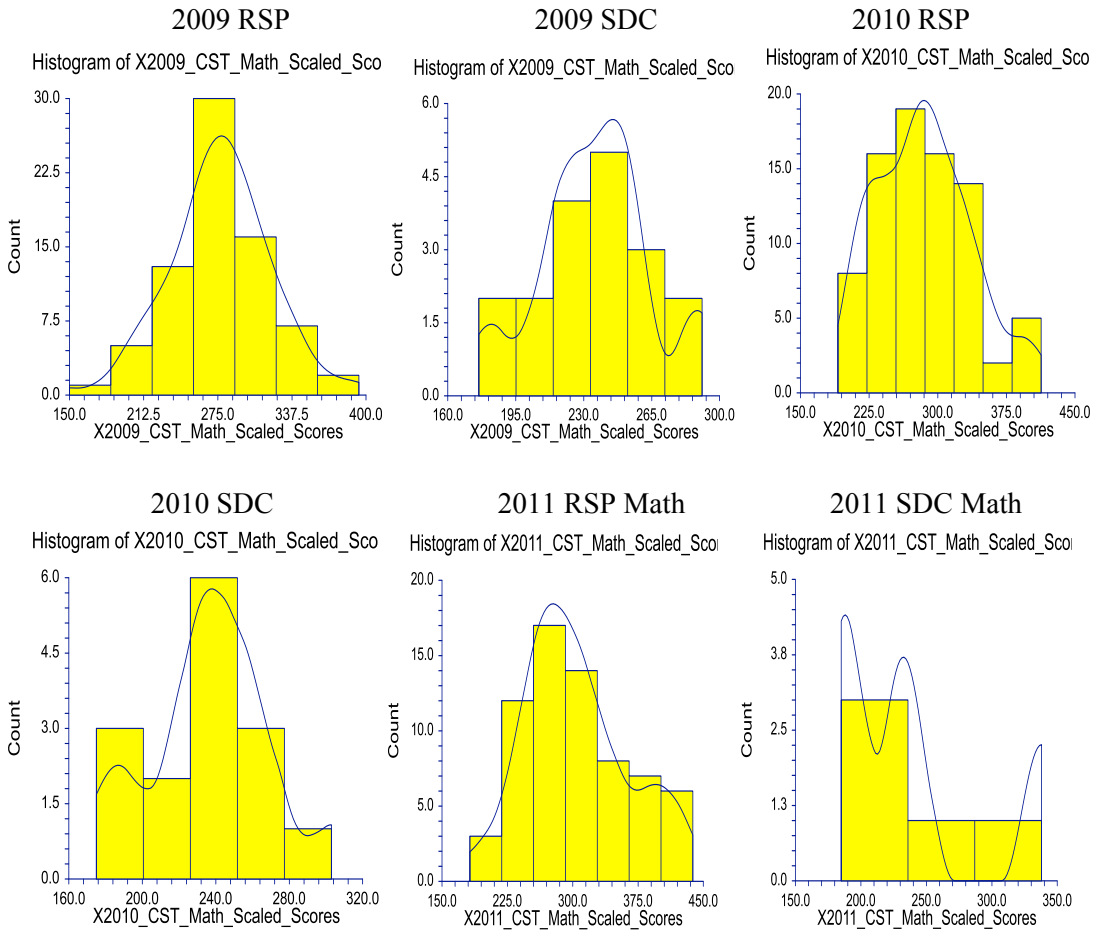


Table 26

ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report 2009 Mathematics

2009 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for Math CST Data for Homeless Students who are EO, EL, IFEP, RFEP*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	6.4789	0.000000	Reject
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	3.0343	0.002411	Reject
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	51.1832	0.000000	Reject
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	8.5219	0.000014	Reject

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 – Resembles a normal curve.

Figure 20

Math Demographic 2009 Histograms

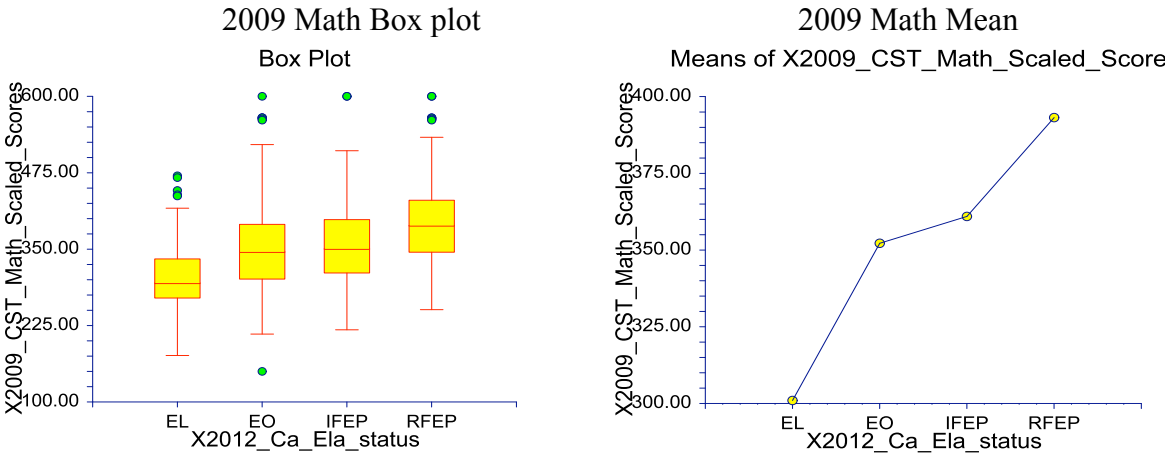


Table 27

ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report 2010 Mathematics

2010 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for Math CST Data for Homeless Students who are EO, EL, IFEP, RFEP*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	8.4076	0.000000	Reject
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	3.4919	0.000480	Reject
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	82.8811	0.000000	Reject
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	3.7748	0.010353	Reject

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 - 0.000000* Statistically significant

Figure 21

Math Demographic 2010 Histograms

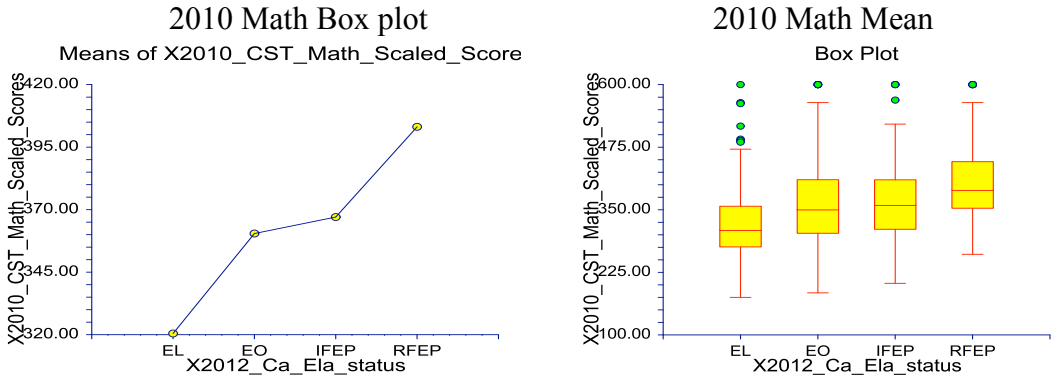


Table 28

ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report 2011 Mathematics

2011 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for Math CST Data for Homeless Students who are EO, EL, IFEP, RFEP*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	6.7213	0.000000	Reject
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	2.0431	0.041046	Reject
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	49.3505	0.000000	Reject
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	1.3827	0.246435	Accept

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 = 0.000000* Statistically significant

Figure 22

Math Demographic 2011 Histograms

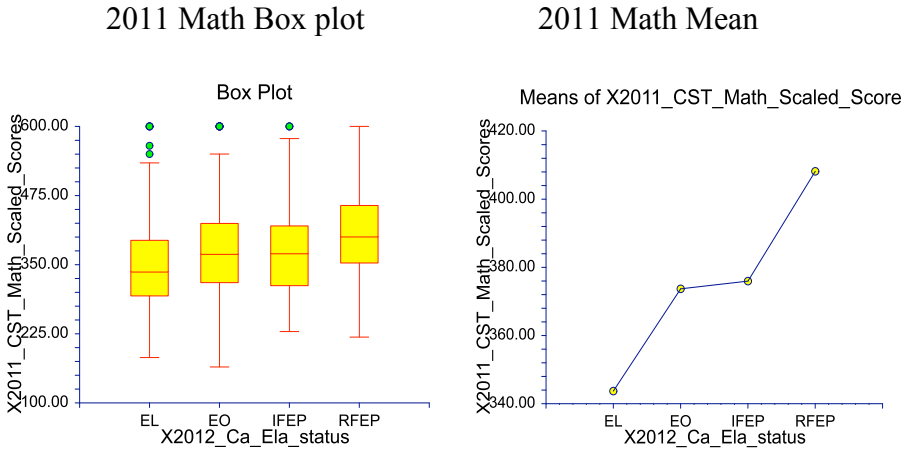


Table 29

Special Education ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report 2009 Mathematics

2009 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for Math CST Data for Homeless Students who are in SPED*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	-0.4091	0.682440	Accept
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	1.5738	0.115544	Accept
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	2.6441	0.266588	Accept
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	0.8543	0.428916	Accept

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 - 0.000005* Statistically significant

Figure 23

Special Education Math Demographic 2009 Histograms

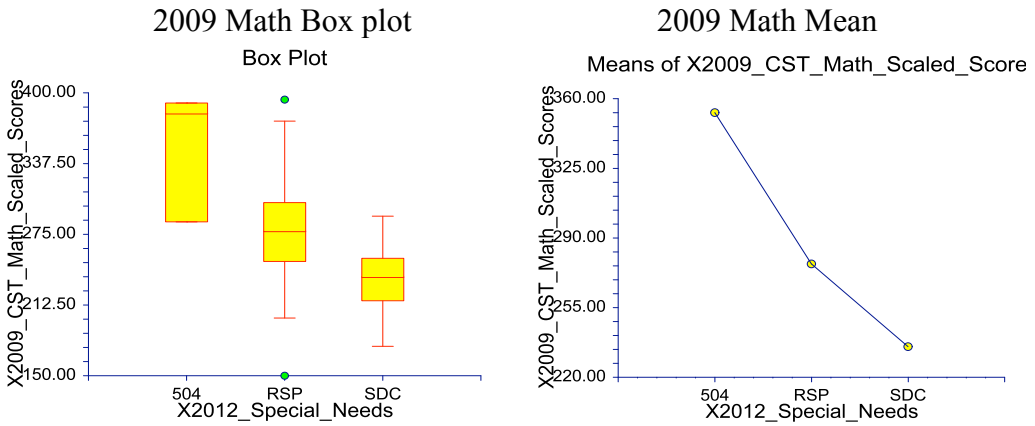


Table 30

Special Education ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report 2010 Mathematics

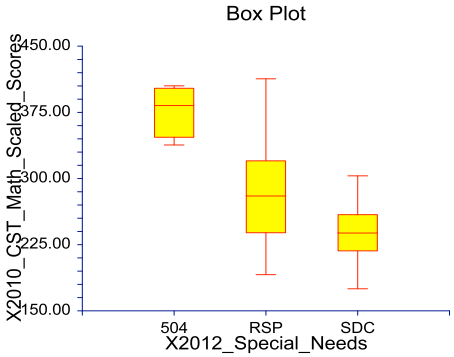
2010 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for Math CST Data for Homeless Students who are in SPED*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	1.6058	0.108313	Accept
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	-0.0271	0.978360	Accept
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	2.5794	0.275353	Accept
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	2.6246	0.077668	Accept

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 – 0.000004* Statistically significant

Figure 24

Special Education Math Demographic 2010 Histograms

2010 Math Box plot



2010 Math Mean

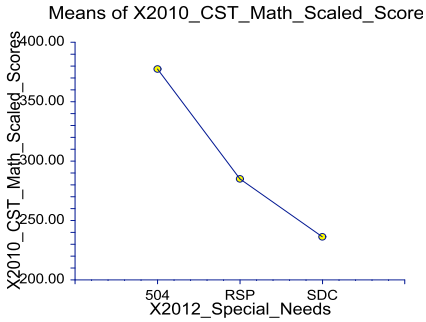


Table 31

Special Education ANOVA Analysis of Variance Report 2011 Mathematics

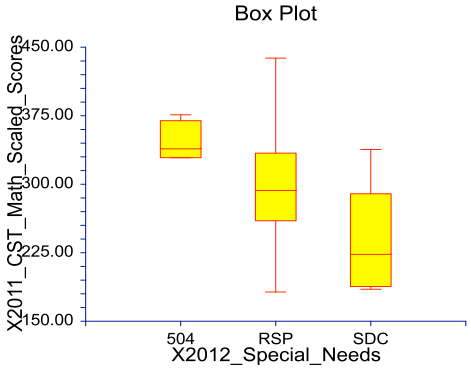
2011 Analysis of Variance *Test of Assumptions for Math CST Data for Homeless Students who are in SPED*			
Time	Test Value	Probability Level	Decision (0.05)
Skewness Normality of Residuals	1.7289	0.083834	Accept
Kurtosis Normality of Residuals	-0.2742	0.783947	Accept
Omnibus Normality of Residuals	3.0641	0.216089	Accept
Modified-Levene Equal-Variance Test	1.2073	0.304890	Accept

* Term significant at alpha = 0.05 Statistically significant

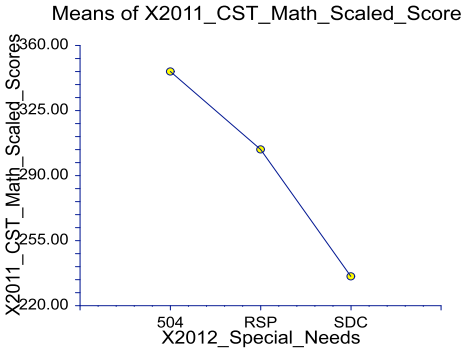
Figure 25

Special Education Math Demographic 2011 Histograms

2011 Math Box plot



2011 Math Mean



Summary of Data and Reports of Findings in Mathematics

Based on the histograms above and the charts measuring central tendency for the 2009, 2010, and 2011 school years in mathematics, the following means were determined for students considered homeless:

6. All homeless Students Performance on the Math CST

Table 32

All Homeless Student Math CST Performance

Year	ALL Homeless Students	
	Count	Mean
2009	824	348
2010	1064	358
2011	1263	369

a. The number of students identified homeless in 2nd through 8th grades has increased by 439 students in the last three years.
b. The average mean score in Mathematics ranges from 348 in 2009 to 369 in 2011. The highest mean score was observed in 2011 with only 11 points over the mean score for 2010.
c. The minimum average score in the last three years is 150 in 2009 with the maximum score of 600 in the last three years.
d. Although there was an increase in the number of homeless students in the last three years, the mean score was within 21 points.

7. Homeless Students by Demographics Performance on the Math CST

Table 33

Homeless Students Math CST Performance

Year	EO		EL		IFEP		RFEP	
	Count	Mean	Count	Mean	Count	Mean	Count	Mean
2009	284	352	243	301	102	361	195	393
2010	387	360	338	320	112	367	227	403
2011	465	374	450	344	120	376	228	408

a. The number of students identified EO homeless students in grades 2nd through 8th grades have increased in the last three years.

b. The average mean score for EO students has increased since 2009 from 252 to 374. There is also growth for English Language Learners (EL) with a mean score of 301 in 2009 to 344 in 2011. IFEP and RFEP students also increased by 15 points in the last three years.

c. EL homeless students are performing better than EO, IFEP, and RFEP homeless students. EL students made a 43point increase over three years.

8. Special Education Homeless Student Performance on the Math CST

Table 34

Special Education Homeless Students Math CST Performance

Year	Special Education			
	Count		Mean	
	RSP	SDC	RSP	SDC
2009	74	18	278	235
2010	80	15	285	236
2011	67	5	304	236

a. The number of students identified as RSP has reduced since 2009 and the average mean score has increased by 23 points since 2009. The number of SDC students has also decreased and the average mean has also increased by 9 points.

b. Based on the low number of RSP and SDC students represented as taking the CST in math may indicate that special education students could have taken the CMA, the California Modified Assessment.

9. Statistically Significant

a. The Rejects under decision (0.05) tells us it resembles a normal curve. There is a statistically significant relationship between these two variables and the variation in terms of the outcome is definitely influenced by this independent variable that is English Language Status (E0, EL, IFEP, RFEP). This is true for data represented for all three school years.

10. The descriptive data between 2009-2011 shows minimal growth with the most growth seen in the data for homeless students who are English Language Learners.

Research Questions Two and Three

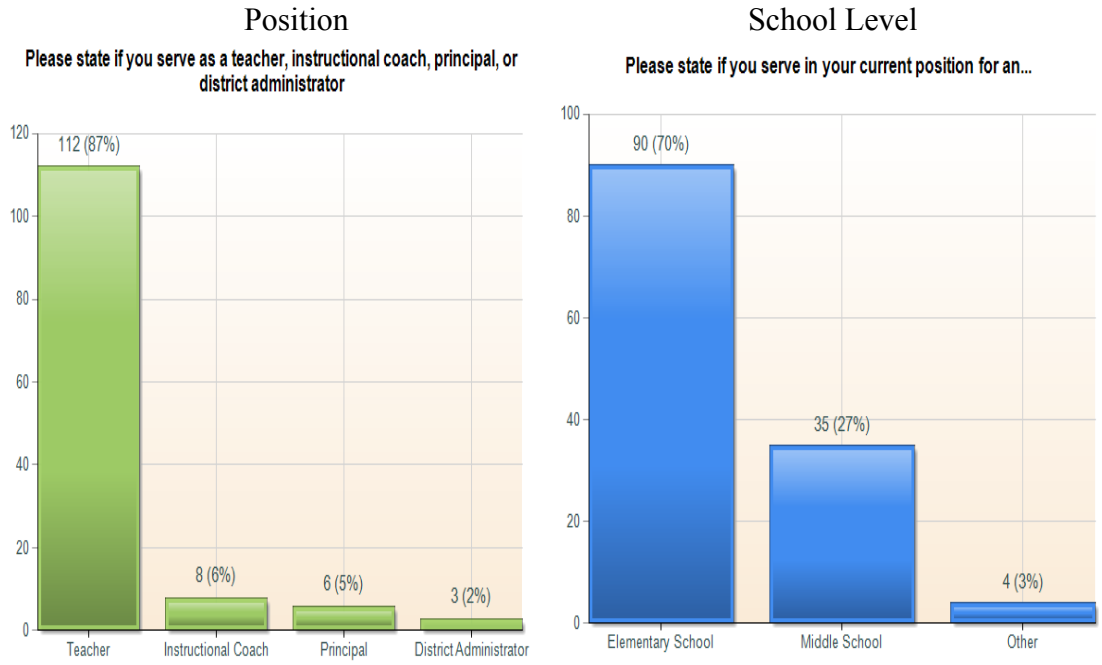
Presentation of data and reports of survey findings. A survey was sent to 250 participants to examine teacher, principals, and instructional coaches perceptions of practices and their needs in order to provide the necessary supports to students experiencing homelessness. Based on the responses, 130 participants out of the 250 surveys sent responded to the survey. The participants were asked 14 questions (see Appendix D).

Along with the fourteen survey questions, two additional basic questions were asked of each participant: (a) Please state if you serve as a teacher, instructional coach, principal, or district administrator; and (b) What school level do you work with?

Participants. Eighty-seven percent of the participants were teachers followed by instructional coaches at 7%, principal at 5%, and district administrators at 2%. Seventy percent of the participants were at the elementary level followed by 27% middle school and 3% others.

Figure 26

Participant Information



Instruction and accountability. When asked for the specific instruction and accountability practices used to support the academic achievement of homeless students, most participants stated that they were not aware who their homeless students were in their classroom. Participants did not specify an instructional strategy used in support of homeless students. Most stated they used data for low performing students, but do not

specifically look at the data for those students who are homeless. The following are a few instructional strategies mentioned in their responses:

1. Small group instruction and guided reading
2. Think Pair Share
3. ELD Strategies
4. Reading Fluency, comprehension, Oral expression of English as well as anecdotal notes used to assess what students need to move up or down a level in ELD), the ability to count above 100, the ability to skip count, the ability to count up or down from a certain number, letter formation (writing), invented vs. conventional spelling, correct punctuation, detailed writing pieces

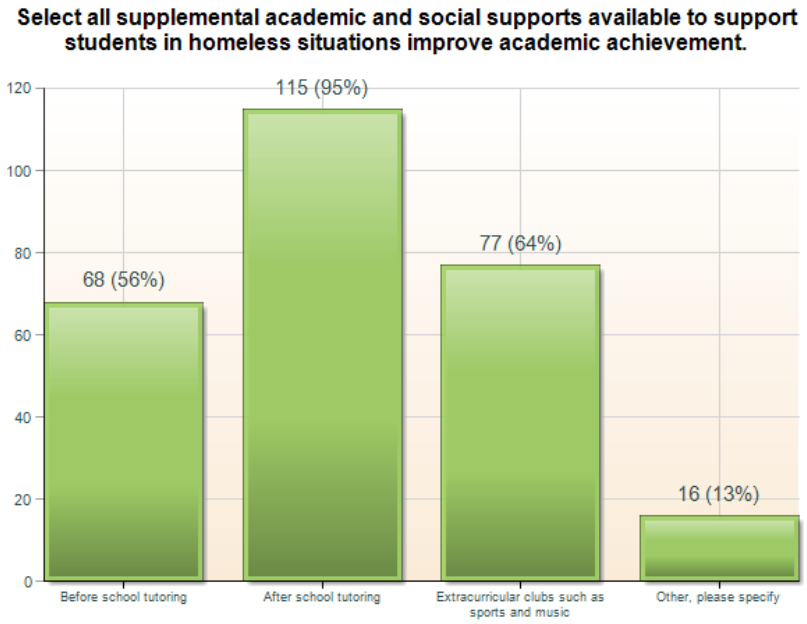
Continuous improvement. Many participants stated that they were unaware of the data practices that are in place for students in this program. Many of the responses asked for professional development in the areas of data, intervention and research regarding the needs of homeless students. The following are a few strategies and data practices mentioned in their responses in the area of continuous improvement:

1. Identifying homeless students
2. Setting goals and reflection
3. Team approach utilizing the CAPPS process similar to the Student Success Team process (SST).
4. Review of data (Benchmark, CST, informal assessments, etc.)
5. Data Director, EADMS (web based data monitoring system), iPass (computer based math program) and Study Island reports are used to track and analyze data.

Organizational structures. When asked about the supplemental academic and social supports available to students in homeless situations to improve their academic performance, 95% of the respondents stated that after school tutoring programs were implemented on site. As indicated in the chart below, 56% stated that both before and after school tutoring was implemented followed by 64% of the respondents stating the existence of extracurricular clubs such as sports or music offered after school.

Figure 27

Supplemental Academic and Social Supports



Thirteen percent of the respondents also indicated the following other programs and supports:

1. Counseling and resources such as free uniforms
2. Health On Wheels, and parenting classes
3. Tutors in classrooms
4. Access to the computer lab

5. Extra electives and the AVID program
6. ASES afterschool program (After School Education and Safety Program)
7. Art classes

Socialization and emotional. Survey participants were also asked how counselors are used to support the socialization and emotional well being of students experiencing homelessness. Thirty-six percent of the participants that responded to the multiple-choice questions did not complete the short answer responses. Based on the short answer responses, 45% of the participants that responded stated that they are not aware or do not know what counseling services are provided to homeless students. Eighteen percent of the respondents stated that counselors are not available on site or have been transferred or are non-existent at the elementary school level. Thirteen percent stated that counselors are only available one day out of the week and are overworked with a large caseload. Twenty-two percent stated that the counselor meets with all students that need support both emotionally or socially.

Classroom management and student behavior. Participants were also asked for their feedback on behaviors they have observed in homeless students that have influenced them to modify classroom or school discipline plans to best support their homeless student population. Fifty-five percent of the participants that responded to this open-ended question stated that they are not aware of any specific behaviors or are unaware of the homeless students in their classroom.

Participants who have observed specific behaviors displayed by their homeless students they have personally serviced have indicated observing the following behaviors:

1. Aggression, extreme sadness, and resentment towards a parent or guardian.

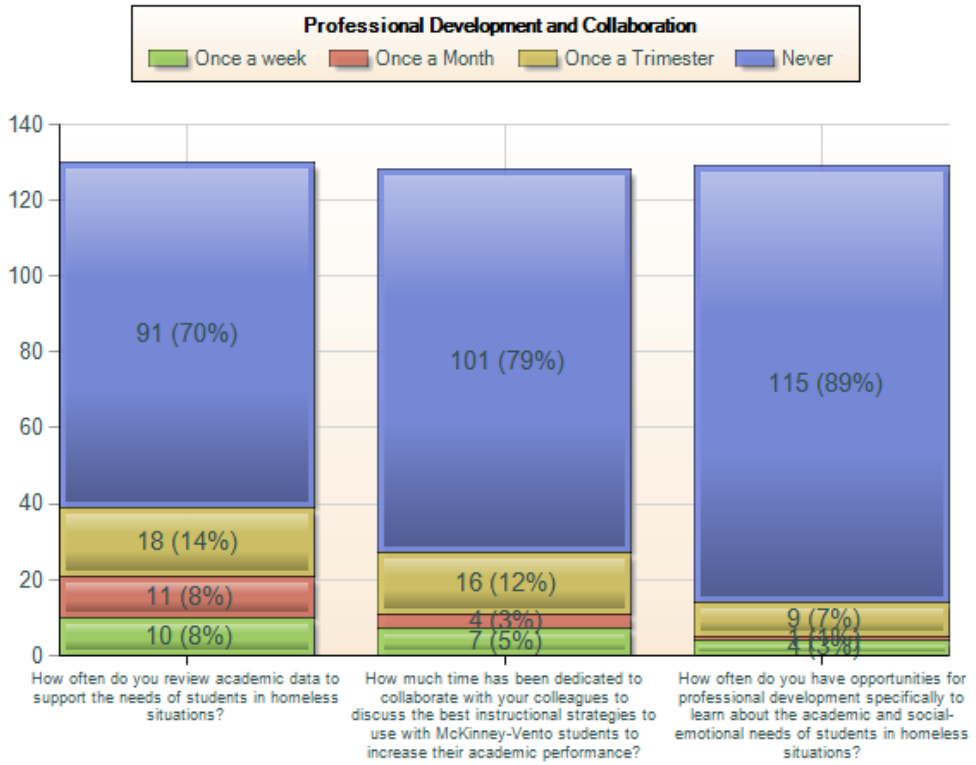
2. Tiredness, anger, restlessness
3. Sleepy, hungry, and un-kept hygiene
4. Lack of materials and supplies, lack of homework, trying hard without understanding work assigned
5. Little to no support at home as far as assignments and projects
6. Lack of confidence and self-esteem

Based on the responses regarding the need to modify the classroom or school-wide discipline plan, 20% of the participants indicated they either believe there is a need to keep the homeless status of students in perspective when implementing their discipline plans and is depended on the individual student. Survey response participant #28 stated they "would like a training in this area and the behaviors teachers should be looking for in homeless students" (Zoomerang, 2012, p. 1).

Professional development and teacher collaboration. Based on the responses to the questions of professional development and collaboration regarding the education of homeless students, survey findings show that 70% of the respondents do not review academic data specifically to support the academic performance of homeless students. Seventy-nine percent do not have dedicated time to collaborate with their colleagues to discuss instructional strategies to increase the student of achievement of homeless students. In addition, the survey indicated that 89% of the respondents have not participated in professional development training specifically focusing on the academic, social and emotional needs of homeless students.

Figure 28

Professional Development and Collaboration



When asking educators what they specifically need in terms of principal and district level support, the majority of those who responded with three major needs listed below:

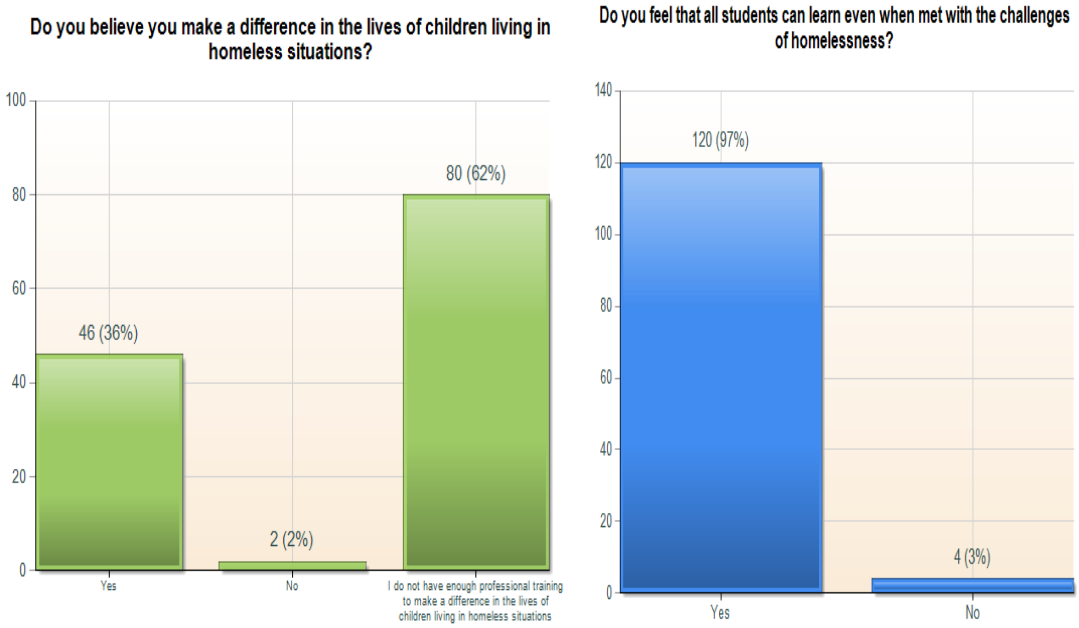
1. The need for information regarding the identification of the homeless students they specifically serve in their classroom
2. Professional development training regarding the specific needs homeless students have in terms of their academic and social emotional needs and behaviors
3. Academic data specifically for their homeless student population.

Learning theory, self-efficacy, expectations for student learning. Sixty-two percent of those who responded to the question as to their belief in making a difference in

the lives of homeless children stated that they at this point do not have enough professional training to do so. Thirty-six percent stated they do make a difference regardless and 2% said they do not. It was clear that 97% of the respondents believed that all students could learn when met with the challenge of homelessness. Three percent of the respondents believed otherwise.

Figure 29

Participants' Beliefs on Learning of Homeless Students



Presentation of Data and Reports of Principal Interviews

Part of the second research question focused on the perceptions of the practices contributing to the academic achievement and social emotional needs of students considered homeless. The research study included ten questions based on the literature researched. The interview questions asked of administrators were:

1. Briefly describe how your school or school district provide for on going training on the special issues and needs of children and youth without homes for all professional and classified staff that interact with this group of learners.
2. Describe the school and/or school district's procedure for making professional staff aware of the living arrangements of children and youth experiencing homelessness?
3. Describe the strategies implemented at your site that help students in homeless situations achieve success?
4. Describe the provisions made to ensure there are accessible tutorial services adequate to meet the needs of students in homeless situations? If so, please describe the programs available.
5. Describe how teachers demonstrate academic and behavioral expectations for students in homeless situations that are generally equal to the expectations held for other students.
6. Describe how the school (or school district) has conducted an assessment of the needs of each student experiencing homelessness?
7. Describe the school's and/or district process for ongoing evaluation of the academic progress of each child experiencing homelessness.
8. Is the academic proficiency of homeless students in your school or within the district increasing? How do you know?
9. What percentage of identified homeless students in your school or district are grade-level proficient in reading and math?

10. What other indicators, in addition to academic achievement scores, do you measure (e.g. attendance, disciplinary referrals, etc.)?

The chart below displays a summary of the findings for the interview portion of this study. Based on the summary of interview responses, there is a clear indication of a lack of awareness of the academic performance of the homeless students within the district. There is a disconnect between the district and school sites regarding the need for information and professional training. Basic awareness of the procedures in place to support homeless students was consistent throughout the interviews. In addition, many of the participants were not aware of who their homeless students are represented on their site.

Table 35

Summary of Principal Interview Findings

Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Organizational Structures	1. Briefly describe how your school or school district provide for on going training on the special issues and needs of children and youth without homes for all professional and classified staff that interact with this group of learners.	Most principals stated they were unaware of what is available in terms of professional development and learning about the specific behaviors and social emotional needs of this group of learners. At least three principal stated they have relied on their own experience to guide how to support students who are homeless and are unaware of district support in this area. They also indicated the lack of staff development offered to the classified staff and were not sure what to cover. Nine of the eleven principals felt there is a need for professional development in this area and have not had any training with the staff or any of the employees regarding this group of learners. Three principals offer brain based professional development targeting all groups of learners.

(Continued)

Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Organizational Structures	1. Briefly describe how your school or school district provide for on going training on the special issues and needs of children and youth without homes for all professional and classified staff that interact with this group of learners.	The specific needs of homeless students have not been addressed, but believe that the training offered such as Erick Jensen's work around working with poverty would touch upon the needs of this group of learners. Three principals have made partnerships with outside counseling services within the city. Counselors work on site and work directly with students and teachers.Three principals have made partnerships with outside counseling services within the city. Counselors work on site and work directly with students and teachers. One principal also partnered with and outside organization called Play Works to teach cooperative games to students and work with teachers. Play works teaches social skills and how to solve issues. One principal conducted a survey with the staff to determine the needs they may have when working with students in transition. Based on the survey, staff needed staff development. Training specifically on homeless students has not been implemented. Trained on clue words. They were unsure if this practice is correct.
Organizational Structures	2. Describe the school and/or school district's procedure for making professional staff aware of the living arrangements of children and youth experiencing homelessness?	Most principals were aware of the available district liaison, but felt more support is needed. Most principals stated there exist a binder that provides information regarding the McKinney-Vento program, however, a couple of principals stated the binder does not answer all their questions. Most principals stated they felt there is a lack of training in this area and they are usually directed to a binder when they have questions. A couple of principals shared when made aware of students struggling with homeless, there are a brief informal conversation with the teacher regarding the child's status. They have not implemented anything formal in place to inform the professional staff of students and their situation. One principal stated informing staff through a CAPPS process similar to a student success team format.

(Continued)

Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Organizational Structures	2. Describe the school and/or school district's procedure for making professional staff aware of the living arrangements of children and youth experiencing homelessness?	Most principals have not trained staff or provided information to staff regarding the living arrangements of students and are not aware of the district's procedures in this regard. They felt the program is not proactive in providing the information. They shared there is a lack of information from the district regarding who is homeless. Once they become aware a student is homeless then they act on supporting the student. One principal stated they provide the latest research to teachers when students enter the classroom. They train the classified staff in developing a warm and secure environment and has implemented a character program that embodies tolerance and acceptance of each other regardless of their differences. At one site, teachers conduct interviews to get to know their students. The principal meets three times a year with teachers to review each student. Year to year, principal can then share this information with teachers. They also have sent out forms to families regarding the needs they may have. Teachers at this site also make personal calls to families before the beginning of the school year.
Instruction and accountability	3. Describe the strategies implemented at your site that help students in homeless situations achieve success?	Three principals have provided their staff with brain based professional development and have trained their staff on Erick Jensen's strategies with a focus on building relationships and a safe environment. Brain based learning aligned to the discipline plan to support this goal. One principal stated their staff does not talk about being homeless. The staff is becoming more aware of the needs of students especially with those that exhibit impulse control and hyperactivity behaviors due to possibly a shelter lifestyle or may not eat

(Continued)

Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Instruction and accountability	3. Describe the strategies implemented at your site that help students in homeless situations achieve success?	healthy, etc. Eighty percent of their staff implements the nutrition program with healthy food choices. They also implement a school wide focus on the six pillars of discipline. Three principals have provided their staff with brain based professional development and have trained their staff on Erick Jensen's strategies with a focus on building relationships and a safe environment. Brain based learning aligned to the discipline plan to support this goal. One principal stated their staff does not talk about being homeless. The staff is becoming more aware of the needs of students especially with those that exhibit impulse control and hyperactivity behaviors due to possibly a shelter lifestyle or may not eat healthy, etc. Eighty percent of their staff implements the nutrition program with healthy food choices. They also implement a school wide focus on the six pillars of discipline. They work on providing students with structure through contracts that help them to regulate their areas of needs. Several principals stated they did not have any specific strategies for this group of learners and have not monitored homeless students in this way. They assume that they are taken care of in the other strategies that are provided for those who are low income such as tutoring, intervention (Rti), ELD, etc. Nothing specific until it is made clear that they are homeless then we get them in touch with additional support services (bus tokens, etc.) Two principals have on-site counseling services of which one of them also has an on-site community liaison that support families in struggling situations. This would include students experiencing homelessness. One principal has a partnership with Pacific Clinics, an organization of counselors who

(Continued)

Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Instruction and accountability	3. Describe the strategies implemented at your site that help students in homeless situations achieve success?	work with families that have mental concerns within the family and are present on the campus two to three days a week Other supports mentioned by principals include: Food aid program The use of Biola tutors Nutrition program All principals made reference to the ASES program or the 21st Century after school programs.
Instruction and accountability	4. Describe the provisions made to ensure there are accessible tutorial services adequate to meet the needs of students in homeless situations? If so, please describe the programs available.	Two sites are providing a WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) program to support all students. A couple of principals stated specific programs and provisions are not implemented for homeless students, but believe the services provided for all students will probably support this group. Most principals stated they offer either before and/or after school tutoring by the teacher. They do not know if students in homeless situations are serviced through these services. All principals stated they have after school program services through ASES or 21st Century. The ASES program is limited to students who are not performing at proficient and is limited to 80 students, however they did not know how many homeless students are attending and gaining this supplemental support. One principal mentioned the use of the fee based ARCC program (Academic Recreation Child Care) as a resource for families. The city can help pay for this program.

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Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Setting High Expectations for Student Learning	5. Describe how teachers demonstrate academic and behavioral expectations for students in homeless situations that are generally equal to the expectations held for other students.	One principal stated they will not make any exception for lowering standards, but will have equally high standards for all. They will have empathy for them, but refuse to lower standards for them because their situation is harder than others and feel they are not doing them any favors by lowering standards. Most principal stated they have equal expectations because they are not aware of homeless students A couple of principals stated teachers do whatever it takes to make the students feel safe understanding student specific needs and possible emotional distress because of their situation. Discipline and classroom management plans are modified depending on the specific needs and situation of students having behavior and academic challenges. This is situational to the individual and their needs and is temporary and not long term. No difference unless there are specific needs. One principal stated they try to keep students' background and family situation in mind when implementing an academic or behavior contract. For example, a contract will not specify the need for a student to have a quiet place to do homework. This may not be feasible for a homeless student. Teachers are sensitive when students do not complete homework and will sit down with the child and modify the assignment. One principal has implemented the Six Pillars of discipline and shared that every teacher would say all students are their students and have a whole child mentality. Some students are on target and other students are not. Their focus is on what they come with and build from there.

(Continued)

Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Setting High Expectations for Student Learning	5. Describe how teachers demonstrate academic and behavioral expectations for students in homeless situations that are generally equal to the expectations held for other students.	A couple of principals indicated when we are aware of homelessness, they provide free uniforms for PE and provide them with a free lock. They provide support if we know they are having a financial difficult. When they are aware of such a situation, teacher is made aware which helps them understand their student and their behavior and will increase opportunities for a positive relationship. The personal information is kept confidential. One principal has implemented the conscious discipline program to help build relationships. This has made a big difference in how teachers deal with behavior and supports teachers in finding positive ways in dealing with different behaviors regardless of homeless status. This also includes parent trainings as well.
Continuous Improvement	6. Describe how the school (or school district) has conducted an assessment of the needs of each student experiencing homelessness?	One principal stated as a school they have implemented a needs assessment. If one exists at the district level, they have not seen one. Most principals stated they have not aware of a district needs assessment and do not have a separate survey for homeless students. Most principals shared they have not implemented a needs assessment on site other than the regular ELD or Title I surveys.
Instruction and accountability	7. Describe the school's (or school district) process for ongoing evaluation of the academic progress of each child experiencing homelessness.	Several principals stated they were not aware of how the district keeps track of the academic performance of homeless students and assume they have a data process. One principal stated they have never received a report from the district informing them of the academic performance or progress of their homeless student population. One principal shared the district has provided training on analyzing the data and how to form groups based on need. At the site, they have data meetings with each teacher discussing each student.

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Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Instruction and accountability	7. Describe the school's (or school district) process for ongoing evaluation of the academic progress of each child experiencing homelessness.	Intervention meeting are also conducted after school with our special ed team to discuss individual needs. Several principals responded with "I don't know" and feel there is a need to do progress monitoring for this group of learners for their specific challenges. One principal stated there are general things the district reviews such as the use of CST, CELDT, and ongoing testing as part of the Units of Study. As far as what the district might do, they don't know of any and if they do it has not been communicated to principals. One principal has ongoing on site progress monitoring (Benchmark, fast forward program with daily red flags). Teachers then work with the principal to review student performance and plan for student success based on the specific needs.
Continuous Improvement	8. Is the academic proficiency of homeless students in your school (or school district) increasing? How do you know?	All principals except for one responded with "I don't know". They have never pulled that subgroup to compare. One principal shared they have not been aware of a system of accountability for McKinney-Vento at any of the school they have worked at. One principal knew 50% of her homeless students are proficient and some are basic. This is the first time they looked in the category of homeless. One principal stated that they believe the proficiency scores at their site have increased and they think at the district level, but the do not know. If so, then it is not communicated to the principals. They get lumped in the socially disadvantaged group. They have not seen it disaggregated that way.

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Concept	Questions	Summary of Findings
Continuous Improvement	9. What percentage of identified homeless students in your school (or school district) are grade-level proficient in reading and math?	One principal knew that 50% of their homeless students are proficient and the rest are basic or below and shared that it was the first time had looked in the category of homeless and found it interesting. One principal stated they could not say since they do not have a list identifying the performance of their homeless students. All principals indicated they are unaware of the proficiency levels of homeless students represented district wide. One principal stated at their particular site, 68% of all students are proficient based on the socially disadvantage group, however does not specifically know what it is for their homeless student population.
Continuous Improvement	10. What other indicators, in addition to academic achievement scores, do you measure? (e.g. attendance, grade-level promotion/retention graduation rates, disciplinary referrals)	One principal stated that attendance is used and sometimes this is how we find out who are homeless on site and believed it should be the other way around. Most shared that attendance and behavior data is also used as other indicators that are measured in addition to academic scores. One administrator shared the students' ability beyond the core subjects also is considered. This happens more at the secondary level. One principal indicated attendance is good at their site due to the monthly assembly and incentives for perfect attendance.

Summary

The review of the academic achievement data in English Language Arts and Mathematics for students considered homeless ranged in the basic to proficient performance levels for all groups of learners. The performance of homeless students on the English Language Arts California Standards Test (CST) ranged from basic to proficient levels. Scores have improved over the last three years minimally for all students specifically for IFEP students. English only students made minimal growth of an eight point jump gain. RFEP students have remained proficient since 2009 with a 13-point increase between 2009 and 2010, however, there was a decrease of six points observed from 2011-2012. The research revealed English Language Learners made the most growth with a 27- point jump gain in the last three years in ELA. The chart below displays this data.

Table 36

ELA Scale Scores Three-Year Comparison

Groups	ELA Scale Scores Range 2009-2011		Growth						Moved from	Moved to
All	337-345		09-10		6 pts.				Basic	Basic
			10-11		2 pts.					
EO	347-351		09-10		4 pts.				Basic	Proficient (Cusp)
			10-11		0 pts.					
EL	295-322		09-10		10 pts.				Below Basic	Basic
			10-11		17 pts.					
RFEP	367-374		09-10		13 pts.				Proficient	Proficient
			10-11		-6 pts.					
IFEP	354-355		09-10		1 pts.				Proficient	Proficient
			10-11		0 pts.					
SPED	RSP	SDC	RSP	SDC	RSP		SDC		Below Basic	Below Basic
	272-295	252-261	09-10		09-10	6	09-10	2		
			10-11		10-11	17	10-11	7		

The number of homeless students increased by 436 students in the last three years with the greatest jump observed from 2009 to 2010. This would be consistent with the Looking at the ELA CST data closely reveals that all subgroups except ELs did not make significant growth from 2010 to 2011. RFEP students went down by six points and IFEP didn't make any growth. Special education RSP students made significant growth overtime. SDC students have made minimal growth in ELA since 2009.

Homeless students performed better on the Mathematics California Standards Test (CST) than in ELA making growth over the last three years. English only students made minimal growth of an eight point jump gain. EL students continue to increase their performance overtime. Although they are still in the basic performance band, they have made a significant improvement since 2009 with a total of a 43-point increase in math. Special education students are also making growth. The table below displays this data.

Table 37

Math Scale Scores Three-Year Comparison

Groups	Math Scale Scores Range 2009-2011				Growth				Moved from	Moved to
All	348-369				09-10	10 pts.			Basic	Proficient
					10-11	11 pts.				
EO	352-374				09-10	8 pts.			Proficient	Proficient
					10-11	14 pts.				
EL	301-344				09-10	19 pts.			Basic	Basic
					10-11	24 pts.				
RFEP	393-408				09-10	10 pts.			Proficient	Proficient
					10-11	5 pts.				
IFEP	361-376				09-10	6 pts.			Proficient	Proficient
					10-11	9 pts.				
SPED	RSP	SDC	RSP	SDC	RSP		SDC		Below Basic	Below Basic
	272-295	252-261	09-10		09-10	7	09-10	1		
			10-11		10-11	19	10-11	0		

The chart below gives us an indication how well the participating schools performed on the CST in both Math and ELA. The chart also indicates the number of students represented at each school site. The highlighted schools show 50% or more of homeless students are performing proficient or above in one or both content areas. When reviewing the interviews conducted with these principals, the sites that have implemented brain based professional development have demonstrated significant growth in academic performance in both ELA and Math over the last three years. Those who have not continue to show growth, however, their data shows 50% or more of their students are not at proficient.

Table 38

ELA and Math Homeless Student Data in Title I Schools

ELA and Math Homeless Student Data by Participating Title I Schools												
Site	**EO**	**EL**	**RFEP**	**IFEP**	**RSP**	**SDC**	**ELA P/A 2009**	**ELA P/A 2010**	**ELA P/A 2011**	**Math P/A 2009**	**Math P/A 2010**	**Math P/A 2011**
1C	22	30	16	2	0	4	11 21%	19 37%	**23 44%**	11 21%	18 35%	**28 54%**
2D	51	64	5	7	4	3	19 21%	23 25%	**42 46%**	17 19%	37 41%	**54 59%**
3E	51	86	15	6	7	6	13 14%	26 28%	**21 23%**	12 13%	33 35%	**50 54%**
4F	30	23	7	3	7	0	11 21%	18 35%	**31 60%**	10 19%	21 40%	**35 67%**
5G	52	32	3	3	0	0	7 15%	14 30%	**23 50%**	6 13%	16 35%	**33 72%**
6J	43	22	5	3	7	4	6 11%	13 24%	**26 47%**	9 16%	20 36%	**32 58%**
7L	42	33	6	4	5	6	7 17%	12 26%	**25 57%**	4 1%	13 28%	**28 60%**
8MF	45	22	7	3	2	2	15 28%	18 34%	**19 36%**	15 28%	19 36%	**16 30%**
9M	69	62	5	9	3	0	5 1%	26 34%	**43 57%**	6 1%	23 30%	**52 68%**
10R	31	22	6	0	3	4	5 11%	19 43%	**17 39%**	6 14%	23 52%	**28 64%**
11N	37	46	2	4	2	1	6 11%	3 1%	**21 40%**	5 1%	12 23%	**26 49%**

Note.*Yellow represents schools that have 50% or more of their homeless students at proficient or above

(Continued)

Table 38

ELA and Math Homeless Student Data in Title I Schools

ELA and Math Homeless Student Data by Participating Title I Schools												
Site	**EO**	**EL**	**RFEP**	**IFEP**	**RSP**	**SDC**	**ELA P/A 2009**	**ELA P/A 2010**	**ELA P/A 2011**	**Math P/A 2009**	**Math P/A 2010**	**Math P/A 2011**
12S	53	107	7	21	6	0	4 1%	17 2%	**37 34%**	11 1%	27 25%	**49 46%**
13cm	83	48	39	26	18	7	66 33%	77 39%	**76 38%**	74 37%	65 33%	**66 33%**
14lm	92	52	60	42	20	16	102 41%	122 50%	**106 43%**	104 42%	102 41%	**124 50%**
15w	65	78	53	33	21	7	74 32%	67 29%	**74 32%**	81 35%	84 36%	**110 47%**
Totals	766	633	236	166	105	60	351 24%	474 33%	**584 40%**	371 26%	513 36%	**731 51%**

Note. *Yellow represents schools that have 50% or more of their homeless students at proficient or above

The information gathered through qualitative measures from the survey and interviews showed the following:

1. Professional development training on homeless students is lacking. Participants (62%) felt they did not have the professional training to make a difference in the lives of homeless students.
2. School sites are unaware of their homeless student population
3. School sites do not invest time to collaborate to talk about the needs of their homeless students.
4. School sites do not know the academic performance of their homeless students
5. There is a lack of awareness regarding the procedures and services available for homeless students at the district and school site level.
6. All sites do have extracurricular clubs and before and/or after school tutoring, however, are unaware of how many of their homeless students participate in these services.

Extensive research data was gathered and based on the results there is a statistically significant relationship between the achievement data and the homeless status of the learner as disaggregated among specific subgroups. This is true for data represented for all three school years. There was some indicators of success specifically in the growth observed in homeless students who are English Language Learners, however, this group is still performing in the basic band of performance. The qualitative data gathered through the survey and the interviews may explain the quantitative measures. As such, the study findings indicates an importance and need for educators and administrators to monitor the academic performance of students who are homeless and to provide professional development in this area.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This mix methodology research study combined an analysis of achievement data of mean scaled scores from 2009-2011 for students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento program in Title I schools. This study included a qualitative factor through an online survey tool collecting data of the perceptions of teachers, instructional coaches, and principals and their practices to support homeless students in 2nd through 8th grades. Finally, principals and district administrators who consented to participate were interviewed to identify perceived practices contributing to the academic and social emotional needs of students. The purpose of this study was to (a) examine the ELA and Math CST achievement data of 2nd -8th grade students considered homeless, (b) identify the practices perceived as contributing to the academic achievement of homeless students, and to (c) examine the perceived needs of teachers of homeless students in one school district in Southern California.

The limited literature and research available on how to support homeless students' social emotional and academic needs at the local school level reinforced the value in conducting research in this area. Therefore, there was an opportunity to study the existing practices in place to support students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act in one school district in Southern California with high populations of socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

Based on the research, the important factors to consider when educating homeless students is the needed socialization and relationship building component that provides homeless students with stability and a connection with the school as well as the teacher and staff awareness and sensitivity needed when working with homeless students (Payne

1996).

Implementation of Practices to Support Homeless Students

The analysis of this data tells us there are three significant areas to consider when educating homeless students. These include having an awareness of your homeless student population, accountability and monitoring of homeless students, and providing the social-emotional organizational practices in place to support these learners.

Awareness. Based on the survey and interview questions, it was clear that awareness of homeless students and their academic and social-emotional needs was one of the greatest needs the participants indicated. Based on the research study conducted by California Department of Education that looked at the practices implemented in three states and six school districts, one of the main challenges was the awareness that educators and the general public have around the challenges of our homeless student populations (DE, 2002). This was quite evident in this particular study as both the survey data and interview responses demonstrated.

The research findings indicated that the participants were not aware of the homeless children they service. Lack of information does not allow them the opportunity to support these students. Several of the respondents including principals requested a list of their identified homeless students. According to Polakow (1993, 2007), teachers should take the time to understand the social needs and hardships their students encounter daily. Expressing genuine care and support can help ease the mind of a homeless child and bring down the walls they have built as a self-mechanism and in turn engage students in learning (Noddings, 1992). The lack of awareness and knowledge regarding the needs of their homeless student population is indicative of the achievement performance data

analyzed in this study.

Accountability and monitoring. The Title I schools represented in this study were very clear in that they do not have a student progress monitoring practice for homeless students and are not aware of who their homeless students are in their classrooms. As reviewed in the literature study in Chapter Two, progress monitoring is a practice teachers can use to discover the needs of their students and to inform their teaching (Safer & Fleisheman, 2005). Based on the work of Fuchs and Fuchs as reviewed in the literature as well, systematic progress monitoring will "design stronger instructional programs" (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2002, p. 32). Nevertheless, a few strategies were mentioned to be sound instructional strategies that could work for any learner. Some of those practices included small group instruction, guided reading, think pair share, and ELD strategies.

The achievement data in both math and ELA indicated English Language Learners made the most growth in the last three years. The focus on ELD strategies within the district for this group of learners may be the reason for this growth. The school district's LEA Plan has made this a focus and of importance. According to Schmoker, there exists a "need to be more disciplined and systematic in our professional collaboration-and be single minded in our concern with identifying and then solving particularly difficult instructional and learning problems" (Schmoker, 1999, p. 15). The focus on English Language Learners as a district shows effectiveness in the area of homeless English Language Learners.

When reflecting on the existing literature, visible tracking of student progress on a frequent and regular basis (Reeves, 2004) was one of the main success factors of schools.

Ongoing and focused professional development, modeling of effective teaching and assessment practices, ongoing professional collaboration, and effective communication were the other four strengths listed as practices to reach academic and educational reform (Reeves, 2004). Based on the data, the findings show that homeless students within the homeless student population can and have made growth. Systems of accountability can be easily implemented to ensure greater growth within this population. This currently is not in place based on the responses from the qualitative portion of the study.

All participants who consented to either completing the survey or the interview process stated they did not review data specifically for their homeless student population and do not have specific strategies in place for homeless students in mind. The findings indicated the need to provide professional development in this area. As indicated earlier in the findings in Chapter Four, teachers do not feel they could have enough professional training to make a difference in the lives of children living in homeless situations. The work of Douglas Reeves can inform how we can approach the need for awareness and professional development to bring about a sense of self-efficacy in teachers that work with homeless students. Reeves makes a connection between *accountability* and the use of data to improve low performing schools. Reeves (2009) suggests educational accountability is connected to "an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account to one's actions" (p. 7). Schools must recognize and be informed about their obligation to educate their homeless student population and one way to begin this process if by developing professional development training to support teachers and administrators.

One viable approach reviewed by such experts as Mike Schmoker and Douglas

Reeves is to include the implementation of collaborative teams to have structured conversations around the operational use of the data for homeless students and making each other accountable for the results. This practice is most commonly used to review subgroup data and can be easily applied to the homeless student population. The practice can only be applied if school sites are aware of the homeless students they serve. In keeping with the literature, there exists a "need to be more disciplined and systematic in our professional collaboration-and be single minded in our concern with identifying and then solving particularly difficult instructional and learning problems" (Schmoker, 1999, p. 15). It could be said that with the infusion and development of a systematic approach and professional training for the educators and principals of this school district, the data for this subgroup of homeless learners will improve just as it has for their English Language Learners.

Social-emotional practices. The findings indicated a lack of available resources not only in the academics, but also in the social-emotional practices instituted to support this group of learners. As school districts and schools sites plan for implementation of effective programs servicing homeless students, the social relationship implications and student basic needs must be addressed in some fashion. Incorporating and building into the school's infrastructure such programs as enrichment clubs and counseling services are important in order to support homeless or highly mobile students become successful in forging a place where they feel a "sense of belonging and connection to the school community" (Walker-Dalhouse & Risko, 2008, p. 85).

All sites that participated in the study have implemented some type of before and/or after school programs and extracurricular clubs and activities at their sites,

however, the number of homeless students participating in these services is unknown. Researchers and educators in the field believe high quality well organized out-of-school-time activities have the potential to support and promote youth development, providing students with the skills needed to engage in the regular day instructional program. These services allow for opportunities to develop relationship with peers, teach skills, beliefs, and behaviors (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2004).

In addition, the qualitative responses in both the survey and interviews indicated a lack of school counselors to help students. Several respondents indicated only having a counselors one time a week or not at all.

The research has shown the importance of school counselors and their ability to help support students of homelessness (Strawser, Markos, Yamaguchi, & Higgins, 2002). Counselors can inform the families regarding available resources and supports as well as provide teachers a different lens or perspective when thinking of classroom management plans and discipline for homeless students. Counselors can support teachers understand the possible reasons why some classroom policies and procedures work and why others may not work for this target population. Counselors can meet with students to help them cope with the obstacles they may face at home and at school as well as provide them with strategies to become successful in school and with friendships. Unfortunately, only those students that are in the Student Success Team process or are referred are supported and it is at times the only way schools become aware that a student may be challenged with homelessness.

Lessons Learned

The research methodology study was one that was very well accepted by those that were interviewed. The survey portion of the research yielded a 52% response rate. One lesson learned was revealed in the interview questions when several participants responded with "I don't know". Some of the respondents felt uncomfortable they were unable to respond. The research study asked participants to share how much they knew about the performance of their homeless student population. A few principals understated the number of homeless students represented on their campus by even hundredths of students.

Participants were not in the practice to review data for this subgroup of learners and felt a bit uncomfortable when answering some of the questions regarding the academic achievement of their students challenged by homelessness. This being the case, it is very important for any researcher studying a topic a group may not have a lot of information or experience with to be sensitive and help the participants feel design methodology and practices that protects the privacy of those being interviewed.

Recommendation for Policy and Practice

The primary goal of this study was to review the academic achievement data of homeless students and to identify the practices perceived to support this group of learners. Based on the research findings, there seems to be a lack of coordinated resources and self-efficacy among the teaching staff to support this particular subgroup in the area of academics and meeting the social emotional needs of students. The study outcomes recommend the following:

1. District level professional development training focused on the special needs of homeless students as well as providing school principals with academic data on their homeless student population. Providing training for principals will provide them with information to develop school wide structures to support this population of learners.
2. Identifying homeless students in a web based data system for teacher review. Making data accessible to teachers will provide them with information to inform their instruction.
3. Site based professional development for both certificated and classified staff to inform and provide strategies in how to work with student who are faced with homelessness.
4. Develop a district wide counseling partnership with outside consultants or city resources to allow for more on-site counseling services more than one day week to support homeless student. This will provide opportunities for homeless students to gain support with their social-emotional needs.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. A study that compares the academic achievement trends of homeless students to those who are not to analyze if there is a difference in performance within both group of learners in Title I schools.
2. A research study analyzing the achievement data of homeless students in non-Title I schools and the practices and organizational structures implemented perceived to support this group of learners.

3. A similar study to this with several districts involved to compare the academic achievement of homeless students and practices implemented to determine if the findings are true across districts or if this particular study of one school district is an outlier.
4. A study regarding the practices used to sustain academic achievement for homeless students to better understand the factors needed to improve homeless education.
5. Research the specific needs of homeless students to development that support homeless education.
6. Study the achievement data of English Language Learners and compare their performance to English Language Learners who are homeless to determine if the existing practices yield the same results for both groups.

Final Thoughts

Students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act are most likely to have academic problems at school than do students who are not. The impact of an unstable home coupled with an unstable school can significantly impact the academic performance and social emotional needs of these students. High transience is one of the main determents to academic achievement and can impact a child's self-esteem and classroom behavior (Hendershott, 1989; Vail, 1996). The literature on highly mobile students indicates that it can take students "four to six months to recover academically after changing schools" (United States Department of Education, 2004, p. 1). Highly mobile students have also been found to have lower test scores and overall academic performance than peers who do not change schools.

The research on social cultural theory makes it imperative that school systems become proactive in developing a learning environment that fosters and enhances opportunities for social interactions. The life of a homeless student does not allow for stable social interactions because of their constant movement. The impact the development of social interactions and relationships on a child's academic performance and future is critical to their success.

Building a comprehensive and collaborative Homeless Education Program at the district and site level will increase the likelihood of a smooth transition and successful school experience for homeless students. The most important first steps are to conduct ongoing awareness raising activities throughout schools and the community, train and designate homeless education liaisons at each school to serve students and educate staff, provide ongoing staff development, and provide collaboration continuously with homeless service providers and other civic groups.

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Appendix A

Superintendent or Designee Permission to Conduct Study

TO: XXXXXX, Superintendent

FROM: XXXXXXX

DATE: XXX XX, XXXX

SUBJECT: Superintendent or Designee Permission to Conduct Study

I would like your permission to conduct a research study at Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District as part of my doctoral dissertation at Pepperdine University. The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent, if at all, there is a relationship between the existing practices and the academic achievement of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act of 2002.

The purpose of the study is to identify successful practices and perceptions of schools working with homeless students to understand how to best serve students in homeless situations. This study seeks to capture the perceptions of teachers and administrators in order to gain a better understanding of the practices they believe contribute to the performance of this subgroup of learners. In addition, data will be collected regarding the perceived needs teachers who work with homeless students may have. Once key practices are identified, the themes will provide recommendations for other schools striving to support the academic achievement of their homeless student population. Your district's participation in the study will contribute to knowledge and practices surrounding the best practices sustaining academic achievement of homeless students in California schools.

I selected Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District as a possible site for this study because it serves a population of McKinney-Vento students in elementary and middle schools. If teachers, instructional coaches, principals, and district administrators agree to the participating in the study, they will be asked to complete an online survey to capture their perceptions on the practices they feel contribute to the academic success of homeless students. The survey will also gain data regarding the needs teachers have to support this particular group of learners.

In addition, principal and district administrator interviews will take place in person or over the phone at the convenience of the selected administrators. I will tape record the interviews and transcribe the notes to ensure accuracy. Participant's identities will remain confidential and the interview notes and recordings will not be shared with others. The interview notes will be examined for common themes and used to identify principals' and district administrators' perceptions of practices that contribute to the academic achievement of students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act of 2001.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants who decide to participate are free to withdraw their consent or discontinue participation at any time. A copy of the informed consent and the interview protocol are attached for your information.

Please sign and return your approval by February 22, 2012. If you are unable to respond by that date, please send this approval as soon as possible.

Please return one copy of this signed form to:

Name XXXXX
Address XXXXX

You may also fax the signed form to (XXX) XXX-XXXX or email it to XXXX.XXXX@XXXX.XX. If you have any questions regarding this study please feel free to contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or (XXX) XXX-XXXX. If you have any additional questions or concerns regarding this study, you may also contact the researcher's supervisor Dr. XXX at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXXX@yahoo.com or XXX.XXXX@XXXXX.XX.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above, that you willingly agree for me to invite your site and staff to participate in this study, and that you have received a copy of this form.

Respectfully,

_____
XXXXXXX

Attachments:
Copy of Superintendent or Designee Permission to Conduct Study;
Survey Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities;
Survey Protocol and Questions;
Principal and District Administrator Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities;
Principal and District Administrator Interview Protocol and Questions

I hereby consent to my school district's participation in the research described above.

_____
School District

_____
Superintendent or Designee Signature

_____
Please Print Superintendent or Designee's Name

_____
Date

Appendix B

Email Invitation to Participate in an Online Survey Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities

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Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent, if at all, there is a relationship between the existing practices and the academic achievement of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. This study seeks to capture the perceptions of teachers and administrators in order to gain a better understanding of the practices they believe contribute to the performance of homeless students.

My name is XXXXXX and I am a doctoral student at XXXXXXX University. This research project is being conducted as part of my doctoral dissertation work. You were chosen from a pool of possible participants for this study.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to respond to the questions through an online survey tool called Zoomerang. The link to this short survey is at the end of this email message. Completing the survey should take 15 minutes. This survey contains questions regarding existing practices and needs you have at your school site and school district. Information regarding your school's student achievement will be obtained through the XXXX Unified School District Assessment and Evaluation Department. If you respond to the survey, you will be sent a summary of the study results and a link to the final study.

Clicking on the link below indicates that you have read and understand the information provided, that you willingly agree to participate, you do not have to answer every question, understand that participation in the study is voluntary, and you may withdraw your consent at any time. If you would like to read more about your informed consent, please read the message below.

Educational Practices to Support Homeless Students

Thank you in advance,

XXXXXX, doctoral candidate
XXXXX University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Address
Address

Appendix C

Online Survey Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities

Participant: _____

Principal Investigator: XXXXX

Title of Project: Educational Practices to Support Homeless Students

1. I agree to participate in the dissertation research study conducted by doctoral student Maribel Galan, from the Educational Leadership and Policy Program at XXXXX University. I understand that I may contact Ms. XXX's supervisor XXXXX at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXX.XXXX@XXXXX.XXX if I have any questions or concerns regarding the study.

2. The overall purpose of this research is to identify the practices perceived as contributing to the academic and social emotional needs of students in homeless situations as identified by the McKinney-Vento Act of 2002. I have been asked to participate in this study because my site serves a population of McKinney-Vento students in either elementary or middle school level.

3. I understand that my participation will involve completing an online survey regarding practices that support the academic achievement and social emotional development of students experiencing homelessness.

4. I understand that by clicking on the link indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, do not have to answer every question, and that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation at any time.

5. My participation in the study will be from the date listed above to March 30, 2012. The online survey shall be conducted when participants are available to complete the survey. Responses are anonymous and will be used to identify the perceptions of practices that contribute to the academic and social emotional growth of homeless students.

6. I understand that the possible benefits to society or myself from the research are increased knowledge about practices surrounding supporting academic achievement and social emotional development of homeless students in California elementary and middle schools. I understand that I may not benefit at all from my participation.

7. I understand that the researcher will work with me to ensure there is minimal risk, discomfort, and inconvenience, identifying and addressing any concerns I may have via email. I understand that harm to human subjects is not limited to physical injury, and that there are certain risks and discomforts that might be associated with research. These risks include: psychological, social, and physical risks that may be fatigue. Psychological risks may include boredom, embarrassment, and anxiety. I believe the risks of this study are

minimized and are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits of the study. I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question, and to discontinue participation at any time.

8. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to participate and/or withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in the project or any activity at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I also understand that the researcher may find it necessary to end my participation in this study.

9. I understand that the investigator(s) will take all reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of my records and my identity will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this project. The confidentiality of my records will be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Under California law, there are exceptions to confidentiality, including suspicion that a child, elder, or dependent adult is being abused, or if an individual discloses an intent to harm him/herself or others.

10. I understand that my job status will not be affected by refusal to participate or by withdrawal from the study.

11. If the findings of the study are published or presented to a professional audience, no personally identifying information will be released. The raw data gathered will be stored on the researcher's personal computer and will be stored in locked file cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. The possibility exists that the data may be used in future research. If this is the case, the data will be used without any personally identifying information so that I cannot be identified, and the use of the data will be supervised by the investigator listed above. The raw data will be maintained in a secure manner for three years at which time the raw data will be destroyed. I do not anticipate the need to share uncoded data with others, and would do so only with your permission.

12. I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact Maribel Galan at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXX.XXXX@XXXX.XXX, if I have other questions or concerns about this research. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I understand that I can contact Dr. XXX, XXXXX University Graduate School of Education and Psychology, XXXXXXXX. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I may contact Dr. XXX chairperson of the XXXXX University Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

13. I will be informed of any significant new findings developed during the course of my participation in this research that may have a bearing on my willingness to continue in the study.

14. I understand I will not receive any compensation, financial or otherwise, for participating in this study.

15. I understand to my satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I may print a copy of this informed consent form at the time of completing the online survey that I have read and understand.

16. Clicking on the link below indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation at any time.

Appendix D

Survey Protocol Educational Practices to Support Homeless Students

zoomerang

Survey Protocol –Educational Practices to Support Homeless Students ~ Appendix D

Survey Protocol Appendix D

Page 1 - Question 1 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Please state if you serve as a teacher, instructional coach, principal, or district administrator

- ○ Teacher
- ○ Instructional Coach
- ○ Principal
- ○ District Administrator

Page 1 - Question 2 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Please state if you serve in your current position for an...

- ○ Elementary School
- ○ Middle School
- ○ Other

Page 1 - Question 3 - Rating Scale - Matrix

Professional Development and Collaboration

How often do you review academic data to support the needs of students in homeless situations?

1: Once a Week 2: Once a Month 3: Once a Trimester 4: Never

How much time has been dedicated to collaborate with your colleagues to discuss the best instructional strategies to use with McKinney-Vento students to increase their academic performance?

1: Once a Week 2: Once a Month 3: Once a Trimester 4: Never

How often do you have opportunities for professional development specifically to learn about the academic and social-emotional needs of students in homeless situations?

1: Once a Week 2: Once a Month 3: Once a Trimester 4: Never

Page 1 - Question 4 - Open Ended - Comments Box

Teachers, how might the District and Principal meet your needs in order to effectively work with students in homeless situations? Principals and District Administrators, how might you support the needs of teachers working with students in homeless situations?

Page 1 - Heading

Instruction and Accountability

Description

Page 1 - Question 5 - Open Ended - Comments Box

Describe the data practices you have in place for students in the McKinney-Vento program to monitor the performance of this group of learners?

Page 1 - Question 6 - Open Ended - Comments Box

What are some additional indicators of academic proficiency that you measure?

Page 1 - Question 7 - Open Ended - Comments Box

Briefly describe any innovative teaching strategies you have implemented to support students considered homeless.

Page 1 - Heading

Expectations for Student Learning

Description

Page 1 - Question 8 - Open Ended - Comments Box

List the academic supports you implement when a McKinney-Vento student does not perform well in your class? District Administrators, what academic supports do you provide when McKinney-Vento students are not performing well in school?

Page 1 - Question 9 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Do you believe you make a difference in the lives of children living in homeless situations?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I do not have enough professional training to make a difference in the lives of children living in homeless situations

Page 1 - Question 10 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

Do you feel that all students can learn even when met with the challenges of homelessness?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Page 1 - Heading

Organizational Structures

Description

Page 1 - Question 11 - Choice - Multiple Answers (Bullets)

Select all supplemental academic and social supports available to support students in homeless situations improve academic achievement.

- ☐ Before school tutoring
- ☐ After school tutoring
- ☐ Extracurricular clubs such as sports and music
- ☐ Other, please specify

Page 1 - Question 12 - Open Ended - Comments Box

Describe how you modify homework requirements for your homeless students represented in your classroom or school? Are specific supplies and materials provided to them to complete the homework?

Page 1 - Heading

Social Emotional Structures

Description

Page 1 - Question 13 - Open Ended - Comments Box

How are counselors used to support the socialization and emotional well being of students experiencing homelessness?

Page 1 - Question 14 - Open Ended - Comments Box

Are there certain behaviors you have observed in homeless students that have influenced you to modify your classroom or school discipline plan to best support your homeless student population?

Thank You Page

Thank you very much for your feedback.

Appendix E

Email Reminder

Dear Participant:

Recently, I sent you an email requesting your participation in a research study that will help identify practices and perceptions of schools working with homeless students to understand how to best serve students in homeless situations as identified by the McKinney-Vento Act of 2002. The analysis of the survey will identify several significant themes regarding educating our homeless youth that you may be interested in.

This email is a reminder requesting you to complete the online survey. For your convenience, I added the survey link below. Please click on the link below and begin the 15-minute survey.

Educational Practices to Support Homeless Students

If you have already completed the survey, thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXX, doctoral candidate
XXXXXXXXX University
XXXXXXXXXXX
Address

Appendix F

Cover Letter for Principal/District Administrator informed Consent

TO: Principal

FROM: XXXXX

DATE: Month, 01, XXXX

SUBJECT: Research Request

I would like your permission to conduct a research study at _____ Elementary or Middle School as part of my doctoral dissertation at XXXXX University. The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent, if at all, there is a relationship between the existing practices and the academic achievement of students who are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act of 2002.

The purpose of the study is to identify successful practices and perceptions of schools working with homeless students to understand how to best serve students in homeless situations. This study seeks to capture the perceptions of teachers and administrators in order to gain a better understanding of the practices they believe contribute to the performance of this subgroup of learners. In addition, data will be collected regarding the perceived needs teachers who work with homeless students may have. Once key practices are identified, the themes will provide recommendations for other schools striving to support the academic achievement of their homeless student population. Your school's participation in the study will contribute to knowledge and practices surrounding the best practices sustaining academic achievement of homeless students in California schools.

I selected your school as a possible site for this study because it serves a population of McKinney-Vento students in either the elementary or middle school levels.

Principal and district administrator interviews will take place in person or over the phone at your the convenience. I will tape record the interviews and transcribe the notes to ensure accuracy. Participant's identities will remain confidential and the interview notes and recordings will not be shared with others. The interview notes will be examined for common themes and used to identify principals' and district administrators' perceptions of practices that contribute to the academic achievement of students considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act of 2001.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants who decide to participate are free to withdraw their consent or discontinue participation at any time. A copy of the informed consent and the interview protocol are attached for your information.

Please sign and return your approval by Month, 01, 2012. If you are unable to respond by

that date, please send this approval as soon as possible.

Please fax or email one copy of this signed form to:

XXXXXX at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or email it to XXXXXX@pepperdine.edu. If you have any questions regarding this study please feel free to contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or (XXX) XXX-XXXX. If you have any additional questions or concerns regarding this study, you may also contact the researcher's supervisor Dr. XXXX at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXXX@yahoo.com or XXXXX@XXXX.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above, that you willingly agree for me to invite your site and staff to participate in this study, and that you have received a copy of this form.

Respectfully,

_____
Name
Attachments:
Principal and District Administrator Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities;
Principal and District Administrator Interview Protocol and Questions

Appendix G

Principal Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities

Participant: _____

Principal Investigator: XXXXX

Title of Project: Educational Practices to Support Homeless Students

1. I, _____ , agree to participate in the dissertation research study conducted by doctoral student XXXXX, from the Educational Leadership and Policy Program at Pepperdine University. I understand that I may contact Ms. XXXX supervisor Dr. XXX at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXXX@XXXXX.edu if I have any questions or concerns regarding the study.

2. The overall purpose of this research is to identify the practices perceived as contributing to the academic and social emotional needs of students in homeless situations as identified by the McKinney-Vento Act of 2002. I have been asked to participate in this study because I am an administrator at the site or district level serving a population of McKinney-Vento students in either elementary, middle, or high school level.

3. I understand that my participation will involve one 50-60 minute interview regarding your perception of practices that contribute to the academic achievement of students in homeless situations as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act.

4. My participation in the study will be from the date listed above to Month, X, 2012. The interview shall be conducted in person or over the phone and tape recorded in order to ensure the accuracy of the interview notes. The researcher will convert the audio files to written text and will use the interview content to identify principals' perceptions of practices that contribute to the academic performance of homeless students.

5. I understand that the possible benefits to society or myself from the research are increased knowledge about practices surrounding supporting academic achievement and social emotional development of homeless students in California elementary schools. I understand that I may not benefit at all from my participation.

6. I understand that the researcher will work with me to ensure there is minimal risk, discomfort, and inconvenience, identifying and addressing any concerns I may have. I understand that harm to human subjects is not limited to physical injury, and that there are certain risks and discomforts that might be associated with research. These risks include: psychological, social, and physical risks that may be fatigue. Psychological risks may include boredom, embarrassment, and anxiety. I believe the risks of this study are minimized and are
reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits of the study. I understand that I have the

right to refuse to answer any question, and to discontinue participation at any time.

7. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to participate and/or withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in the project or any activity at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I also understand that the researcher may find it necessary to end my participation in this study.

8. I understand that the investigator(s) will take all reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of my records and my identity will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this project. The confidentiality of my records will be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Under California law, there are exceptions to confidentiality, including suspicion that a child, elder, or dependent adult is being abused, or if an individual discloses an intent to harm him/herself or others.

9. If the findings of the study are published or presented to a professional audience, no personally identifying information will be released. I understand that the interviews will be tape recorded only with my permission prior to each interview. The raw data gathered will be stored on the researcher's personal computer and transcribed interviews will be stored in locked file cabinets to which only the investigator will have access. The possibility exists that the data may be used in future research. If this is the case, the data will be used without any personally identifying information so that I cannot be identified, and the use of the data will be supervised by the investigator listed above. The raw data will be maintained in a secure manner for three years at which time the raw data will be destroyed. I do not anticipate the need to share uncoded data with others, and would do so only with your permission.

10. I understand that my job status will not be affected by refusal to participate or by withdrawal from the study.

11. I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact Maribel Galan at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXX@XXXX, if I have other questions or concerns about this research. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I understand that I can contact Dr. XXX, XXXX University Graduate School of Education and Psychology, XXXXXXXX. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I may contact Dr. XXXX, chairperson of the XXXXX University Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB) at (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

12. I will be informed of any significant new findings developed during the course of my participation in this research that may have a bearing on my willingness to continue in the study.

13. I understand I will not receive any compensation, financial or otherwise, for participating in this study.

14. I understand to my satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research

project. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have received a copy of this informed consent form that I have read and understand. I hereby consent to participate in the research described above.

I hereby consent to my school district's participation in the research described above.

_____

Participant's Signature

_____

Date

_____

Witness

_____

Date

I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented to participate. Having explained this and answered any questions, I am cosigning this form and accepting this person's consent.

_____

Principal Investigator

_____

Date

Appendix H

Request to Participate Phone Call Protocol

I will follow the following steps to answer the following questions when contacting a principal to schedule an interview.

1. Review why their school was selected and the purpose of the study.
2. Information regarding the interview procedures found in the informed consent.
3. Answer any questions they have.
4. Ask to schedule an interview.
5. Ask participants to sign and return the informed consent prior to the interview.

Appendix I

Principal and District Administrator

Interview Protocol and Questions

I will review the following information prior to our interview. I selected XXX School as a site for this study because it serves a population of McKinney-Vento students in either the elementary or middle school levels.

I will be conducting research regarding your perception of practices that contribute to the academic achievement of students in homeless situations as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act.

I will be conducting one 50-60 minute interview with you. I will audiotape record of our conversation during the interview with your permission.

I will not be excessive in demands and will be sensitive to your needs. I will attempt to be the least disruptive as possible.

The findings will be published and shared with the educational community. I assure you of confidentiality that names will not be used in the manuscript, and individual identities will be disguised through coding of data. No one will have access to the transcriptions and recordings except me.

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the researcher or your school or district.

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty.

Original documents and recordings of interviews will be safeguarded and not shared with others. They will be stored for three years, after which they will be destroyed.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Principal and District Administrator

Interview Questions

The purpose of the study is to identify practices and perceptions of schools working with McKinney-Vento students to understand how to best serve students in homeless situations as identified by the McKinney-Vento Act of 2002. This study seeks to capture the perceptions of administrators in order to gain a better understanding of the practices they believe contribute to the performance of this subgroup of learners.

11. Briefly describe how your school or school district provide for on going training on the special issues and needs of children and youth without homes for all professional and classified staff that interact with this group of learners.
12. Describe the school and/or school district's procedure for making professional staff aware of the living arrangements of children and youth experiencing homelessness?
13. Describe the strategies implemented at your site that help students in homeless situations achieve success?
14. Describe the provisions made to ensure there are accessible tutorial services adequate to meet the needs of students in homeless situations? If so, please describe the programs available.
15. Describe how teachers demonstrate academic and behavioral expectations for students in homeless situations that are generally equal to the expectations held for other students.
16. Describe how the school (or school district) has conducted an assessment of the needs of each student experiencing homelessness?

17. Describe the school's and/or district process for ongoing evaluation of the academic progress of each child experiencing homelessness.
18. Is the academic proficiency of homeless students in your school or within the district increasing? How do you know?
19. What percentage of identified homeless students in your school or district are grade-level proficient in reading and math?
20. What other indicators, in addition to academic achievement scores, do you measure? (e.g. attendance, disciplinary referrals, etc.)

Appendix J

Email Thank you Letter

To: XXXXXXXXXXX
From: XXXXX
Date: TBD
Subject: Thank You Letter

Dear XXXXXXXX,

Thank you for your participation in my doctoral study on successful practices and perceptions of schools working with McKinney-Vento students to understand how to best serve students in homeless situations as identified by the McKinney-Vento Act of 2002. The analysis of the survey and the principal interviews will identify several significant themes regarding educating our homeless youth that you may be interested in. The survey revealed XYZ. The Principal interviews revealed XYZ.

Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this research study. It was a pleasure gaining your perspective on improving student achievement for our homeless student population.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXX