



# *Removing Barriers Everyday*

*Ensuring the educational rights and protections due under the ~~McKinney~~**Vento Homeless Assistance Act** to all students experiencing homelessness.*

Carla Grace Scott  
Administrative Supervisor



Austin ISD

# WHAT IS THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT?

The intent of the McKinney-Vento Act is to remove barriers to educational access and success for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

The McKinney-Vento Act states that children and youth who lack “a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” will be considered homeless.

**McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless** U.S. § 11434a(2) A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to

A regular residence is one that is used on a regular [i.e., nightly] basis and adequate residence is one that is sufficient for physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

All schools must use the definition of homeless established by the education subtitle V of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act [42

U.S. § 11434a(2)]

- President Reagan passed McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in 1987.
- The Act entitles homeless school children access to the same, free, appropriate public education that is provided to non-homeless youth.
- President Obama expanded law through Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2016.
- Every Local Education Agency must have a liaison to advocate for students experiencing homelessness.

# WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES?

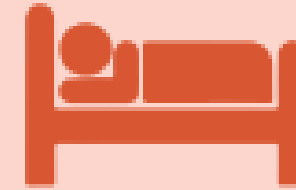
**Students experiencing homelessness live in any of these situations:**



Doubled-up  
with other people



Homeless Shelter



Hotel/Motel



Car, park, empty building,  
bus, or train station

**McKinney-Vento eligible students have the right to:**

- ✓ Receive a free, appropriate public education.
- ✓ Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment.
- ✓ Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents.
- ✓ Enroll in the local school or continue attending their school of origin.
- ✓ Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested.
- ✓ Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to the student's needs.

# WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES?

## Doubled up

- Living in shared housing (i.e., living with relatives, friends or close associates in housing where the child's parent's name is not on lease, mortgage or bills) due to eviction, violence, inadequate housing, natural disaster or destruction of home, parent/ guardian abandonment
- Moving to multiple homes or are “in-between” homes – non-stable housing
- Hardship (financial, loss of employment, illness, etc.) that forces families or youth to share housing temporarily

## Unaccompanied Youth

The term “unaccompanied youth” includes youth who not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian

- Runaways
- Thrown out of home by parents
- Couch surfers
- Abandoned by parents (e.g., fleeing, incarceration or given to other relatives)

# LEGAL EXPECTATIONS

## MCKINNEY VENTO & FOSTER CARE



### Immediate Enrollment

- No delay in enrollment
- Ability to complete enrollment without all documentation as required
- Complete a Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ)
- School supplies are provided to ensure continuity of education regardless of financial and housing obstacles.



### School of Origin

Right to attend school of origin (last school attended) or zoned school (school assigned to address)



### Transportation

- Transportation is available to school of origin if school is over 2 miles away.
- Transportation is available within Attendance Zone



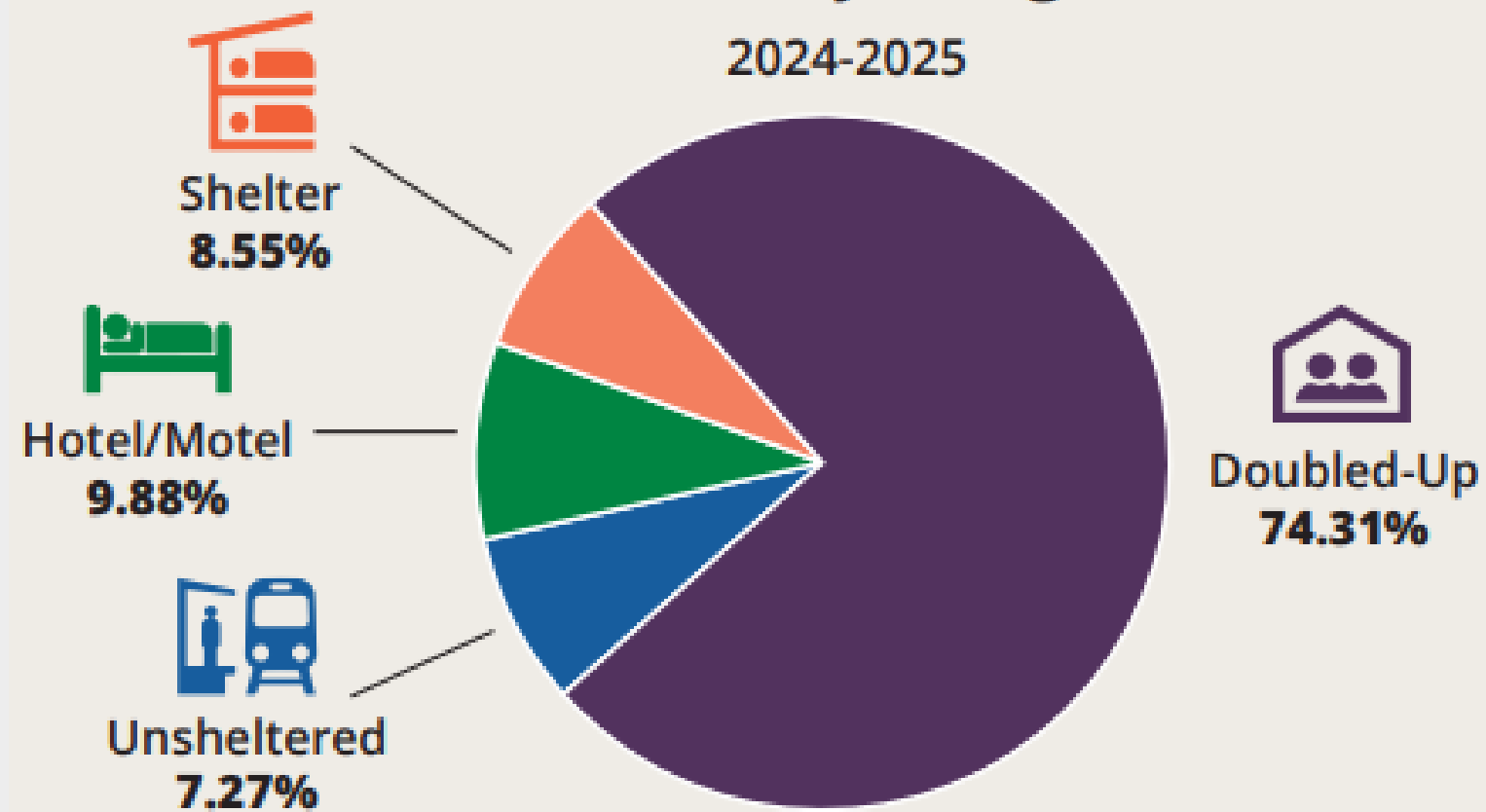
### Nutrition

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 expanded federal child nutrition programs to assist homeless, migrant, foster, and runaway children and youth by providing automatic eligibility for free school meals

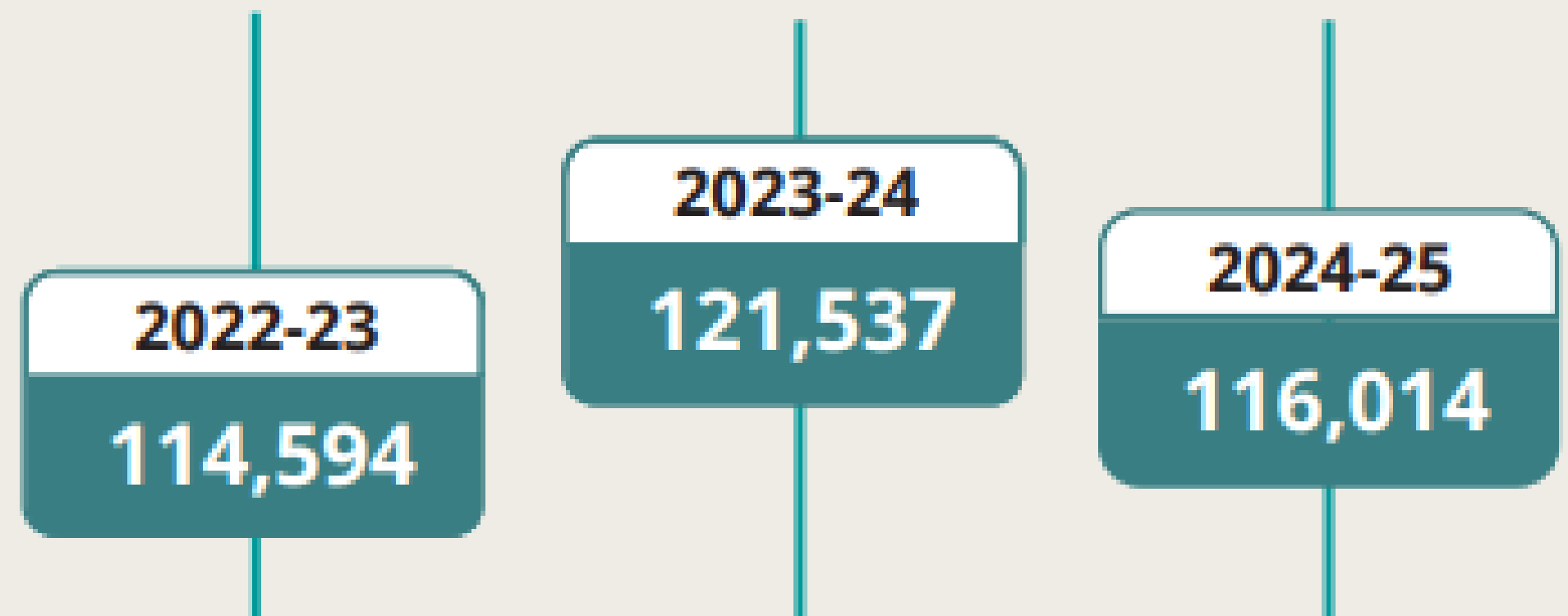
# State of Texas Data Overview

## Identified Students Experiencing Homelessness by Living Situation

2024-2025



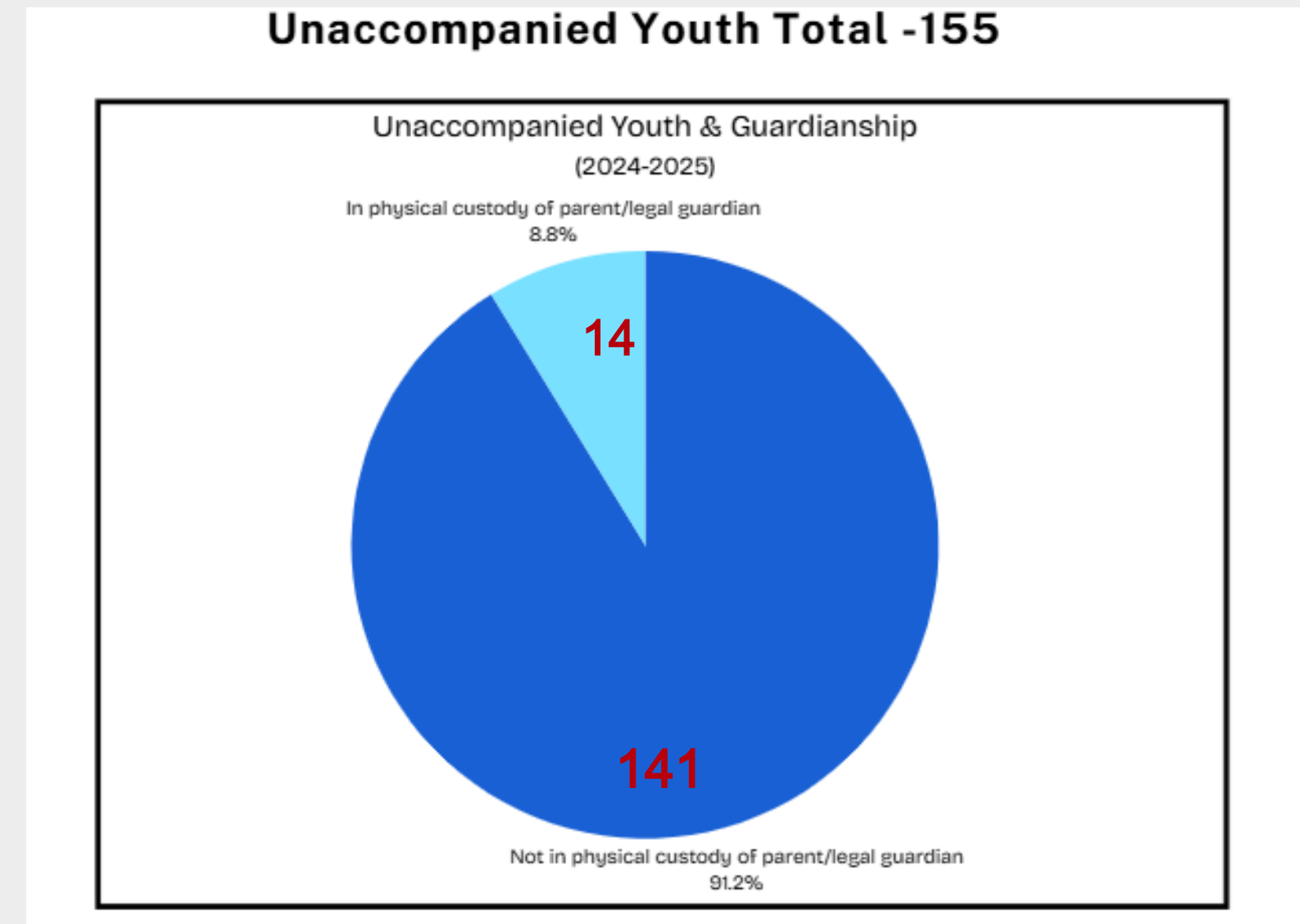
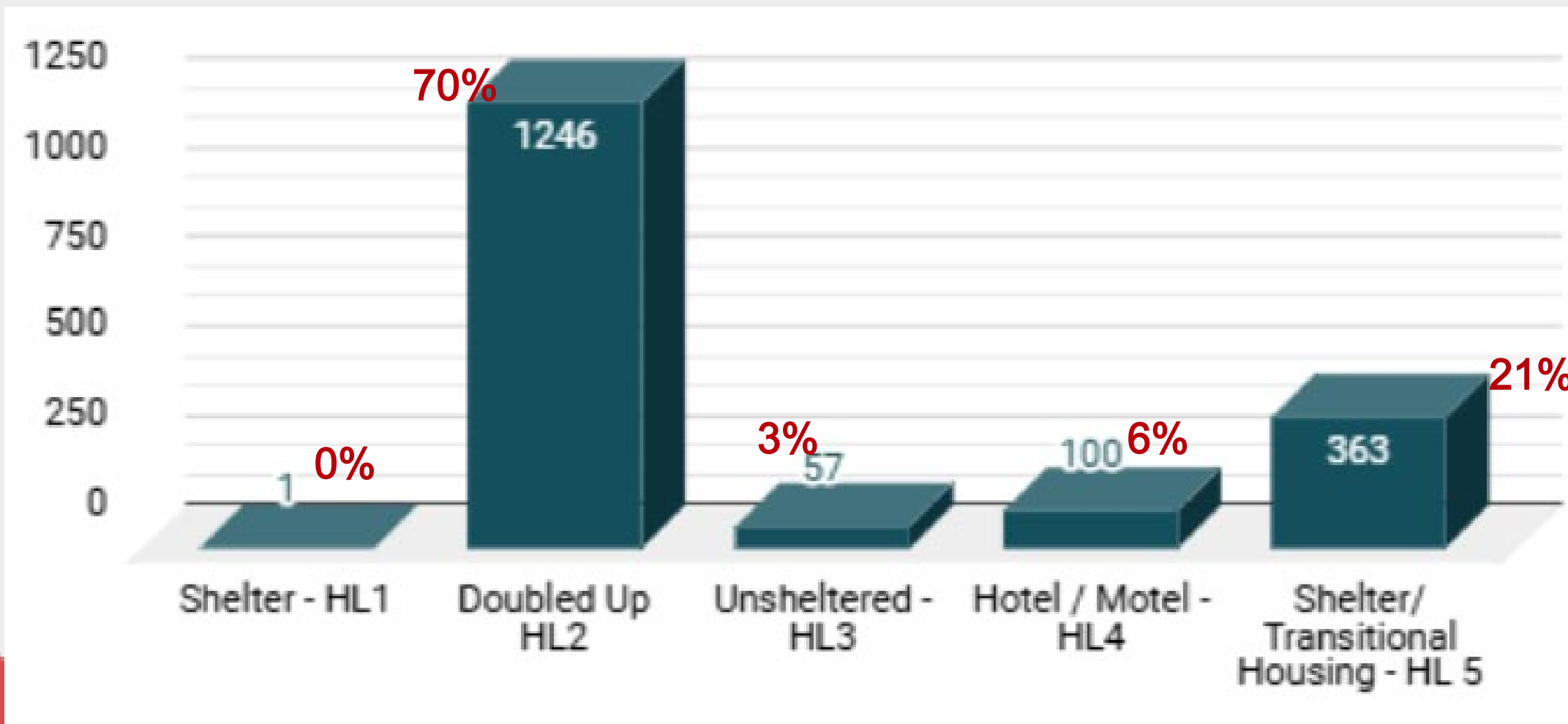
## Students Experiencing Homelessness in Texas Public Schools



# 20242025 Project HELP Data

Homeless Student Total 768

Unaccompanied Youth Total 155



# 20242025 Project HELP Data

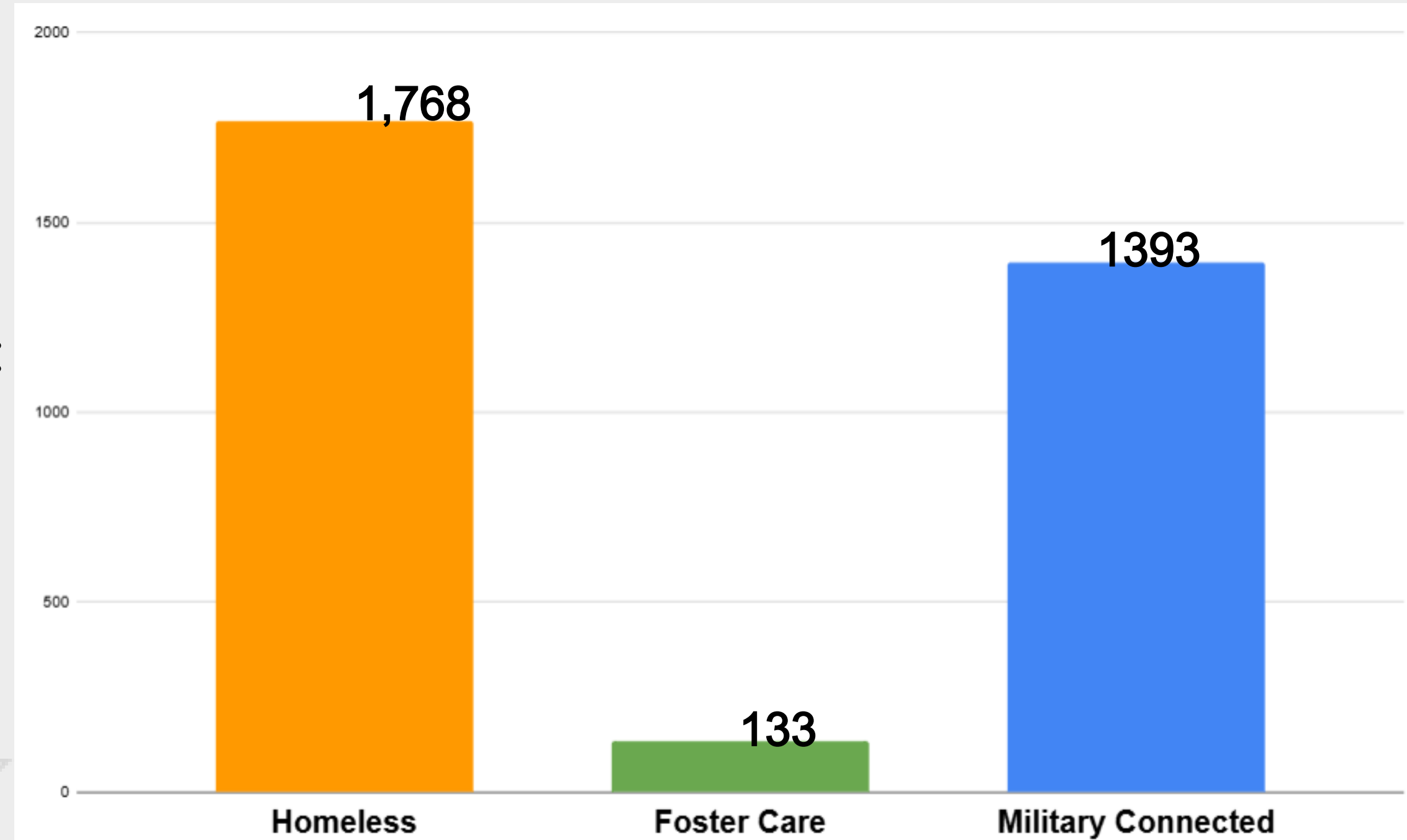
Project HELP served  
**3,294** students during the  
2024-2025 school year.

The students were identified as:

Homeless

Foster Care

Military connected



# Project HELP's Community Partnerships

Project HELP's mission is to support students and families in crisis. Our efforts are made possible through the generosity of dedicated community partners. Each donation we receive is a lifeline to a child or family navigating difficult circumstances and we are proud to work alongside organizations that share our commitment to dignity, compassion, and practical support.



# Project HELP's Benefits from Fund



## Public School Energy Assistance Fund now serving homeless students

Since 2012, the Public School Energy Assistance fund has been an accessible way for City of Austin Utilities customers to voluntarily contribute to public education. In late 2022, Austin City Council passed a resolution to allocate those funds to serve the most vulnerable of students — those experiencing homelessness, including children who are unsheltered or living in shelter or transitional housing, hotel/motel accommodations, or doubled up in insecure housing. The new Homeless Student Assistance Fund aims to help schools provide quality educational opportunities to homeless students in each of the school districts served by Austin Energy. You can help by donating, either online at [coautilities.com](https://coautilities.com) or with an added contribution when you mail in your payment. Look for “Homeless Student Fund” on the tear-off payment stub portion of your bill.

**Austin ISD** is one of **8** local school districts to benefit from the generosity of citizen donations. Other local districts are:

**Del Valle ISD**

**Eanes ISD**

**Lake Travis ISD**

**Leander ISD**

**Manor ISD**

**Pflugerville ISD**

**Round Rock ISD**

**Project HELP** benefits from the “Homeless Student Assistance Fund” available through citizen donations.

October 2023 - \$15,168.30

October 2024 - \$17,123.87

October 2025 - \$21,768.75

# Project HELP

At Project HELP, we understand that educational equity starts with stability, support, and a sense of belonging.

We are honored to walk alongside our students and families during their most vulnerable times—and to help lay the foundation for brighter and hopeful futures.

## Staff:

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Kevin Hopper

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Carla Grace Scott

# THANK YOU