Improving Education Disparities Experienced By Homeless Youth in Eastern North Carolina

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What?

- According to the North Carolina Housing Coalition, in 2022:
  - More than 28,000 homeless children/adolescents were enrolled in public schools
  - Families with children made up approximately 30% of the state’s homeless population
  - 51,000 families in the state experienced homelessness on any given night
- Community Crossroads Center in Greenville, North Carolina, is the only homeless shelter in eastern North Carolina
  - Average of 15 school-aged residents at any given time
  - Current greatest service need are youth-centered educational programs

So What?

- Childhood homelessness can lead to frequent school changes, difficulty attending school regularly, and challenges in completing homework and studying
  - 52% of students experiencing homelessness during the school year are chronically absent
- Nationally, 75% of homeless children perform below grade-level in reading, 72% perform below grade-level in spelling, and 54% perform below grade-level in STEM courses
- The average high school graduation rate among homeless students in North Carolina is 69%
  - This 12% below other low-income students and 18% below the rate for students at-large
- Young adults without a high school diploma are 4.5 times more likely to experience homelessness in adulthood

Now What?

- Establish an educational enrichment initiative for students at Community Crossroads Center
- Develop a sustainable project at Community Crossroads Center in which:
  - Volunteers tutor or assist students with schoolwork on a weekly basis
  - Hands-on enrichment activities are created to enhance gross motor and social development
  - STEM and public health education are emphasized

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Number of Homeless Children/Youth Enrolled in Public School by Year

Graduation rates among homeless high school students across Prosperity Zones

Prosperity Zones:
- Southeast P2 has the highest homeless student graduation rate, whereas the Northeast P2 has the lowest