

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
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Spring 2022 Positive Pathways Quarterly Webinar
Wednesday, February 2, 2022

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF SURVEY OF FLORIDA STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

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Positive Pathways Program



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
MYFLFAMILIES.COM

THE SAMPLE (N=58)

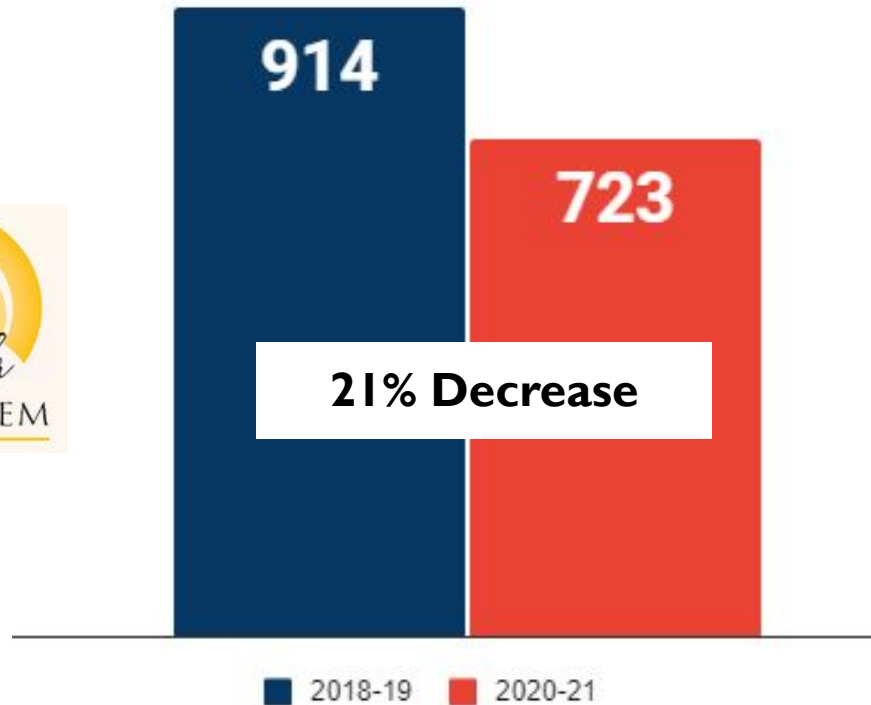
Colleges and Technical Colleges

	Number	Percent
Broward College	12	30%
Miami Dade College	12	30%
St. Petersburg College	6	15%
Sante Fe College	3	8%
Florida State College at Jacksonville	2	5%
Atlantic Technical College	1	3%
Florida Southwestern State College	1	3%
Eastern Florida State College	1	3%
Pinellas Technical Education Center	1	3%
Hillsborough Community College	1	3%
Totals	40	100%

Universities

	Number	Percent
Florida Atlantic University	10	30%
Florida International University	10	30%
Florida Gulf Coast University	6	18%
University of North Florida	4	12%
Florida International University	2	6%
Florida State University	1	3%
Totals	33	100%

Statistics of the Number of Housing Insecure Students (FCS)



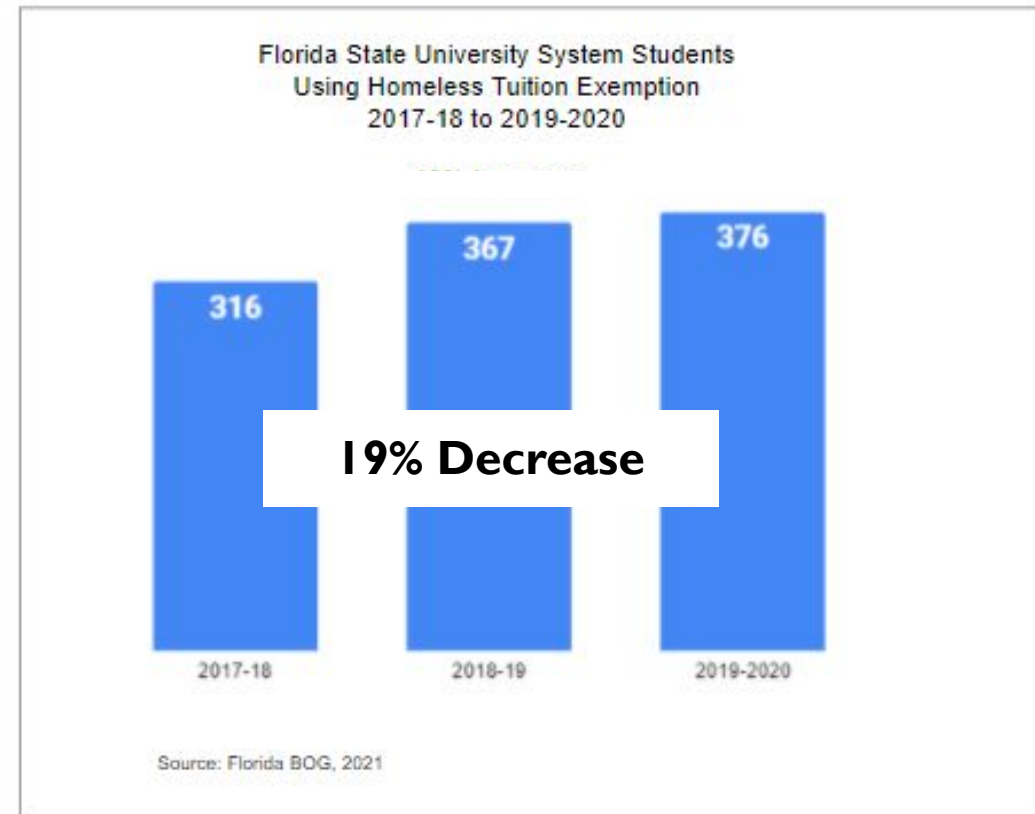
	Homeless Exemption
Average GPA	2.76
Course Enrollments	3,378
C or Higher	2,024
D, F, U	747
Withdrawals	500
Other	107

60% of students using the homeless waiver for entire course earned a grade of C or higher in that course.

Statistics of the Number of Housing Insecure Students (SUS BOG)



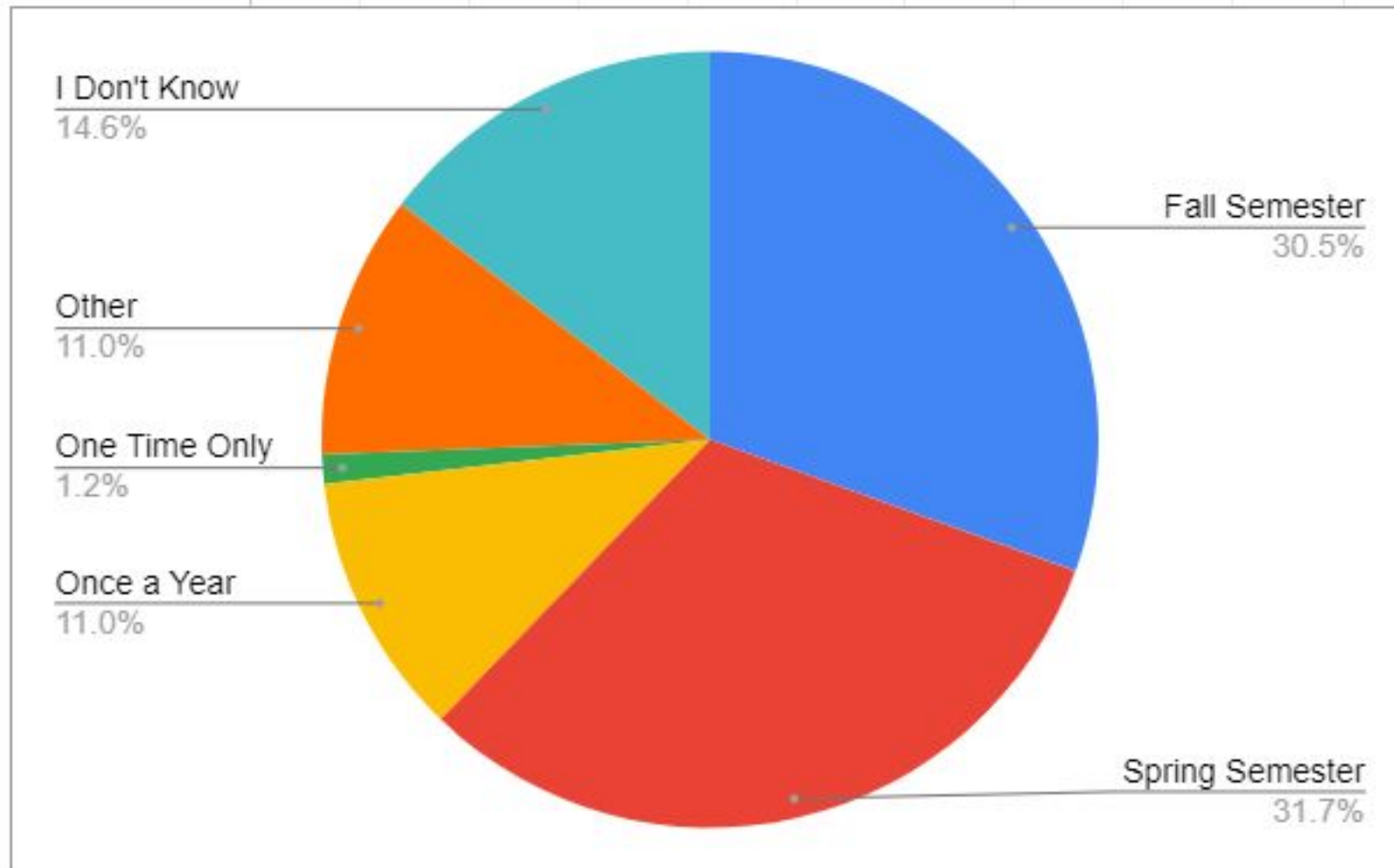
State University System Homeless Waiver Use



From 2016-16 to 2019-20, the number of students using the homeless waivers to attend Florida's universities has increased 19% since 2017-2018.

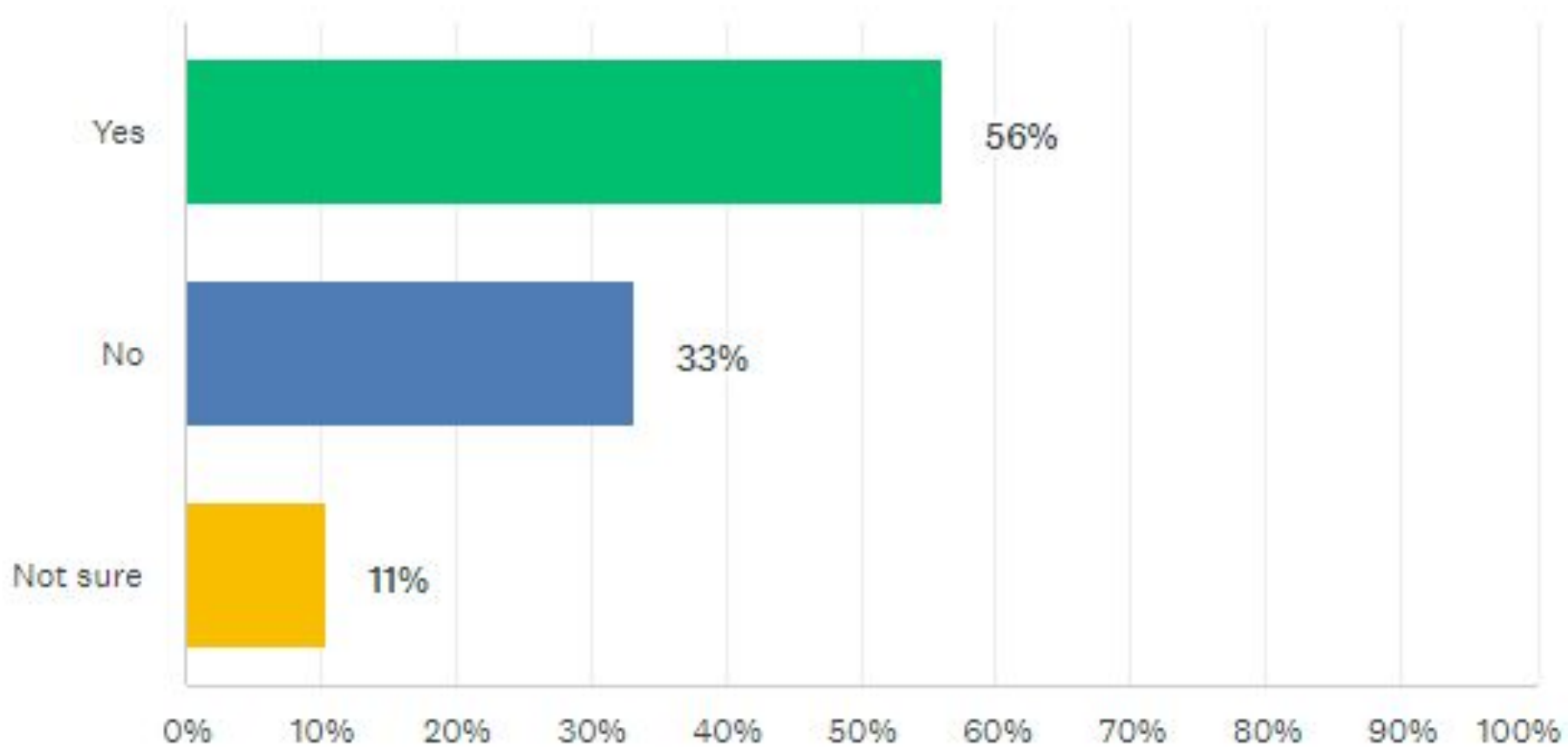
How often are you required to submit documentation to your institution that you are homeless? (Mark all that apply)

N = 56



Did your college or university reach out to offer you help?

N = 57

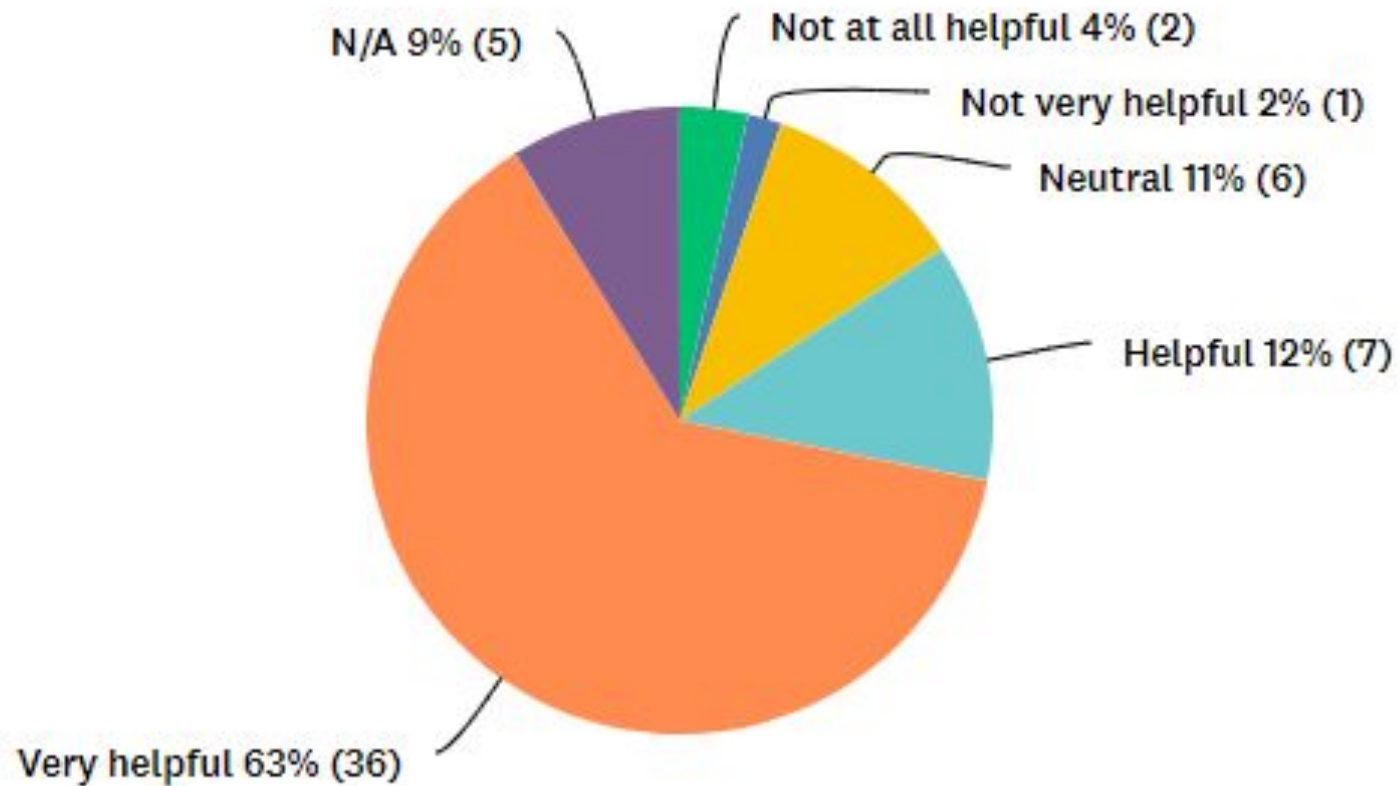


WHAT SERVICES DID YOUR COLLEGE OFFER YOU?

- Information about the homeless waiver
- Additional financial aid (CARES Act funds, Federal Pell Grant, scholarships)
- Food assistance
- Housing support
- Hygiene maintenance
- Counseling
- Some students indicated that they were offered assistance from outside organizations such as AOK scholars and Educate Tomorrow.

HOW HELPFUL HAVE THESE SERVICES BEEN?

N = 57



HOW HELPFUL HAVE THESE SERVICES BEEN?



“They provide me with a peace of mind knowing they have programs set up for my best interest”.

HOW HELPFUL HAVE THESE SERVICES BEEN?



“Having a counselor to talk to was great for me when I was in the darkest time of my life. With her help, I was able to graduate. I’m extremely grateful to have [..] as my support agent”.

HOW HELPFUL HAVE THESE SERVICES BEEN?



“This has helped me in so many ways giving me so much hope for a better future for myself. This program is incredible and in the year and a half I have been in it has drastically helped my goals, emotional well-being, self-esteem, etc. This opportunity has been exactly what I needed”.

HOW HELPFUL HAVE THESE SERVICES BEEN?

“I really appreciate this homeless waiver it has allowed me to study without worrying so much.”



WHAT SERVICES WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL TO YOU?



Food assistance



Transportation assistance



Homeownership



Domestic violence resources



Affordable housing



Emergency funds



Lockers and showers



Healthcare

DEFINING HOMELESSNESS

Students were asked their opinion about this definition, which is in Florida law.


“A student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private shelter designed to provide temporary residence, a public or private transitional living program, or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. This includes a student who would otherwise meet the requirements of this paragraph, as determined by a college or university, but for his or her residence in college or university dormitory housing”.

DEFINING HOMELESSNESS

- Add couch surfing to the definition in order to avoid “excluding a huge population of homeless youth”.
- Take into account students who live in an unsafe environment such as students who are experiencing domestic violence.
- Students who have a “nighttime residence” may not have a home during the day and therefore should also qualify as homeless.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

- “Strengthen outreach and promotion of the resources available to youth struggling with problems at home and better preparing advocates for working with homeless youth”.
- “Prep all advocates being more well informed in order to assist students without confusing them”.
- “I feel like they should re verify homelessness status every 2 years. Every year is too much for those who are struggling since the process of getting a letter can be time-consuming”; “Is a constant reminder of how uncomfortable our reality”

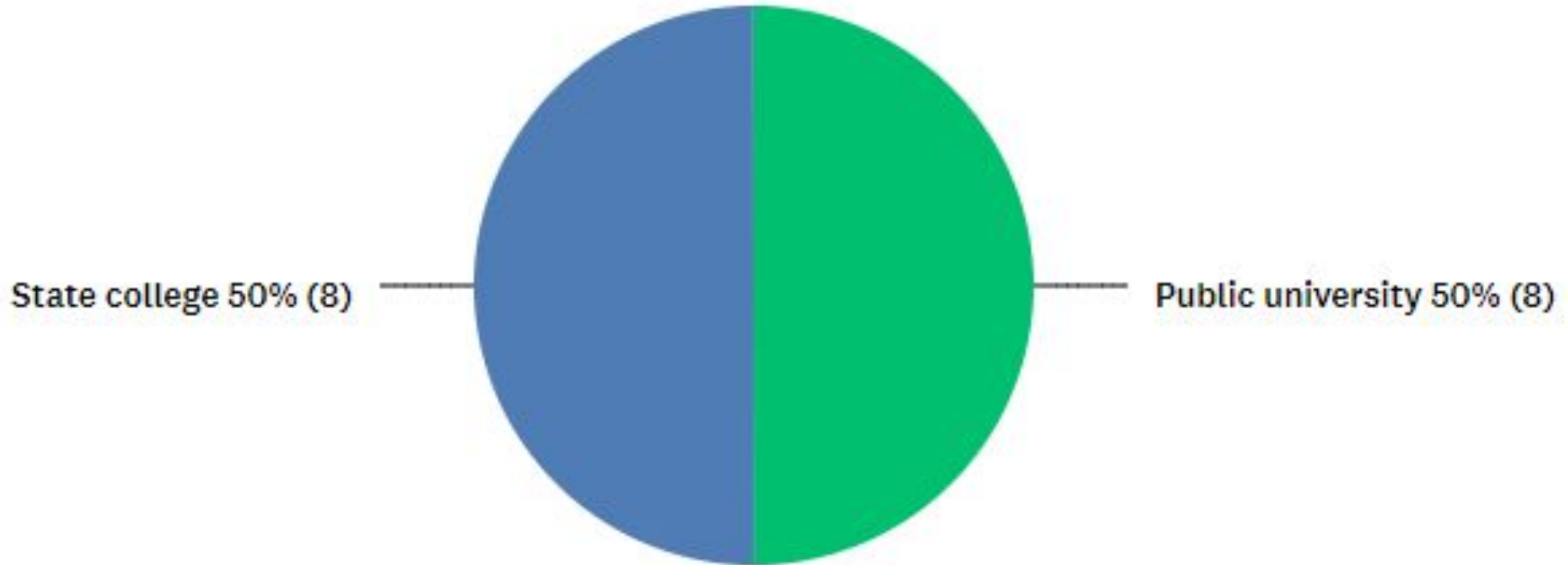


Preliminary Results of Survey Answered by Campus Liaisons

Educate Tomorrow and Positive Pathways are conducting a survey related to documentation and procedures of the Homeless Tuition Waiver. (See below for reference to the state statute). As part of our collaboration with Florida Department of Education, we would like your input regarding how your institution works with the Homeless Tuition Waiver. Your input will inform efforts to improve access for students. Thank you for taking time to complete this survey.

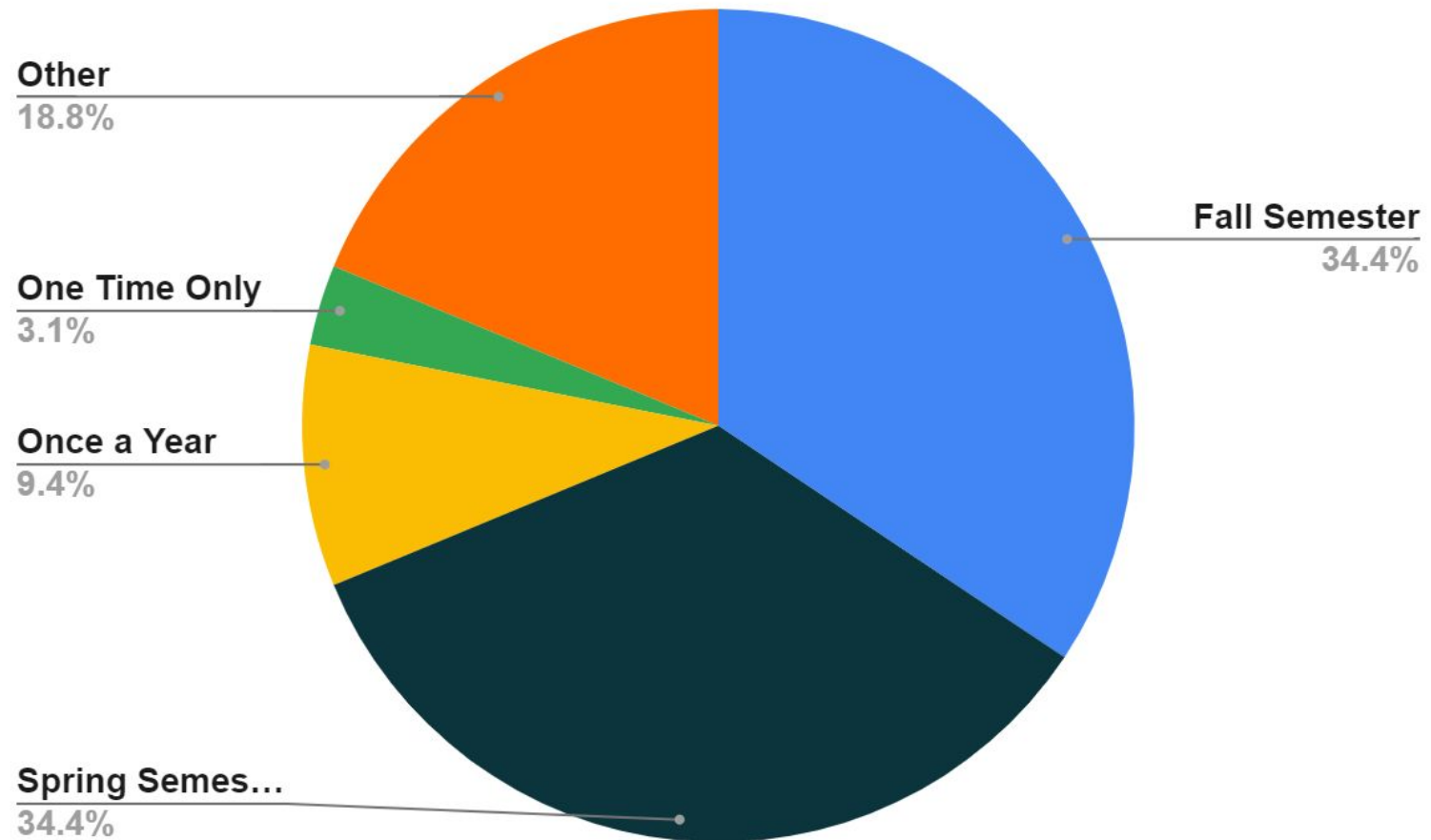
Type of Institution

N = 16, 4 skipped



How often are students required to submit documentation to your institution that they are homeless? (Mark all that apply)

N = 20



Which Departments Handle the Homeless Waiver?

- Financial Aid
- Student Support Services then Financial Aid
- Dean of Students
- Homeless Committee
- Multiple Departments (The Office of Financial Aid, Student Business Services, Department of Student Support and Transition, Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement)
- Homeless Waiver Committee with multiple members from various departments (Dean of Students, Student Outreach and Support, Financial Aid, Cashiers)
- Dean of Students / Student Financial Services
- Cashier / Bursar, Financial Aid assists
- Admissions who process into students' accounts and waiver the fees
- Admissions / Records and Financial Aid
- Enrollment services / VP of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs
- Student Accounts
- Financial Aid
- Student Financials
- Admissions x 3
- Admissions and Seahawk Outreach Services (for students not affiliated with an agency)

Please describe how a student's homeless tuition waiver is processed, along with details about what departments or external agencies might be involved.

- Students who self-identify as homeless can request a waiver through a Student Success Specialist. That specialist works with the Financial Aid Director to apply the waiver.
- Student contacts Support Services and requests the waiver. Waiver form is sent along with instructions to return with letter of support. Once both documents are received, they are reviewed. As long as the information is accurate the request is approved. The documents are then sent to Financial Aid to be applied to the student's account.
- Student applies on Dean of Student website and upload documentation. DOS connects with student to do intake and discuss concerns. Student provides supporting documents from agencies and that is sent to tuition and billing, etc.
- 1. Student submit waiver request form and documentation that they are receiving services from an agency whose mission is to service homeless individuals. Requests may be turned in 30 days to semester start. 2. Appox 1 week before classes we call to verify that student is still considered homeless and receiving services. 3. Residency is updated if required. 4. Waiver approval sent to student accounts so that the fees can be waived.

What works well regarding the homeless tuition waiver process at your institution?

- Our process is quick and efficient.
- The intake process allows for more engagement and conversation. Verification is done annually.
- Students are told to contact me if they identify as homeless (if they identify to their academic advisor, counselor, financial aid, admission officer, etc.).
- The flow we have between departments.
- We have a good process at ____ between the various office I believe.
- The student gets a customized care in working with the Admissions/Records department, Financial Aid, and Advising departments.
- Most people are aware of it
- Nothing stands out as working particularly well
- The collaboration to support the students petition to ensure they are offered access to supports through student outreach and support.
- ____ has an official policy for reviewing applications for the HTE. They are reviewed and processed promptly.

What would you like to see improved regarding how your institution administers the homeless waiver?

- I would like to move to a once an academic year process because it would be easier for our students. Most of them do not have a significant change in their status after only a semester.
- Greater partnership/ transparency in the process. A lot of times students are frustrated with getting the letters and contacting agencies to get the documentation to recertify
- Additional opportunities for students to self-identify (maybe on the admissions application).
- Having to provide each semester. Some enroll late or we are notified late and this can cause an issue with securing housing. Student are required to live on campus to receive the waiver. I think it would be nice to have flexibility with this if housing is full but that is not how we have it set up.
- There is little information available to staff or students regarding waiver. Other than our specialists, I'm not sure where another staff member or a student would find out about the waiver.
- The instructions are very hard to follow
- I would like to see the Important Dates sent out monthly
- None that I can think of.
- Clear cut guidelines about how long we can use the McKinney-Vento Act letters from the county school board office.

Other questions that will be analyzed

1. What challenges does your institution face as it tries to support students from homeless settings?
2. What challenges does your institution face as it tries to support students from homeless settings?
3. What are some ways that the State of Florida can help your department and / or your institution as they develop more support for students with homeless backgrounds to enroll and succeed?
4. In what ways, if at all, does your institution interact with community organizations or the local school system(s) to help homeless students transition to college from high school?
5. What services does your institution provide specifically for students from homeless backgrounds. Please note if it is the same program or set of services for students from foster care.

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