

Local Initiative

# Chicago

Inclusive Economy Lab  
at the University of Chicago

The [Inclusive Economy Lab at the University of Chicago](#) works with government and non-profit partners to identify barriers to social mobility and racial equity, and to develop effective strategies for removing these barriers. Their work cuts across traditional policy domains, including education, workforce development, housing and cash assistance programs. In July, 2021 the Lab published [Known, Valued, Inspired: New Evidence on Students Experiencing Homelessness](#). Partnering with Chicago Public Schools and using a data set representing nine years of administrative data, the report outlines 8 important findings about students experiencing homelessness, including that black students in the district have a one in four chance of experiencing homelessness, and that patterns of housing instability can last an average of two years. Importantly the report notes that the majority of students experiencing homelessness in Chicago Public Schools are considered doubled-up, and face ineligibility for permanent housing through the city's Continuum of Care system. In addition to quantitative analysis, the report offers insights from seven focus groups consisting of students, parents, school staff, and community partners. Their stories show how trauma, family unrest, housing instability, and lack of access to economic opportunity keep students experiencing homelessness from being able to focus on their education.