

McKinney-Vento 101: Implementing Homeless Education



2022-2023
Back-To-School Training



Definition of Homeless

Who is eligible for McKinney-Vento services?

Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. 11434a(2)

- ✓ Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason.
- ✓ Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.



Definition of Homeless

Who is eligible for McKinney-Vento services?
(continued)

- ✓ Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- ✓ Living in a public or private place not designed for or regularly used as accommodations.
- ✓ Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
 - What is substandard? Check utilities; infestations; mold; dangers



Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

- ✓The term *unaccompanied youth* includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. 42 U.S.C. § 11434a(6)
- ✓Liaisons must assist unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) with enrollment, school selection, & dispute resolution.
- ✓Have the same right to immediate enrollment & educational services as other students.

Homeless



Unaccompanied



Unaccompanied
Homeless Youth



Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

- ✓ There are no age limits in the McKinney-Vento Act.
- ✓ Eligibility is based on the student's housing.
- ✓ Pathways to homelessness for unaccompanied youth:
 - 35% of youth experienced the death of at least one parent or caregiver
 - 44% of youth had been in foster care
 - 24% were homeless with their families before becoming unaccompanied



= Equal Access =

- ✓ A primary focus of the McKinney-Vento Act is school access for children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- ✓ McKinney-Vento students must be provided equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as is provided to other children and youth [42 U.S.C. § 11431(1)].
- ✓ In order to provide equal access, LEAs must remove all barriers that could result in McKinney-Vento students missing critical learning opportunities.



Removing Barriers

- LEAs **must develop, review, and revise policies** to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment and retention of McKinney-Vento students, including barriers due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences.
 - This is a “broad, on-going requirement... with regular input from homeless parents, youth, and advocates so that new barriers... do not prevent” students from full, immediate enrollment and services.



Removing Barriers: Full Participation

- Remove barriers to academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs.
 - LEAs should anticipate and accommodate the needs of McKinney-Vento students to enter these programs and consider giving them priority on waitlists.
 - SEAs and LEAs should develop policies to expedite full participation in extracurricular activities and work with athletic associations to adjust policies to facilitate participation.



Immediate Enrollment

McKinney-Vento students are entitled to immediate enrollment in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend, even if:

- Students do not have required documents, such as school records, records of immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, guardianship, or other documents; or
- Students have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.



School Selection

Option 1: School of Origin

- Defined as the school the students attended when permanently housed or the school the students last attended
- Includes public preschools
- Includes receiving schools
- **Try to keep the student in the school of origin for the child's or youth's best interest**

Option 2: Local attendance area school

- Includes any public school that non-homeless students living in the same location have the right to attend



School Selection

- Can remain in the school of origin
 - ✓ For the duration of the homelessness
 - ✓ Until the end of the school year in which the student obtains housing
 - ✓ If the student becomes homeless over the summer and is still homeless at start of school year

42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(A)(i)(II)

- Decisions are based on the individual student's best interest

42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(B)



Determining Best Interest

In determining best interest, the LEA shall:

- Presume that keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest.
 - Unless contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth.
- Consider student-centered factors, including the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, & safety.
 - For preschool children, consider attachment to teachers; availability and quality of services in the new area; and travel time.
- Give priority to the request of the parent/guardian.
- Give priority to the request of an unaccompanied youth.



Transportation to the School of Origin

- LEAs must provide transportation to and from the school of origin until the end of the year when the student obtains permanent housing, at a parent's or guardian's request (or at the liaison's request for unaccompanied youth).
 - Even if transportation is not typically provided.
- If staying in the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation to the school of origin.
- If crossing LEA lines, both LEAs must determine how to divide the responsibility and share the cost, or they must share the cost equally.



Dispute Resolution

- Disputes may be over: eligibility, school selection, or enrollment
- If enrollment is denied, a written statement must be given explaining the reason and appeal process
 - ✓ Provided in a format and language the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied homeless youth can understand
- The parent/student must be immediately referred to the liaison
- Students must be enrolled and receive services while a dispute is mediated

42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(F)



School Meals

- HCY are categorically eligible for free meals. 42 U.S.C. § 1758(b)(5)(A)(b)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture policy allows liaisons to qualify HCY
 - ✓ <https://www.fns.usda.gov/updated-guidance-homeless-children-school-nutrition-programs>



Title I, Part A & Title IX, Part A Set-Aside Funds

- Two principles govern the usage of homeless set-aside funds:
 1. The services must be reasonable and necessary to assist students experiencing homelessness to take advantage of educational opportunities.
 2. The funds must be used only as a last resort when funds or services are not available from other public or private sources.



Title I, Part A & Title IX, Part A Set-Aside Funds

Allowable Expenses:

- ✓ Clothing, particularly if necessary to meet a school's dress or uniform requirement
- ✓ Clothing and shoes necessary to participate in physical education classes
- ✓ Student fees that are necessary to participate in the general education program



Title I, Part A & Title IX, Part A Set-Aside Funds

Allowable Expenses:

- ✓ Personal school supplies
- ✓ Birth certificates necessary to enroll in school
- ✓ Immunizations
- ✓ Food (In-School Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks)
- ✓ Hygiene Products
- ✓ Medical and Dental Services
- ✓ Eyeglasses and Hearing Aids



Title I, Part A & Title IX, Part A Set-Aside Funds

Allowable Expenses:

- ✓ Counseling services to address anxiety related to homelessness that is impeding learning
- ✓ Outreach services to students living in shelters, motels, and other temporary residences
- ✓ Extended learning time (before and after school, Saturday classes, summer school) to compensate for lack of quiet time for homework in shelters or other overcrowded living condition



Title I, Part A & Title IX, Part A Set-Aside Funds

Allowable Expenses:

- ✓ Tutoring services, especially in shelters or other locations where homeless students live
- ✓ Support Homeless Liaison Position
- ✓ Hire teachers, aides, and tutors to provide supplemental instruction
- ✓ Pay for student projects and/or field trips



Title I, Part A & Title IX, Part A Set-Aside Funds

Allowable Expenses:

- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Parental involvement specifically oriented to reaching out to parents of homeless students
- ✓ Prepaid cell phones to students (ADDED DUE TO COVID)
- ✓ Provide mobile hotspots and laptops/ tablets to shelters, motels, and directly to families and youth who are staying with other people. (ADDED DUE TO COVID)



Title I, Part A & Title IX, Part A Set-Aside Funds

Allowable Expenses:

- ✓ Fees for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) testing
- ✓ Fees for college entrance exams such as the SAT or ACT
- ✓ GED testing for school-age students
- ✓ Cap and gown to wear at graduation



Title I, Part A & Title IX, Part A Set-Aside Funds

Unallowable Expenses:

- ✓ Provide clothing assistance for parents
- ✓ Pay for the cost of prom dresses or yearbooks
- ✓ Pay for hotels/motels



Credit Accrual

Districts must have clear procedures in place to award full or partial credit for work completed in a previous district. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(F)(ii)

Examples:

- Consult with the prior school to evaluate the work completed
- Evaluate the student's mastery of courses & award credits accordingly
- Offer credit recovery or mastery- based courses
- Offer distance learning



Postsecondary Education

- HCY must be assisted with FAFSA verifications
 - ✓ Liaisons are allowed to provide subsequent year verifications

42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(6)(A)(III)

- All HCY should receive information and individualized counseling regarding
 - ✓ college readiness
 - ✓ college selection
 - ✓ applying for school
 - ✓ financial aid
 - ✓ on-campus supports



Resources

- [ALSDE Homeless Education](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth](#)
- [National Center for Homeless Education](#)
- [National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty](#)



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