



The Center for Families in Transition (C-FIT) is designed to provide students with stability while connecting families with appropriate resources to support them during their transition phase. Cultivating and nurturing these partnerships ensures that families receive the assistance they need and that students can continue to flourish academically with minimal interruption.

Our goals include:

1. Removing barriers to school enrollment and attendance.
2. Connecting families to school-based and community-based supports focused on housing, education, and family stability.
3. Increasing advocacy and amplifying the voices of students and families in transition in RPS planning and decision-making.
4. Supporting students to graduate on time with plans for their future.

A student is considered to be experiencing homelessness if he or she lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.

Under federal law school districts are required to meet the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. Students who qualify for services under the [McKinney-Vento Act](#) have three choices for school selection:

- Enroll in the zoned school for their temporary address (zoned school), or
- Remain in the current/last school attended (school of origin), or
- Enroll where they were attending at the time housing was disrupted (school of origin).

McKinney-Vento Eligibility

McKinney-Vento Eligibility must be determined for students each school year and families must complete the McKinney-Vento eligibility Screening Form to be screened for McKinney-Vento eligibility. Once the form is complete, C-FIT will follow up within 48-72 hours with an eligibility determination.

When a student is found eligible, they are tagged in ASPEN. This information is updated immediately – in “real-time” – and can be accessed by all SISOPs and school social workers. The C-FIT office does not provide lists of students to schools at this time. All C-FIT-eligible student information must be accessed in ASPEN.

Resource: [McKinney Vento Student List Filter Guide](#)



If a student is found ineligible, the parent/caregiver is emailed a notice of their rights to appeal and information to enroll them into their zoned school. The parent/caregiver has 5 days to request an appeal, and C-FIT *does not* facilitate transfers to zoned schools.

We know that our families often experience transitions throughout the school year. When these transitions occur, we ask that the family complete the [Contact Change Form](#) for their information to be updated in ASPEN and with RPS Transportation.

*Please note that the wait times may be longer due to the high volume of screening forms we are currently receiving.

Transportation

All families eligible for McKinney-Vento services have the right to transportation through RPS Transportation. When a student is found eligible, a transportation request is sent directly to RPS transportation for routing. RPS Transportation has 2-4 business days to process a transportation request. Once the request is routed, the parent is called, and the information is emailed to the parent and school social worker. All inquiries and issues must be communicated to RPS Transportation, and they can be reached at 804-674-1234.

When a family moves, they are required to complete the [Contact Change Form](#). Once received and processed, a new transportation request form is submitted to RPS Transportation, and the student is re-routed. Please note that in cases of a change of address, RPS Transportation requires 2-4 business days to process the request. All inquiries and issues must be communicated to RPS Transportation, and they can be reached at 804-674-1234.

If there are behavioral concerns for transportation, these must be addressed, like a non-CFIT student. C-FIT students and parents follow the same protocol regarding parents not picking up students and being responsive/responsible for them. The C-FIT office does not have direct contact with transportation vendors or bus drivers. All inquiries and issues must be communicated to RPS Transportation, and they can be reached at 804-674-1234.

Community Resources

The C-FIT office currently provides referrals to several community partners. We can provide food support to our families through our partnership with The Market at 25th. We also provide information to the FeedMore food pantries that are accessible across the entire city of Richmond. Families are encouraged to visit [Feedmore](#) to access available food resources.

The C-FIT office does not house families. We do connect families to community partners who provide housing navigation services. Richmond Public Schools currently partners with [Housing](#)



[Families First](#). We can provide qualified families with financial assistance and navigation services through this partnership.

Families experiencing crisis and needing immediate housing assistance are encouraged to contact the Homeless Connection Line at 804-972-0813. The Homeless Connection Line is the direct access point for immediate housing assistance for families in Richmond.

Staff Engagement and Training

C-FIT aims to support each student experiencing housing instability within Richmond Public Schools. To conquer this task, we need your help! To assist us, we have set a goal to ensure that each RPS staff member is knowledgeable and trained about the McKinney-Vento Act and the rights and protections of students and families who are found eligible. We can conduct training at after-school professional development and staff meetings. To request training, please get in touch with the C-FIT Team at cfit@rvaschools.net.

The state department *Project HOPE* also provides a training video for general school staff, [Mckinney Vento 101/Learning Library](#),

- School staff and early childhood educators can view MV training videos and take a quiz to test their knowledge. There are also several short, whiteboard videos available for a variety of school staff roles.

and One-page tip sheets for:

- [Teachers](#)
- [School Counselors and School Social Workers](#)
- [Enrollment Staff](#)
- [School Psychologists](#)
- [Early Childhood Educators](#)
- Resources for:
 - [McKinney-Vento Liaisons](#)
 - [Parents, Caregivers & Students](#)
 - [School Division Staff](#)
 - [Shelters & Community-Based Organizations](#)



(Access to Project HOPE)



Parent Engagement

One of our goals within the C-FIT office is to increase parent engagement. In order to do so, we aim to increase our visibility within the school and community. We are available to support your school activities built around meeting our engagement goals as a division to:

1. Decrease Chronic Absenteeism
2. Increase Two-way Family-School Communication
3. Increase Parent Advocacy

To request C-FIT attendance at your school and community events, please reach out to C-FIT Coordinator Dr. Janelle Taylor-Johnson at jtaylor7@vaschools.net.

C-FIT Team

C-FIT Coordinator: Janelle Taylor-Johnson, PhD (jtaylor7@vaschools.net)

Family and Student Support Specialist: Takita Brown (tbrown22@vaschools.net)

Family Liaison (Housing/Resource Support): Nakesha Mills-Martin (nmills@vaschools.net)

Family Liaison: Johnneisha Fitz (Transportation Support) (jfitz@vaschools.net)

Administrative Office Assistant: Sandra Bullock-Lomax, CEOE (sbullock@vaschools.net)

Please contact us with any questions at 804-780-6288 or cfit@vaschools.net.