Working Together Across Homeless Education and Title I, Part A: Cross-Program Partnership Strategies

This California Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (HETAC) tip sheet explores opportunities for LEA homeless education and Title I, Part A programs to work together to support students experiencing homelessness, including through

- joint planning and needs assessment;
- coordination on the Title I, Part A homeless reservation;
- integrated professional development and shared service delivery models; and
- ongoing engagement.

This tip sheet is part of a suite of HETAC Title I, Part A resources that also includes the following:

- *Serving Students Experiencing Homelessness Under Title I, Part A*
- *Allowable and Strategic Uses of Title I, Part A Homeless Reservation Funds*
- *Making the Case for Partnership Across Homeless Education and Title I, Part A*

Context

Children and youth experiencing homelessness often face unsteady and even traumatic circumstances in their everyday lives outside of school, which, in turn, create unique barriers to their success in school. Despite data consistently showing an increased risk of academic setbacks among students experiencing homelessness in California as compared to their housed peers, many local educational agencies (LEAs) in the state do not receive dedicated federal homeless education funding.



This HETAC tip sheet, part of a suite of HETAC Title I, Part A resources, explores specific strategies for partnering across LEA homeless education and Title I, Part A programs to work together to support students experiencing homelessness.

Cross-Program Partnership Strategies

Collaboration across LEA Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EHCY) and Title I, Part A programs presents a powerful opportunity to align resources, reduce duplication, and deliver more cohesive, student-centered support. Through intentional coordination in service planning and delivery, LEAs can ensure that all students experiencing homelessness—whether in Title I, Part A or non-Title I, Part A schools—receive the academic and wraparound supports they need to thrive. Consider these cross-program partnership strategies.

1. Joint planning and needs assessment

- Conduct joint data reviews using a variety of sources to identify academic and non-academic barriers faced by students experiencing homelessness. Use insights from this data review to inform the development of the LEA's Title I, Part A homeless reservation amount.
- Ensure that the needs of students experiencing homelessness are addressed in LEA Title I, Part A plans and Title I, Part A school improvement plans.

2. Coordination on the Title I, Part A homeless reservation

- Convene the LEA Title I, Part A director, homeless education liaison, fiscal staff, and other Title I, Part A and EHCY program staff when conducting homeless reservation planning. Conversations may include determining the reservation amount, how EHCY program staff will access reservation funds, and how reservation funds will be spent.
- Ensure that the amount reserved reflects the needs identified by the LEA to provide comparable services for students experiencing homelessness.

3. Integrated Professional Development

- Provide joint training for EHCY and Title I, Part A program staff as well as other LEA and school personnel who work with students experiencing homelessness. Focal topics may include signs a student may be experiencing homelessness, Title I, Part A and McKinney-Vento Act requirements, the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness, and best practices for delivering trauma-informed and responsive services.
- Share EHCY and Title I, Part A awareness and informational materials across program staff.

4. Shared service delivery models

Collaborate across programs to provide:

- transportation,
- academic interventions such as tutoring and mentoring,
- extended learning and enrichment opportunities,
- family engagement activities, and
- other supports as available and needed.

5. Ongoing engagement

Set a regular date and time for homeless education program staff and Title I, Part A program staff to meet to:

- discuss the ongoing and emerging needs of students experiencing homelessness;
- assess the effectiveness of Title I, Part A services provided to students experiencing homelessness; and
- evaluate current partnership efforts, including what is going well and what may need to be adjusted to achieve desired outcomes for students and the LEA.

Concluding Thoughts: Stronger Together

LEAs with a legacy of joint investment in students experiencing homelessness across their EHCY and Title I, Part A programs find that their partnerships provide a collective impact that results in a return on investment for their individual programs and the children and youth they serve. LEAs are encouraged to use the information, recommendations, and resources in this tip sheet to build cross-program partnerships whose unified efforts lead to greater impact than what each program could accomplish alone.

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