Making the Case for Partnership Across Homeless Education and Title I, Part A Programs

This California Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (HETAC) tip sheet explores the case for partnership across homeless education and Title I, Part A programs, including

- emphasizing the role of statutory requirements and
- providing specific recommendations for "making the case" for partnership in conversations with local educational agency administrators and program staff.

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

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 opportunities for LEA homeless education and Title I, Part A programs to work together to support students experiencing homelessness, including demonstrating the need for partnership by emphasizing the role of statutory requirements and providing specific recommendations for "making the case" for partnership in conversations with local educational agency administrators and program staff.

Homeless Education and Title I, Part A: The Case for Collaboration

While the federal EHCY program addresses many of the unique educational challenges faced by students experiencing homelessness, the additional supports that Title I, Part A can provide are critical to ensuring the success of these students. The case for meaningful partnership across the EHCY and Title I, Part A programs is clear.

Statutory Requirements

The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (hereafter *McKinney-Vento Act*) includes specific requirements and recommended best practices for partnership across the EHCY and Title I, Part A programs [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(4)(B)]. Similarly, the federal Title I, Part A statute mandates partnership across the EHCY and Title I, Part A programs, with specific obligations related to targeting Title I, Part A

program supports to children and youth experiencing homelessness (20 U.S.C. §§ 6313-6315). In sum, partnership across the EHCY and Title I, Part A programs is required by law, as explored in more detail in the HETAC's *Serving Students Experiencing Homelessness Under Title I, Part A* tip sheet.

"Making the Case" with LEA Administrators

LEA homeless education liaisons and Title I, Part A directors may wonder how to "make the case" with LEA administrators and program staff for strengthening partnership across the LEA's EHCY and Title I, Part A programs, including ensuring a homeless reservation that is sufficient to meet the unique needs of students experiencing homelessness. Consider the key concepts below when engaging with LEA stakeholders.

1. Program basics

Briefly introduce the EHCY and Title I, Part A programs. SchoolHouse Connection's *The McKinney-Vento "Elevator Pitch": A Guide to Engaging School Staff and Community Partners* can help raise awareness about student homelessness in your LEA quickly and effectively using information tailored to your unique LEA context.

2. Policy foundation

Highlight key legislative provisions across the McKinney-Vento Act and Title I, Part A, focusing on central themes like:

- categorical Title I, Part A eligibility for children and youth experiencing homelessness;
- cross-program collaboration requirements; and
- the requirement to reserve Title I, Part A funds to serve students experiencing homelessness.

It is also recommended that LEAs familiarize themselves with CDE's Homeless Education Federal Program Monitoring (FPM) Instrument, including the portions focused on serving students experiencing homelessness under Title I, Part A.

3. Impacts on student and district success

Share about the potential benefits of strong EHCY/Title I, Part A collaboration, including improved LEA- and student-level outcomes. When possible, use information specific to your LEA such as:

- the number of students identified as homeless in recent school years;
- the educational barriers faced by students experiencing homelessness as informed by LEA Title I, Part A and/or EHCY program needs assessments;
- academic achievement and performance data on students experiencing homelessness; and
- ways in which using Title I, Part A funds may benefit students experiencing homelessness and the LEA (e.g., improved school attendance and graduation rates resulting in increased average daily attendance (ADA) and state per-pupil funding).

4. Strategic financial and resource allocation

Highlight the potential efficiencies that may develop from a strong EHCY/Title I, Part A program partnership, including:

- students in need having access to comprehensive and coordinated services across both programs,
- program funds being used in ways that map unique funding uses to student needs, and
- fiscal benefits to the LEA as mentioned in concept three above.

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 bigger impact than what each program could accomplish alone.

References

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. 42 U.S.C. § 11431 *et seq*.
https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title42/chapter119/subchapter6/partB&edition=prelim

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. 20 U.S.C. § 6301 *et seq*.
https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title20/chapter70/subchapter1/partA&edition=prelim

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