PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION
BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

NORTH CAROLINA HOMELESS EDUCATION LEARNING INSTITUTE

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AGENDA

• Shared experience from homeless/unaccompanied youth perspectives

• Higher education resources for homeless/unaccompanied youth

• Comments from financial aid administrators

• Residential Determination Service (RDS)

• Hearing from NC homeless liaisons: challenges, successes, recommendations
COLLEGE CONSIDERATION

• Early reach-out (freshman year) to discuss post-secondary options
  – Continued meetings and reminders of upcoming deadlines
  – Create a checklist with the student that can be reviewed at each meeting
  – U.S. Dept. of Education guide
    • “I want to go to college: Now what?”
• If a student is interested in postsecondary education, encourage them to take the SAT & ACT
  – Fee waivers are available for most students (ACT, SAT)

• Encourage all students to apply for FAFSA and other scholarship opportunities such as:
  – SchoolHouse Connection’s Youth Leadership and Scholarship Program
CREATIVE RESOURCES

• Host a college tour or a panel of alumni who are current college students

• Build partnerships with college access programs (TRIO, GEAR UP)

• Establish partnerships with community groups to fill unmet student needs such as dorm supplies and textbook assistance
  – Example: partner with a women’s group to sponsor student’s dorms
NAVIGATING BARRIERS

• Housing
  – Pros and Cons of on-campus vs. off-campus housing
  – Does your dorm close for holiday break/summer?

• Meal Plan
  – Dining dollars vs. Meal swipes

• Social Support
  – Clubs, Religious organizations, volunteering, mentoring
After the Transition

• The power of a simple check-in
  – Small care-package, email, letter

• Verification letters
  – Who can write it?
FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS...

• Difficult if the student is not identified as homeless at the time of FAFSA application
• All FAFSAs that indicate homeless status will be chosen for verification
• Liaisons don’t always change the date on the form, Answer YES if you received a determination as any time on or after July 1, 2018
• Contact between homeless liaisons and the financial aid office not as active as in previous years
• Identify correctly on FAFSA
• Some forms do not have name/contact of homeless liaison or signature; cannot use the determination
FROM VERIFICATION FORM

- This letter is to confirm that **NAME OF STUDENT** was (check one):

- This letter is to confirm that **NAME OF STUDENT** was (check one):
  - [ ] an unaccompanied homeless youth after July 1 of the year prior to college entry *(Add in year here)*. Refer to: https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/homeless-youth.pdf
Financial Aid and Other School Counselor Resources

Find FAFSA and Financial Aid Resources

Professional Development Opportunities

Need some inspiration? Check out what other counselors are doing!
Students with Unstable Address History

- Students who acknowledge unstable address history are flagged to assist RDS in working with the student, if needed.
- A student identified as McKinney-Vento does not automatically receive a resident status.
- If student has an unstable address history, RDS alerts student determination is “Under Review”
- RDS reaches out to student by end of next business day
- Phone conversation helps student navigate RDS and assesses time in NC and residence history
A Few Basic Concepts: Residency Law and Policy

- Must be domiciled in North Carolina at least 12 months
- Residency is based on the parent’s domicile unless the student can prove otherwise
- Non-US citizens with certain visa and immigration statuses are eligible for in-state tuition and state financial aid; DACA and undocumented students are not eligible
- Students classified as McKinney-Vento are not automatically considered residents for tuition and state aid purposes
The biggest misconception about RDS and the homeless population is that students who are classified as McKinney-Vento automatically receive in-state resident status. This is NOT the case. McKinney-Vento classification helps us understand how to better assist the students but it is not a given the student will automatically receive residency. Residency law still applies. Two examples:

1) Residency law requires a student be in NC for at least 12 months; if a student is classified as McKinney-Vento but has only lived in the state 9 months, the student will be classified a non-resident

2) Residency law/policy has specific immigration statuses eligible for tuition and state aid; if a student is classified as McKinney-Vento but has an ineligible immigration status the student will be classified a non-resident
RESOURCES

• Form for homeless liaisons to complete; CFNC/Education Professional/School Counselor Financial Aid Resources: https://www.cfnc.org/home/sc/fafasa_fa_resources.jsp

• Form for financial aid administrators: Marking Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Determinations: A Tool for Financial Aid Administrators

• Reference materials for paving the way to college for students experiencing homelessness.

• RDS Handout
FINANCIAL AID / FAFSA TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

• Creating College-Going Momentum
  – Caldwell CC and Technical Institute - June 18
  – Wayne Community College - June 24
  – Richmond Community College - June 26

• Fall School Counselor Trainings
  – Nine locations (to be determined)

• YOOU (Your Options & Opportunities Unlimited)
  – Database of organizations in NC helping students with postsecondary transition

• SPOC lists
  – Supports for homeless/unaccompanied youth on campuses
Questions?
CONTACT INFORMATION

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