

North Carolina Homeless Education Program

New Homeless Liaison Training 2019-2020SY

Presentation Slides



THE UNIVERSITY *of* NORTH CAROLINA
GREENSBORO



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction



Federal Law

The McKinney-Vento Act is a federal law designed to increase the school enrollment, attendance, and success of children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.



Federal Law

- States and local policies must remove barriers to enrollment and retention of eligible students including extra-curricular activities.
- Enrollment is defined as attending classes and participating fully in school administered activities.
- McKinney-Vento Act supersedes local and state policies and practice when there is a conflict or barrier to identify and enrolling students in school (U.S. Constitution, Article VI).
- McKinney-Vento Act was reauthorized through ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) on December 10, 2015.

McKinney-Vento Main Themes

- School access
- School stability
- Support for academic success and accrual
- Child-centered, best interest decision making
- Role of the local homeless liaison
- Subgrant requirements
- Transportation
- Preschool
- Higher Education

Homeless Liaison Roles & Responsibilities

- Every LEA and charter must designate a local homeless liaison.
- Homeless liaisons ensure all students are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic standards established for other children and youth.
- Homeless liaisons are required to ensure students in transition have access to and receive educational services which they are eligible for, including early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA, and other preschool programs administered by the LEA.
- Homeless liaisons ensure parents/guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of educational and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.

Homeless Liaison Roles & Responsibilities

- Homeless liaisons post educational rights of homeless students to be displayed in all school buildings and locations frequented by parents/guardians and unaccompanied youths with the **homeless liaison contact information**.
- Homeless liaisons ensure parents/guardians understand all their rights under the McKinney-Vento Act including transportation.
- Homeless liaisons mediate disputes in accordance with the requirements of the state dispute policy for homeless children and youth and the McKinney-Vento Act for homeless children and youth.
- Homeless liaisons provide school personnel with professional development and other support in understanding the rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Homeless Liaison Roles & Responsibilities

- Homeless liaisons provide referrals to health care, dental, mental health, substance abuse, housing, and other services as appropriate.
- Homeless liaisons make referrals to community providers and services for families in transition.
- Homeless liaisons are required to conduct outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
- Homeless liaisons provide community partners with professional development and other support in understanding the rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Homeless Liaison Roles & Responsibilities

- Homeless liaisons are required to ensure staff understand how to identify and enroll homeless children and youth in school and provide equal opportunity to succeed.
- Homeless liaisons must participate in professional development and technical assistance activities required by the State Coordinator's office.
- Homeless liaisons must have adequate capacity to be able to carry out their duties sufficiently.

Causes of Homelessness

- Lack of affordable housing
- Poverty
- Health problems, mental illness and addiction
- Domestic Violence
- Natural and other disasters
- Abuse/neglect/family dysfunction
- Other



Impacts of Homelessness



- There is higher incidence of acute and chronic illnesses, depression and anxiety.
- Homelessness in early childhood is associated with poor classroom engagement and poor social skills in early elementary school.
- The achievement gaps between homeless and low-income elementary students tend to persist, and may even worsen, over time.
- A youth who experiences homelessness is 87% more likely to drop out of school.

Barriers to Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Poor health, fatigue,
hunger

Emotional trauma,
depression, anxiety

Stereotypes and lack of
awareness

Under-identifications

High mobility resulting
in lack of school
stability and
educational continuity

Enrollment
requirements (school
records, health records,
proof of residence,
guardianship)

Lack of transportation

Lack of school supplies,
clothing, etc.

Enrollment Rights of Homeless Children and Youth

- Immediate enrollment, even when lacking records.
 - Homeless liaisons will assist in obtaining missing records after enrollment has taken place.
- Equal access to program and services.
- Categorical eligibility for free meals at time of enrollment/identification.
- Attend the school of origin, if in the student's best interest, or the local attendance area school.

Enrollment Rights of Homeless Children and Youth

- Students can continue attending their school of origin the entire time they are homeless, and until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin.
 - This must be at the request of a parent/guardian or homeless liaison on behalf of the homeless unaccompanied youth.
- In years of transition, school of origin shall include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools if in the best interest of the student.



Homeless Definition

The term “homeless children and youth” – means an individual who lacks a **fixed regular** and **adequate** nighttime residence.

Homeless Definition



- **Fixed** residence: is one that is stationary, permanent and not subject to change.
- **Regular** residence: is one that is used on a regular basis (i.e. nightly).
- **Adequate** residence: is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

Note:

If a living situation does not meet all **3** (fixed, regular and adequate) then the situation is considered homeless.

Homeless Situations...

- Sharing a home due to loss of housing
- Sharing a home due to economic hardship
- Living in motels / hotels / trailer parks
- Living in a shelter / bus or train stations
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Living in cars / parks / under bridges
- Living in campgrounds & abandoned buildings
- Migratory children
- Unaccompanied homeless youth
- Human trafficking
- Other

Questions to Consider

Can the student go to the SAME PLACE (fixed) EVERY NIGHT (regular) to sleep in a SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SPACE (adequate)?

Step 1: Get the facts.

Step 2: Analyze the facts.

1. Does the living situation fit into one of the specific examples of homelessness listed in the law?
2. Does the living situation fit another type of situation that is not fixed, regular, and adequate?

Step 3: Call your Regional Specialist if you're not sure.

Decisions are made on a case by case determination.

Appointment of the Homeless Liaison

- Every LEA, whether or not it receives dedicated McKinney-Vento subgrant funding, is required to carry out the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act.
- State Coordinator of North Carolina recommends:
 - That the district homeless liaison appoint a person in each school building in the LEA who can carry out and be responsible for identifying and serving students and reporting to the district homeless liaison the services and activities performed.

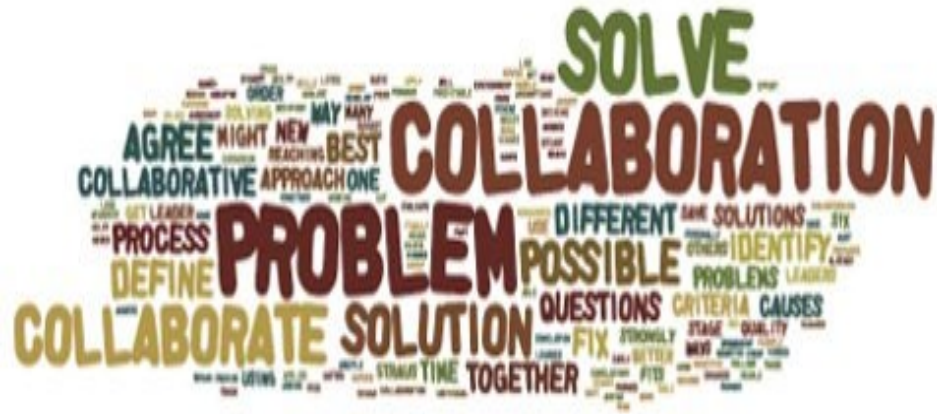
District Responsibilities

- School districts must take proactive steps to identify students experiencing homelessness.
- School districts must enroll children and youth experiencing homelessness immediately.
- School districts must keep, maintain, and make available student records for future school enrollment.
- School districts must review, and revise policies to remove barriers, including barriers due to outstanding fees, fines, or absences.

District Responsibilities

- School districts must provide a written explanation in a language that a parent/guardian and or unaccompanied youth can understand that explains the reasons for the LEA's decision.
- School districts must allow the liaison to coordinate with local agencies that provide services and assistance to homeless children, youth, and their families.

Internal Collaborations



- Title I (Mandated)
- Transportation Department
- Child and Nutrition Services (Mandated)
- Migrant/ESL Services
- Exceptional Children's Services/PBIS-IDEA
- Student Services Department -
Psychologists, Counselors, Healthful Living Staff, Military Liaison
- Curriculum and Instruction Services
- Elementary and Secondary Education
- Career and Technical Education
- Auxiliary Services Department
- Other

External Collaborations

- Institutions of Higher Education(Single Point of Contact-SPOC)
- Continuum of Care and HUD Programs
- United Way, Food Pantries, Churches
- Salvation Army/ Local Shelters/ Transitional Housing
- Department of Social Services, Health Department
- Behavioral Health-Children's Services
- Head Start (Mandated)
- Hotel and Motel
- Local Business Partnerships
- Local Police/ Sheriff's Office/Juvenile Justice
- Other





Transportation

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, homeless children and youths are entitled to receive transportation that is comparable to what is available to non-homeless students.

Transportation Requirements

LEAs must provide transportation to and from the school of origin:

- If the school of origin is in the student's best interest.
- If requested by parent/legal guardian/unaccompanied homeless youth.
- Until the end of the year in which a student gains permanent housing.

LEAs must also:

- Eliminate transportation barriers.
- Provide comparable transportation services.
- Work with other LEA(s) on mode of transportation, if student's current housing is in a different LEA.

Additional Transportation Requirements

- If a student is McKinney-Vento eligible at the time of enrollment, there is no obligation to provide transportation by the magnet or charter school.
- If a student is McKinney-Vento eligible after enrolling and attending classes, there is an obligation to provide transportation, even if the magnet or charter school does not typically provide transportation to other non-McKinney-Vento students.
- If a homeless student receives an approved transfer to another school, there is no obligation to provide transportation to the school.

Data Collection

- Is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Education (Ed.).
- Is required of all LEAs, Charter Schools, and Lab Schools annually.
- Is required even if the LEA has “0” student to report.

Homeless Module Opens: Late October – Mid-November

Submission Due Date: June 15th annually



PowerSchool

Data Collection

Who to Include in Reporting:

- Any student who:
 - Has been enrolled in your LEA/charter school at any point during the academic year, AND
 - Was identified as McKinney-Vento during the current academic year.
- Any preschool-aged (Birth – 5 yrs. – not Kindergarten) sibling of an identified student who:
 - Is also in the same or another qualifying McKinney-Vento situation.
- Any school-aged, out of school sibling of an identified student, who:
 - Is also living in the same or another qualifying McKinney-Vento situation.

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY)

An **unaccompanied youth** is any student not living in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian.

An **unaccompanied homeless youth** meets eligibility for McKinney-Vento based on whether the living situation is fixed, regular and adequate.

Unaccompanied + Homeless = Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

No lower age limit.

Upper age limit is school age defined by the state.
NC the upper limit is 21.

No citizenship requirement (Plyler vs. Doe).

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth.... “On Their Own”

- Family conflict or crisis
- Parental incarceration, substance abuse, illness, death, etc.
- Foster care issues: aging out of the foster care system; running away from a foster care placement
- Family homelessness
- Being asked to leave the home
- Choosing to leave home on their own
- Abandoned by family
- Other

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth...

Special Provisions ...

- Unaccompanied homeless youth do not need a parent/guardian to enroll or have access to services.
- Local homeless liaisons must support the student in making decisions and understanding his/her rights.

Homeless liaison will ...

- Assist in enrolling in school.
- Assist in obtaining school/ medical records.
- Inform unaccompanied homeless youth of services they are eligible for under the McKinney-Vento Act.

Access to Higher Education

- All McKinney-Vento youth must be able to receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths and prepare and improve the readiness of such youths for college.
- Liaisons must ensure unaccompanied youth are informed of their status as independent students and may obtain assistance from the liaison to receive verification of that status.



ESSA Updates Affecting Post-Secondary Education Opportunities

- The homeless liaison, along with guidance counselors and other LEA staff tasked with college preparation, should ensure that all homeless high school students receive information and individualized counseling regarding college readiness, college selection, the application process, financial aid, and the availability of on-campus supports.
- A local liaison may continue to provide verification of a youth's status as either unaccompanied and homeless, or as self-supporting and at risk of being homeless, for federal student aid purposes for as long as the liaison has access to the information necessary to make such a determination for a particular youth.

FAFSA



- Youth who meet the definition of “independent student” can complete the FAFSA without parental income information or signature.
- Unaccompanied youth are automatically considered independent students.
 - Must be determined to be unaccompanied and homeless after July 1 of the prior year.
- Youth who are unaccompanied, at risk of homelessness, and self-supporting are also automatically considered independent students.
 - Must be determined as such during the school year in which the application is submitted.

FAFSA Continued

- Determination must be made by:
 - a McKinney-Vento Act school district liaison,
 - a HUD homeless assistance program director or their designee,
 - a Runaway and Homeless Youth Act program director or their designee, or
 - a financial aid administrator.
- Under ESSA, local liaisons must inform UHY about their independent student status and assist them in documenting this status.
- Local liaisons may make subsequent determinations for student for whom they have access to the needed information (new under EHCY Guidance).
- More info and sample letters are available at:
<http://www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/higher-ed>

Title I Set-Aside for Homeless Students

- Title I, Part A is designed to meet the educational needs of low achieving children in schools with the highest levels of poverty by aligning high-quality assessments, systems of accountability, teacher preparation, curriculum, and instructional materials with challenging state academic standards.
- Homeless children and youth are part of Title I, Part A's target population.

Title I Set-Aside for Homeless Students

- For these reasons, children and youth who are homeless are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services, whether or not they attend a Title I, Part A school or meet the academic standards required of other students for eligibility.
- According to Title I, Part A, each LEA must reserve funds as necessary to provide services to homeless children who are attending elementary, middle, or high schools that are not Title I, Part A schools.

Title I Set-Aside for Homeless Students

- Services provided by the set-aside funds for homeless students may differ from those normally provided to other students receiving Title I, Part A services, but they must be comparable to services normally provided by the program.

The Dispute Process

- If a dispute arises over eligibility, school selection or enrollment in a school, enrollment and attendance must continue until the dispute is resolved.
- Homeless liaison will carry out the dispute process including:
 - Providing written notice of decision, including right to appeal to the State.
 - Ensuring the student is immediately enrolled in requested school and provided all applicable McKinney-Vento services during dispute resolution.
- School districts must provide a written explanation in a language that a parent/guardian and or unaccompanied youth can understand that explains the reasons for the LEA's decision.