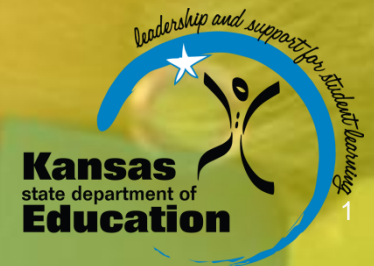


Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Have the Right to a Free, Appropriate Public Education

Kansas Summit on
Homelessness and Housing

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Objectives

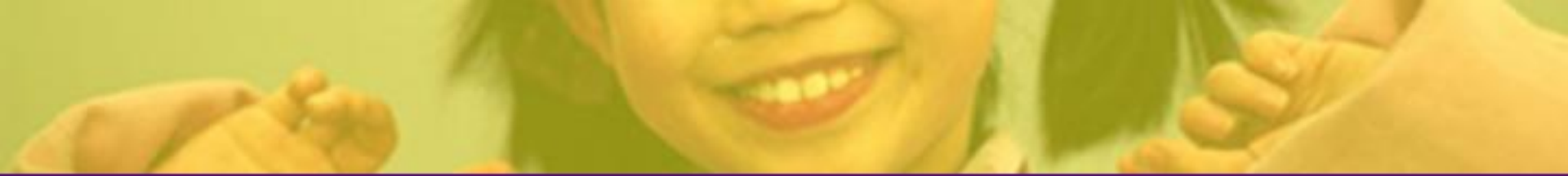
- Identify the current legal definition of “homeless student”.
- Identify legal requirements and activities of school districts, and legal rights of homeless students.
- Identify ways to fund certain activities with local funds, Title I-A homeless set asides, and McKinney-Vento grant money.

McKinney-Vento

Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001

Title X, Part C

- Reauthorizes the McKinney Act originally enacted in 1987.
- Requires educational access, attendance, and success for children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Provides states with funding to support local grants and statewide initiatives.



**Education is the key to
breaking the cycle of
homelessness.**



Who is homeless?

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:
 - Sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate housing.
 - Living in emergency or transitional housing.
 - Abandoned in hospitals.
 - Awaiting foster care.
 - Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or bus or train stations.
 - Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations.
 - Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in the circumstances described above.



Possible Signs of Homelessness

These characteristics could be attributed to students with other issues as well as those students experiencing homelessness.

- Attendance at several schools
- More than one family at the same address
- Attention-seeking behavior
- Hunger and hoarding of food
- Poor hygiene and grooming
- Sleeping in class
- Inappropriate dress for the weather
- Some common statements used by homeless students include:
 - “We've moved a lot.”
 - “We're staying with relatives/ friends while looking for a place.”
 - “We're going through a bad time now.”



Purpose of McKinney-Vento

To ensure that homeless children & youth –

- Enroll in, attend, and succeed in school, and
- Have access to educational and other services needed to help them meet State academic & achievement standards.



Purpose of McKinney-Vento

To ensure that the State & school districts –

- Remove all barriers to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children & youth.



McKinney-Vento Act: Enrollment

- Requires public schools to immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness even when lacking:
 - Proof of residency
 - Guardianship
 - Birth certificates, school records, or other documents
 - Medical records, including immunization records
 - Required dress code items, including uniforms



What a District Must Know

Homeless students –

- may not be segregated;
- must be transported to & from school of origin;
- must be enrolled immediately;
- must be placed according to the “best interest” of the student;



What a District Must Know

Districts must –

- designate a liaison;
- set aside funds in Title I for homeless education; and
- report numbers of homeless students annually to KSDE.



Liaison's Responsibilities

Ensure that-

- homeless children & youth are identified;
- homeless children & youth are enrolled in and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school;
- homeless children & youth and their families receive eligible services;



Liaison's Responsibilities

Ensure that-

- parents or guardians are informed of educational & related opportunities available to children and given meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;



Liaison's Responsibilities

Ensure that-

- parents or guardians and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of transportation services and assisted in accessing transportation;
- enrollment disputes are mediated according to McKinney-Vento; and



Liaison's Responsibilities

Ensure that-

- public notice of educational rights of homeless students is provided in locations where they receive services under McKinney-Vento.



Liaison's Responsibilities

Assist in –

- enrolling students and accessing school services;
- obtaining immunization or medical records;
- informing parents, school personnel, and others of rights of homeless;



Liaison's Responsibilities

Assist in –

- working with school personnel to resolve disputes;
- coordinating transportation services; and
- collaborating & coordinating with State Coordinator and school personnel responsible for providing services to students.



Addressing Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness

School District -

- set aside Title I funds;
- reserve slots in Head Start and Even Start; and
- ensure enrollment.

Schools -

- enroll students in free breakfast and lunch programs;
- ensure access to appropriate instructional supports/resources, including those available through Title I set asides, gifted programs, and special education;
- conduct an educational assessment;
- provide homeless awareness training; and
- alert teachers of a student's living situation (respecting privacy).



Addressing Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness, cont'd.

Teachers

- make the student feel welcome;
- assign a peer buddy to help the student get acquainted with the school and classroom;
- make contact with the parents; and
- give the child ownership of school space (e.g., cubie, locker, etc.);



Identification-Strategies

- provide awareness activities for school staff.
- coordinate with community agencies;
- provide outreach materials and posters;
- work with truancy and attendance officers;
- ask school-age children about preschool siblings;
- use enrollment and withdrawal forms to inquire about housing status;
- have students write or draw about where they live; and
- avoid using the word “homeless”.



Working With Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

- reduce school entry stress;
- promote academic success through encouraging words and actions that recognize the gains made;
- use tutoring and after-school programs to provide academic support; and
- increase access to services and activities.



Working With Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness, cont'd.

- encourage supportive relationships;
- establish consistent boundaries;
- have high expectations; and
- recognize stressful environments outside of school, and provide accommodations for homework. (For example, the child may not have the means to be able to make a collage or do a science project outside of school.)
 - provide needed supplies.
 - provide time and space in the school.
 - modify homework.



Unaccompanied Youth-Key Provisions

- Liaisons must help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school, after considering the youth's wishes, and inform the youth of his or her appeal rights.



Mobility

- Students who switch schools frequently score lower on standardized tests (study found mobile students scored 20 points lower than non-mobile students).
- Mobility also hurts non-mobile students (study found average test scores for non-mobile students were significantly lower in high schools with high student mobility rates).
- It takes children four-six months to recover academically after changing schools.



Mobility

- Students suffer psychologically, socially, and academically from mobility; mobile students are less likely to participate in extracurricular activities and more likely to act out or get into trouble.
- Mobility during high school greatly diminishes likelihood of graduation (study found students who changed high schools even once were less than half as likely as stable students to graduate, even controlling for other factors).



Feasibility

- Continuity of instruction
- Age of the child or youth
- Safety of the child or youth
- Length of stay at the shelter
- Likely area where family will find permanent housing
- Student's need for special instructional programs
- Impact of commute on education
- School placement of siblings
- Time remaining in the school year



Child Nutrition Act of 2004

- Homeless, runaway, and migrant students are automatically eligible for free school lunches—they don't have to fill out the normally required paper form.
- USDA has limited the documentation requirement to the student's name, effective date to receive meals, and the signature of a homeless liaison or service provider.
- Once found eligible, students are able to receive free lunches for the remainder of the school year and up to 30 days into the next school year without filling out a new application.



Title I and Homelessness- Key Provisions

- Homeless children are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services.
- LEAs must reserve (or set aside) funds as are necessary for homeless students not attending Title I schools.
- Set-aside funds must be used to provide services that are comparable to those provided to students in Title I schools.
- Services may include educationally related support services to children in shelters (or other locations where children may live) or other services that are typically not provided to other Title I students.
- These funds may also be used to provide services above and beyond to students in Title I schools.



Kansas Homeless Data

2005-2006	45 districts	3064 students
2006-2007	57 districts	3569 students
2007-2008	65 districts	4890 students
2008-2009	90 districts	6700 students
2009-2010	126 districts	8485 students



Resources

- Fact Sheets
- DVDs
- Imagine the Possibilities
- Law book
- Homeless posters
- NCHE materials
- Websites/listservs/newsletters
- Standards
- NAEHCY conference



Resources

- National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (NLCHP)
202-638-2535
<http://www.nlchp.org>
- National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)
202-364-7392
<http://www.naehcy.org>
- National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
1-800-308-2145
<http://www.serve.org/nche>
- National Network for Youth
202-783-7949
<http://www.nn4youth.org>



For Your Information

- www.ksde.org
- www.ksde.org (State & Federal Programs: **Education for Homeless Children and Youth**)
- <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=372>

For Your Information

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