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State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Transportation and Homeless Education

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California Department of Education's (CDE)

Homeless Education Team

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Homeless Education
[https://www.cde.ca.gov/s
p/hs/](https://www.cde.ca.gov/s/p/hs/)



Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act (1)

- Originally passed in 1987
- Reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which took effect on October 1, 2016
- 42 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section 11431 et seq.
- Sections 721 and 722 of the McKinney-Vento Act (The Act)

Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act (2)

- Works hand-in-hand with Title I, Part A and other federal education programs
- Requires all local educational agencies (LEAs) to designate a local homeless liaison to ensure identification, enrollment, and success for homeless children and youth. For the list of local homeless liaison, visit this spreadsheet at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/documents/ehcyliaisonlist.xlsx>

Definitions

- The next several slides will address the definitions for the following:
 - Homelessness
 - Unaccompanied homeless youth
 - School of origin

Homeless Definition (1)

- Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence – on December 10, 2016, the term “awaiting foster care placement” was eliminated

Homeless Definition (2)

- Fixed, regular, and adequate are defined as:
 - A **fixed** residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change
 - A **regular** residence is one that is used on a normal, standard, and consistent basis
 - An **adequate** residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments

Homeless Definition (3)

- Examples of homelessness include children and youth living in:
 - Shared housing due to economic hardship
 - Motels or hotels
 - Public or private places not designed for sleeping

Homeless Definition (4)

- Trailer parks or campgrounds
- Cars, parks, and abandoned buildings
- Shelters
- Emergency or transitional shelters

Homeless Definition (5)

- Additional examples of homelessness include children and youth who are:
 - Migratory children, who qualify as homeless
 - Abandoned in hospitals
 - Unaccompanied homeless youth

Homeless Definition (6)

- To determine if a homeless child or youth lives in substandard living conditions, consider:
 - Health and safety concerns
 - Number of occupants per square foot
 - Age of occupants
 - State and local building codes

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Definition

- “Unaccompanied homeless youth” is defined as a child or youth who meets the McKinney-Vento definition and is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian
- There is no age limit for an unaccompanied homeless youth

School of Origin Definition (1)

- A homeless student has the right to remain in their school of origin (SOO) for the duration of their homelessness, if it is in the best interest of the student, and it is parent requested
- School of origin is defined as:
 - The school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed;

School of Origin Definition (2)

- The school in which the child or youth was last enrolled; or,
- A school that the child or youth has had some sort of connection to within the last 15 months
- Feeder school patterns are also part of the definition, including preschool
- Best interest is based on student-centered factors, such as age, grade, programs, etc.

Mobility (1)

- Homeless students can lose four to six months of academic progress with one school move during a year
- Mobility also hurts non-mobile students; a study found average test scores for non-mobile students were significantly lower in high schools with high student mobility rates

Mobility (2)

- Students who change high schools even once during high school are less than half as likely as stable students to graduate, even accounting for other factors

Additional Consequences (1)

- Homeless students and their families typically experience:
 - Poor nutrition
 - Inadequate health care
 - Higher exposure to violence and emotional stress
 - Increased incidents of health impairments

Additional Consequences (2)

- With constant moving, children and youth experiencing homelessness leave behind a familiar space, their possessions, and people
- Children and youth experiencing homelessness leave projects half finished, cling to possessions, are restless, may exhibit aggressive behavior, or feel a loss of control so they fight for control at school

Transportation – General (1)

- The Act requires LEAs to provide services to homeless students comparable to those services offered to other students, including transportation
- LEAs are required to enroll homeless students immediately, and transportation must be arranged without delay
- Transportation should be part of the LEA's policies and procedures at it relates to homeless students

Transportation – General (2)

- The mode of transportation is based on the best interest of the student and in consultation with the parent/guardian
 - The LEA ultimately determines the mode of transportation, as long as it does not create a barrier to the student
- If transportation is a barrier to extracurricular activities, the LEA would be required to provide or arrange transportation to and from the activity

Transportation – Funding Options

- LEAs can use the following funds to provide or arrange transportation:
 - General funds
 - Title I, Part A reservation funds
 - McKinney-Vento subgrant funds

Transportation – School of Origin (1)

- When a homeless student attends their school of origin and *lives within the LEA's attendance area*, then the LEA needs to provide or arrange transportation
- Once a homeless student becomes permanently housed, services continue to be provided for the remainder of the school year
 - This includes transportation

Transportation – School of Origin (2)

- When a homeless student attends their school of origin, and *lives outside the LEA's attendance area*, then the LEA of origin and the LEA of residence must agree upon a method and cost for providing or arranging transportation
- If the two LEAs are unable to agree, then the responsibility and cost for transportation must be shared, equally

Collaboration

- Collaboration is key!
- Along with the local homeless liaison, you should be collaborating with:
 - District leadership and neighboring districts
 - Homeless service providers
 - Community agencies such as shelters, faith-based programs
 - Parents/guardian of homeless students

Transportation Strategies (1)

- Convene a meeting with local liaisons and transportation directors
- Identify a district transportation staff member who will serve as the point person to work with the liaison and homeless students
- Develop forms, such as student requests, parent agreements, and inter-district transportation agreements

Transportation Strategies (2)

- Be aware that homeless families often move frequently, and transportation plans must be adjusted accordingly
- Explore flexible bus routes that can be implemented easily
- Maintain a list of shelters, hotels, motels, campgrounds, and other areas where homeless families may live

Transportation Strategies (3)

- Assist the liaison with developing a system of providing gas vouchers/cards or reimbursement to parents/guardians
- Brainstorm cost-saving solutions with the LEA and community stakeholders
- Remember anyone can assist with identification of homeless children and youth within the community

Transportation Strategies (4)

- Bus drivers can assist with identification, too. They can observe changes in a student's appearance or behavior (e.g. wearing the same and/or dirty clothes everyday, arriving late to the bus stop, acting withdrawn, or behaving aggressively)
- Display a "You Can Enroll in School" poster in each bus. Posters are available on the CDE's web site at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/cy/documents/homelesspostereng.pdf>

Transportation and COVID-19

- Social distancing or other changes to busing due to COVID-19 do not affect the LEA's obligation to provide transportation under the McKinney-Vento Act, legally speaking
- The McKinney-Vento Act remains in full effect

Resources

- The CDE's Homeless Education web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/>
- National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) website at <https://nche.ed.gov/>, which is the technical assistance center for the U.S. Department of Education
- NCHE's Transportation website at <https://nche.ed.gov/transportation/>

Contact Information

Homeless Education Program
Integrated Student Support and Programs Office
California Department of Education

Toll-free Number 1-866-856-8214

Email: HomelessED@cde.ca.gov

Lwheeler@cde.ca.gov

Certificate of Completion

Transportation and Homeless Education

I have fully reviewed the contents of this training and agree to implement the provisions of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act.

Participant Name

Participant Signature

Date of Completion

Please print out this slide of the PowerPoint, complete, and retain a copy for your records.