



McKinney-Vento 101

November 2, 2023

About SchoolHouse Connection

SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness through education.

We provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

WEBSITE:

schoolhouseconnection.org

NEWSLETTER:

schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up

- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships

School Year 2022-23 Data

Identified

- 18,443 PreK-12 children were identified as experiencing homelessness
- 2.2% of all PreK-12 children were identified as experiencing homelessness

Nighttime Residence

- Doubled Up: 75.7%
- Shelter: 10.7%
- Hotel/Motel: 11.1%
- Unsheltered: 2.5%



The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act



McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law



Originally passed in 1987; last updated in 2015 as part of Every Student Succeeds Act



Applies to public school districts and public charters



Goal: Ensure identification, enrollment, and success in school, including preschool, for children and youth experiencing homelessness

Homelessness Defined

Under McKinney-Vento the term “homeless” children and youth means:

Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence



Fixed, Regular, and Adequate

Can the student go to the same place (fixed), every night (regular) to sleep in a safe and sufficient space (adequate)?



Fixed:

- Stationary, permanent, not subject to change



Regular:

- Used on a predictable, routine, consistent basis
- Consider the relative permanence



Adequate:

- Lawfully and reasonably sufficient
- Sufficient for meeting the physical and psychological needs typically met in a home environment



Eligibility

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason (doubled up)
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar setting

Unaccompanied Youth

A child or youth without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence **and** not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian.



Youth run away from home due to abuse or neglect

- 40-60% physically abused
- 17-25% sexually abused
- Connection between parental substance use and abuse and youth running away from home



Parents force youth out of the home due to conflict

- Sexual orientation and gender identify
- Pregnancy



An unaccompanied youth can be a student of any age



School year 2022-23: 11.4% of students identified under McKinney-Vento were identified as unaccompanied youth



Unaccompanied Youth

Resources:

- [SHC Unaccompanied Youth](#)
- [FAFSA](#)



Liaisons must ensure that unaccompanied youth are:

- Enrolled in school;
- Have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as the State establishes for other children and youth, including through implementation of partial credit procedures;
- Are informed of their status as independent students and are able to obtain assistance from the liaison to receive verification of such status for purposes of FAFSA

Outreach and Awareness

Resources:

- [National Center for Homeless Education Free Outreach Posters](#)
- [Know Your Rights Flyers \(editable\)](#)
- Outreach Materials in Other Languages
 - [SHC Training Resources](#)
 - [Washington State - Parent and Youth Posters in Other Languages](#)



Public notice of the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness must be disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians or unaccompanied youth



Locations include: schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens



Materials posted or disseminated must be in a manner and form understandable to the parents, guardians, and youth



Identification

Resources:

- [First Step: Identifying Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Next Step: Supporting Students After They've Been Identified as Homeless](#)
- [Editable Know Your Rights Flyers](#)
- [DPI Sample Questions for Information Gathering](#)

- Children and youth experiencing homelessness must be identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination with other entities and agencies
- Children and youth who are identified must be informed of their rights under McKinney-Vento
- Liaisons may not investigate, but may ask questions to better understand the living situation
- Identification is critical to successfully implementing McKinney-Vento



Identification of Young Children



Children and youth experiencing homelessness must receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, early intervention (IDEA Part C), and preschool programs administered by the LEA



Preschool is included in the school of origin

Resources:

- [Referring Young Children to Early Childhood Development Programs: Checklist for Liaisons](#)
- [Early Childhood Resources](#)

Identification Challenges

Challenges

- Misunderstanding the definition of homelessness
- Fear of self-identifying
- Moving around and changing schools
- Racism, homophobia, transphobia, and other biases
- Children under five are particularly invisible

Identification Strategies

- Don't use the word "homeless"
- Use a housing questionnaire in enrollment documents
- Include information in outreach efforts, classwork, and conversations
- Stay in touch with students and families on a regular basis
- Enlist help from parents and students
- Ask about younger siblings

Identification Strategies

- Relationships are key!
- Have a process for identification at other times during the school year
- Train staff to know indicators of homelessness and who to contact

Immediate Enrollment

- **62%** of McKinney-Vento students said that proof of residency requirements posed a major challenge for them when enrolling in a new school.
- **56%** said lack of cooperation between their new and old schools (records transfer) posed a major challenge.
- **60%** found changing schools difficult to navigate.

The right to enroll in school immediately

- McKinney-Vento students are entitled to immediate enrollment, even without required documents, such as school records, records of immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, guardianship, or other documents.
- Enrollment means “attending classes and participating fully in school activities.”
- Immediate means “without delay.”

Immediate Enrollment for Unaccompanied Youth

1

Unlike most education laws, McKinney-Vento gives rights directly to unaccompanied youth, above the rights of their parents/guardians

- To enroll and make decisions
- To choose between school of origin and local school
- To file disputes

2

LEAs can handle enrollment in any way that ensures immediate participation; the most common procedure is for youth to enroll themselves.

School of Origin

What is the school of origin?

- The school attended when permanently housed, or
- The school in which last enrolled.
- Includes preschools, and
- Includes a designated receiving school in a feeder school system

The right to remain in the school of origin:

Each LEA shall, according to the child's or youth's best interest:

- Keep the student in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness, and until the end of the academic year in which the student becomes permanently housed; or
- Enroll the student in a local school,
- There is a presumption in favor of the school of origin, as well as parent/unaccompanied youth wishes.
- **Resource:** [Interview Checklists for Supporting School Selection](#)

The Right to Transportation

Resource:

- [Meeting the Transportation Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness in the Pandemic and Beyond](#)

- 1 LEAs must provide students in homeless situations with transportation to the school of origin.
- 2 LEAs must also address transportation barriers to attending classes and participating fully in school, including extracurricular activities.
- 3 What the LEA is/is not doing for other students does not change these requirements.

Full Participation

Resources:

- [Full Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities for Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Awarding and Accepting Partial Credit for Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Quick Guide for Counseling Staff](#)
- [FAFSA Resources](#)



Parents/guardians and youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate



Liaisons must work to ensure that barriers to full participation are removed



Students experiencing homelessness must receive appropriate credit for full or partial coursework completed while attending a prior school. Liaison are responsible to implement these policies



Liaisons should collaborate with school counseling staff to ensure that youth receive assistance to prepare and improve college readiness

Removing Barriers to Participation in Extracurricular Activities

- 1 Provide transportation
- 2 Pay for needed uniforms and supplies
- 3 Pay/waive fees

Removing Barriers to Enrollment and Retention

Challenges

- Chronic absenteeism
- Mobility
- Trauma and related mental health struggles
- Lack of adult support
- Gaps in learning

Strategies

- Ensure access to tutoring, after-school, and summer enrichment programs by prioritizing McKinney-Vento students and providing transportation.
- Provide one-on-one academic support and regular “check-ins.”
- Monitor attendance and provide interventions quickly.
- Award and accept partial credits and provide credit recovery options.
- Support trauma-informed, restorative discipline policies and practices.
- [Resource: Supporting the Attendance of Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)



Policies and Dispute Resolution

- Liaisons must work with LEAs to review and revise policies to remove barriers to identification, enrollment, and retention. This includes barriers to fees, fines, and absences
- In the event of a dispute over eligibility, school selection, or enrollment, the child or youth must be immediately enrolled in the school in which they seek enrollment, pending a resolution of the dispute and all appeals
- Liaisons must work with families and youth to navigate the dispute resolution process, including all appeals



Community Referrals

→ Children and youth experiencing homelessness must receive referrals to health, dental, mental health, housing, substance abuse, and other appropriate services

→ Regularly connect with community partners to establish two-way referral processes

→ Resource:

[Ensuring Access to Food Resources for Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)



Professional Development

Resources:

- [McKinney-Vento Training Series for School Personnel](#)
- [Awareness and Training Resources](#)



Liaisons must ensure that other school personnel receive professional development and other support



Liaisons must participate in professional development and other technical assistance activities as determined appropriate by the State Coordinator



Strategies for providing professional development may include staff meetings, online modules or tools, etc.

Questions & Discussion



Let's Connect!

Facebook: SchoolHouse Connection

Facebook Group: Homelessness &
Education - A SchoolHouse Connection
Group

Instagram: @SchoolHouseConnection

Twitter: @SchoolHouseConn

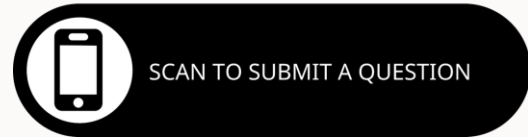
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**Have questions?
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and submit them!**



Contact Information



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