

Meeting the Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness with Federal Funds

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Learning Outcomes

- Understand the impact of homelessness on children and youth.
- Learn the requirements under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- Understand allowable uses of federal funds pertaining to students experiencing homelessness, including ARP-HCY, EHCY, Title I and ESSER stimulus funds.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

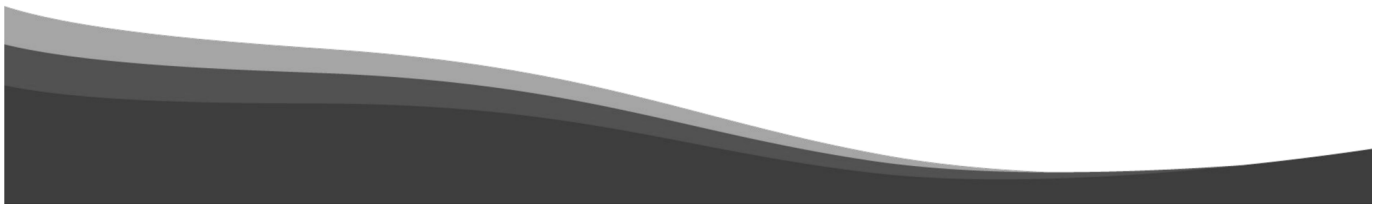
- The intent of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is to ensure all children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence receive access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth.
- As part of the McKinney-Vento Act, all LEAs are required to remove barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and the academic success of children and youth experiencing homelessness, and provide this student population with the opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held.

Causes of Homelessness

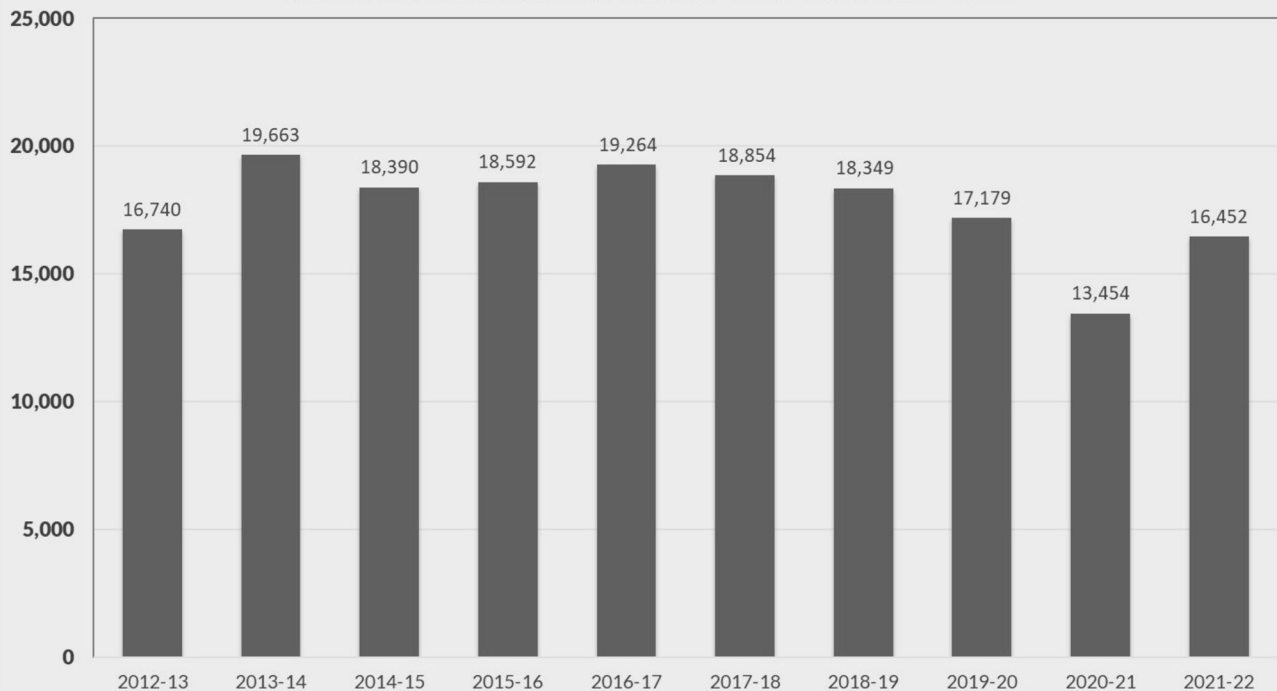
- Lack of affordable housing
- Poverty
 - Increase in low vs middle wage employment
- Health problems
 - Lack of health insurance
 - Alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA), mental health
- Domestic violence
- Natural and other disasters
- Abuse, neglect, family dysfunction (unaccompanied youth)
- **COVID-19**

Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth

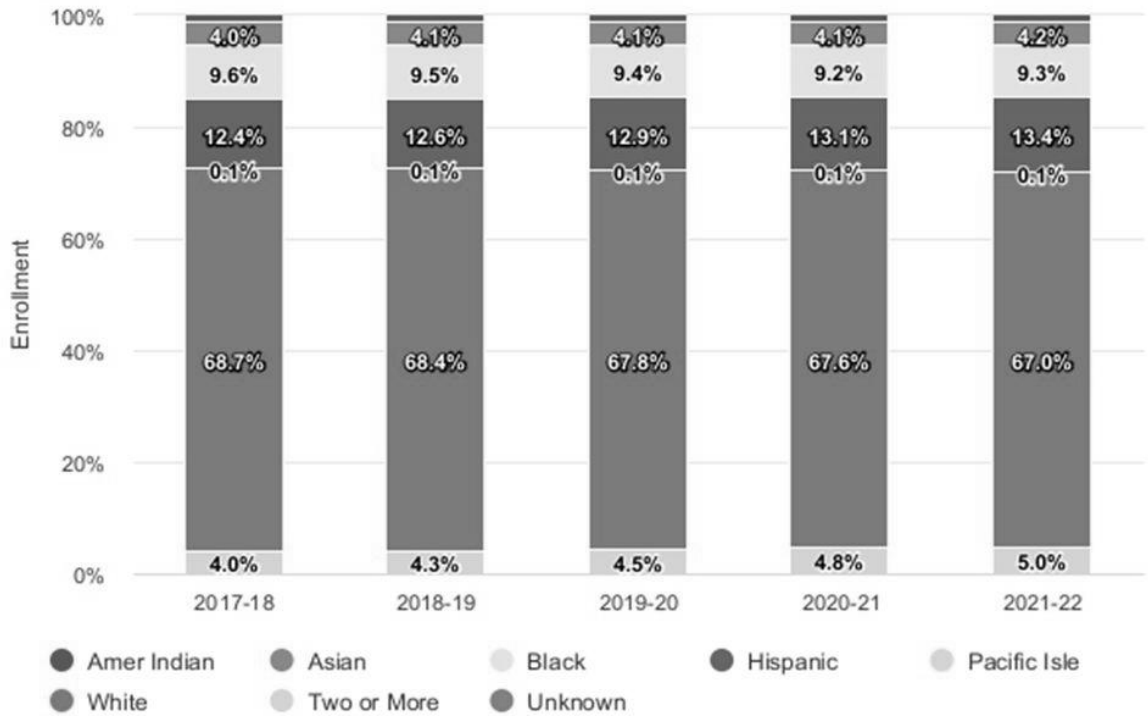
- Higher incidences of acute and chronic illnesses, depression and anxiety.
- Homelessness at any time in early childhood is associated with poor classroom engagement and poor social skills in early elementary school.
- The achievement gap between homeless and low-income elementary students tend to persist,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



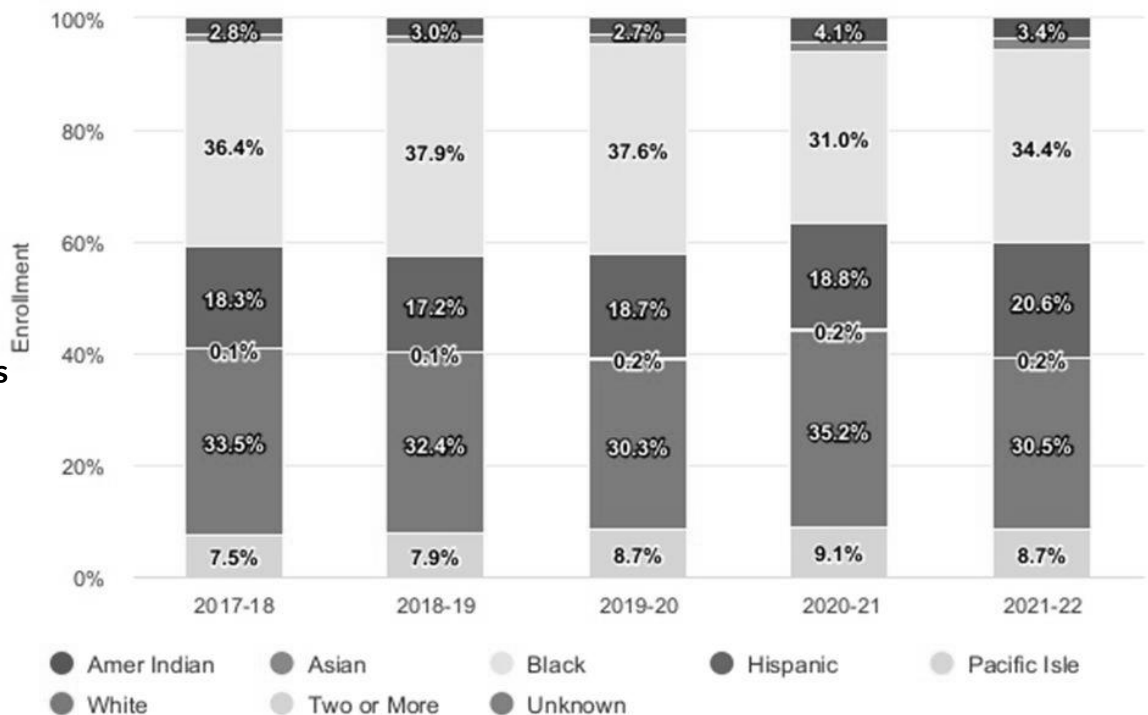
Homeless Student Enrollment in Wisconsin 2011-2021



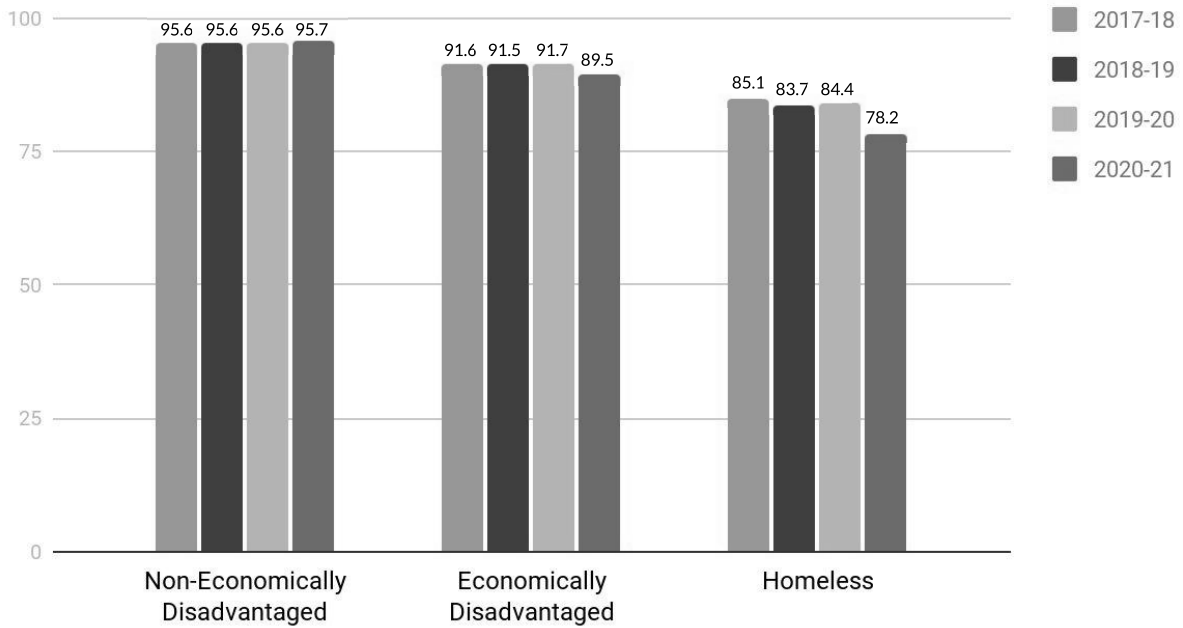
Percent of Students Enrolled by Race/Ethnicity



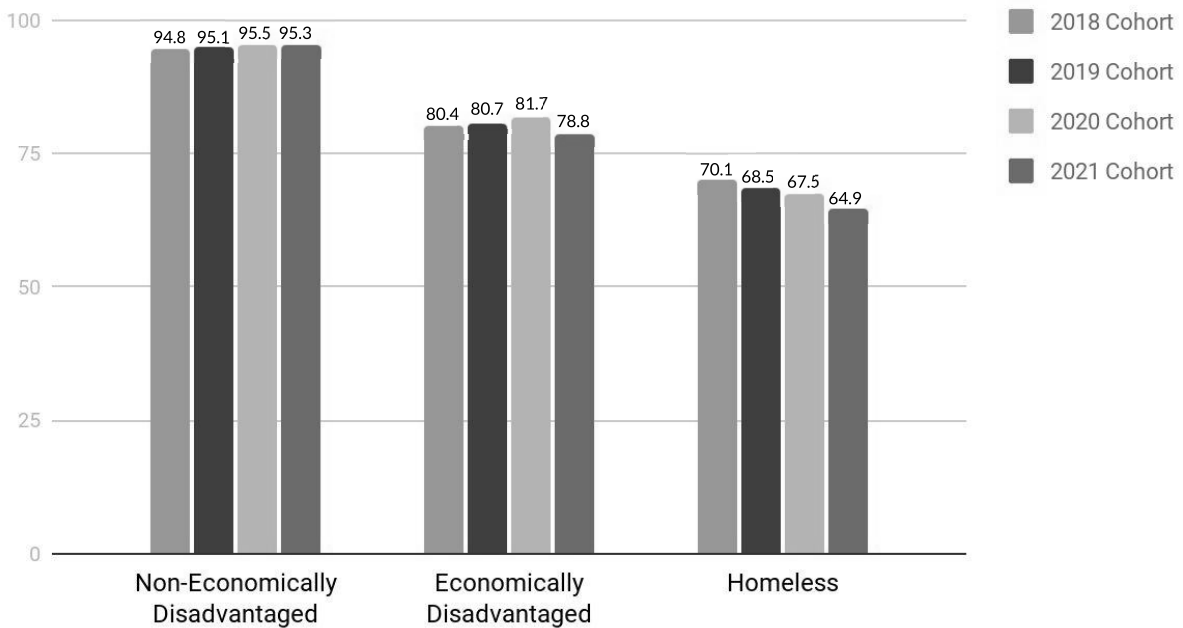
Percent of Students Experiencing Homelessness by Race/Ethnicity



Attendance Rates



4 Year Cohort Graduation Rates



Homelessness Defined

The term “homeless” children and youth means:

“Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence—”

What exactly is a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence?

Fixed, Regular, and Adequate

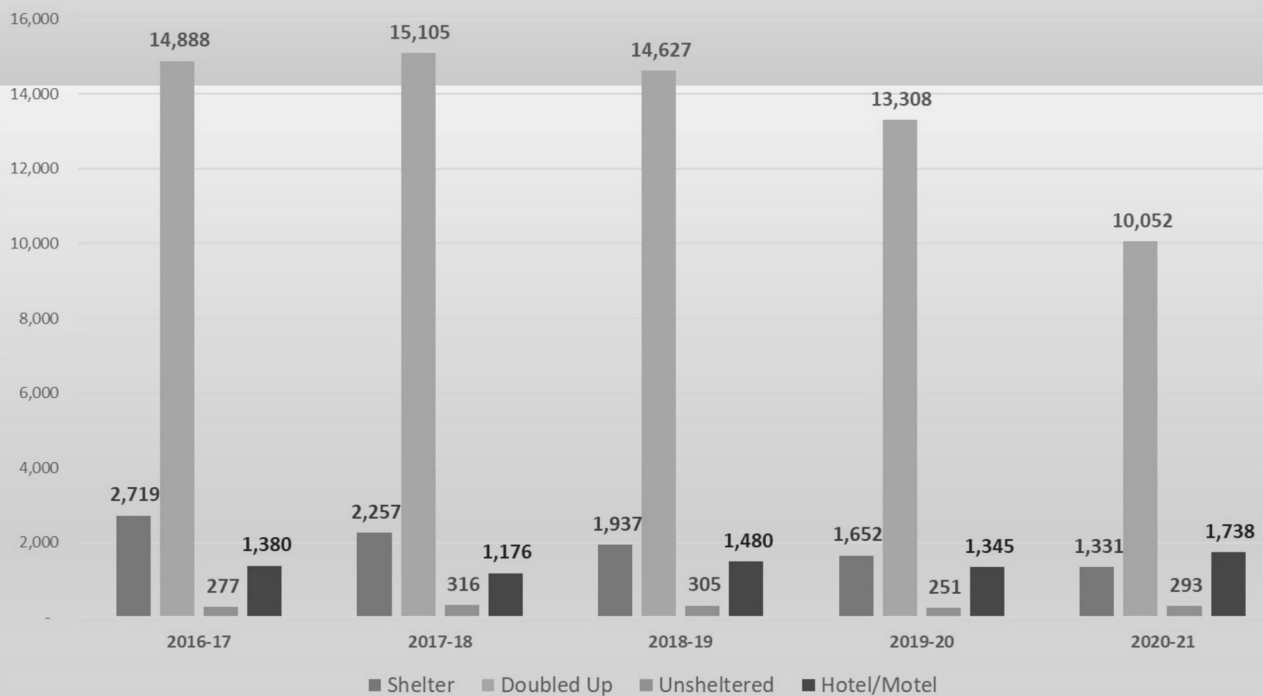
- **Fixed:**
 - Stationary, permanent, not subject to change
- **Regular:**
 - Used on a predictable, routine, consistent basis
 - Consider the relative permanence
- **Adequate:**
 - Lawfully and reasonably sufficient
 - Sufficient for meeting the physical and psychological needs typically met in a home environment

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

Eligibility

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (sometimes referred to as doubled-up)
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in a public or private place not designed for ordinary use as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans (cars, parks, bus or train stations, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, etc.).
- Children from migratory families who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
- Unaccompanied youth living in the above circumstances

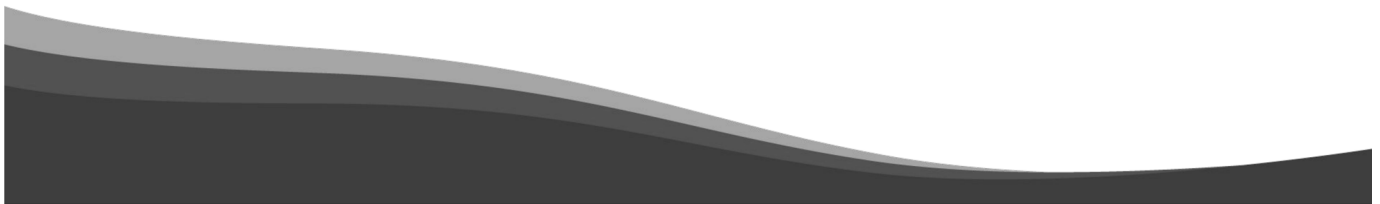
Homeless Student Nighttime Residence Data 2016-2021



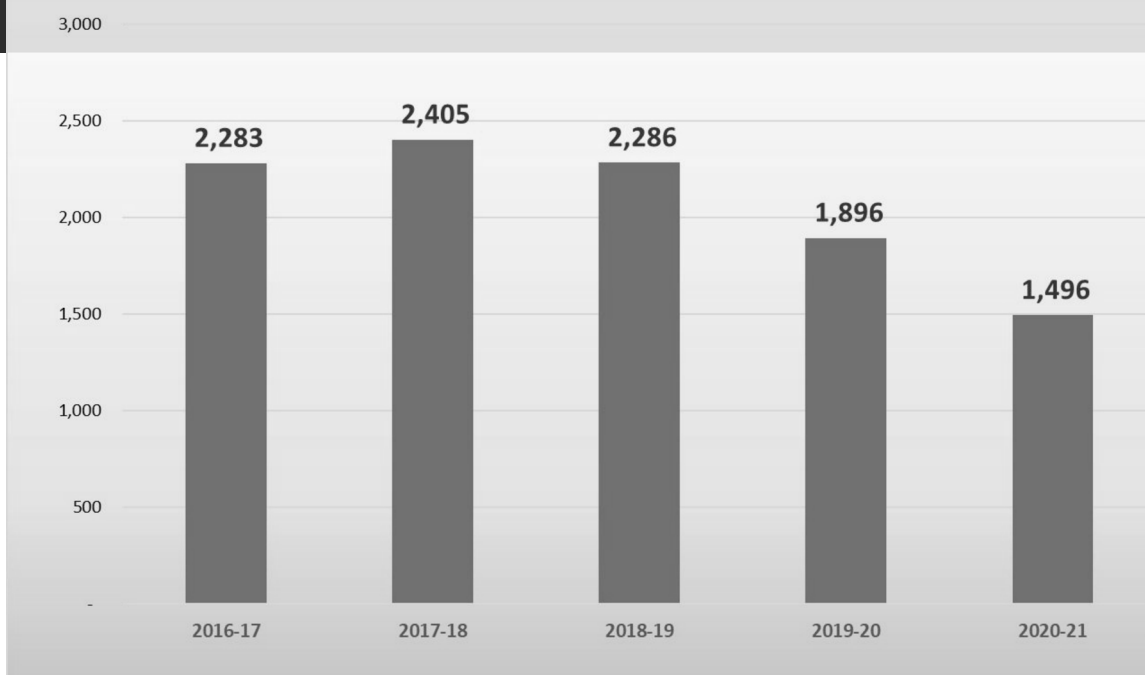
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Definition:

Youth who meet the definition of homeless **AND** are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian (i.e., youth living with relatives on an emergency basis, youth living with a friend or runaway).



Total Unaccompanied Youth Enrollment 2016-2021



School Stability

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

- Continue the student's education 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 in any public school that housed students living where the student is living are eligible to attend.

School of Origin and Residence

- School of origin: school that child or youth attended when permanently housed or last enrolled.
- School of residence: school in the local attendance area where the child or youth is staying.

School Stability (*continued*)

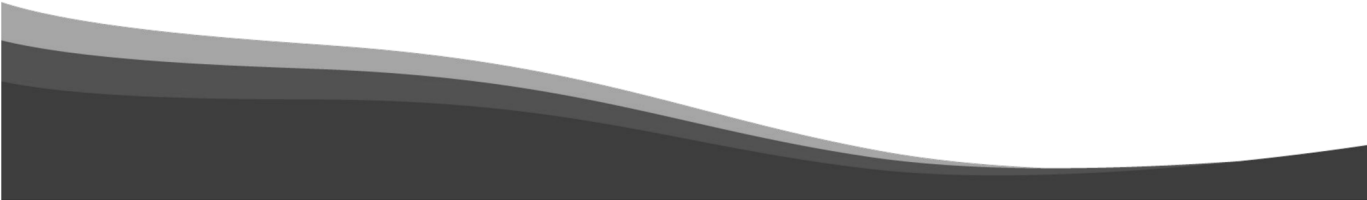
- Applies when students lose housing during the year or during the summer
- School of origin:
 - Includes a preschool
 - Includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for feeder school patterns, when the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin

Transportation

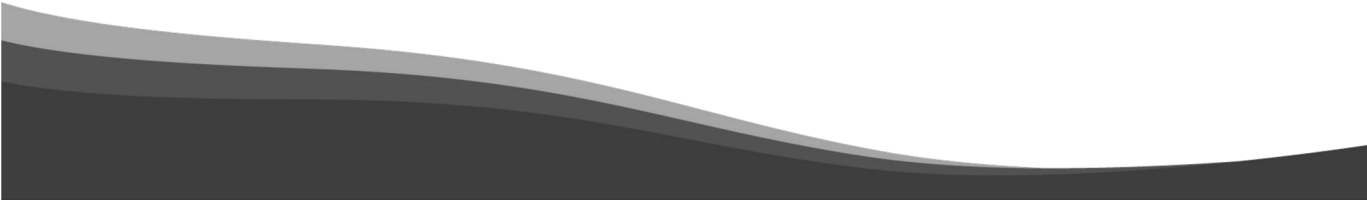
LEAs must provide transportation to and from the school of origin, including until the end of the year when the student obtains permanent housing, at a parent's or guardian's request (or at the liaison's request for unaccompanied youth).

- If staying in the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation to the school of origin.
- If crossing LEA lines, both LEAs must determine how to divide the responsibility and share the cost, or they must share the cost equally.

Transportation—Key Provisions

- LEAs must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.
 - LEAs must eliminate barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of students experiencing homelessness (including transportation barriers).
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Support for Academic Success: Coordination with Other Laws/Programs

- LEAs must coordinate McKinney-Vento and special education services within the LEA and with other involved LEAs.
 - Information about a student eligible under McKinney-Vento's living situation is a student education record subject to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
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Title I Eligibility

Children and youth experiencing homelessness are:

- automatically eligible for Title I services, including services provided through schoolwide or targeted assistance programs
- eligible to receive Title I services, even if not attending a Title I school, through the Title I reservation
- eligible to receive Title I services for the remainder of any school year in which they become permanently housed

**Federal Funds to Support
Students Experiencing
Homelessness**

Federal Funds to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness

- Title I, Part A Homeless Reservation
- Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant (competitive)
- ARP-HCY Part I and Part II
- ESSER

Title I-A Reservation

- Title I funds must be used to support students to succeed in school and meet academic achievement standards.
- When taking into consideration barriers that students experiencing homelessness often encounter, districts may provide students experiencing homelessness with services that are not ordinarily provided to other Title I permanently housed students, and are not available from other sources.
- Services must be reasonable and necessary to assist students experiencing homelessness to take advantage of educational opportunities.
- Title I, Part A funds must be used only when funds or services are not available from other public or private sources that provide similar services for economically disadvantaged students in general.

Determining the Title I-A Reservation

There is not a specific amount of Title I, Part A funds an LEA must reserve. However, it is required that the amount be sufficient to provide services to students experiencing homelessness. Options include:

- an LEA may use a districtwide, per pupil amount for students experiencing homelessness.
- an LEA may reserve a percentage of their total Title I, Part A allocation.
- an LEA may determine its own amount that is reasonable and necessary to provide comparable Title I services to students experiencing homelessness.

[DPI Title I, Part A Homeless Reservation FAQ](#)

Coordinating with Title I, Part A

- LEAs are still required to take a Title I, Part A homeless reservation despite receiving ARP-HCY funds. ARP-HCY funds should not be taken into account when determining a reasonable and necessary reservation amount.
- LEAs should coordinate the use of ESSER funds with EHCY and Title I, Part A funds to ensure a comprehensive approach to meet the needs of students experiencing homelessness.

Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Grants

- Under the McKinney-Vento Act, SEAs must distribute federal EHCY grant funds to LEAs in a competitive manner.
- Typically around \$1,000,000 distributed each year.
- Grant funds may be used for the 16 activities authorized under Section 723(d) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- Majority of budget must be related to grant goals.

EHCY Innovation Grant

The purpose of the 3-yr Innovation grant is to:

- Fund innovative strategies to support students experiencing homelessness above and beyond compliance with McKinney-Vento
- Improve the academic and school success of students experiencing homelessness
- Fund strategies that are based on data analysis
- Build sustainable new strategies that continue after the 3-year grant cycle

Districts applying for this grant must already be in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

EHCY Compliance Grant

The purpose of the 2-year Compliance grant is to:

- Strive for equitable distribution of EHCY funds throughout the state.
- Provide increased technical support to districts to ensure compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- Encourage recipients to go beyond compliance in a select area.
- Provide the opportunity for districts to feel prepared to apply for the EHCY 3-year innovation grant.

EHCY Grant Timelines

- Now accepting applications for the EHCY Innovation Grant and EHCY Compliance Grant!
- Complete grants in Qualtrics by April 11, 2023, 4:00 p.m.
- Find applications and guidelines on <https://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/grant-info>
- Attend the informational webinar on Thursday, March 2 at 9:00 a.m. (details at link above; will be recorded)

American Rescue Plan - Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY)

- ARP-HCY funds are specifically dedicated to support the identification, enrollment, and school participation of children and youth experiencing homelessness, including through wrap-around services.
- Funds should address the specific and urgent needs due to the extraordinary impact of the pandemic on students experiencing homelessness, include academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

Purpose and Focus of ARP-HCY

- Added flexibilities to activities typically allowed with EHCY funds.
- Overall, costs must be “reasonable and necessary” and align with the purpose of, and other requirements in, the EHCY statute.
- Grant funds may be used for the 16 activities authorized under Section 723(d) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- USDE also emphasized that LEAs should analyze the needs of students experiencing homelessness and use funds for “other extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youths to attend school and participate fully in school activities.”

ARP-HCY At A Glance

- ARP-HCY total amount allocated to LEAs: \$7,569,722
- The funding was split into two grants:
 - ARP-HCY Part I (competitive application)
 - ARP-HCY Part II (formula allocation)
- ARP-HCY grant funds can be used until September 30, 2024
 - Follows same timeline as ARP ESSER (III) funds

Application and Budget

- Initial budgets should have already been completed in 2022.
- There are still grant recipients without approved budgets:
 - 3 ARP-HCY I
 - 37 ARP-HCY II
- Business officials should work with LEA homeless liaisons to complete the budget ASAP.
- Please start making partial claims ASAP.

Coordinating with Other Stimulus Funds

- LEAs should strategically use and leverage **both** ESSER funds and dedicated homeless funding (Title I, Part A reservation, EHCY) to locate, engage, maintain connection, and support children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- **ARP-HCY, and ESSER funds can all be used to support the 16 allowable activities under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.**
- Even if an LEA received a small amount of ARP-HCY funds or joined a consortium, ESSER funds can and should be used to support the extraordinary needs of students experiencing homelessness.

Use of Funds - Basics

- Homeless liaison's salary
- Excess cost of transportation to and from the school of origin
- Clothing/shoes (school uniform/dress code/gym uniform)
- Cap and gown
- Fees to participate in the general education program
- School supplies
- Birth certificates
- Medical/dental services (glasses, hearing aids, immunizations)

Use of Funds - Identification/Outreach

Increase outreach and identification by:

- Increasing staff hours for the homeless liaison or McKinney-Vento related personnel. Hiring additional staff, or adding hours to staff specifically tasked with finding and re-engaging students.
- Launching an outreach campaign which may include increasing posters, flyers, and other outreach throughout the community.
- Screen for homelessness by embedding questions and information about homelessness in all school or district outreach efforts and registration materials.
- Provide training to all teachers and staff to assist with identification.
- Upgrade online enrollment systems to ensure full and easy accessibility to families and students experiencing homelessness.

Use of Funds - Communication/Wrap-Around

Enhance communication with students and families.

- Provide wireless hotspots for highly mobile students, purchase software for communicating with families, outreach campaigns.

Partner with Community-Based Organizations or hire “systems navigators” to help families and youth access wrap-around services.

- To help students and families meet basic needs like food, health care, hygiene items, laundry, shelter, housing and rental assistance, Head Start, etc.

Use of Funds - Wrap-Around

Help meet rising mental health needs.

- Invite mental health providers to support students virtually and/or on-site at schools.
- Implement trauma-informed training and practices.

Increase counseling and social work services.

- Ensure counselors can assist students experiencing homelessness with credit accrual and recovery, FAFSA completion, and college/career transition.
- Hire or assign building-level “success/graduation coaches” for students experiencing homelessness.

Use of Funds - Academic Support/ Early Childhood

Provide academic coaching, enrichment opportunities, and access to summer learning.

- Offer transportation to all available in-person enrichment opportunities.

Offer early childhood education services for young children experiencing homelessness.

- Provide transportation to existing in-person options.
- Increase capacity in preschool, Head Start, child care, and early intervention programs.
- Hire early childhood homelessness specialists at LEA, Head Start programs, and child care programs who assist in the identification and support of young children experiencing homelessness and their families.

Use of Funds - Transportation

Provide more transportation options.

- Using ARP-HCY funds, purchase a vehicle for students experiencing homelessness' school of origin transportation and for community outreach to motels, campgrounds, food banks, etc.
- Increase capacity of existing transportation services by hiring drivers for district vehicles or a transportation coordinator.
- Partner with public transportation providers to offer no-cost or reduced-cost bus options.
- Reimburse youth and parents for gasoline/mileage to/from school of origin.

ARP-HCY Specific Use of Funds

These are expenses that are allowable with the increased flexibilities of ARP-HCY that are **NOT allowable** with EHCY or TI-A funds.

- **Providing emergency housing for families experiencing homelessness**
Hotel/motel stays, vouchers
- **Providing a gift card for school and hygiene supplies, clothing, or items necessary to attend and fully participate in school.**
Purchasing these items outright is easiest for LEAs but gift cards may be acceptable as long as they are following obligations rules under EDGAR. [ARP-HCY Procedures for Gift Cards](#)
- **Car repairs for student or family experiencing homelessness**
Situation specific. Is it the only way to ensure the student(s) can attend school? Is there any other transportation option?

More details and guiding questions are available in the [DPI ARP-HCY FAQ](#)

DPI Resources

- **DPI ARP-HCY Grant Information**
 - <https://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/arp-hcy>
 - [DPI ARP-HCY Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- **DPI EHCY Grant Information**
 - <https://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/grant-info>
- **DPI EHCY Guidance Topics (including Title I-A reservation)**
 - <https://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/guidance>

Related Resources

- **SchoolHouse Connection:**
 - <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/arp-hcy/>
 - <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/how-to-use-arp-funds/>
- [USDE Frequently Asked Questions: ESSER and GEER](#)
- [DPI Guidance on allowable costs under ESSER](#)
- [US Department of Education Frequently Asked Questions: Transportation](#)

Contact Us

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Questions?

