

Providing Coordinated Services to Students Experiencing Homelessness and Foster Care McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act Foster Care Laws

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McKinney Vento Liaison

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Campus Connection Coach K-8

2023-2024 Staff Training

Sherry Breckenridge, McKinney Vento Homeless Liaison and Foster Care Liaison

- ▶ Greetings! As Liaison, I provide annual training to all staff and community outreach on the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Foster Laws. This presentation provides basic training in working with students and families who may be experiencing the hardships of homelessness or are in the foster care system.
- ▶ Use the word “homeless” sparingly; rather use terms like hardships or unexpected circumstances. In Arkansas, homelessness often means families are living doubled up due to economic hardship and loss of housing.
- ▶ You will be contacted by me at times as we work together to ensure the academic success of these students. We are all bound by FERPA privacy laws.
- ▶ Contact me with any questions. **A google document is posted with the presentation for you to sign once you have viewed the training. Thank you.**





Objectives

- ▶ To train and discuss the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance and Foster Care programs, and the liaison duties within each program in relation to the law
- ▶ Show that communication and collaboration are interwoven between the programs and that the liaison and staff can wrap around the students with coordinated services
- ▶ Identify similarities in the processes and requirements for foster and homeless programs

Ensure Students Experiencing Homelessness and Foster Care Have Equitable Access to Education

Liaison and staff should reach out to help students prepare for the school year; devices may be at increased risk of theft and breakage due to unstable or unsafe living conditions.

Inform students and their families of their rights , especially immediate enrollment and free access to school meals and assistance with learning and virtual learning.

Unemployment levels and our recent tornado disaster have increased homelessness in our community; sensitive outreach may be needed.

Embed questions and information about homelessness into your communication with families.

As liaison, I am available to connect with families as needed during out of school times, especially to stay in touch with unaccompanied youth who are mostly at the high school level.





Educating Homeless Children and Youth

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth program:

- Is authorized under Title VIIB of the McKinney-Vento Act
- Addresses the challenges that homeless children and youths may face in enrolling, attending and succeeding in school
- Under the act, state educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youths.
- Ensures that homeless children and youths must have access to the educational and related services that they need to meet the same challenging state academic standards to which all students are held
- States that homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment.
- Requires that districts continually eliminate any barriers to the identification, enrollment, and attendance or success in school of homeless children and youths.

McKinney Vento Homeless Liaison Duties

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Act:

Requires all school districts to designate a local homeless liaison, who is able to carry out the duties as described in the law. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)].

Duties Cont'd: Identification of Homeless Students

(i) children and youth experiencing homelessness are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies such as police departments and hotels



Duties Cont'd: Educational Services

iii) children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Early Head Start and Head Start programs, early intervention services under Part C of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act, and other preschool programs administered by the school district



Duties Cont'd: Immediate Enrollment

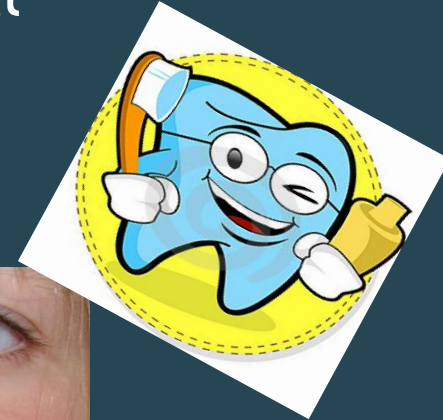
(ii) ensure children and youth experiencing homelessness are enrolled in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools within the district



Duties Cont'd: Referrals to Appropriate Services

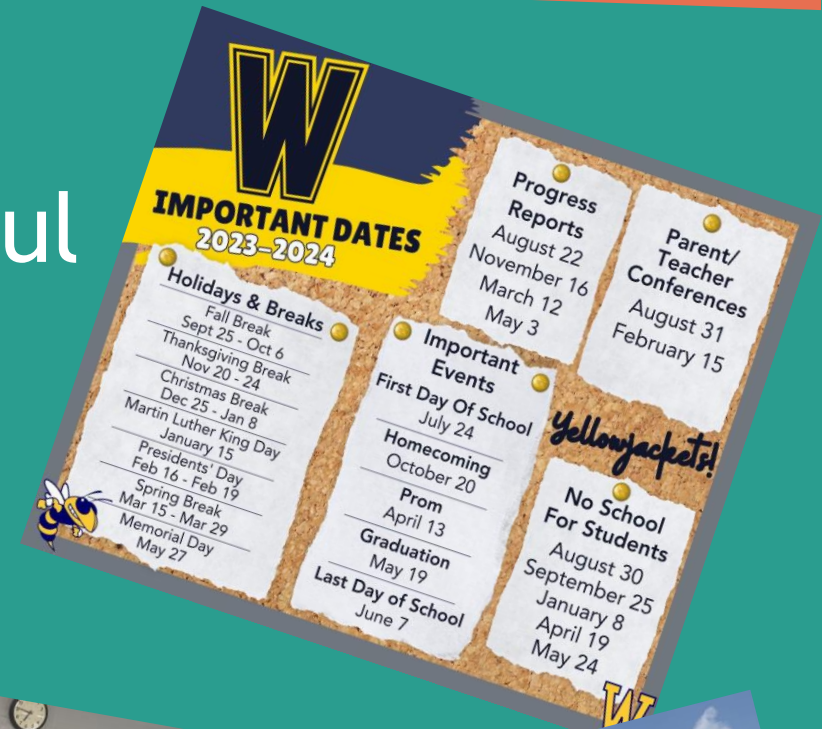
iv) children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness receive referrals to health care, dental, mental health, substance abuse, housing, and other appropriate services

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Duties Cont'd: Inform Parents/Guardians of Meaningful Opportunities to Participate

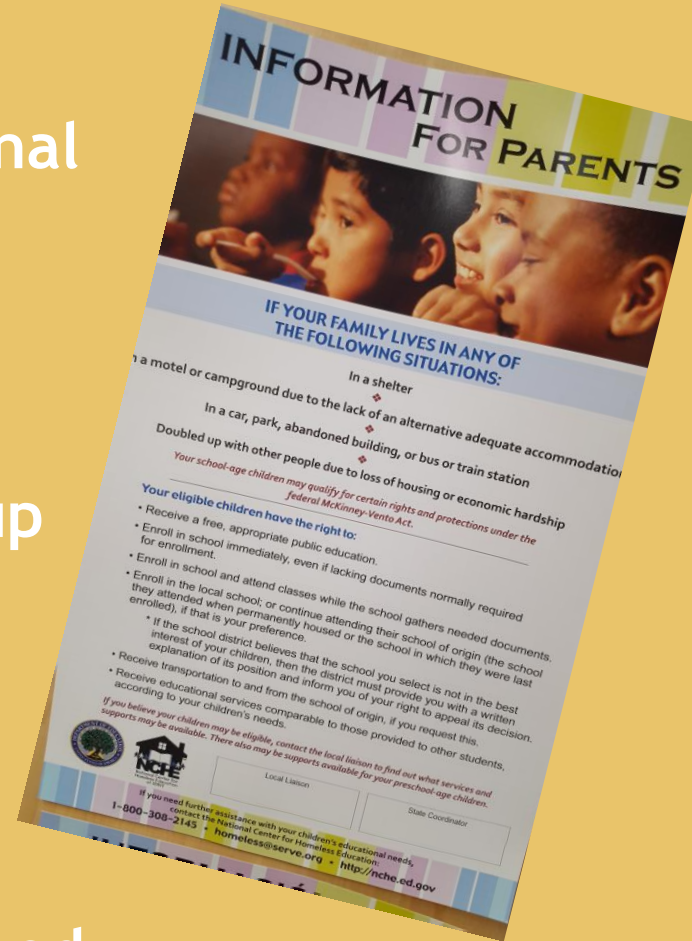
v) the parents or guardians of students experiencing homelessness are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children, and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;



Duties Cont'd: Disseminate Public Educational Rights

(vi) public notice of the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness is disseminated in locations frequented by families and youth experiencing homelessness, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, in a manner and form understandable to parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth;

Flyers are posted in the schools and around town.



Duties Cont'd: Mediate Disputes

o discuss the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance and
(vii) enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance
with the provisions of the Act by the Liaison.

Foster Care programs, and the liaison duties within each program



Duties Cont'd: Transportation Services

(viii) parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness are fully informed of all transportation services available to McKinney-Vento students, including transportation to the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing transportation





Transportation Continued: What is the school of origin?

- ▶ The term school of origin means the school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool.
- ▶ When the child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term 'school of origin' includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.
- ▶ School of origin for Foster Care is the school in which a student is enrolled at the time of placement.

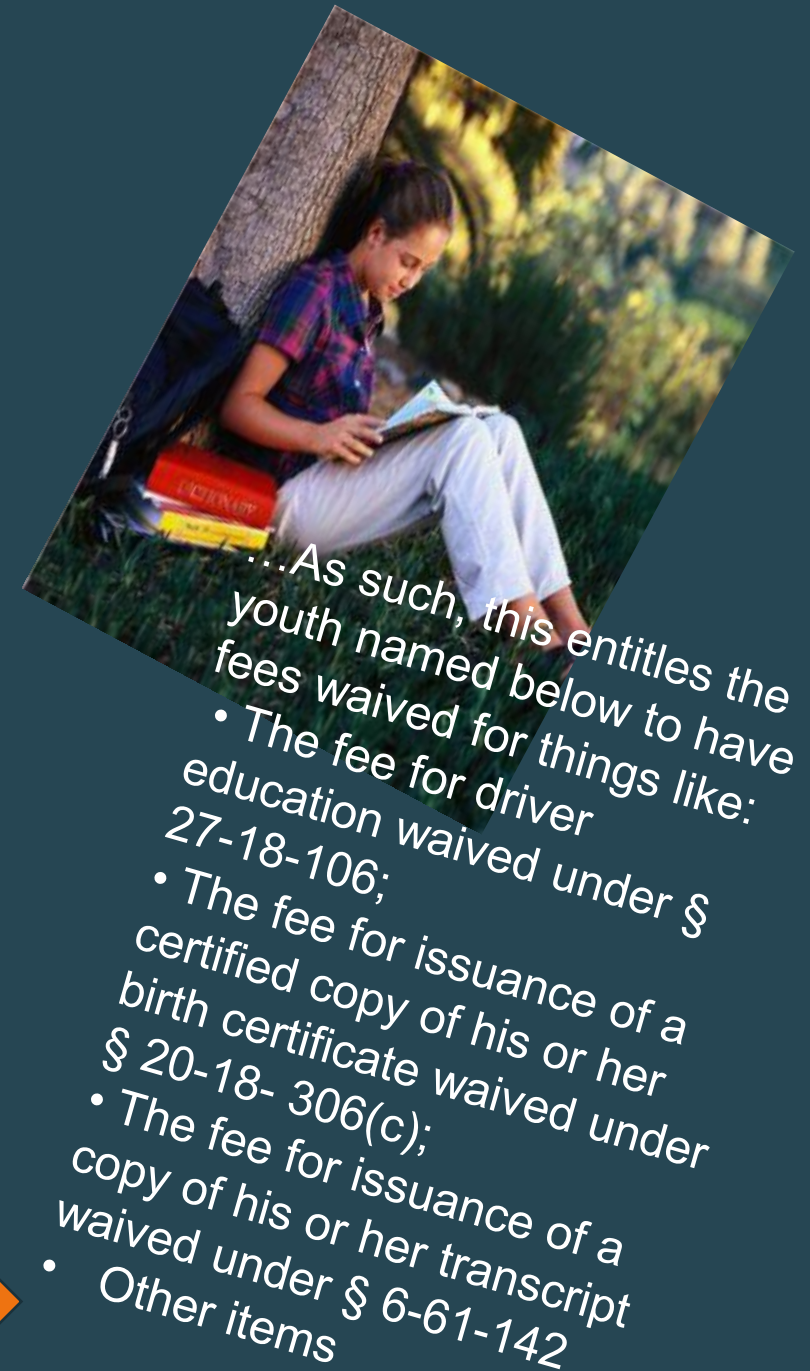
Duties Cont'd: Professional Development

(ix) school personnel providing services to students experiencing homelessness receive professional development and other support



Identify Unaccompanied Youth

- ▶ (x) unaccompanied youth (I) are enrolled in school; these may be what you know as our couch surfer students or students not in the care of their parents
- ▶ (II) have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as other children and youth; and
- ▶ (III) are informed of their status as independent students under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 1087vv), and receive assistance verifying this status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- ▶ In accordance with Act 506 McKinney Vento unaccompanied youth between sixteen and twenty-two who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian (may be a run-away, or was forced to leave his/her home, or whose parents left the area and left the youth behind) and have been certified by the McKinney Vento Liaison using form CFS-005 are entitled to some fee waivers.



...As such, this entitles the youth named below to have fees waived for things like:

- The fee for driver education waived under § 27-18-106;
- The fee for issuance of a certified copy of his or her birth certificate waived under § 20-18-306(c);
- The fee for issuance of a copy of his or her transcript waived under § 6-61-142
- Other items



Coordination and Collaboration

- ▶ Local liaisons must coordinate and collaborate with State Coordinators, community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to students experiencing homelessness.
- ▶ This coordination must include collecting and providing the State Coordinator with reliable, valid, and comprehensive data on students experiencing homelessness per the requirements of the Act [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(C)].

Questions on the Duties of the Liaison



The Impact of Homelessness in the U.S.

In 2022-2023, Arkansas had 16,926 homeless identified compared to 13,580 the year before; human trafficking is also on the rise.

The top four causes of homelessness, in order, are lack of affordable housing, unemployment, poverty, and low wages.

33.3% of the homeless population are families; In 2020-21, 73.84% had no primary nighttime residence and were living doubled-up.

Wynne Schools had approximately 147 homeless and 37 foster students at the end of the 2022-2023 school year. We had an increase from 25 to 147 homeless students after the tornado.

Homeless students experience higher incidences of sexual assault, violence, robbery, assault, illness, depression, anxiety, achievement gaps and are more likely to drop out of high school.

McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act

- ▶ Addresses the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness
- ▶ Originally passed in 1987
- ▶ Reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- ▶ ESSA Amendments took place October 1, 2016
- ▶ Works hand-in-hand with Title IA and other federal education programs
- ▶ Funds are authorized annually to State Education Agencies(SEAs)





Hi! We're every social problem in America that you can name rolled into a herd of too many humans for one mere mortal to manage --- let alone teach, what do you want us to do? These students need skills to cope with life.





What documents must homeless liaisons retain?

- ▶ State Residency Form for all students K-12
- ▶ Parent's Rights
- ▶ Dispute Resolution
- ▶ Collaboration Form
- ▶ Missing Documents Form
- ▶ Written Notification Form
- ▶ Records for all homeless students, services, and transportation records (birth certificate, school records, food, clothing, etc.).
- ▶ Document all conversations with the families and/or student.
- ▶ Keep a list of all donations and purchases; cash donations are placed in a cash account for homeless.
- ▶ Report student data correctly.
- ▶ Transportation to school or origin
- ▶ Needs Assessments
- ▶ Form CFS-005 Certification of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Are these homeless?



Doubled-Up



Shelter



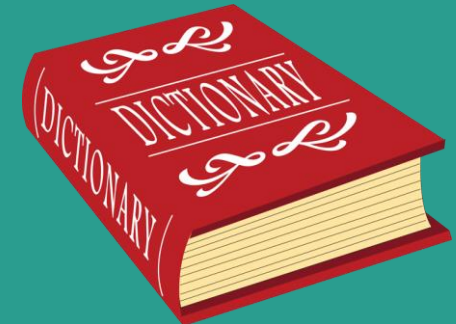
Hotel/Motel



Unsheltered

Who is considered homeless?

- ▶ Children and youth who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence
- ▶ This includes sharing the housing of others **due to loss of housing and economic hardship**, or similar reason and includes many scenarios.
- ▶ Unaccompanied youth who may be separated from parents due to lack of living space, shelter policies, abuse, family dysfunction, or pregnancy.



Regular, Fixed, Adequate Residence

- ▶ **Regular** - One that is used on a predictable, routine, consistent nightly basis
- ▶ **Fixed** - One that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change
- ▶ **Adequate** - One that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments

Possible Situations

- ▶ Sharing housing for various reasons
- ▶ Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to inadequate alternative living conditions; We saw this after the tornado.
- ▶ Living in shelters
- ▶ Living in a place (public or private) not designed for human living; Many stayed in their destroyed homes until evicted after the tornado.
- ▶ Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, etc. *What is substandard? Check utilities; infestations; mold; dangers.*
- ▶ This also includes migratory students living in these situations.
- ▶ Finally, this includes children or youth who are not in physical custody of a parent or guardian and meet the McKinney-Vento criteria.(Unaccompanied Homeless Youth)



Would these children meet the requirements of McKinney-Vento



A tornado devastated Wynne. The Bogart family is living in a hotel. Mom marks "waiting on a house or apartment to rent" on the residency form. Is Sam homeless?
(Yes)

Sue's mom is incarcerated and dad has custody of Sue. Recently, he was incarcerated and made arrangements for Sue to be cared for by her aunt. Is Lane homeless??

(No, there was a family arrangement;

It would be yes if no prior arrangement had been made)

Bo's family lived homeless in a hotel. After dad lost his job, they moved in with Bo's uncle. They have been with Bo's uncle for over a year. Is the family still homeless?

(Yes - still unstable and could be asked to leave)

Sydney's family live in a camper trailer on their lot where their home was destroyed by the tornado. Is Ellen and her family homeless?
(Yes-substandard housing and they lost their home.)

Gloria and her Mom move to Wynne to find work and housing after Mom's fiancé passed away and they lost their home in Poinsett County. They have moved in with Gloria's grandmother. Is Gloria homeless?
(Yes)



Identification:

How do I identify students, especially doubled-up students?

At the beginning of the school year all students receive a McKinney-Vento residency form to take home. This form is what is used to identify the students that qualify for the program.

Students may be identified at open-house events.

The liaison may visit local shelters, hotels, motels, and seek assistance with identification. Many times they will know who is homeless before the liaison will.

Students may be identified through communication with others.

The liaison looks over homeless students from the previous year and see if they still qualify. A student can be homeless from one year to the next. All students still have to complete the form each year. Residency forms are kept on file to verify homeless status.





Identification Strategies Used by Liaisons and School Staff

- Coordinate with community service agencies, such as shelters, soup kitchens, law enforcement, legal aid, public assistance and housing agencies, mental health agencies and public health departments.
- Coordinate with youth service agencies such as juvenile courts, teen parent programs, or youth organizations.
- Make special efforts to identify preschool children and their siblings.
- Use residency and withdrawal forms to inquire about living situations.
- Coordinate with faith-based organizations.



Identification tips for secretaries and counselors:

Case-by-case determination

Get as much information as possible (with sensitivity)

Don't say "homeless"

Look at the MV definition (specific examples in the definition and then the overall definition)

Use descriptive language.

Are you staying somewhere temporarily?

Where would you go if you couldn't stay here?

What led you to move in to this situation?

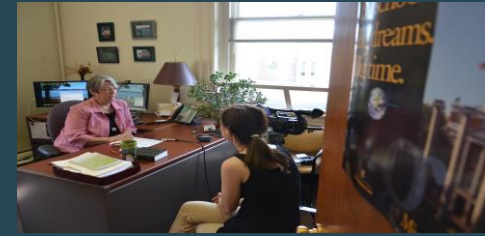
Do you have utilities on?

Could your family be asked to leave?




67% of students say they were uncomfortable telling people at school about their homelessness and asking for help.

Immediate Enrollment



- ▶ McKinney-Vento students are entitled to immediate enrollment in any public school **EVEN IF**: 11432(g)(3)(C)
- ▶ Students do not have required documents, such as school records, records of immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, guardianship, or other documents
- ▶ Students have missed application or enrollment deadlines to enroll in sports or clubs during any period of homelessness.
- ▶ “Enrollment” includes attending classes and participating fully in school activities. 11434a(1)
- ▶ The liaison must assist in obtaining shots, immunization and other health records or screenings; the student must be enrolled in the interim. 11432(g)(3)(C)(iii)

Immediate Enrollment Cont'd:

- ▶ Enrolling schools must obtain school records from the previous school; the student must be enrolled while records are obtained 11432(g)(3)(C)(ii)
 - ▶ Immediate enrollment applies even without parent or guardian. 11432(g)(1)(H)(iv) Typically, unaccompanied youth enroll themselves.
 - ▶ Immediate enrollment applies to preschools, as long as there is space.
 - ▶ McKinney-Vento children should be prioritized on wait lists; Some preschool programs holds slots open for McKinney-Vento children
 - ▶ Head Start, Early Head Start and subsidized child care programs (CCDF) have special requirements for children experiencing homelessness:
- 

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth



Definition:

A child or youth who meets the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness and is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.



Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Youth run away due to abuse or neglect.

- **40-60%** of unaccompanied youth were abused physically at home.
- **17-35%** of unaccompanied youth were abused sexually at home.

Research links parental substance abuse and youth running away from home.

Parents force youth out of the home due to conflicts.

- Pregnancy
- Sexual orientation and gender identity

The circumstances of homelessness force families apart.

- Families become separated due to poverty, lack of space in living situations, or shelter policies.

Collaborations Within School Walls

- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ Child Nutrition
- ❖ Student Services
- ❖ Special Education
- ❖ Title I
- ❖ McKinney Vento Liaison
- ❖ Preschool/Head Start/Early Head Start
- ❖ Counselors/Teachers/Administrators



Collaborations Outside School Walls

- ❖ Adult Education Centers/Day Rooms
- ❖ Shelters
- ❖ Housing Authorities
- ❖ Businesses
- ❖ Food Banks
- ❖ Churches/Ministries
- ❖ Community Action Agencies
- ❖ Continuum of Care
- ❖ Mental Health Agencies





How to Report Homelessness

- ▶ Contact Sherry Breckenridge, Homeless Liaison and Foster Liaison
- ▶ Call the District Parent Center 587-0350 or extension 0350
- ▶ Contact school counselors and ask them to contact the liaison (Primary 870-238-5050, Intermediate 870-238-5060, Junior High 870-238-5040, or High School 870-238-5070)

How Fast to Expect Help for Students

- ▶ Your district's liaison will make contact with families usually within 24 hours unless the family does not answer a phone or is not at home.
- ▶ Phone calls are followed up with home visits.
- ▶ The liaison will do whatever is needed to see that students are identified, enrolled, and receiving equitable services to which they are entitled.



Title I: What are allowable expenditures with Title I set aside money?

- ▶ McKinney-Vento students attending *any* school in the LEA are automatically eligible for Title I-A services. 20 USC 6315(c)(2)(E); Guidance M1
- ▶ All LEAs that receive Title I-A funds must set-aside the funds necessary to provide McKinney-Vento students with services comparable to services provided in Title I-A schools: 20 USC 6313(c)(3)
- ▶ Amount must be based on the total LEA allocation prior to expenditures or transfers;
- ▶ Amount must be sufficient to provide comparable services to homeless students, regardless of other services provided with reserved funds. Guidance M5

Determining Allocations

X - Students

\$75 - Per pupil McKinney-Vento allocation

Formula

$X(\$75) =$ Suggested Title-I Part-A allocation

For 2023-2024 This formula is highly suggested for the upcoming school year.

For 2024-2025 This formula will be mandated by the Office of Federal Programs for every district.




Cont'd: What are allowable expenditures for Title I set aside money?

Funds may be used: 20 USC 6313(c)(3)

- ▶ For McKinney-Vento children and youth attending *any* school in the LEA. Guidance M5
- ▶ For services not ordinarily provided to other students. Guidance M4, M5
- ▶ To fund the McKinney-Vento liaison. Guidance M10
- ▶ To provide transportation to the school of origin. Guidance J7
- ▶ For educationally related support services, including Pre-K.

Cont'd: What are allowable expenditures for Title I set aside money

- ▶ Must be coordinated with McKinney-Vento programs;
 - ▶ Must describe the services provided to McKinney-Vento students, including with reserved funds, to support their enrollment, attendance and success. 20 USC 6312(a)(1); (b)(6)
 - ▶ Should describe the method used to determine the amount of the set-aside for students experiencing homelessness;
 - ▶ Should describe how the liaison was involved in determining the amount; Guidance M8
 - ▶ LEA set-aside amounts may be determined based on a needs assessment that reviews homeless student enrollment averages and trends over 2-3 years and multiplies by the average per-pupil cost of providing Title I services;
 - ▶ The needs of McKinney-Vento students should be reviewed at least twice per school year;
 - ▶ Each year's set-aside should include an evaluation of the effectiveness of past activities in accomplishing the goals of both Title I and McKinney-Vento for individual students and the overall programs. Guidance M7
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Examples of Allowable Expenditures with Title I Funds:

Ed Guidance (2009) issued on the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act provides a list of possible services Title I, Part A funds may support for homeless students. While this is not an exhaustive list, it does provide examples districts may find useful:

- ▶ Clothing to meet a school's dress or uniform requirement
- ▶ Clothing and shoes to participate in P.E. classes
- ▶ Student fees necessary to participate in the general education program
- ▶ Personal school supplies like backpacks
- ▶ Birth certificates for enrollment
- ▶ Fees for AP, IB, SAT, ACT and GED testing for school-age students
- ▶ Extended learning time (before and after school, Saturday classes, summer school)
- ▶ Immunizations
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Medical, dental services, eyeglasses, and hearing aids
- ▶ Parental Engagement to reach out to families of homeless students
- ▶ Counseling services for issues related to homelessness that are impeding learning
- ▶ Outreach services to students living in shelters, motels, and temporary residences
- ▶ Tutoring services, especially in locations where homeless students live



Definition of Foster Care

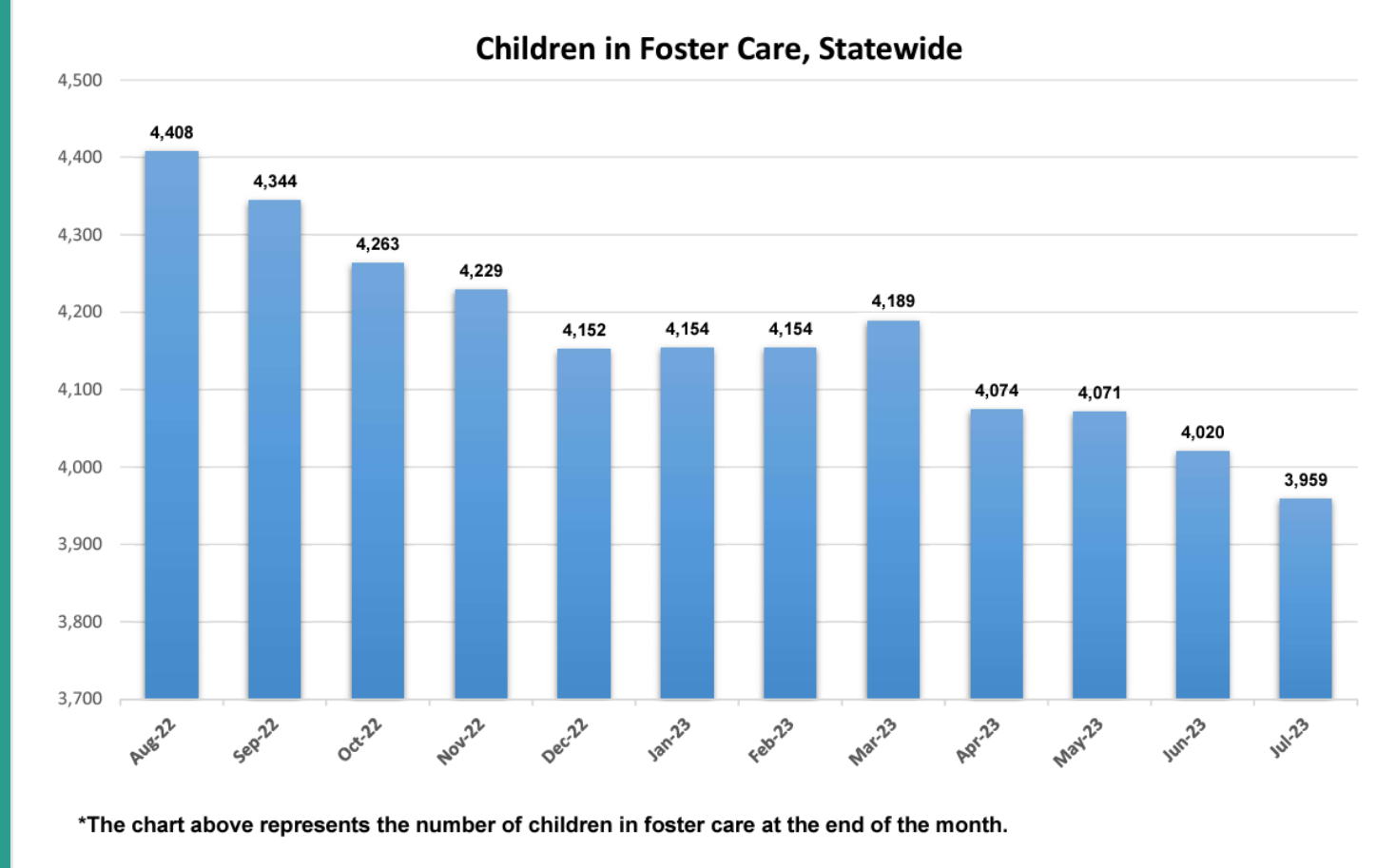
- ▶ 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility. It is a temporary service.
- ▶ May be with relatives or unrelated foster/fictive parents
- ▶ Foster care placement types: In a foster family/fictive kin home; Placement with relatives; Group homes; Emergency shelters; Residential facilities; and Any placement of temporary guardianship
- ▶ **Not foster care placement:** living at home with parents and receiving in-home services; Placed informally with relatives without child welfare involvement; Are not involved in the court system; And permanent guardianship
- ▶ One of the most vulnerable subgroups of students
- ▶ More likely to struggle academically and fall behind; Less likely to graduate
- ▶ Experience much higher levels of residential and school instability



McKinney-Vento vs. Foster Care

Similarities	Differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Both have to be identified into eSchool•Title I Funds can be used to support both•Shared similar benefits from state government (Next Slide)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Federal Funding Sources•eSchool identification•Typically, Foster Care students have primal state support (i.e clothing waivers, room and board stipends to foster families, school supplies, etc.)

Arkansas Foster Care Demographics



- Not all children in foster care are school-aged children
- Of the total 4,000-plus children in foster care, about half are enrolled in schools



Applicable Foster Care Laws for Schools include:

- Federal: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2015)
(Addendum Approved 2022)
- Federal: Fostering Connections to Success Act of 2008
First federal law to require efforts to ensure educational stability for foster students
- Federal: Uninterrupted Scholars Act of 2013
- State: AR Code Ann. Sec. 9-28-112 & 113 (2019, 2012)
- Memorandum of Understanding between ADE-DESE and DHS-DCFS 2023



Local Education Agency (LEA) Foster Care Liaison Duties Under Federal Law and Protections for Students in Foster Care (Every Student Succeeds Act 2015)

- ▶ The foster care liaison serves in a support role as the point of contact person for the schools and staff to ensure that the needs of foster students are met. (Assurance in Indistar)
- ▶ Students may remain in their school of origin unless a collaborative determination is made that it is not in the best interest of the child
- ▶ Supports counselors and secretaries in enrolling students
- ▶ Establishes an enrollment process for the LEA regarding foster students
 - Liaison builds collaborative relationships with Division of Child and Family Services (D.C.F.S.), caseworkers, and school staff
 - Sets up a file system for foster students to document contact and support
 - Forms to collect: CFS-384-LEA ,Notice of Changes in Child Placement, Schools, or Traumatic Events; CFS-383,Notice to LEA Regarding Parent Access to Records and School Activities; Medi-Alert; Foster Family Addendum; and CFS-005, Certification of Youth in Foster Care or Qualifying Unaccompanied Homeless Youth; in addition to school enrollment packet and supporting documents such as Student Success Plan or IEP.
 - Notifies staff of the new student and status or changes as they occur during a student's tenure in school
- ▶ Facilitating the transfer of records and immediate enrollment of students in foster care even if they do not have proper clothing or documentation; A foster student's grades cannot be lowered due to absence from school for changes in enrollment or attendance at court-ordered counseling or treatment. (AR Code Ann. Sec. 9-28-113)
- ▶ Providing training to school staff on ESSA foster care provisions and the educational needs of children in foster care



AR Code Ann. Sec. 9-28-112

AR Code Ann. Sec. 9-28-113

Requires DHS and **school districts to work together** for the best interest of any child placed in DHS custody.

Requires DHS to inform a child's current school district, by the next business day, if:

- DHS exercises a 72-hour hold on a child or a court places a child in DHS custody;

- A foster child transfers to a new placement; or DHS reasonably believes or knows that a foster child has experienced a traumatic event

Requires continuity of educational services for students in foster care by ensuring that the foster student:

- Remains in the school of origin** whenever possible;

- Is moved to a new school in a timely manner when necessary, appropriate, and in the best interest; and

- Has **access to the same academic resources, services, and extracurricular activities available to all students.**

Requires school districts to work with DHS to develop a transportation plan to ensure continuity of education services; must be reasonable and practical.

Best Interest Determination

LEA Foster Care Liaison leads the development of a process for making the best interest determination

Factors that the child welfare and educational agencies should consider:

Preferences of child and child's attachment to the school

Placement of siblings

Influence of school climate on child and availability of services to meet the child's needs

History of school transfers

How length of commute would impact student

Transportation-Clear Written Procedures

(Every Student Succeeds Act and AR Code Ann. Sec. 9-28-113)

Having clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain foster care students in their school of origin (school in which a student is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care), when in their best interest, will be provided, arranged and funded for the duration of the child's time in foster care is a federal requirement. Collaboration is essential between LEAs and state and local child welfare agencies to ensure continuity of education services, to the extent reasonable and practical, and if additional expense is not imposed on the district (developed and coordinated by LEA Foster Care Liaison)

Procedures must ensure that:

- Children in foster care needing transportation to their schools of origin will promptly receive that transportation in a cost effective manner (cost, distance, whether mode of transportation is developmentally appropriate)
- If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation, the LEA will provide such transportation if:
 - The child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the LEA for the cost;
 - The LEA agrees to pay for the cost; OR
 - The LEA and local child welfare agency agree to share the cost
- Title I funds may be used by the LEA to pay for additional costs to transport children in foster care to their school of origin.
- Districts cannot use comparable services or homeless set-asides to provide transportation to keep foster children in their school of origin.



Uninterrupted Scholars Act (2013)

Amended **FERPA** to permit educational agencies to disclose, without parent/student consent, education records of students in foster care to state child welfare agencies.

Applies to IDEA as well.

Facilitating data sharing with the Child Welfare Agency (CWA), consistent with FERPA and other privacy protocols

The LEA Foster Care Liaison contacts the local county offices 2-3 times each school year for Best Practices to collaborate on children in foster care.

How can we help students in foster care to succeed academically

- ▶ Follow Foster Care Laws which focus on increased educational stability
- ▶ Collaboration between educational and child welfare agencies is important to ensure students have the same opportunity to achieve at high levels
- ▶ Communication; Foster Liaison, school staff, and D.C.F.S.
- ▶ Monitoring classwork and grades with teacher(s) and counselors; teach life-skills
- ▶ Establish a relationship with foster students
- ▶ Make contact with the foster family; inquire as to their needs




What Are Allowable Expenses For Foster Students?

- Foster Care falls under Title I, Part A, therefore Title I funds can be set aside to establish educational stability for foster-identified students.
- There is currently no set guidance for an appropriate estimate for set aside amounts for each foster student. Setting aside funds is best practice due to the nature of students coming into Foster Care.

Examples of how Title I funds could be used for educational stability of foster students:

- Events and outreach supporting foster families and learners in foster care
- Transportation of learners in foster care to and from school and school events
- Educational supplies and materials necessary for a learner's educational stability in foster care
- Staff development opportunities for staff to learn how to support learners in foster care and their families
- Support for life skills, financial skills, and self-care skills for learners transitioning out of foster care
- Support for transitional services out of foster care
- Fund a portion of the foster care point of contact's salary



Who makes the final call on disputes and how can I become a foster parent or help others who are curious in my district?

- The Child Welfare Agency makes the final call on placements and best interests of children in their care, so keep the lines of communication open and productive.
- Pay attention to your district's data; is there a shortage of foster homes?
- Partner with your local child welfare office to make informed plans for helping in your community.
- Send those interested in being foster parents to your local D.C.F.S. office, or to local churches that may have foster families within their congregation, to find out about the process
- Reach out to Connected Care

How Does the District Meet the Needs of Homeless and Foster Students?

- ▶ Title I provides for allowable expenses after attempts are made to provide in-kind or charitable contributions for items such as clothing, fees to participate in programs, school supplies, birth certificates, counseling services related to homelessness, and outreach services
- ▶ The district has private and corporate community partners who help to meet students' needs
- ▶ Foster students needs are met primarily through state funding, or community partners
- ▶ Schools may waive fees and fines
- ▶ Extended learning time; implementing new resources or programs such as teaching life skills
- ▶ Needs Assessments are conducted with homeless families, staff, and community partners annually to evaluate the district's program
- ▶ Staff may provide extra instruction to homeless and foster students as needed and monitor their needs to inform the liaison

Recognizing Signs of Homeless Youth and Foster Students

- ▶ Unaccompanied Youth not in the presence or physical custody of a parent
- ▶ Poor Health- unmet medical or dental needs, Emotional trauma, depression, anxiety
- ▶ Highly mobile students who come and go often and attend many schools
- ▶ Students with large gaps in acquired academic skills; lack of educational continuity; poor organizational skills; mistaken diagnosis of abilities
- ▶ Students who cannot meet enrollment requirements such as records or immunizations
- ▶ Students whose family lacks transportation
- ▶ Students without school supplies; students who do not turn in special projects
- ▶ Students who wear the same clothing for a number of days in a row or have hygiene issues
- ▶ Students who never bring money for field trips or special events and cannot pay fees or fines
- ▶ Students who do not participate in any extracurricular activities
- ▶ Students who are hungry or sleepy

Barriers to Education for Homeless and Foster Students:

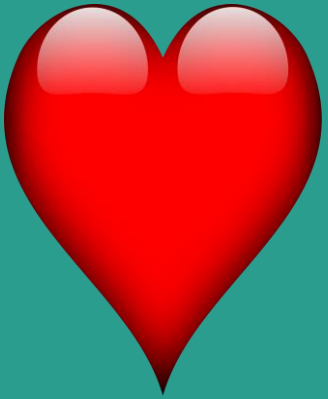
- ▶ Hunger
- ▶ Lack of sleep; Emotional trauma and anxiety
- ▶ Stereotypes and lack of awareness
- ▶ Under-identification
- ▶ Lack of school stability and educational continuity; Loss of credits
- ▶ Enrollment requirements (school records, health records, guardianship, proof of residency, immunizations)
- ▶ No transportation
- ▶ Bullying; lack of coping skills
- ▶ Lack of supplies and a quiet place to study; Lack of money for sports, clubs, and activities
- ▶ Chronic absenteeism; High mobility creates achievement gaps that may worsen with time without intervention

HOW STAFF CAN HELP:

- ▶ Give students someone to trust and talk to about their life, problems, etc. **MAKE A CONNECTION!!**
- ▶ Watch for those achievement gaps and give top priority to homeless and foster students for after school and summer school programs.
- ▶ Contact the Liaison if you become aware of academic issues like failing grades or the need for educational assistance; ask the liaison to help with a life-skill; the liaison makes family contacts and home visits
- ▶ Help youth without parental support by giving them an extra hug or a treat at Christmas.
- ▶ Notify the liaison if you know a family that is homeless has a preschool child to enroll
- ▶ Notify the liaison if help is needed to obtain missing documentation for enrollment or medical needs.
- ▶ Have extra patience with a child you know who is foster or homeless and may not trust anyone; we do not realize all the things these children may have experienced.
- ▶ Be aware that a family may be without electricity or water which may affect getting homework done or the completion of a special project; perhaps offer the child a place and time at school to complete the assignment and remember the goal is not always to report but to support this child and his/her family.
- ▶ Contact the liaison or counselors when funds are needed for field trips etc. The need can usually be met.
- ▶ Give an older homeless unaccompanied youth a food card for meals. Ensure students eat their free meals.
- ▶ Have compassion for families who have become homeless due to the housing crisis in the United States, loss of a job, natural disasters, or illness.
- ▶ Tell students about the library or the summer food program, food pantries, and church programs for support.
- ▶ **TELL OTHERS WHO THE MCKINNEY VENTO AND FOSTER LIAISON IS FOR YOUR DISTRICT; NEW STAFF**

The Impact of McKinney-Vento and Foster

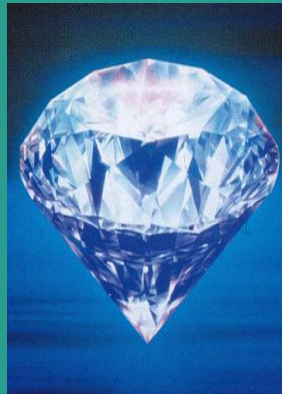
- ▶ Making sure children and youth experiencing homelessness and foster care are given the support they need.
- ▶ All children need to know they are:



LOVED



NEEDED



VALUED



SAFE





Contact Information:
Sherry Breckenridge

District Family and Community
Engagement Coordinator
Homeless Liaison
Foster Liaison

Campus Connection Coach Virtual
Wynne Public Schools

P.O. Box 69

Wynne, AR 72396

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Cell 870-588-1517

Email

sbreckenridge@wynneschools.org

THANK YOU!!

Resources

SchoolHouse Connection

<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/SchoolHouseConnection/>

Hidden in Plain Sight

<http://www.americaspromise.org/report/hidden-plain-sight>

National Center on Homeless Education

<https://nche.ed.gov/>

National Network for Youth

<http://www.nn4youth.org>

Jessica Hickman, Public School Program Advisor

State Coordinator Homeless Education

Arkansas Department of Education 501-683-5428

Kim Befeld 870-898-3208

David, Terrell, A.D.E./State Foster Care Liaison 501-692-3824

Sherry Breckenridge

870-587-0350



School House Connection
for providing information
to use for trainings!