HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

OSEP National Technical Assistance Call for Special Education
Thursday, February 23, 2023
Meet our team!

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Contact our program office team at HomelessEd@ed.gov!
Agenda of Topics for this Call

• Knowing ED’s National Center for Homeless Education
• Overview of McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) and American Rescue Plan-HCY Programs
  • Special requirements and priorities of each program
• Definition of homeless and unaccompanied
• The process for determining eligibility by LEA liaisons
• IDEA and MVA Points of Coordination
• Questions and Answers
• Online Resources
National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)

NCHE is the U.S. Department of Education’s technical assistance center for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program.

- Website: http://nche.ed.gov
- Helpline: 800-308-2145 or homeless@serve.org
- Products: https://nche.ed.gov/resources/
- Webinars: https://nche.ed.gov/group-training/
- Listserv: https://nche.ed.gov/resources/ (click Listserv tab)
- Twitter: @NCHEducation | Facebook: facebook.com/NCHEducation
EHCY Grant Program

• Authorized under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

• FY 2023 Appropriation: $129 million

• SY 2020-2021 Enrollment: 1,099,221 students; 220,599 SWDs (20%)

ARP-HCY Grant Program

Through the **ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief – Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) fund** Congress appropriated **$800 million** to address the specific and unique impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and youth experiencing homelessness.

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**TITLE II—COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS**

Subtitle A—Education Matters

PART 1—DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SEC. 2001. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In addition to amounts otherwise available through the Education Stabilization Fund, there is appropriated to the Department of Education for fiscal year 2021, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $122,774,800,000, to remain available through September 30, 2023, to carry out this section.

(b) **GRANTS.**—From funds provided under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

1. use $800,000,000 for the purposes of identifying homeless children and youth and providing homeless children and youth with—

   (A) wrap-around services in light of the challenges of COVID-19; and

   (B) assistance needed to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and participate fully in school activities; and

2. from the remaining amounts, make grants to each State educational agency in accordance with this section.

(a) **Attorneys to States.**—The amount of each grant under
ARP-HCY State Plan Template
Prompt #7: Identifying and serving students from historically underserved populations

• The extent to which the SEA will use its State-level activities funds to award subgrants or contracts to community-based organizations that are well-positioned to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness in historically underserved populations such as rural children and youth, Tribal children and youth, students of color, children and youth with disabilities, English learners, LGBTQ+ youth, and pregnant, parenting, or caregiving students experiencing homelessness, and connect them to educationally related support and wraparound services.

Program Overview

• The McKinney-Vento Act establishes the definition of “homeless children and youth” for the purposes of determining eligibility under the EHCY and ARP-HCY programs.

• The programs are designed to address the challenges that students experiencing homelessness have in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

• Under the programs, eligible students retain the following rights:
  • Right to **immediate school enrollment**, even when records typically required for enrollment are not available;
  • Right to **remain at the school of origin**, if in the student’s best interest;
  • Right to **receive transportation** to and from the school of origin; and
  • Right to **receive support for academic success**.
Defining “Homeless Children and Youth”

Individuals lacking a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence, including children and youth:

- Sharing housing due to a loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Living in public or private spaces not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus/train stations, or similar situations; and
- Who are migratory and living in one of the above situations.

*McKinney-Vento Act section 725(2)*

Program eligibility determinations are context-specific and should be made on a case-by-case basis.
Defining “Unaccompanied Homeless Youth”

• An unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) is “a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian” (McKinney-Vento Act section 725(6)).
• UHY have specific rights under the McKinney-Vento Act, including the right to immediate school enrollment without a guardian’s signature and the right to be informed of his/her rights under the statute.

Learn more about strategies to identify and support UHY on NCHE’s topical webpage: [https://nche.ed.gov/unaccompanied-youth/](https://nche.ed.gov/unaccompanied-youth/).
Process for Determining Eligibility

- School districts must designate a local liaison for homeless education. Local liaison interviews student and/or parent/guardian to determine homeless status.
  - Many States and LEAs use a student residency questionnaire.

- LEA makes a best interest determination and if the school placement is other than the one requested, informs the parent/guardian or youth in writing and explains the dispute resolution procedure.

- If the parent/youth is unsatisfied with LEA enrollment dispute decision, they can appeal to the SEA.

- There is only a Federal complaint procedure and ED provides technical assistance to SEAs directly or through its National Center for Homeless Education.
Resources – Eligibility Determinations

Access the National Center for Homeless Education’s resources related to program eligibility at https://nche.ed.gov/determining-eligibility/.
MVA-IDEA Points of Coordination

• Child Find prioritizing children and youth who are homeless (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(3)(A))
• SICC’s having McKinney-Vento State Coordinators as members (20 U.S.C. §§ 1441(b)(1)(K-L)).
• SEAPs/SEACs including members with homeless education expertise (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(21))
• Local liaisons referring young homeless children for Head Start and early intervention services’ screenings (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(iii))  
  • State Coordinators serving on SACs and providing input to CCDF State plans
• Local liaisons coordinating with IEP teams for homeless student best interest determinations, school of origin transportation and dispute resolution procedures (see NCHE’s disabilities-brief.pdf (ed.gov))
MVA-IDEA Additional Considerations

• Balancing LRE and school stability
  • In MV best interest determinations
  • In IEP meetings

• SWD remaining in their schools of origin in another LEA
  • Which LEA is responsible for FAPE?
  • How will transportation responsibility be assigned (IDEA or MV or both)?

• State coordination in TA and complaints

• State and local cross training of staff

• Example: Virginia’s “Intersection of McKinney-Vento and IDEA”
Additional Resources

• ED’s EHCY Program Webpage

• ED’s ARP-HCY Program Webpage

• Contact us!
  HomelessEd@ed.gov

• National Center for Homeless Education
  https://nche.ed.gov/ and homeless@serve.org

• Project Hope-Virginia, School of Education, College of William and Mary
  https://education.wm.edu/centers/hope/ and homlss@wm.edu