

Amanda Goes To School

**An Educator's Guide for
Responding to the Rights and
Needs of Homeless Students in
Washington State**



Randy I. Dorn
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

March 2011

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Homeless Students in Washington State**

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2011

Foreword

Over 44,000 children and youth are estimated to experience homelessness in Washington. Yet, local districts recently reported that less than 7,700 homeless students were attending schools.¹ This considerable discrepancy between school numbers and community estimates propels us to wonder where the other tens of thousands of homeless children are. Are they attending schools but remain unidentified? Are they receiving the academic and support services they need? Or are these children not even in schools, and have we somehow inadvertently denied them an education?

Regrettably, many communities have failed to recognize the changing face of homelessness. Although children are now among the fastest growing segments of the homeless population, their terrible plight has gone largely unnoticed.² Why may this be? Primarily for two reasons: (1) lack of awareness — communities, including schools, are often unaware of the definition of homeless children, and (2) lack of visibility — homeless families frequently escape public attention by quietly dwelling in doubled-up situations, cars, motels, and shelters (rather than on public streets).

It is our hope that this guidebook will help educators improve the identification, enrollment, and services to homeless children in Washington. In addition, we also hope this manual will assist educators in understanding their vital role of working in schools and with communities to identify all children in need. The future of homeless children is highly dependent on their educational success; therefore, it is our responsibility and great privilege to help them succeed.

Finally, Amanda is a character created for this guidebook. Although fictional, her letters very much reflect the lives and realities of children experiencing homelessness. We hope this manual will both inspire and assist you in serving some of the most vulnerable children in our state.

¹ Wu, J. (2005). *Visions of a brighter future: A study of homeless education programs in Washington State*. Olympia, WA: OSPI, 25.

² NCH. (2001). *Education of homeless children and youth. Fact sheet #10*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

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Abbreviations

BL – Building Liaison

CTED – Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development

DL – District Liaison

DSHS – Department of Social and Health Services

ECEAP – Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program

HUD – Department of Housing and Urban Development

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Act

IEP – Individualized Education Plan

ITBS – Iowa Test of Basic Skills

ITED – Iowa Test of Educational Development

LAP – Learning Assistance Program

LEA – Local Educational Agency

LEP – Limited English Proficient

MV – McKinney-Vento Act

NAEHCY – National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

NCH – National Coalition for the Homeless

NCHE – National Center for Homeless Education

NCLB – No Child Left Behind Act

NLCHP – National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

NN4Y – National Network for Youth

OSPI – Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

SEA – State Educational Agency

USDOE – United States Department of Education

WASL – Washington State Assessment of Student Learning

WSSDA – Washington State School Directors' Association

Glossary

Doubled-Up: Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason [USDOE Guidance 2003].

Enroll/Enrollment: Attending classes and participating fully in school activities [MV 725(1)].

Homeless Children and Youths: Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth living in [MV 725(2)]:

- Shared housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason.
- Motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations.
- Emergency or transitional shelters.
- Hospitals due to abandonment or awaiting foster care placement.
- Public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for humans.
- Cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus/train stations, or similar settings.

LEA: Public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a state for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a state as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools [NCLB, Title IX 9101(26)(A)].

School of Origin: The school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled [MV 722(g)(3)(G)].

SEA: Agency primarily responsible for the state supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools [NCLB, Title IX 9101(41)].

Unaccompanied Youth: Youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian [MV 725(6)]. This would include youth living in runaway shelters, abandoned buildings, cars, on the streets, or in other inadequate housing, those denied housing by their families (sometimes referred to as “throwaway” children) and school-age unwed mothers (living in homes for unwed mothers) because no other housing is available [USDOE Guidance 2004].

I BACKGROUND

Dear Teacher,

I know you're mad because I fell asleep in class. I'm really sorry but I was so tired. We've been living in our car and it was really cold yesterday. My mom even had to turn on the car a few times to keep us warm. I really like school and hope you won't stay mad at me.

Love,
Amanda



Who Are Homeless Children?

As defined in the McKinney-Vento Act, homeless children and youth are individuals who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence. This definition includes children and youth living in:

- Emergency or transitional shelters.
- Motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds.
- Shared housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship (doubled-up).
- Hospitals secondary to abandonment or awaiting foster care placement.
- Cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or similar situations.
- Public or private places not ordinarily used as sleeping accommodations for human beings.

Migratory status, in itself, does not qualify children as homeless; migratory children must be living in the circumstances described above to meet the federal educational definition of homeless.³

How Many

In a given year, over **1.35 million children** are estimated to experience homelessness in the United States. Homeless children are now among the fastest growing segments of the homeless population.⁴ Of those in homeless situations, families with children comprise 40 percent and unaccompanied youth comprise another 5 percent.⁵ In Washington State, Community, Trade and Economic Development agency (CTED) recently reported sheltering 1,226 unaccompanied youth and 14,337 children (accompanied by parents or guardians) under the age of 18.⁶ This total of 15,563 sheltered children, however, only represents a small subset of children in homeless situations.

The 2000 Report to Congress compiled data submitted by the states regarding the primary nighttime residence of homeless children and youth; in this report, **sheltered children represented only 35 percent of all homeless children.**⁷ Using this national percentage and the Washington shelter count, an estimated total of **44,466** Washington children and youth are likely to experience homelessness in a given year. Yet, only **7,687** homeless students (birth–12 Grade) were reported in a 2004 survey of Washington school districts. Sadly, homeless children are under-identified, under-enrolled, and under-served in Washington State.⁸

³ McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B, Section 725(2).

⁴ NCH. (2001). *Education of homeless children and youth. Fact sheet #10*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

⁵ U.S. Conference of Mayors. (2004). *Hunger and homelessness survey: A status report on hunger and homelessness in America's cities*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

⁶ CTED. (2003). *Emergency shelter assistance program Report, July 2002– June 2003*. <http://housing-information.net/report>

⁷ USDOE. (2000). *Education for homeless children and youth program: Report to Congress fiscal year 2000*. Washington, D.C.: Author, 16.

⁸ Wu, J. (2005). *Visions of a brighter future: A study of homeless education programs in Washington State*. Olympia, WA: OSPI, 4, 25–26.

Effects of Homelessness

Homelessness can significantly affect the normal development of children. Compared to their peers, homeless children are more likely to suffer from health problems, developmental delays, learning disabilities, emotional difficulties, and mental disorders.⁹ Furthermore, the high mobility associated with homelessness has been shown to negatively impact a child's education. Research findings on mobility and academic achievement include the following:

- Children may take **four to six months** to recover academically from a school transfer.¹⁰
- Compared to their housed peers, mobile students are half as likely to graduate from high school and twice as likely to repeat a grade.¹¹
- Children who move frequently have higher absenteeism rates that correlate with lower academic achievement.¹²
- The negative impact of mobility is not just limited to moving students; it also adversely affects the academic achievement of non-mobile students remaining in the classroom.¹³

What The Law Says Regarding...

Rights of Homeless Children

In 1987, the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act was passed in response to the growing crisis of homelessness in America. One of the Act's provisions established the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program in order to address the educational barriers homeless children encounter. Reauthorized in the 2002 No Child Left Behind Act, the Homeless Education Program (also known as Title X, Part C) now stipulates the following:

- Homeless children and youth should have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education as housed children.
- States must review residency requirement laws and other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless children and youth.
- Students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment because of their homeless status.

⁹ Hart-Shegos, E. (1999). *Homelessness and its effects on children*. Minneapolis, MN: Family Housing Fund.

¹⁰ Homes for the Homeless. (1999). *Homeless in America: A children's story, part one*. New York: Institute for Children and Poverty, 11.

¹¹ Rumberger, R.W., Larson, K.A, Ream, R.K., Palardy, G.J. (1999). *The education consequences of mobility for California students and schools*. PACE Policy Brief, 1(1), 3; Jacobson, L. (2001). Moving targets. *Education Week*, 20(29), 32–34.

¹² Family Housing Fund. (1998). *Kids Mobility Project*. Minneapolis, MN: Author, 1.

¹³ Rumberger, R.W., Larson, K.A, Ream, R.K., Palardy, G.J. (1999). *The education consequences of mobility for California students and schools*. PACE Policy Brief, 1(1), 4.

- All homeless children and youth should have access to the education and other services, including public preschool education, needed to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

What The Law Says Regarding...

Responsibilities of LEAs

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, every local educational agency (LEA) must designate a homeless education liaison to ensure that homeless children and youth are identified, enrolled, and receive appropriate services to succeed in school. Specifically, LEA responsibilities include:

1. School Selection

As homeless children often live in places lacking traditional addresses, the question of their residency and which school they should attend often arises. According to the law,

- A. Homeless students should have two options for school enrollment:
 - ✓ Their school of origin.¹⁴
 - ✓ The school attended by other students living in the same area as the current residence of the homeless student.
- B. The process for determining school choice should be based on the best interest of the student and the wishes of the student's parents/guardians.
 - ✓ In determining the best interest of the student, the LEA shall, **to the extent feasible**, keep a homeless child or youth in the school of origin, except when it is contrary to the wishes of the child or parent/guardian.
 - ✓ In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the LEA shall ensure the homeless liaison assists in placement or enrollment decisions.
- C. If school of origin is selected, LEAs should continue the student's education for the duration of homelessness:
 - ✓ In any case in which a family becomes homeless during an academic year or between academic years.
 - ✓ For the remainder of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year.

2. Dispute Resolution

- A. In the event that the school's decision does not concur with the wishes of the parents or the unaccompanied youth, the following actions must be taken:

¹⁴ School of origin is defined as the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

- ✓ The student should be **immediately enrolled** in the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.
- ✓ Written documentation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal, must be provided to the parents or unaccompanied youth.
- ✓ The local liaison shall conduct the dispute resolution process.

3. Documentation

Homeless families move frequently and often lack the documents typically required for school enrollment. According to the law,

- A. The selected school should *immediately enroll* the homeless child or youth, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, e.g., previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation.
- B. The enrolling school should immediately contact the last school attended by the child or youth to obtain relevant academic and other records.
- C. If the student needs immunizations or medical records, the enrolling school should immediately refer the parent/guardian to the local liaison for assistance.

4. Guardianship

Whether due to shelter restrictions, lack of adequate housing space, runaway situations, family abandonment, or other reasons, homeless students may lack a guardian. According to the law,

- A. Children **cannot** be denied enrollment secondary to the absence of a legal guardian.¹⁵

5. Services

- A. Homeless children and youth should receive services *comparable* to their housed peers, including:
 - ✓ Transportation services.
 - ✓ Education services, such as Title I, special education, limited English proficiency, etc.
 - ✓ Vocational and technical education programs.
 - ✓ Gifted and talented programs.
 - ✓ Free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch programs.

¹⁵ An affidavit signed by an adult willing to act *in loco parentis* (in the place of the parent) may be considered as an option. Popp, P., Hindman, J., and Stronge, J. *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit: Pre-Publication Draft Copy*. Greensboro, N.C.: NCHE at SERVE, 17.

What The Law Says Regarding...

Responsibilities of Local Liaisons

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, local liaisons are responsible for ensuring that all of the following occur:

1. Homeless Awareness and Identification
 - A. Homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other agencies.
 - B. Parents/guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children.
 - C. Educational rights of homeless children and youths are posted where such children receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, e.g., schools, shelters, soup kitchens, etc.
2. School Access and Enrollment
 - A. Homeless children and youth enroll in and have equal opportunity to succeed in school.
 - B. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance to the law described in the above section "Responsibilities of LEAs."
3. Services
 - A. Parents/guardians of homeless children are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
 - B. Parents/guardians of a homeless child and any unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services (including transportation to the school of origin) and are assisted in accessing transportation to their selected school.
 - C. Homeless families should receive educational services for which they are eligible, including:
 - ✓ Head Start and Even Start programs.
 - ✓ District preschools.
 - ✓ Referrals to services such as health care, dental, mental health, and other appropriate services.

Responsibility-Activity Checklist

Putting it all together...

Practically speaking, the duties of LEAs are often carried out by liaisons; thus, the following activity checklist has been created to approach the responsibilities of LEAs and liaisons holistically.

RESPONSIBILITY	ACTIVITY
I. IDENTIFICATION	
Homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Professional staff development (all school staff) on definition of homeless, signs of homelessness, required responsibilities. <input type="checkbox"/> Appoint liaisons in every school building. <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with community agencies to mutually refer students.
Educational rights of homeless children and youth are posted where such children receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, e.g., schools, shelters, soup kitchens, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Post notices in schools; post notices in areas where homeless children and families are served (shelters, soup kitchens, food banks, etc.).
II. ENROLLMENT	
Homeless children and youth enroll in and have equal opportunity to succeed in school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish homeless enrollment procedures. <input type="checkbox"/> Professional staff development for secretaries and office staff regarding enrollment procedures.
(a) Residency/School Choice	
Homeless students have two options for school enrollment: (1) school of origin (2) school of residence (identified by attendance zone of student's current residence).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explain options to parents and students and assist in school selection.
The process for determining school placement should be based on the best interest of the student and the wishes of the student's parents/guardians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To the extent feasible, the LEA should keep a homeless child or youth in the school of origin, except when it is contrary to the wishes of the child or parent/guardian.

(a) Residency/School Choice (continued)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison should assist in placement or enrollment decisions.
If a family becomes homeless during or between academic years and selects the school of origin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ LEAs should continue the student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness.
If a homeless child or youth becomes permanently housed during the academic year and selects the school of origin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ LEAs should continue the student's education in the school of origin for the remainder of the academic year.

(b) Dispute Resolution	
When the school's decision differs with the wishes of the parents or the unaccompanied youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ The student should be immediately enrolled in the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth. ❑ A written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal, must be provided to the parents or unaccompanied youth. ❑ The local liaison shall conduct the dispute resolution process.

(c) Documentation	
When a student lacks records normally required for enrollment, e.g., previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ The selected school should immediately enroll the homeless child or youth. ❑ The enrolling school should immediately contact the last school attended by the child or youth to obtain relevant academic and other records. ❑ If the student needs immunizations or medical records, the local liaison should assist in obtaining these items.

(d) Guardianship	
When children lack a legal guardian.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Schools must still enroll the children. ❑ Allow youth to enroll themselves while having the school district homeless liaison monitor academic progress and assist youth in making basic educational decisions. ❑ Try to identify an adult in the youth's life who can act as a caretaker. Schools and districts may decide to ask such adults to fill out caretaker forms. ❑ Ensure that all enrollment procedures are carefully crafted so they do not create further barriers or delay enrollment. For example, policy statements should clarify that identifying a caregiver is not a prerequisite to enrollment.

III. SERVICES	
Homeless children and families should receive services for which they are eligible and services comparable to their housed peers, including (see below):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Establish referral procedure for services. Typically, all identified homeless students should be referred to the building or district liaison.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Professional staff development for all school staff regarding referral procedures for services and description of services provided. ❑ Request families and unaccompanied youth fill out an intake form to determine needed services for students, parents, and siblings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Free breakfast and lunch programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Submit documentation of students' homeless status to school nutrition directors so that students may receive free meals for the entire school year. Documentation must include the child's name or list of names, effective date(s), and the signature of the district liaison or shelter director. (This documentation is in lieu of the standard application.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Title I services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Coordinate with Title I director regarding services and set-aside allocation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Special education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Expedite special education evaluations; transfer any existing evaluations to a receiving school in a timely fashion.

III. SERVICES (continued)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Limited English Proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Request previous school records; coordinate with program directors; expedite appropriate testing and placement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Head Start, Even Start, and district preschools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Inquire about preschool siblings; coordinate with Head Start, Even Start, and district preschools to ensure that enrollment of homeless preschoolers are prioritized (e.g., reserving slots for homeless preschoolers).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Referrals to services such as health care, dental, mental health, and other appropriate services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Learn resources in community; establish relationships with providers; collaborate to expedite delivery of needed services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Transportation services (including to and from school of origin). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Establish primary contact at transportation department; collaborate closely to develop referral system/process; learn what services housed peers are receiving (preschool, afterschool programs, extracurricular, etc.).
<p>Parents/guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Coordinate information workshops and information brochures for parents; distribute information brochures.
<p>Parents/guardians of homeless children are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Assist families in attending back-to-school nights, teacher conferences, family read nights, etc. Coordinate outreach and educational activities to encourage and foster parental involvement in their children's education.

Funding

For fiscal year 2005, \$62.5 million was allocated to the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program. The USDOE disburses these funds to states through a formula based on their Title I allocation. States then award the majority of the funds to LEAs on a competitive grant basis. Only four to five percent of school districts typically receive McKinney-Vento sub-grants in our state. Applications are available on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI's) Web site and can be accessed through the iGrants System in late spring of each year.

Although specific funding for homeless education is limited, many other resources are available to support district efforts. Successful McKinney-Vento programs have flourished through numerous collaborations with federal and state educational programs, homeless service

providers, and local communities. The guidance and resources sections will further elaborate on strategies and ideas to locate and maximize resources.

Technical Assistance

For any questions or assistance regarding homeless education issues, please contact:

- Your district homeless liaison (contact information listed at www.k12.wa.us/HomelessEd)
- Washington's State Coordinator for Homeless Education
Ms. Melinda Dyer
Program Supervisor, Education for Homeless Children and Youth
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building, P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200
Telephone: 360.725.6050
TTY: 360.664.3631
Fax: 360.664.3575
Email: mdyer@ospi.wednet.edu

II GUIDANCE

Part I

Dear Teacher,

You must be really mad because I've missed so much school. I've had to stay home and take care of my baby sister. Today my mom said she wouldn't be gone long. I kept waiting so I could go to school. I don't know why but she didn't come back. My baby sister cried the whole time cuz she was so hungry. I'm really hungry too. I miss school and I miss you. Do you miss me?

Love,
Amanda



This section walks you through 10 steps involved in building an effective homeless education program. Young, developing, and even mature programs should benefit from examining their programs through this approach. Although careful consideration was given to the sequence of steps, clearly some flexibility exists in program implementation.

Building a Foundation

Step 1: Identifying and Training Your District Liaison

Appointing a liaison for your district is not only legally required, but is central to the success of your homeless education program. Liaisons are ultimately responsible for coordinating efforts to ensure that homeless children and youth enroll, attend, and succeed in school. Oftentimes, these individuals are responsible for multiple district positions. However, this practice frequently prevents liaisons from having sufficient time to address all of their responsibilities.

In Washington State, 90 percent of liaisons reported spending 20 hours or less on homeless education and 43 percent reported not having enough time to fulfill all their duties.¹⁶ Although full-time liaisons are currently a minority in Washington, anecdotal evidence suggests that medium and large school districts **need** to hire liaisons full-time.^{17, 18} Furthermore, anecdotal evidence also indicates that hiring full-time liaisons can be a cost-effective practice.

Districts utilizing this approach cite that full-time liaisons are better positioned to support homeless students and this increased level of support leads to higher attendance rates, decreased grade retention, greater basic education dollars, and more cost-effective transportation choices. Districts often use a variety of funding sources to support their liaisons (e.g., Basic Education, Title I, Title IV, McKinney-Vento, Readiness-to-Learn, Migrant, I-728, Head Start, etc.) and have been very creative in blending different funding streams to fund the liaison as well as supportive homeless staff positions.

Now that you've identified your liaison, what does this person do? Well, specific responsibilities required by law have already been outlined in the Background Section. Therefore, we'll focus here on ways that liaisons can obtain the knowledge and resources necessary to be effective.

- **READ UP!** For starters, a suggested reading list includes this guidebook, the Local Homeless Liaison Toolkit (www.serve.org/nche), McKinney-Vento legislation (included in Appendix), and USDOE's Non-Regulatory Guidance (www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/guidance.pdf).
- **GET TRAINED!** OSPI's Homeless Education Program offers annual trainings on McKinney-Vento. These workshops are typically held in the spring and all liaisons are invited and encouraged to attend. NAEHCY (National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth) annually offers a national conference for homeless

¹⁶ Wu, J. (2005). *Visions of a brighter future: A study of homeless education programs in Washington State*. Olympia, WA: OSPI, 19–20.

¹⁷ Ibid, 30.

¹⁸ Ibid, 6. Medium school districts were defined as 1001-9999 students, large school districts as 10,000 or greater.

education, typically held in the fall. Both are excellent professional development opportunities.

- **GET MENTORED!** Experienced liaisons are a great resource for new or young liaisons. Ask your previous liaison for assistance, request help from neighboring districts, or contact the Office Superintendent of Public Instruction, Homeless Education Office (State Coordinator for Homeless Education) for potential mentors.

Step 2: Reviewing and Revising District Policies

McKinney-Vento requires that districts:

- Adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youth are not **stigmatized or segregated** on the basis of their homeless status.¹⁹
- Review and revise policies that may act as *barriers* to the enrollment of homeless children and youth.²⁰

At this point, district policy should be reviewed and aligned with state and federal legislation (attached in Appendix). Referring to the “Responsibilities of LEAs” in the Background Section can be a helpful tool as you revise district policy and ensure all responsibilities become policy. Once identification and enrollment procedures have been developed in Step 3, these procedures should also be incorporated into district policy.

Washington State School Directors’ Association (WSSDA) has written model policy regarding homeless children and youth. Their policy is useful as a starting reference point and is included in the Appendix. Another helpful reference is the sample LEA policy contained in NCHE’s Local Homeless Liaison Toolkit (www.serve.org/nche).

Building a Framework

Step 3: Developing Districtwide Procedures, Forms, and Database

Establishing districtwide procedures to identify, enroll, and serve homeless students is vital to a homeless education program. Standard procedures throughout the district ensure consistency, fairness, and thoroughness. As expected, regular and appropriate staff trainings are necessary for procedures to be implemented successfully (refer to steps 4 and 5). For each listed subtopic, examples of effective procedures and sample forms are provided.

¹⁹ McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B, Section 722(g)(1)(J)(i).

²⁰ Ibid, Section 722(g)(1)(I).

Identification

Residency questionnaires are an excellent tool for determining McKinney-Vento eligibility. By including these forms in all district enrollment packets, **all** enrolling children will be screened for homelessness. This document should inquire about housing situations in non-stigmatizing language and information about the educational rights of homeless children should also accompany it. In addition to screening, this questionnaire can serve the purpose of verifying homeless status.

Adapted from materials developed by the Texas Homeless Education Office, the sample forms provided have been written for the dual purpose of screening for and verifying homelessness. The first questionnaire is designed for inclusion in district enrollment packets and includes a section for secretaries to specify if any enrollment records are missing. The second serves two purposes: (1) to be distributed to preschool providers for inclusion in their enrollment packets and (2) to verify the homeless status of students who were “notified” to the homeless education program (i.e., school or community staff submitted notification forms for these students).

If building liaisons are well-versed in the McKinney-Vento Act, it is recommended that they be responsible for signing this questionnaire; however, district liaisons should adapt this form to meet the needs in their district. As for the informational brochure regarding educational rights, NCHE offers a parent brochure that can be downloaded electronically (www.serve.org/nche). Hard copies also can be requested online, by fax, or by phone (800.308.2145).

Notification Process

An articulated notification process contributes significantly to the identification infrastructure of a homeless education program. Once this process is explained to all participants, staff will better understand their roles, including their responsibility to notify the homeless program of **all** identified homeless students. McKinney-Vento requires that homeless children and youth be identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other agencies. Therefore, the term ‘notification’ is used to gently emphasize this requirement instead of ‘referral’ which often implies a voluntary action.

Adapted from the South Whidbey School District, a sample notification process is included and responsibilities per role are defined. Essentially, school personnel are asked to notify their building liaison and community agencies to notify the district liaison. Certainly some variance and flexibility in the process is expected as programs ascertain what works best for schools and agencies in their community.

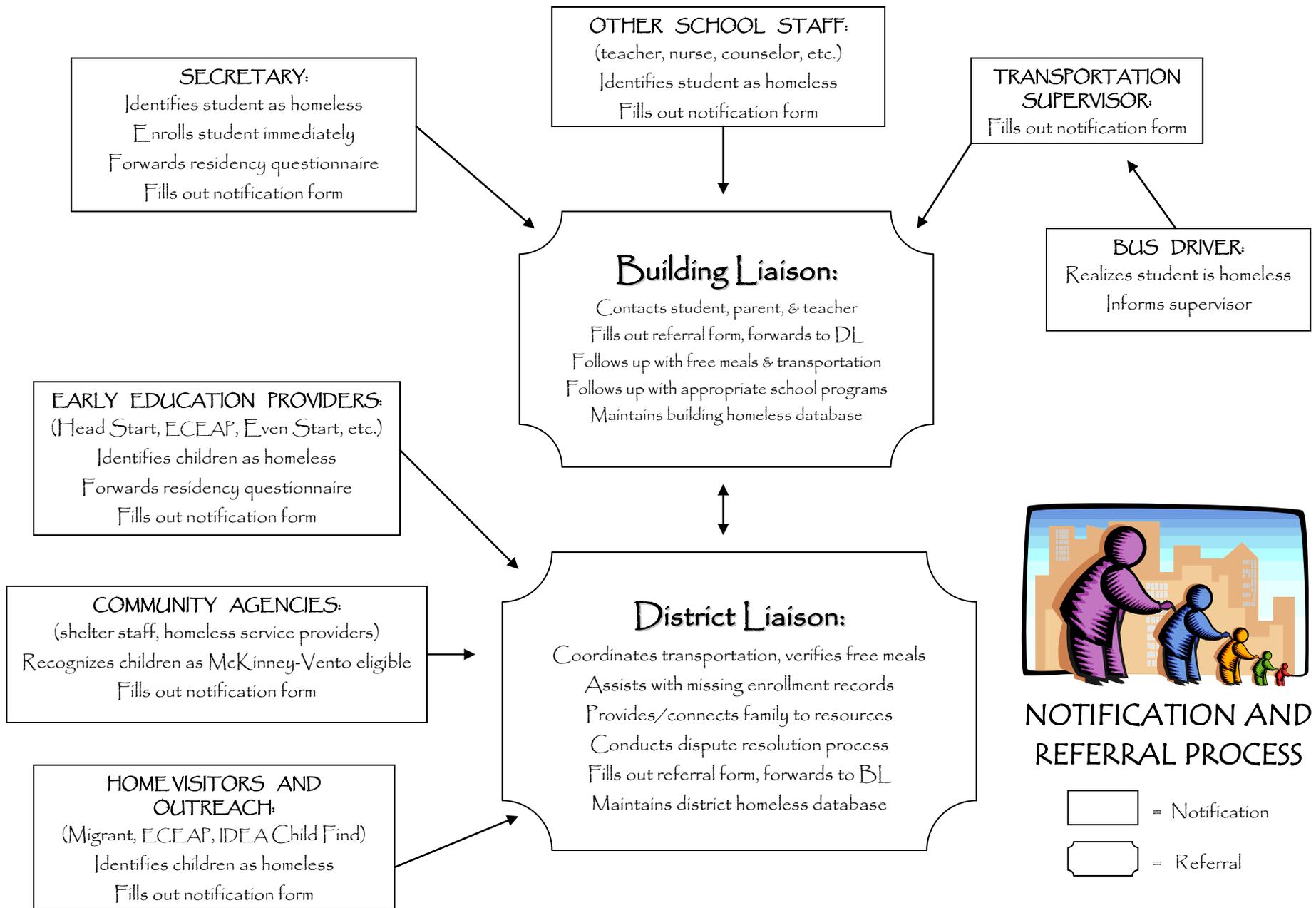
Schools:

- Secretary and Front Office Personnel
 - ✓ During Enrollment: Identifies a child as homeless, immediately enrolls the student and forwards the residency questionnaire to the Building Liaison.

- ✓ Outside of Enrollment: Identifies a child as homeless, fills out a notification form and submits it to the Building Liaison.
- Bus Driver and Transportation Supervisor
 - ✓ If a bus driver realizes that a student is homeless, the driver should inform his or her supervisor who fills out a notification form and submits it to the Building Liaison.
 - ✓ In larger-sized districts, it may be easier for the transportation supervisor to submit the notification form to the District Liaison. Again, districts will need to adapt the process to fit the needs of their system.
- All Other School Staff
 - ✓ If any other school staff identifies a homeless student, he or she should fill out a notification form and submit it to the Building Liaison.
 - ✓ In the event that homeless students are not identified during enrollment or become homeless during the school year, school staff will be prepared to identify and assist homeless students in receiving services.

Community Providers:

- Early Education Providers
 - ✓ During Enrollment: Include residency questionnaires in enrollment packets; forward forms indicating homelessness to District Liaison.
 - ✓ Outside Enrollment: Fill out notification forms for identified homeless students and forward to District Liaison.
- Community Agencies
 - ✓ Fill out notification forms for identified homeless children and forward to District Liaison. For shelter providers and other direct service providers, inquire about school enrollment for school-age and preschool-age children during intake.
- Home Visitors and Outreach Workers
 - ✓ Bring notification forms for home visits and outreach. Ask about school enrollment for school-age and preschool-age children. Fill out forms for identified homeless children and forward to District Liaison.



HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM, Notification Form (SAMPLE) School Building Staff

Please submit this completed form to your Building Liaison. Can also be faxed to _____.

Child's Name	Gender	Grade	Teacher's Name
	M F		
Address		City	Zip
Referring Person	Position	Phone #	Email

Please indicate the child's living situation:

- Doubled-up[†]

 Motel/hotel

 Shelter

 Unsheltered[‡]

[†] Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason

[‡] Living in a car, park, campsite, trailer park, bus/train station, abandoned building, abandoned in hospital, or other location not ordinarily used as sleeping accommodations

Comments:

Signature of Referring Person _____ Date _____

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM, Notification Form Community Agency Staff

Please fax this completed form to your District Liaison at _____.

Child's Name	Gender	Age	Parent's/Guardian's Name
	M F		
Address		City	Zip
Enrolled in School?	Current School (or last attended)		Grade
Yes No			
Referring Person & Agency		Position	Phone #

Please indicate the child's living situation:

- Doubled-up[†]

 Motel/hotel

 Shelter

 Unsheltered[‡]

[†] Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason

[‡] Living in a car, park, campsite, trailer park, bus/train station, abandoned building, abandoned in hospital, or other location not ordinarily used as sleeping accommodations

Comments:

Signature of Referring Person _____ Date _____

Enrollment

Legislation requires that homeless children and youth be enrolled *immediately* in school, even if they lack the documentation typically required. Unfortunately, a third of Washington school districts recently reported the presence of enrollment barriers. Even more disconcerting is that Washington shelter providers perceived barriers at *twice* the rate of districts.²¹ As discussed in Step 2, McKinney-Vento requires that districts review and revise any policies that may act as barriers to enrolling homeless children. Potential barriers include proof of residency, proof of guardianship, missing birth certificates, missing immunizations/medical records, and missing previous academic records. LEAs must ensure that these barriers are effectively eliminated—both in policy and in practice.

Procedures for enrolling homeless students should be carefully developed and implemented districtwide. An example procedure follows:

- Student identified as homeless through residency questionnaire (included in enrollment packet).
- Secretary follows the district's "Enrolling Homeless Students" procedure, which includes:
 - ✓ Assisting the parent/youth in filling out the enrollment packet, including the residency form.
 - ✓ Contacting the previous school for relevant academic and other records.
 - ✓ Indicating any missing enrollment records in the appropriate section of the residency form.
 - ✓ Forwarding the residency questionnaire to the Building Liaison.
 - ✓ Immediately enrolling the student.
- District Liaison follows up regarding any missing records and ensures all needed documentation is procured within 30 days.

*Please note: the residency questionnaire's section on missing enrollment records is intended strictly for convenience. Please do not delay enrollment secondary to missing records nor delay forwarding these forms to a liaison. School success is dependent on **immediate** enrollment and the **timely** delivery of support services.*

Referral/Services

All identified homeless students—whether screened through residency forms or "notified" by school/community staff—should be brought to the attention of the building or district liaison. A liaison should complete an intake form for all homeless students, collecting basic student data and assessing for needed services. Sample documents for intake and frequently provided services (transportation and child nutrition) are provided.

Although local liaisons are required to identify all homeless students in their district, parents and youth have the right to decline services. In this event, liaisons would still complete an intake

²¹ Wu, J. (2005). *Visions of a brighter future: A study of homeless education programs in Washington State*. Olympia, WA: OSPI, 13.

form (notating declined services), update the database, and periodically reassess the student's homeless status and desire for services.

Although optimal procedures will clearly vary per district, all districts should carefully design and implement practices that meet the needs of their schools and students. An example procedure for providing services follows:

Role of Building Liaisons (BL):

- Receive and verify all "positive" and "uncertain" residency forms for building students.
- Receive notification forms from building staff and verify homeless status by having parents or unaccompanied youth complete residency questionnaires.
- Contact each student and parent and complete intake, transportation, and nutrition forms.
- Forward copies of forms to appropriate personnel (district liaison, transportation, nutrition).
- Coordinate in-building services (academic and support).
- Follow up with services arranged by District Liaison (e.g., transportation, free meals, missing enrollment records, community referrals, etc.).
- Notify appropriate personnel of student's status (teacher, counselor, principal, etc.).
- Enter intake information into building homeless database and update data regularly.

Role of District Liaisons (DL):

- Receive notification forms from community entities—preschool providers, community agencies, and home visitors/outreach workers—and verify homeless status by having parents or unaccompanied youth complete residency questionnaires.
- Contact "notified" student and parent; complete intake, transportation, and nutrition forms.
- Forward intake copies to appropriate building contacts.
- Receive intake, transportation, and nutrition forms from building liaisons:
 - ✓ Coordinate with transportation director, forwarding arrangement to involved parties.
 - ✓ Submit documentation of free breakfast/lunch eligibility to food service directors.
 - ✓ Assist with obtaining missing enrollment records.
 - ✓ Provide and/or connect families to needed resources.
- Conduct dispute resolution process (when necessary).
- If completed intake on student, input information into district homeless database.
- Maintain district homeless database via data submissions from building contacts.

Child Nutrition

All homeless students are **automatically eligible** for free school meals. Under the 2004 Child Nutrition and Women and Infant Care Reauthorization Act, eligibility is now effective for the **remainder of the school year**, even if students become permanently housed. During the intake process, building or district liaisons should determine if children are receiving free school meals. If services are needed, district liaisons should immediately submit eligibility documentation to school nutrition services directors (sample form provided). Also new with the reauthorization are simplified documentation requirements which are summarized below:

- In lieu of the standard application, documentation that children are homeless may be accepted from either the district liaison or the children's shelter director.
- Documentation must include the child's name or list of names, effective date(s), and the signature of the district liaison or shelter director.
- School food authorities may also continue a child's eligibility from the previous year for 30 operating days into the subsequent school year or until a new eligibility determination is made (whichever occurs first).
- With this extended eligibility, households are no longer required to report changes in circumstances, e.g., an income increase, a decrease in household size, or when a family is no longer eligible for food stamps or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).²²
- Documentation or lists, however, still need to be kept on file for six years, the same length of time as the regular free/reduced-priced meal applications.²³

Transportation

Homeless students have the right to receive:

- Transportation to and from their school of origin.
- Transportation services that are comparable to their housed peers (**e.g., afterschool programs, extracurricular activities, preschools, etc.**).

Given that many factors contribute to the difficulty in coordinating these services, transportation remains one of the greatest barriers in homeless education. For example, shelters may not be on established bus routes, students may travel across district lines, and families may move frequently and be difficult to contact. Subsequently, arranging and providing transportation for McKinney-Vento students can be a process that is both cumbersome and costly.

Creating and implementing well thought-out procedures is one way to ensure that this process will be efficient and effective. Examples of questions to consider during procedure design include:

- Who will determine if transportation services are needed?
- Who will be involved in coordinating transportation?
- What will be the standard communication method (fax, email, phone) between involved parties (liaisons, students, parents, schools, and transportation personnel)?
- What are the available options for transporting homeless students?
- Of these choices, what are the most cost-effective methods for safe transportation?
- What will be the expected turnaround time for arranging transportation?
- If regular transportation cannot be arranged immediately (e.g., bus must be re-routed and affected students need to be called), how will transportation be provided in the interim?

²² United States Department of Agriculture. (2004). Memorandum SP3: Duration of households' free and reduced price meal eligibility determination – Reauthorization 2004. Alexandria, VA: Author; United States Department of Agriculture. (2004). Memorandum SP4: Categorical eligibility for free lunches and breakfasts of Runaway, Homeless, and Migrant Youth: Reauthorization 2004 Implementation. Alexandria, VA: Author.

²³ OSPI. (2003). Bulletin No. 39-03 Child Nutrition Services. Olympia, WA: Author.

- How will inter-district transportation occur and who will be the primary contacts for each district?

Possible transportation methods to consider include:

- Established school bus route.
- Altering or adding a school bus route.
- Mileage reimbursement for parents to transport students (referred to as “in lieu of”).
- Mileage reimbursement for shelter vans to transport students.
- Public bus or train.
- School district motor-pool vehicle.
- Preschool bus/van.
- Taxi.
- Medicaid or ADA vans.

Finally, procedures regarding specific transportation methods should also be created. These procedures should be outlined for program use as well as for articulating expectations to parents. For example, the Spokane School District has a document that lists the different transportation options and associated procedures for parents. Adapted examples from this form as well as additional ideas from the Spokane School District and Sumner School District transportation programs are listed below.

Bus Passes/Tokens

- Distributing monthly bus passes through building liaisons.
- Leaving monthly bus passes in the school office and notifying students or parents when available.
- Giving adult passes for parents/guardians to accompany young children to and from school.
- If passes are lost, placing students on the “two token a day” system.
- Removing bus pass privileges due to excessive tardiness or lack of attendance.

In Lieu Of

- Required to be state employee reimbursement rate (WAC 392-141).
- Requiring parents to sign in at front office to document transporting students to school.
- Issuing reimbursement checks monthly for parents to pick up.
- Not reimbursing parents for days that students are absent or tardy.
- Removing in lieu of privileges due to excessive tardiness or lack of attendance.

Taxi/Vans

- Requiring companies to use non-smoking vehicles and uniformed drivers to transport students.
- Requiring companies and drivers to maintain confidentiality of student’s status.
- Conducting criminal background checks on drivers, and verifying satisfactory checks.

- Establishing a relationship with one company.
- Requiring parents to call in by a designated time if student is ill or not needing transportation.
- Verify that any vans or preschool buses used have a manufacturer's design capacity of 10 persons or less (including the driver).

Tips for Coordinating Transportation:

- Use standard forms for convenience and efficiency. Two examples are included in this guidebook. The transportation request is adapted from forms used by Spokane and South Whidbey School Districts. The mileage reimbursement form is adapted from one developed by Sumner School District.
- Establish a primary contact at the transportation department to facilitate information exchange and encourage proficiency/sensitivity in dealing with the transport of homeless students.
- Collaborate with neighboring districts. Many Washington liaisons have invited liaisons and transportation supervisors from neighboring districts to discuss and establish collaborative methods regarding transporting homeless students. From these meetings, one frequent suggestion is to ask transportation directors to coordinate directly with one another in determining inter-district solutions.²⁴
- Plan for emergencies. For example, Chicago Public Schools provides every school in the district with a Homeless Education Program Emergency Packet to offer families in the event that transportation services cannot be arranged immediately. Packets for elementary schools include 1 pack of 20 student fare cards, 1 adult 7-day transit pass, and \$10 cash for purchasing transfers or adult transit cards. Packets for secondary schools include 1 pack of 20 student fare cards and \$11 cash for purchasing transfer fares.²⁵
- Did you know that all students transported must be included in October's ridership count (including transportation by public bus, private party contract with parent cab or other provider)? Find out when the count will occur and share your data with transportation coordinators. (In case you're wondering why this is important, districts are compensated for the entire school year for transportation costs based on a one-week ridership count every fall.)

²⁴ Wu, J. (2005). *Visions of a brighter future: A study of homeless education programs in Washington State*. Olympia, WA: OSPI, 40.

²⁵ Chicago Public Schools. *Homeless education program: Policy and other important documents*. Chicago, IL: Author, 10. www.oism.cps.k12.il.us/pdf/WhatSchoolsMustDo.pdf

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM, Intake Form (SAMPLE)

Child's Name	Sex	Age	Ethnicity (Optional) *	Student ID (Optional)
			A As C N H O	
Current School (or last attended)	Grade	DOB	Enrolled in School?	Teacher's Name
		/ /	Yes No	
Address	City	Zip	Phone #	Parent's/Guardian's Name

* **A** = African-American **As** = Asian/Pacific-Islander **C** = Caucasian **N** = Native American **O** = Other

Please indicate the child's living situation:

- Doubled-up[†]
 Motel/hotel
 Shelter
 Unsheltered[‡]

[†] Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason

[‡] Living in a car, park, campsite, trailer park, bus/train station, abandoned building, abandoned in hospital, or other location not ordinarily used as sleeping accommodations

Please check the following services that are needed or desired:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing | <input type="checkbox"/> Missing enrollment records |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free breakfast/lunch | <input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Birth certificate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School supplies | <input type="checkbox"/> Afterschool programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Immunizations/medical record |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Prior academic records |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gifted/Talented | <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardianship issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational/Technical | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/dental referral | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid/DSHS services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LEP/Bilingual program | <input type="checkbox"/> Vision referral/glasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool enrollment |

Please list siblings or other children in the home:

Name	Sex	Age	Grade	School (if unenrolled, please indicate)

Comments or notes:

Building/District Liaison Signature _____ Date _____

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM (SAMPLE) Transportation Request

Student Name	Address	Phone #

School Name	Grade	Start & Dismissal Time	Other Needs or Considerations

- Parent has a car and can transport the student to and from school with mileage reimbursement
- Parent is available and willing to escort the young child on a public bus

Comments or notes:

Liaison Signature _____ Date _____

Transportation Department Use Only

Transportation will begin on _____ and will be provided by the following method:

In Lieu Of (Mileage Reimbursement)

School Bus

AM Route		Pick-up Time		Location	
PM Route		Drop-off Time		Location	

Public Bus

AM Route		Pick-up Time		Location	
PM Route		Drop-off Time		Location	

Taxi

Company		Pick-up Time		Location	
Phone #		Drop-off Time		Location	

Other _____

Transportation Coordinator Signature _____ Date _____

McKinney-Vento Transportation Services (SAMPLE) Mileage Reimbursement and Attendance Form

Student Name _____ School _____

Date	Drop-Off Time	Parent Initials	Pick-Up Time	Parent Initials	Staff Initials
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					
26					
27					
28					
29					
30					
31					

OFFICE: Total # Days (_____) x Roundtrip Mileage (_____) x \$0.36/mile = _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Month _____

I certify that this claim for reimbursement is accurate and true and has not been previously paid.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Liaison Signature _____ Date _____

Determining Best Interest and Feasibility

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, homeless students have two options for school enrollment:

1. **School of Origin** – the school the child last attended when permanently housed OR the school where the student was last enrolled; **students may attend for the duration of their homelessness or, if they become permanently housed, may attend for the remainder of the school year.**
2. **School of Residency** – the school attended by other students living in the same attendance area as the homeless child’s current residence.

Districts should establish a method for determining the best interest and feasibility of school placement for homeless students. Methods should outline which individuals should be involved as well as factors to consider in forming a decision. For example, the homeless child, the child’s parent/guardian, and the homeless liaison should all participate in the determination process. (If the student is an unaccompanied youth, the district liaison is required to assist the youth in placement or enrollment decisions.) Other individuals that may also contribute to the process include teachers, counselors, social workers, transportation coordinators, and shelter/social service providers.

In determining best interest and feasibility, districts need to specify what factors will be considered. For example, since research has demonstrated the negative impact of mobility upon academic achievement, school stability is an extremely important issue. Legislation now specifies that to the extent feasible, LEAs should keep homeless students in their school of origin. Ultimately, the school of origin will be the preferred school placement unless:

1. Not desired by the parent or unaccompanied youth.
2. Not in the best interest of the student.
3. **The LEA determines it is not feasible.**

A two-page worksheet has been provided as a sample tool for working through school placement decisions. This form was adapted from materials developed by NCHE and the Missouri Department of Education. Above all else, LEAs should remember that the best placement determinations are child-centered and individualized.

Dispute Resolution

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, if a district’s decision regarding school placement or enrollment differs with the wishes of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth:

- ✓ The child/youth must be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought.
- ✓ The LEA or school must provide a written explanation to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth and include a statement regarding the right to appeal. **(sample form adapted from NCHE’s Toolkit is provided)**
- ✓ The district liaison shall carry out the dispute resolution process.

In the event of a dispute resolution case, all districts should follow Washington State’s Dispute Resolution Process (see Appendix).

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM (SAMPLE)

Determining Best Interest and Feasibility of School Placement

Student Name _____ Age _____

Unaccompanied Youth: Yes No

Individuals contributing to the best interest and feasibility determination of this placement:

- Student Parent/Guardian Transportation Director District Liaison
 Teacher Shelter/Service Provider Counselor/Social Worker Building Liaison
 Other _____

	School Name	District Name	Dates of Attendance
School of Origin <i>(when permanently housed)</i>			
School of Origin <i>(where last enrolled)</i>			
School of Residence			

Factors to consider:

(1) Does the parent/guardian desire for the student to attend the school of origin? Yes No

(2) Does the student desire to attend the school of origin? Yes No

If answers to Questions 1 and 2 are both no, school of residence should be selected.

(3) Is the time and distance required to travel to and from the school of origin Yes No
 reasonable for the student's age?

(4) Considering the student's age, can transportation be arranged in a safe and reasonable manner? Yes No

Example Questions to Explore:

How many transfers would be required?

Would the student be required to wait alone?

If public transportation were proposed, would the parent be available and willing to accompany their young child?

(5) Is the school of origin especially meaningful to the child and/or parent? Yes No

Example Questions to Explore:

How long did the child attend the school of origin?

Is the child involved in special programs not available at the school of residence?

Did the child develop meaningful relationships at the school of origin?

What time of year is it, i.e., has the school year already begun?

What is the likelihood that the family will establish residency again in the attendance area of the school of origin?

(6) Does the student have any special needs or considerations that may impact the best interest and feasibility of school placement? Yes No

Example Question to Explore:

Are there siblings and where is their school placement?

District's recommendation is to place the child in:

School of origin (where the child last attended when permanently housed).

School of origin (where the child was last enrolled).

School of residence (where other students living in the same area as the child are attending).

Signature of District Official _____ **Date** _____

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM (SAMPLE)
Written Notification of Enrollment Decision

In compliance with Section 722(g)(3)(E) of the 2001 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, the following written notification is provided to:

Parent/Guardian _____ Student _____

After reviewing your request to enroll the above-named student at _____,
the request is denied. This determination was based upon: *(School Name)*

School Personnel's Name _____ Title _____

School Personnel's Signature _____ Date _____

You have the right to appeal this decision by completing the section below and submitting it to your district's homeless liaison. Alternatively, you may contact the district liaison to begin the dispute resolution process.

District Liaison's Name _____ Phone Number _____

If you choose to appeal the enrollment decision, your child shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought (pending resolution of the dispute). A copy of Washington State's Dispute Resolution Process is attached.

Decision to Appeal

Student Name _____ School _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Phone/E-mail _____

I wish to appeal the enrollment decision and have been provided with:

- A written explanation of the school's decision.
- Contact information for the district homeless liaison.
- A copy of the Washington State's Dispute Resolution Process.
- A copy of this form (upon submission).

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

OR

Unaccompanied Youth Signature _____ Date _____

Data Collection

Data collection is an essential and often overlooked element in homeless education programs. Previously only districts receiving McKinney-Vento sub-grants were required to participate in a federal data collection. All LEAs, however, are now required to submit information to their State Coordinator for the purposes of collecting state and federal data on homeless education. Besides fulfilling a federal requirement, data collection is also instrumental to the current and future efficacy of programs.

In establishing a procedure for collecting data, LEAs should consider the following:

- What data elements should be included?
- Who will collect the data?
- How will this data be collected?
- When and how often will the data be collected?

A sample procedure would then proceed like so:

- District liaison determines which data elements are needed.
- District liaison creates a database and emails a template to every building contact.
- Building liaisons:
 - ✓ Collect data for building students using intake forms.
 - ✓ Input intake information into building homeless database (based on template).
 - ✓ Check in with students and parents once a month and update database.
 - ✓ Respond to monthly data requests from district liaison by emailing building database.
 - ✓ District liaison:
 - Collects data for students referred directly to DL using intake forms.
 - Inputs intake information into district homeless database.
 - Requests monthly updates from BL.
 - Compiles information from BLs into district homeless database.
 - Responds to requests for district data from OSPI.

Databases are truly an excellent tool for organizing information in a way that is convenient, accessible, and useable. Adapted from materials developed by the Sumner School District, sample databases have been provided. Both were created with Excel, one designed for K–12 students and the other for preschool-aged children. A very simple but powerful database can be created using Excel. This program not only has the ability to organize large quantities of data but also to perform sophisticated calculations. For example, if programs were filling out OSPI's data collection form and needed to count the number of students living in shelters, this calculation could be done instantaneously on an Excel database.

Quick tips for performing such a calculation are as follows:

- **Be consistent**: For data elements that are to be counted, e.g., living situation of homeless students, information must be entered consistently. Thus, if programs were using the

abbreviation “D” to indicate that a student’s living situation is doubled-up, no other variations can be used to signify doubled-up or the calculated numbers will be inaccurate.

- **Simplify:** Use abbreviations for common choices, e.g., A = African American, C = Caucasian, etc. Sample abbreviations for various data elements are found below.
- **Calculate:** Use the COUNTIF function to count the number of cells within a range that meet a given criteria. Here’s an example: You’ve listed 5 students in Column A, starting from Row 2 to Row 6. You’ve chosen to input homeless living situations in Column B and are using the sample abbreviations below. Now you’d like to query how many students are living in shelters. So, in the cell that you’d like to display this count, you use the COUNTIF formula by entering the desired cell range and your search criteria, that is:

=COUNTIF(B2:B6,”S”)

Thus, your worksheet should now look something like this:

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Student	Status		# Sheltered	2
2	Amanda	S			
3	Bob	M			
4	Charles	D			
5	David	D			
6	Emily	S			

=COUNTIF(B2:B6,”S”)

And now you know that the number of students living in shelters is 2!

Examples of abbreviations per data element:

Homeless Status

- D** = Doubled-up
- M** = Motel/hotel
- S** = Shelter
- U** = Unsheltered

Preschool Programs

- D** = District
- E** = ECEAP
- ES** = Even Start
- H** = Head Start

Academic Programs

- E** = English Language Learner
- G** = Gifted and Talented
- S** = Special Education
- V** = Vocational and Technical

Transportation

- I** = In-lieu
- P** = Public Bus
- S** = School Bus
- SE** = Spec Ed Bus
- T** = Taxi
- W** = Walks
- O** = Other

Ethnicity

- A** = African-American
- As** = Asian/Pacific-Islander
- C** = Caucasian
- H** = Hispanic
- N** = Native-American
- O** = Other

WASL

- MR** = Met standard in Reading
- NR** = Not meet standard in Reading
- MM** = Met standard in Math
- NM** = Not meet standard in Math
- NP** = Not participate in WASL

Step 4: Designating and Training Building Liaisons

Although the appointment of building liaisons is voluntary, research demonstrates that this practice is highly successful. In Washington State, 97 percent of districts that used building liaisons reported this method as effective. Regrettably, this system is under-utilized with only 25 percent of districts currently participating.²⁶ How does a system of building liaisons work to strengthen homeless education programs?

- **Divide and Conquer:** By appointing additional liaisons, more individuals share in the responsibilities, more are equipped to raise homeless awareness, and more serve as homeless advocates.
- **Provide an Immediate Contact:** With liaisons in all school buildings, homeless children and families have someone to provide immediate, on-site assistance with enrollment and other education/social services. Furthermore, building staff who have identified students as homeless or recognized needs in their homeless students also have an immediate contact.
- **Closer Tracking:** Having liaisons in each school building allows homeless education programs to closely track their students. For example, important data such as attendance, academic progress/testing, and educational/social needs can all be monitored with increased frequency and ease.

Begin by reflecting on how a system of building liaisons will function best in your district. Draft a basic schematic outlining the responsibilities of these liaisons (see examples below). Work with school principals to designate building liaisons who will be sensitive and responsive to the needs of homeless children. Then present an overview of the district's homeless education program to your liaisons and train them regarding the basics of the McKinney-Vento Act and their responsibilities as building liaisons.

Examples of Building Liaisons' Responsibilities:

- Share information sent by the district liaison with appropriate school personnel.
- Share with the district liaison any difficulties that the school is experiencing in working with homeless students.
- Track homeless student data for the McKinney-Vento eligible children in their respective buildings; respond to requests for student data by the district liaison.
- Serve as the building liaisons for referring students to the homeless education program.
- Assist in the identification and enrollment of homeless students.
- Coordinate building support services for students.
- Meet regularly with homeless parents and students to monitor academic progress and assess educational or social service needs.
- Assist the district liaison in providing professional development to other building staff.

²⁶ Wu, J. (2005). *Visions of a brighter future: A study of homeless education programs in Washington State*. Olympia, WA: OSPI, 21.

Step 5: Training and Building Awareness in Schools

Raising homeless awareness is one of the most fundamental characteristics of an effective homeless education program. Without the knowledge of which children qualify as homeless, schools will readily fall short of their mission to identify and provide services to children in need. Liaisons must educate school personnel regarding the McKinney-Vento definition of a homeless child, raise awareness and sensitivity concerning this population, and define specific roles in the context of legal requirements and social responsibilities. Although training systems may vary, **all** school staff must be trained in the basics of homeless education.

Who should be trained?

Simply put, all school staff should be trained. This includes secretaries, front office staff, principals, assistant principals, teachers, counselors, social workers, nurses, bus drivers, transportation coordinators, early education providers, etc. Some districts find it useful to target trainings to specific audiences so that the training content can be focused and efficient. For example, by training bus drivers and transportation coordinators together, discussion can be centered on how to coordinate bus routes sensitively instead of how to enroll students in school (more apropos for school secretaries).

What type of content should be included in trainings?

Again, training sessions will vary depending on target audience and time available for professional development. The barest essentials, however, should include:

- Defining the roles of district liaison and building liaisons (include contact information).
- Explaining the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless, the rights of homeless students under McKinney-Vento, and the responsibilities of school districts to serve students experiencing homelessness (include handouts).
- Providing background information on homeless children, e.g., numbers of homeless children in district/state/nation, impact of homelessness, etc.
- Common signs of homelessness.
- Tailor the following components to specific audiences:
 - ✓ Identification procedures.
 - ✓ Enrollment procedures (secretaries, front office staff).
 - ✓ Process for referring homeless children to liaisons.
 - ✓ Suggestions on how staff can assist homeless students.
 - ✓ Sensitivity issues regarding homelessness and poverty.

How often and when should trainings occur?

At minimum, trainings should occur annually. August/September is generally the best time to conduct trainings to ensure that all staff receives training before or soon after the school year begins.

What's an example of a successful training model?

Chicago Public Schools offers an example of an excellent training system. Each principal must select a homeless education liaison and clerk who are sensitive to the needs of homeless children. The principal, liaison, and clerk from each school then attend the annual and mandatory Homeless Education Program training offered by the district. Within 30 days of the district training, principals and liaisons are required to conduct an all-staff training within their schools regarding the rights and needs of homeless students. Their trainings must include:

1. An explanation and distribution of Child Protective Services (CPS) Policy and Procedures on Education of Homeless Children and Youth.
2. Identification, introduction, and role of the school's Homeless Education Liaison.
3. Identification, introduction, and role of the school's clerk. Attendance sheets from these building trainings are then submitted to the district liaison for verification.²⁷

Are there any training tools available?

Yes! Please refer to the Resources Section for training tools and a list of available resources. Included in this guidebook are three training tools: a McKinney-Vento overview, common signs of homelessness, and suggested activities for various staff positions. The liaison toolkit also offers a Homeless Awareness Presentation and is available on NCHE's Web site (www.serve.org/nche).

What's the purpose of these trainings?

Homeless children are among the most vulnerable children in our society. Not surprisingly, they are at great risk of failing inside and outside of the classroom. Oftentimes, these students are unaware of their rights under the McKinney-Vento Act and the additional services available to them. School staff are in a unique position to dramatically impact the lives of children and must be trained to identify and assist this particularly vulnerable population.

Building a Community

Step 6: Partnering With Federal, State, and District Programs

In the midst of shrinking budgets and rising poverty, collaboration is crucial—now more than ever. Several federal, state, and district programs have target populations that significantly overlap with that of McKinney-Vento. Developing close relationships with these programs is vital to streamlining limited resources and ensuring the success of all students. Potential programs to consider include: Title I, Title IV, Migrant, Special Education, Learning Assistance Program, ECEAP, Head Start, Even Start, district-sponsored preschools, Gifted and Talented,

²⁷ Chicago Public Schools. *Homeless education program: Policy and other important documents*. Chicago, IL: Author, 2–3. www.oism.cps.k12.il.us/pdf/WhatSchoolsMustDo.pdf

Vocational and Technical, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Gear Up, Running Start, and TRIO programs (such as Upward Bound and Talent Search).

Examples of collaborative models that have been successfully implemented in our state and nation include the following:²⁸

➤ **Academic Assistance and Services:**

- ✓ In the Sumner School District, funds from Title I, and LAP are blended to provide a learning specialist in every building. Names of McKinney-Vento eligible children are forwarded to specialists who assess students for math, reading, and writing skills and provide academic interventions.
- ✓ In the Bellingham School District, Title I Part A set-asides are used to provide a shelter-based tutoring program for homeless students. Title I tutors work with students individually or in groups after school and communicate regularly with classroom teachers to discuss progress and focus areas.
- ✓ Additional idea: Coordinate with gifted and talented programs to ensure that placement testing is not a barrier. Typically, children are tested in the beginning of the year (when homeless students are often not enrolled yet) and slots fill up before McKinney-Vento children even arrive at school. Close collaboration can ensure multiple testing dates, space reservation, and equitable access to academic programs.

➤ **Outreach:**

- ✓ In the South Whidbey School District, ECEAP's home visitor receives training on McKinney-Vento and uses visits to provide ECEAP services and to identify children who may be homeless. Families whose children may qualify are referred to the district's homeless education program. The home visitor also completes notification forms for eligible children and submits the forms to the district liaison.
- ✓ In Oregon, districts are helping to support migrant recruiters with Title I, Part A funds. By utilizing individuals who are in the field already, districts can optimize the identification of migrant and homeless children and deliver services more efficiently.
- ✓ Additional idea: Assist special education directors in the required outreach for Child Find by providing information regarding the location of homeless families in the district.

➤ **Preschool:**

- ✓ In the Olympia School District, the liaison communicates frequently with Head Start and public preschools, which hold two slots each for homeless students. She also works with preschool providers to coordinate needed transportation and child care.
- ✓ In the Aberdeen School District, the homeless liaison also collaborates with various early education providers (Migrant program, Even Start, birth to three program, special services, and teen parents program) to ensure that all homeless preschoolers are immediately identified and enrolled. In addition, she screens every preschool-aged sibling of identified homeless students and completes the enrollment paperwork for any eligible child.

²⁸ Wu, J. (2005). *Visions of a brighter future: A study of homeless education programs in Washington State*. Olympia, WA: OSPI, 26, 29, 36–37.

➤ **Special Education:**

- ✓ Although the 2004 IDEA reauthorization limits the timeframe for completing special education evaluations to 60 days, expedited assessments remain critical for highly mobile populations. In Cleveland, Ohio, the district funds a part-time psychologist to test homeless students who may need special education. Within 14 days of identification, students requiring special education are placed in programs, a process that typically spans months.
- ✓ Additional idea: Collaborate with your special education director to provide early intervention services for K–12 students (emphasis on K–3) who need additional academic and behavioral support but are not eligible for special education. (2004 IDEA reauthorization now allows LEAs to reserve up to 15 percent of their IDEA grants to develop and implement these services.)

Also, in the context of working with other programs in the district, school improvement plans should be considered. Only 44 percent of Washington districts reported that all their schools were incorporating homeless education in school improvement planning.²⁹ Although NCLB only requires plans from Title I schools who have failed to make adequate yearly progress, Washington State requires school improvement plans from every school district receiving basic education dollars.³⁰ Schools and districts should seize this opportunity and develop a comprehensive plan to assist **all** students in succeeding.

Step 7: Collaborating With Community Agencies

Homeless Service Providers

A collaboration between school districts and homeless service providers cannot be emphasized enough. Washington’s statewide study of homeless education programs aroused grave concerns regarding the level of collaboration between school districts and shelter providers. When comparing the survey responses of districts and shelters, significant discrepancies were revealed regarding the numbers of identified homeless students and the presence of enrollment barriers. In short, the study concluded that districts were greatly under-identifying homeless students as well as the enrollment barriers encountered by children.³¹

In order to improve Washington’s programs, liaisons must develop closer ties with community providers and educate them regarding McKinney-Vento. Information about the district’s homeless education program and available services should also be shared. In addition, promoting open and regular communication with homeless providers will assist liaisons in better identifying and removing these enrollment barriers. Otherwise, thousands of homeless children in Washington will continue to be unidentified and denied their educational rights. Suggestions for building a stronger and more effective community through collaboration include:

²⁹ Ibid, 23.

³⁰ Washington Administrative Code 180-16-220 (2)(b) and (2)(c).

³¹ Wu, J. (2005). *Visions of a brighter future: A study of homeless education programs in Washington State*. Olympia, WA: OSPI, 24–28.

- Generate a list of organizations serving low-income and homeless children in your area. If your community participates in the HUD/Continuum of Care process, a planning document should be available that includes identified resources and areas of need. Below is a list of agencies commonly serving children and families in transition:
 - ✓ Shelters (family, youth, domestic violence) DSHS
 - ✓ Transitional Housing Providers Community Action Councils
 - ✓ Food/Clothing Banks, Soup Kitchens Community Health Clinics
- Establish relationships with the organizations on your list by calling and/or meeting in person. Ask to have a regular contact person at each agency to facilitate communication and foster closer relationships.
- Provide trainings/in-services for community agencies that include:
 - ✓ Explaining the roles of district liaison and building liaisons.
 - ✓ Explaining the definition of homeless and educational rights in McKinney-Vento.
 - ✓ Describing the district process for referring homeless children to schools.
 - ✓ Distributing handouts on McKinney-Vento (including information for parents), services (mandatory and voluntary) provided through your program, and contact information for district and building liaisons.
- For shelters and transitional housing providers, encourage implementing regular school attendance as a requirement for receiving housing services, but be careful that shelters do not mandate attendance at a particular school, e.g., only the local area school.
- Communicate and meet regularly with service providers. Ask how the district can improve the school enrollment and support services for homeless children and families.
- Create handouts listing community agencies, contact information, provided services, and hours of operation for distribution to homeless youth/families and building liaisons.

Albeit not direct service providers, homeless advocacy organizations and homeless planning committees are also very important. Many successful homeless education programs ask liaisons to represent their district on continuum of care committees and local homeless coalitions. This level of involvement ensures that the educational needs of homeless children and youth are also addressed in planning and advocacy.

General Service Providers

Although the mission of many community agencies may not be specific to providing services for homeless families, oftentimes these organizations will be responsive to meeting particular needs of children experiencing homelessness. Examples of collaborative partnerships within Washington State include:

- Free before/after school programs and childcare for homeless children (Parks and Recreation in Sumner and YMCA in Olympia).
- A local thrift shop responding to the needs of homeless youth by providing youth with employment opportunities and donating store proceeds to the families in transition program (South Whidbey).
- Local churches:

- ✓ Raising funds to pay for new shoes (Spokane).
- ✓ Donating hundreds of backpacks filled with school supplies per classroom lists or general supply lists (Olympia).
- ✓ Holding annual fundraising drives to offer housing assistance, including providing first and last month's rent, deposits, and emergency reserves, to needy families; district liaison screens families to determine program eligibility (Olympia).
- ✓ Donating money for homeless children to buy new clothes (Olympia).
- ✓ Donating gas vouchers for homeless families (Sumner).
- ✓ Donating Weekend Backpacks; every Friday, children bring home backpacks filled with food for the weekend, and every Monday, children return empty backpacks to be refilled for the following weekend (Sumner).

By no means exhaustive, a short list of other community organizations to collaborate with include 4-H Programs, Boys & Girls Clubs, public libraries, Red Cross, Rotary Clubs, Salvation Army, United Way, and Volunteers of America.

Step 8: Linking Families

Research has documented the importance of supporting and involving parents if education is to be a priority for homeless children. By supporting families, home environments are stabilized more quickly and greater academic success ensues. How can homeless education programs support and involve families meaningfully?

- Educate parents about their children's eligibility and rights under McKinney-Vento; collaborate with community agencies to offer information sessions for parents.
- Work with a family resource center to comprehensively address education and social needs; if a resource center does not exist, partner with community agencies to create one; assess families for needed services and directly meet needs or connect families to available resources.
- Refer families to parenting classes or, if none are available/accessible, organize and provide classes to equip parents with the tools to build healthy families.
- Provide meaningful opportunities to involve parents in their child's education. A few examples include:
 - ✓ Sponsoring literacy events or programs for parents and children (refer to the resources section for funding sources).
 - ✓ Providing transportation for parents to attend teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, PTA meetings, school events, etc.
 - ✓ Organizing care teams for every identified homeless student. Care teams are composed of individuals involved in the student's life (e.g., parent, teacher, counselor, etc.) and meet regularly to monitor progress and problem-solve issues.

Step 9: Networking and Program Sustainability

Professional networking is invaluable in providing peer-learning opportunities. By learning from others' experiences and collectively problem-solving, successful strategies can be optimized and

not so successful practices minimized. On the local level, networking can occur within a district, county, or state. For example, Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) coordinates regular meetings for King and Pierce Counties. All district liaisons from the two counties are invited to participate and learn from one another. On a national level, a networking base can be established through conferences (mentioned in Step 1) and via the liaison listserv. Hosted by NCHE, NAEHCY's listserv provides educators, advocates, and service providers with a national forum to discuss homeless education issues. To subscribe to the listserv, please send an email request to homeless@serve.org.

In the final phases of building your program, it's also important to consider how your program can grow and achieve sustainability. With many funding sources being competitive grants, homeless education programs may require several years to develop the partnerships and various funding streams necessary to survive and thrive. A few recommended strategies for building sustainability include:

- **Developing a Sustainability Plan:** Plan for the future and propose a budget for program activities and expenditures for at least one academic year, preferably more. Specify timelines and details/tasks for meeting fundraising goals. Share the plan and involve others in fundraising activities.
- **Diversifying Funding Sources:** Avoid being wholly dependent on any one funding source. Funding is fickle, so it's best to be prepared and become interdependent with your community. Who's your community? As discussed in Step 6, many federal, state, and district programs overlap with the target population of McKinney-Vento. Seek to collaborate with these programs in order to diversify funding sources, maximize limited resources, and improve programs. As discussed in Step 7, funding from foundations, churches, and private donors further widens your funding base. Diversification ensures against program collapse secondary to insufficient funding.
- **Evaluating Your Program:** Program evaluations are necessary for demonstrating needs and outcomes to potential funders. Collecting and reporting quality data increases your program's capability to secure funding. Please refer to Step 10 for additional information and resources.

Step 10: Evaluating Your Program

Program evaluation is an important tool, one that is often overlooked or set aside indefinitely. Data generated from assessments is vital in improving programs, identifying needs, procuring resources, and documenting compliance. Two assessments are included in this guidebook, a District Homeless Education Program Assessment and a Needs Assessment for Homeless Children, Youth, and Families. The district tool examines the presence of critical program components and is divided into five program areas: identification, enrollment, services, data collection, and general program. The listed program elements are essential to an effective homeless education program and are mandated by law, implied in legislation, a McKinney-Vento standard, or a demonstrated best practice. The following is a key for the district tool:

Bolded font signifies that the activity is required by McKinney-Vento or Title I legislation.

Italicized font indicates that the element is a McKinney-Vento standard.³²

Normal font denotes that the component is either considered a best practice example or implied in legislation (i.e., not explicitly stated but necessary to fulfill legal mandates).

The second assessment is useful in gauging the local needs of homeless children and their families. Although the traditional model for schools has focused on delivering educational services, schools are uniquely positioned to impact children—particularly homeless children—far beyond the academic domain. As schools are often the only source of stability and security for children in transition, educators must recognize the evolving role of schools and partner with their communities to address the needs of homeless children and their families.

Therefore, the most effective approach to conduct these assessments is to assemble a committee with diverse representation and multiple perspectives. Examples of potential committee members include liaisons, teachers, principals, counselors, secretaries, transportation coordinators, shelter/transitional housing staff, food bank/clothing bank staff, DSHS representatives, local housing authority representatives, community health staff, Child Protective Services, homeless parents, and homeless youth.

For the district tool, the committee should decide whether each program component is present and mark yes or no. If no, action plans should be formulated. If yes, the committee should determine if action is necessary and plan accordingly. When action plans are formed, target dates for completing the plans should be written under the column TBC (To Be Completed).

For the needs assessment, the committee should decide whether the need is unaddressed, partially addressed, well-addressed, or not a need. If the answer is unaddressed or partially addressed, action plans should be created. If the response is well-addressed or not a need, the committee should determine if action plans are required and act accordingly. Again, target dates for completing the action plan should be notated under the column TBC (To Be Completed).

³² In 2001, NCHE convened a work group to develop standards and indicators for McKinney-Vento. Their product, *McKinney-Vento Data Standards and Indicators Guidebook*, can be found on NCHE's Web site. www.serve.org/nche

District Homeless Education Program Assessment

I. IDENTIFICATION	YES	NO	ACTION PLAN	TBC
Appointed a district liaison?				
Appointed liaisons in every school building?				
Annually train ALL school staff regarding role of liaison, McKinney-Vento law, definition of homeless, signs of homelessness, sensitivity issues, referral and notification processes, etc.?				
Collaborate with community agencies to identify homeless children?				
Post educational rights in schools and areas where homeless children and families are served?				
Established procedures for identifying homeless children, including in-school and community referrals?				
Established procedures for notifying appropriate school personnel when students are homeless?				

II. ENROLLMENT	YES	NO	ACTION PLAN	TBC
Established procedures for enrolling homeless students?				
Annually train secretaries and office staff regarding identification and enrollment?				
Homeless children are able to enroll in school when lacking academic and medical records, proof of residency, birth certificates, etc.?				
Homeless children are able to enroll in school when lacking a legal guardian?				
<i>Homeless students are attending school within one full day of attempting enrollment (with or without records/guardianship)?</i>				
Homeless students receive assistance in obtaining needed immunizations or medical records?				

(a) SCHOOL CHOICE	YES	NO	ACTION PLAN	TBC
Parents/students are informed about their options for school enrollment and allowed to enroll in either their school of origin or residential area school?				
School selection process is based on the best interest of the student and the wishes of the student and parent?				
<i>Students attend their school of origin for the duration of their homelessness when feasible and requested by the parent or youth?</i>				
<i>Students who become permanently housed attend their school of origin for the remainder of the school year when feasible and requested by the parent or youth?</i>				

(b) DISPUTE RESOLUTION	YES	NO	ACTION PLAN	TBC
The district has adopted the state's dispute resolution policy/process to resolve enrollment disputes?				
If a dispute arises over school choice, students are immediately enrolled in the school requested by the parent/student?				
If a dispute arises over school choice, written documentation (including information regarding the right to appeal) is provided to the parent or youth?				

III. SERVICES	YES	NO	ACTION PLAN	TBC
All homeless students are immediately enrolled in free breakfast and lunch programs?				
Homeless preschool-age children participate in public preschools (Head Start, Even Start, ECEAP, district-sponsored, etc.)?				
Homeless families and children receive referrals to services such as health care, mental health, dental, vision, and other appropriate services?				

III. SERVICES (cont'd)	YES	NO	ACTION PLAN	TBC
Transportation services are arranged to the selected school (including the school of origin)?				
Homeless students receive transportation services comparable to housed peers, e.g., afterschool programs, extracurricular activities, preschool, etc.?				
Once homeless eligibility is determined, transportation services are promptly provided?				
Established a formula/method for determining Title I, Part A set-aside?				
All homeless students automatically eligible to receive services provided under Title I?				
Title I, Part A plan includes description of services provided to homeless students, including services provided with Title I, Part A set-aside?				
When eligible, homeless students participate in:				
* Gifted and talented programs?				
* Limited English Proficiency programs?				
* Special education?				
* Vocational and technical education?				
Homeless parents are informed and provided opportunities to participate meaningfully in their children's education, e.g., parent trainings, teacher conferences, family read nights, etc.?				
Collaborate with community agencies to provide education-related services to homeless children?				

IV. DATA COLLECTION	YES	NO	ACTION PLAN	TBC
Established database (preschool and school-age students) to:				
* Count number of identified homeless students?				
* Collect student data and demographics?				
* Track academic programs and testing?				
Requested building liaisons be responsible for tracking various database elements for students in their building?				

V. GENERAL PROGRAM	YES	NO	ACTION PLAN	TBC
Policies and practices ensure that homeless children are not isolated or stigmatized?				
Reviewed and revised policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youth?				
Coordinate closely with other educational programs:				
* Title I?				
* Special education?				
* Migrant?				
* Preschool providers (Head Start, Even Start, ECEAP, district-sponsored, etc.)?				
Homeless students' WASL participation rates are at/above district average?				
<i>Homeless students' rates of meeting/exceeding WASL standards are at/above district average?</i>				
Homeless students' participation rates for district-level assessments are at/above district average?				
<i>Homeless students' district-level assessments scores are at/above district average?</i>				
<i>Homeless students' promotion rates to next grade level are at/above district average?</i>				
Homeless students' high school graduation rates are at/above district average?				

Needs Assessment for Homeless Children, Youth, and Families

BASIC NEEDS	Unaddressed	Partially Addressed	Well Addressed	Not a Need	ACTION PLAN	TBC
Free Breakfast and Lunch						
Food (outside of school)						
School Uniforms						
Clothing						
Hygiene Products						
Access to Showers						
Access to Laundry Facilities						
School Transportation						
Counseling Services						
Parent Trainings						
Medical Services						
Dental Services						
Vision Services						
Mentoring						
Case Management for Community Services						
Emergency Shelter						
Transitional Shelter						
Affordable Permanent Housing						
Other						

EDUC. NEEDS	Unaddressed	Partially Addressed	Well Addressed	Not a Need	ACTION PLAN	TBC
School Enrollment Assistance						
Preschool Availability						
School Supplies						
Tutoring						
Expedited evaluations for special education						
Activity Fees						
Before/Afterschool programs						
Summer School						
Parental Involvement						
Flexible Credit Programs						
Alternative Education Programs						
Other						

SOCIAL NEEDS	Unaddressed	Partially Addressed	Well Addressed	Not a Need	ACTION PLAN	TBC
Life Skills Training						
Child Care						
Job Skills Training						
Job Placement Assistance						
Transportation for jobs, services, and trainings						
Domestic Violence Intervention						
Child Abuse Intervention						
Substance Abuse Programs						
Teen Parenting Programs						
Other						

III GUIDANCE

Part II

Dear Teacher,

I'm sorry I'm always late to school. My dad lost his job and we've been living in a park. We used to have an alarm clock but we don't know where it is. My dad tries to make us feel better and tells us we're "camping". I don't want to tell him, but it's not very fun. I can't even do my homework cuz it gets so dark. I wish we could be normal again.

Love,
Amanda



Identification

Homeless Definition

Once again, homeless children and youth are individuals who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence. This definition includes children and youth living in:

- Emergency or transitional shelters.
- Motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds.
- Shared housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship (doubled-up).
- Hospitals secondary to abandonment or awaiting foster care placement.
- Cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or similar situations.
- Public or private places not ordinarily used as sleeping accommodations for human beings.

Migratory status, in itself, does not qualify children as homeless; migratory children must be living in the circumstances described above to meet the federal educational definition of homeless.³³

Application of the Definition

If a child or youth's living situation does not clearly fall into the situations described previously, then the LEA should refer to the McKinney-Vento definition of "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence" and consider the relative permanence of living arrangements. Determinations of homelessness should be made on a **case-by-case** basis. Note that children and youth who are already in foster care or incarcerated are NOT considered homeless.³⁴ Children **awaiting** foster care placement, however, are considered homeless and eligible for McKinney-Vento services.

A flow chart for determining homelessness according to the McKinney-Vento definition is included. The determination process consists of four steps. If the answer is unclear for determination Steps 1–3, check if Step 4 provides further clarification and/or seek advice from your peers, local liaison, attorney, state coordinator, or other appropriate individuals.

In order to make this flowchart especially useful and relevant to your local community, it is recommended to further define the following phrases:

- In Step 1, further define the phrase "awaiting foster care placement" by reviewing the DCFS subsequent section and seeking collaboration with child welfare officials, attorneys, and other community members to establish local guidelines.
- In Step 3, further define the term "substandard housing" by collaborating with attorneys and other community members to establish guidelines sensitive to community standards and cultural norms.

³³ McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B, Section 725(2).

³⁴ USDOE. (2004). *Education for homeless children and youth program: Non-regulatory guidance*. Washington, D.C.: Author, 31.



Awaiting Foster Care Placement

Although the McKinney-Vento Act clearly covers children and youth “awaiting foster care placement,” it does not specifically define this phrase. A draft memorandum released from NLCHP provides additional guidance in interpreting this term and is summarized in the following paragraphs.³⁵

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USHHS) regulations define “foster care” very broadly and the USHHS definition is as follows:

24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes.

Under this definition, virtually every child who is removed from home would be considered in foster care, regardless of the nature of the placement. Although USHHS’ broad definition of foster care fits perfectly within the purpose of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, it makes little sense in the context of the McKinney-Vento Act. Applying the USHHS’ definition to McKinney-Vento would render the statutory phrase “awaiting foster care placement” meaningless and therefore cannot be utilized in this setting.³⁶ Instead, the U.S. Department of Education’s (USDE) interpretation should focus on its primary goal of improving academic achievement within the context of the McKinney-Vento Act.

The Act does not apply to children who have achieved permanence in their living situations, but does apply to children and youth “who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” This general definition combined with the specific inclusion of children “awaiting foster care placement” must be interpreted as applying the McKinney-Vento Act to children in **any interim** placement. In general, interim placements include any living arrangement that is not intended to be long-term; instead, the social services agency intends these placements to be temporary while appropriate long-term accommodations are located. **Thus, children in interim placements are the population that should be considered to be “awaiting foster care placement” and are the ones who can benefit the most from the Act’s protections.**

The intended duration of a placement can be determined in several ways. Liaisons should be able to obtain this type of information from departments of social services/human services, local juvenile/family courts, court-appointed attorneys/advocates, and other personnel involved in the child’s case. Reference to the child’s permanency plan can also be helpful. Due to the nature of social service placements, it is often difficult to predict how long a child will remain in a placement or determine if the placement is temporary or permanent in nature. However, until a

³⁵ NLCHP. (2003). “*Awaiting Foster Care Placement*” under the McKinney-Vento Act. Washington, D.C.: Author.

³⁶ It is a well-established canon of construction that a statute cannot be interpreted in such a way as to render statutory language meaningless. (Canons of construction are established legal rules for interpreting statutory language.)

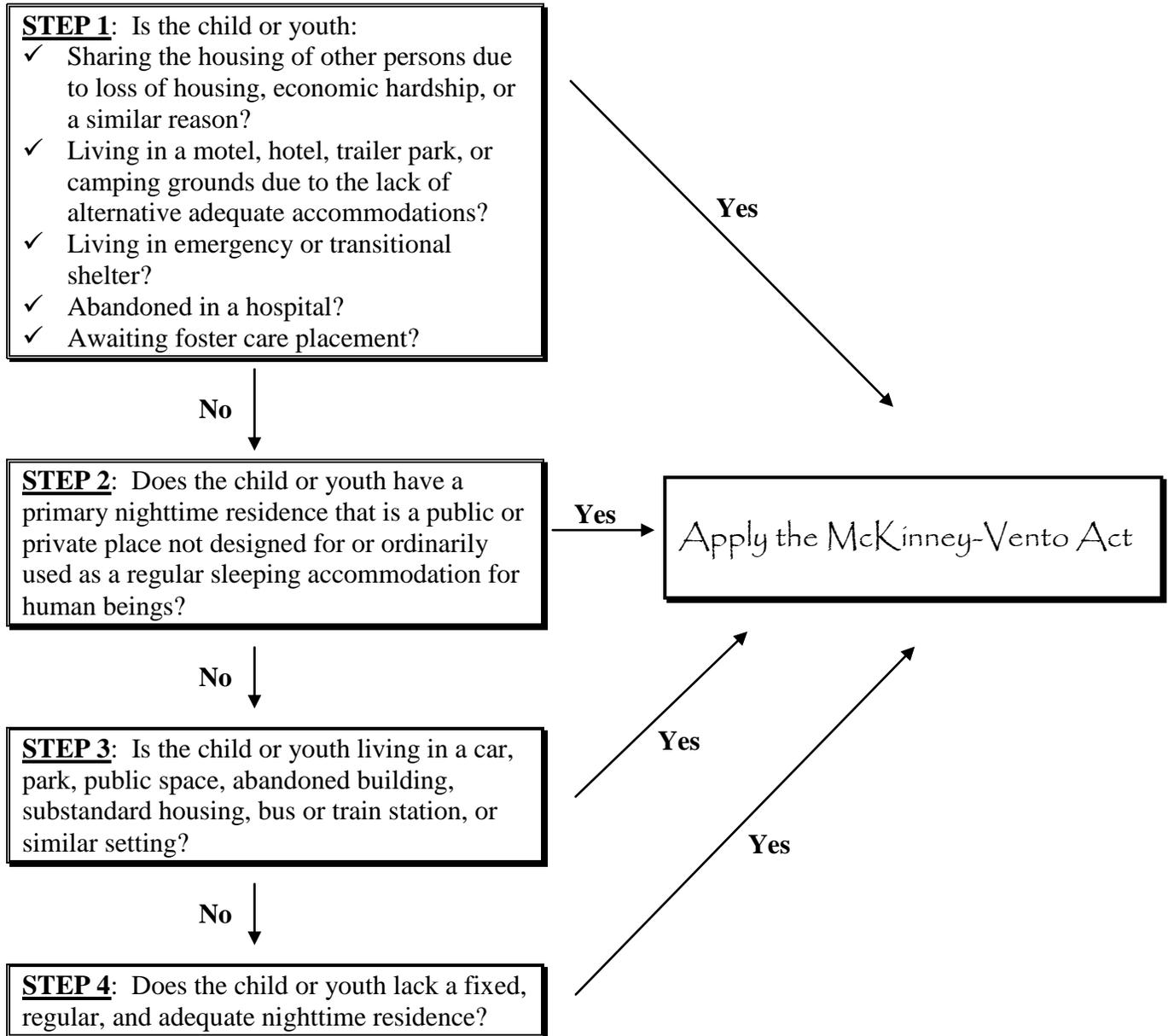
determination is made that the child's placement is appropriate and is intended to be long-term, the child should be considered to be awaiting foster care placement.

Like all cases of McKinney-Vento eligibility, determinations of whether a child is awaiting foster care placement should be made on a case-by-case basis. The following guidelines, however, can assist in individual case determinations:

- The phrase “awaiting foster care placement” is likely to include children in the following types of placements:
 - ✓ Shelters.
 - ✓ Emergency/interim/short-term foster homes.
 - ✓ Group homes and residential placements that are not intended to be long-term.
 - ✓ Evaluation centers or placements for the sole purpose of evaluation.

- Placements that are unlikely to be covered by the McKinney-Vento Act include:
 - ✓ Long-term foster homes.
 - ✓ Pre-adoptive foster homes.
 - ✓ Long-term kinship care.
 - ✓ Group homes and residential placements, if a determination has been made that the placement is appropriate and long-term.

DETERMINING HOMELESSNESS



Adapted from "Determining Homelessness by the Definition," 2003 Annual Meeting of State Coordinators for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.

Title I

Key Provisions Relating to Homelessness:³⁷

- As Title I funding is used to improve the academic performance of children in poverty, a homeless child attending any school in a district receiving Title I money is **automatically eligible** for Title I services.
- LEAs are required to set aside funds necessary to provide services to homeless students in non-Title I schools that are **comparable** to those received by children in Title I schools.
- Any LEA receiving Title I funds must file a plan with OSPI that is coordinated with the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Each LEA Title I plan must include a description of services that will be provided to homeless children, including services provided with the Title I, Part A set-aside.

Strategies for Using Title I Funds:

- Establish a method for determining mandatory Title I, Part A set-asides for homeless children and youth. Here are four suggested methods for allocating set-asides:³⁸
 - (1) *Identify the needs of homeless students and fund accordingly.* Figure out how much it costs to pay for the services that homeless children in your district need and reserve that amount.
 - (2) *Obtain a count of homeless students and multiply by Title I, Part A per-pupil allocation.* This method requires an accurate count of the homeless students in your district. If a precise number is not available, surveying your staff or researching community estimates are alternatives.
 - (3) *Reserve an amount of funds greater than or equal to the amount of your McKinney-Vento sub-grant request.* If you're applying for a sub-grant, this method may be considered.
 - (4) *Reserve a specific percentage based on your district's poverty level or total Title I, Part A allocation.* If a homeless student count is unavailable and you're not applying for a sub-grant, this method is also possible. As an example, districts might reserve between 1 and 5 percent of its total Title I, Part A allocation, depending on the poverty level in your district. The higher the poverty level, the higher the reservation percentage.
- Collaborate with your Title I Coordinator to reserve additional Title I funds to serve homeless children in all schools, not just non-Title I schools.
- Pool Title I and McKinney-Vento funds to efficiently provide comprehensive programs for children at-risk of academic failure.
- Effectively use Title I funds (including set-aside) to provide educational support by:
 - ✓ Supporting the position of a full-time district liaison.

³⁷ NAEHCY, NCHE, NCH, NLCHP, & NN4Y. (2002). *Title I and Homelessness*. McKinney-Vento 2001—Law into Practice. A copy of this brief can be found in the appendix of the Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit. <http://www.serve.org/nche>

³⁸ Four Methods for Determining New Mandatory Title I, Part A Set-Aside for Homeless Children. (November 2003). *No Child Left Behind Financial Compliance Insider*. New York: Brownstone Publishers, 1–2. A copy of this article can be found in the appendix of the Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit. <http://www.serve.org/nche>

- ✓ Hiring tutors, aides, and special teachers to provide supplemental instruction. (For example, districts will use roving tutors to provide services to all schools or collaborate with shelters to offer shelter-based tutoring programs.)
- ✓ Covering the cost of before-school, afterschool, summer school, and other academic enrichment programs.
- ✓ Planning meaningful activities to involve parents in their children's education, e.g., Family Read Nights.
- ✓ Providing transportation to involve parents in their children's education, e.g., parent conferences, Back-to-School Nights, PTA meetings, school events, etc.
- ✓ Paying for activity fees that allow students to participate more fully in school, e.g., class fees, ASB cards (access to athletic events, school dances, and other school events), cap and gown fees, testing fees, yearbooks, field trips, etc.
- ✓ Meeting the basic needs of homeless students not otherwise provided by community donations or other state/federal programs.
- ✓ Meeting the educational needs of homeless students not otherwise provided by community donations or other state/federal programs, e.g., school supplies, expedited special education evaluations, preschool services, procuring necessary enrollment documentation such as birth certificates, etc.

Strategies for Facilitating Collaboration between Title I and McKinney-Vento:

- Ensure collaboration between Title I coordinators and district liaisons in developing Title I plans.
- Ensure that district homeless liaisons attend Title I conferences and Title I directors attend homeless education conferences.
- Share Title I and homeless education handbooks with each program.
- Communicate regularly to discuss impact of services, needs of homeless students, and program improvements.

IDEA: A Special Needs Update

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) was reauthorized in December 2004 and now includes new provisions regarding the special education needs of homeless children and youth. NAEHCY, NLCHP, and the ABA Center on Children and Law have prepared summaries of the recently reauthorized IDEA.³⁹ Summary highlights are presented below:

Definition and Identification

- IDEA contains a definition of homeless children that includes any children or youth considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

³⁹ NAEHCY, NLCHP. (2005). *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Reauthorization 2004 at a Glance*. www.nlchp.org; NAEHCY, ABA Center on Children and the Law. *IDEA 2004: Nuts and Bolts of Homeless and Foster Care/Ward of the State Provisions*. www.naehcy.org

- IDEA's **child find** provisions now specifically includes homeless children with in its requirement for child find that children with disabilities experiencing homelessness are identified, located, and evaluated.

Evaluations and IEPs

- IDEA 2004 now requires LEAs to complete initial evaluations within 60 days of receiving a parent's consent for evaluation or within timeframes established by the State.
 - ✓ IDEA allows extensions of the evaluation timeline when:
 - A school receives transfer students who were in the middle of the evaluation process prior to changing schools. In order to qualify for this extension, the new school must make sufficient progress toward completing the evaluation and the parents must agree to the new timeframe.
 - ✓ When assisting students who transfer between school districts in an academic year, new districts must coordinate their evaluation efforts with previous school districts in order to ensure prompt completion of the process.
- School districts must promptly provide special education services when children with IEPs change school districts during the course of a school year. Districts must provide services comparable to those described in the previous IEP, in consultation with parents, until the previous IEP is adopted or a new IEP is developed.
 - ✓ Enrolling school districts are required to immediately request records from previous schools and previous schools must immediately send requested records (already required in state law WAC 28A.225.330).
 - ✓ Transition planning is now required to begin no later than age 16 and appropriate measurable postsecondary goals must be specified.

Unaccompanied Youth Issues

- LEAs must make reasonable efforts to appoint surrogate parents for unaccompanied homeless youth with special needs within 30 days of determining a need for a surrogate parent. In addition, included in the proposed USDE regulations related to the 2004 revised version of the Individuals with Disabilities Education act (IDEA), when appropriate, staff members of emergency shelters, transitional shelters, independent living programs, and street outreach programs may be appointed as *temporary* surrogates. Please note that the final regulations from USDE regarding temporary surrogacy have not yet been issued, however, schools and youth advocacy agencies may wish to proactively prepare for and explore the possibilities surrounding this type of support system for unaccompanied youth.

Parental Decision Making For Wards of the State

- When a child is a ward of the state and is not residing with the child's parent, the LEA shall make reasonable efforts to obtain informed consent from the parent for the initial evaluation. However, IDEA does not require parental consent for an initial evaluation if the parent cannot be found or the parent's rights have been terminated.

Services

- LEAs are now allowed to reserve up to 15 percent of federal IDEA Part B funds to develop and implement early intervening services for K–12 students (with emphasis on K–3) who have not yet been identified for special education but who need additional academic and behavioral support.

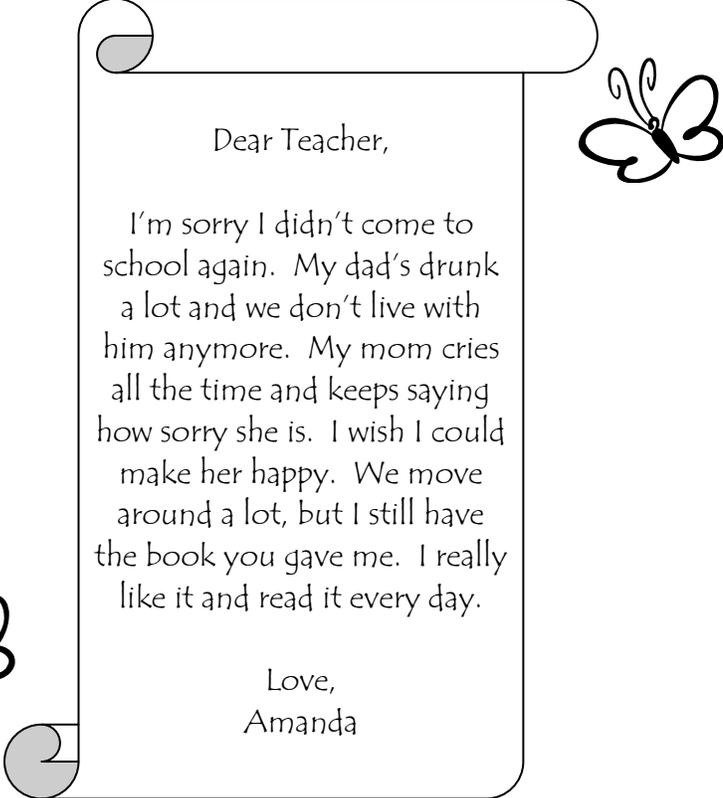
Infants and Toddlers (0–3): IDEA Part C

- Any state receiving an IDEA Part C grant must make early intervention services available to infants and toddlers with disabilities who are homeless and their families and wards of the state.
- States are required to meaningfully involve homeless families and wards of the state in the planning and implementation of their special education programs for infants and toddlers.

Coordination/Compliance with McKinney-Vento

- States are required to ensure that the requirements of McKinney-Vento are met for all children with disabilities in homeless situations in their state.
- IDEA now requires states to include state and local McKinney-Vento personnel on the State Advisory Panel and Interagency Coordinating Councils.

IV RESOURCES



Dear Teacher,

I'm sorry I didn't come to school again. My dad's drunk a lot and we don't live with him anymore. My mom cries all the time and keeps saying how sorry she is. I wish I could make her happy. We move around a lot, but I still have the book you gave me. I really like it and read it every day.

Love,
Amanda

McKinney-Vento Overview

The following McKinney-Vento overview was prepared by Barbara Duffield of NAECHY.
A version of the PowerPoint file can be found on OSPI's Web site
(www.k12.wa.us/HomelessEd).

How many children and youth experience homelessness?

- 1.35 million children
- 10 percent of all children living in poverty
- 733,000-1.3 million youths
- Over 40 percent of all children who are homeless are under the age of 5



Barriers to Education for Children and Youth in Homeless Situations

- Enrollment requirements (residency, school records, immunizations, legal guardianship)
- High mobility resulting in lack of school stability and education continuity
- Lack of access to programs
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of school supplies, clothing, etc.
- Poor health, fatigue, hunger
- Prejudice and misunderstanding

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

- Reauthorized 2002 as part of NCLB
- Educational achievement and accountability
 - School stability
 - Awareness of educational rights
 - Child-centered, best interest decision making
 - Services for preschool-aged children and unaccompanied youth
 - Central role of the **local homeless liaison**

Definition of Homeless

- Children who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence—**
- Sharing the housing of others
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters
 - Abandoned in hospitals

Definition of Homeless

- Awaiting foster care placement
- Living in a public or private place not designed for sleeping
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, etc.
- Migratory living in circumstances described above



School Selection—Key Provisions

- Children and youth experiencing homelessness can stay in their school of origin or enroll in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend, according to their best interest.
- School of origin—school attended when permanently housed or in which last enrolled.
- Best interest—keep students who are homeless in their school of origin, to the extent feasible, unless against the parents' or guardians' wishes.

McKinney-Vento Overview

School Selection—Key Provisions

- Students can stay in their school of origin the entire time they are homeless, and until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing.
- If a student is sent to a school other than that requested by a parent or guardian, the district must provide a written explanation to the parent or guardian of its decision and the right to appeal.

What the research tells us about school mobility:

- Students who switch schools frequently score lower on standardized tests (study found mobile students scored 20 points lower than non-mobile students).
- Mobility also hurts non-mobile students (study found average test scores for non-mobile students were significantly lower in high schools with high student mobility rates).
- It takes children 4–6 months to recover academically after changing schools.

What the research tells us about school mobility:

- Students suffer psychologically, socially, and academically from mobility; mobile students are less likely to participate in extracurricular activities and more likely to act out or get into trouble.
- Mobility during high school greatly diminishes likelihood of graduation (study found students who changed high schools even once were less than half as likely as stable students to graduate, even controlling for other factors).

Transportation—Key Provisions

- LEAs must provide students experiencing homelessness with transportation to and from their school of origin, at a parent's or guardian's request (or at the liaison's request for unaccompanied youth).
- If the student's temporary residence and the school of origin are in the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation. If the student is living outside of the school of origin's LEA, the LEA where the student is living and the school of origin's LEA must determine how to divide the responsibility and share the cost, or they must share the cost equally.

Transportation—Key Provisions

- In addition to providing transportation to the school of origin, LEAs must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.

Enrollment—Key Provisions

- Children and youth in homeless situations can stay in their school of origin (to the extent feasible) or enroll in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend.
- The terms "enroll" and "enrollment" include attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

McKinney-Vento Overview



Enrollment—Key Provisions

- Children and youth have the right to enroll in school immediately, even if they do not have required documents, such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documents.
- If a student does not have immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the liaison must immediately assist in obtaining them, and the student must be enrolled in the interim.

Enrollment—Key Provisions

- Enrolling schools must obtain school records from the previous school, and students must be enrolled in school while records are obtained.
- Schools must maintain records for students who are homeless so they are available quickly.
- Federal law supercedes state and local laws where there is a conflict. [U.S. Constitution, Article VI]
- SEAs and LEAs must develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to enrollment and retention of children and youth in homeless situations.

Resolution of Disputes—Key Provisions

- Every state must establish dispute resolution procedures.
- When a dispute over enrollment arises, the student must be immediately admitted to the school of choice while the dispute is being resolved.
- Liaisons must ensure unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled while the dispute is being resolved.

Resolution of Disputes—Key Provisions

- Whenever a dispute arises, the parent or guardian must be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision, including the right to appeal.
- The school must refer the child, youth, parent or guardian to the liaison to carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.

Unaccompanied Youth—Key Provisions

- Liaisons must help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school, after considering the youth's wishes, and inform the youth of his or her appeal rights.
- School personnel must be made aware of the specific needs of runaway and homeless youth.

Preschool-Aged Children

- Liaisons must ensure that families and children receive Head Start, Even Start, and other public preschool programs.
- State plans must describe procedures that ensure that children have access to preschool programs.
- U.S. HHS issued a memo describing how Head Start grantees should collaborate and adjust their programs to serve homeless children.

McKinney-Vento Overview

Access to Services

- Students who experience homelessness must have access to educational services for which they are eligible, including special education, programs for English learners, gifted and talented programs, voc./tech. programs, and school nutrition programs.
- Undocumented children and youth have the same right to attend public school as U.S. citizens and are covered by the McKinney-Vento Act to the same extent as other children and youth. [Plyler v. Doe]

Access to Services

- USDA policy permits liaisons and shelter directors to obtain free school meals for students by providing a list of names of students experiencing homelessness with effective dates.
- The 2004 reauthorization of IDEA includes amendments that reinforce timely assessment, inclusion, and continuity of services for children and youth who are homeless and have disabilities.



Segregation

- States are prohibited from segregating homeless students in separate schools, separate programs within schools, or separate settings within schools.
- SEAs and LEAs must adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youth are not segregated on the basis of their status as homeless, or stigmatized.
- Services provided with McKinney-Vento Act funds must not replace the regular academic program and must be designed to expand upon or improve services provided as part of the school's regular academic program.

Title I and Homelessness—Key Provisions

- A child or youth who is homeless and is attending any school in the district is automatically eligible for Title I Part A services.
- LEAs must reserve (or set aside) funds as are necessary to provide services comparable to those provided to children in Title I Part A schools to serve homeless children who do not attend participating schools, including providing educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where children may live.

Title I—Types of Services for Homeless Students

- Services for homeless students in both Title I and non-Title I schools comparable to those provided to non-homeless students in Title I schools.
- Services that are not ordinarily provided to other Title I students and that are not available from other sources.



What We're All About—

"...Through it all, school is probably the only thing that has kept me going. I know that every day that I walk in those doors, I can stop thinking about my problems for the next six hours and concentrate on what is most important to me. Without the support of my school system, I would not be as well off as I am today. School keeps me motivated to move on, and encourages me to find a better life for myself."

Carrie Arnold, LeTendre Scholar, 2002

Common Signs of Homelessness

Adapted from flyers developed by National Center for Homeless Education (Local Homeless Liaison Toolkit), Illinois Department of Education, and Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Lack of Continuity in Education

- Attendance at many different schools
- Lack of records for school enrollment
- Inability to pay fees
- Gaps in skill development

Poor Health/Nutrition

- Lack of immunizations and/or immunization records
- Unmet medical and dental needs
- Chronic hunger (may hoard food)
- Fatigue (may fall asleep in class)

Transportation and Attendance Problems

- Erratic attendance and/or tardiness
- Numerous absences
- Inability to contact parents
- Lack of participation in extracurricular activities

Poor Hygiene

- Lack of clean clothes or wearing the same clothes for several days
- Poor or inconsistent personal hygiene

Lack of Class Preparation

- Incomplete or missing homework
- Lack of basic school supplies
- Concern for safety of belongings

Social and Behavioral Cues

- Change in behavior
- Poor/short attention span
- Poor self-esteem
- Difficulty trusting people
- "Old" beyond years
- Protective of parents
- Need for immediate gratification

Reactions by Parent, Guardian, or Child

- Anger or embarrassment when asked about current address
- Mention of staying with grandparents, other relatives, friends, or in a motel
- Comments such as:
 - ✓ "I don't remember the name of our previous school."
 - ✓ "We've been moving around a lot."
 - ✓ "Our address is new; I can't remember it." (may hide lack of permanent address)
 - ✓ "We're going through a bad time right now."

Five in Five

5

five-minute

ways

you



can



help

students

experiencing

homelessness...

Five in Five

5 five-minute ways you can help students experiencing homelessness...



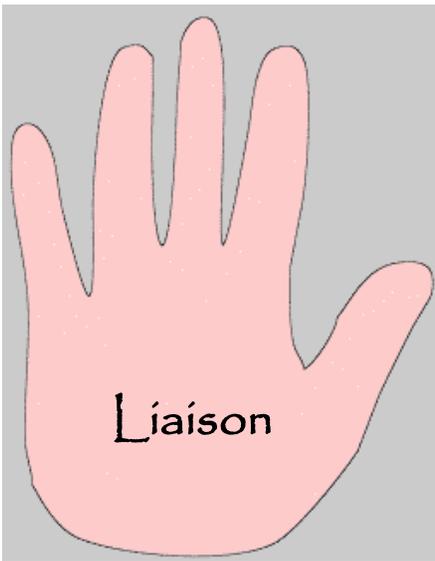
1. Welcome new students and their parents.
2. Together with your district homeless liaison, appoint a building homeless liaison for your school.
3. Ask your staff how you can support their efforts in serving homeless students.
4. Provide city bus tokens or arrange rides for parents to attend conferences, school events, or PTA meetings.
5. Together with your building liaison, develop relationships with local shelters, motels, food banks, soup kitchens, etc.



1. Be familiar with the signs of homelessness.
2. Refer children that you identify to your transportation coordinator (for further referral to the district liaison).
3. Arrange your route so that homeless students are picked up first and dropped off last.
4. If route rearrangement is not feasible, choose convenient, nonstigmatizing bus stops, e.g., a street corner versus a shelter's front entrance.
5. Warmly greet students and be sensitive to their current housing situation.

Five in Five

5 five-minute ways you can help students experiencing homelessness...



1. Enroll students in the free and reduced school meal program. (See Guidance for new, simplified guidelines.)
2. Provide students with school supplies, including class-specific items and backpacks.
3. Supply students with appropriate school clothing, including school uniforms when applicable.
4. Connect students to before- and afterschool programs or activities.
5. Check in with families every 2–3 weeks and ask what support or resources they need.



1. Be familiar with the signs of homelessness and refer children that you identify to your school or district liaison.
2. Remember that sending a sick child “home” may not be the best option. Assist families in finding alternative choices.
3. Work with your building or district liaison to identify the health needs of your homeless student population.
4. Coordinate with local optometrists to provide free eye exams and eyeglasses.
5. Collaborate with community clinics and local health providers to provide free immunizations, medical care, and dental care.

Five in Five

5 five-minute ways you can help students experiencing homelessness...



1. Be familiar with the signs of homelessness and refer children that you identify to your school or district liaison.
2. Learn to recognize the addresses of area shelters and low-income motels.
3. Bring families to a private place to fill out enrollment forms and offer assistance in filling out forms.
4. Enroll children immediately, even without records. If records are missing, contact previous school for records.
5. If a student is leaving, prepare a parent pack (folder containing photocopies of the student's academic and health records).



1. Be familiar with the signs of homelessness and refer children that you identify to your school or district liaison.
2. Assign a peer buddy to orient new students to the classroom and to the school.
3. Provide students with personal space for belongings (e.g., cubbie or locker). Avoid taking away possessions. (Children in unstable situations often find "security" in their possessions.)
4. Communicate with parents regarding school performance.
5. Coordinate with your liaison to connect students to tutoring or afterschool programs.

Resource Listing

Advocacy, Research, and Tools

Homeless Education

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)

www.naehcy.org 763.545.0064 info@naehcy.org

NAEHCY, a national grassroots membership association, serves as the voice and the social conscience for the education of children and youth in homeless situations. NAEHCY connects educators, parents, advocates, researchers, and service providers to ensure school enrollment and attendance, and overall success for children and youth whose lives have been disrupted by the lack of safe, permanent, and adequate housing. NAEHCY offers educational resources, legislative updates, and national conferences on homeless education.

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)

www.serve.org/nche 800.308.2145 (helpline) homeless@serve.org (helpline email)

NCHE provides research, resources, and information enabling communities to address the educational needs of children experiencing homelessness. The center offers numerous resources for educators, including the Homeless Liaison Toolkit, educational rights posters, parent brochures, parent pack folders, and McKinney-Vento issue briefs. Educators may annually order up to 25 of most NCHE products (at no charge) online, by phone, or by fax.

U.S. Department of Education (USDOE)

www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/guidance.pdf

Federal non-regulatory guidance on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act), July 2004.

Homelessness and Housing

National Center on Family Homelessness

www.familyhomelessness.org 617.964.3834

The National Center on Family Homelessness is dedicated to helping homeless children and families through research and evaluation, program design, service delivery, systems integration, and advocacy. The Center works closely with shelters, children and families, service providers, researchers, advocates, and policymakers to develop immediate and long-term services and solutions. Their goal is to permanently end homelessness for all families in America.

National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH)

www.nationalhomeless.org

NCH's mission is to end homelessness by engaging in public education, policy advocacy, and grassroots organization. NCH publishes a variety of information on homelessness including fact sheets, reports and papers, and legislative updates.

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP)

www.nlchp.org 202.638.2535

The mission of the Law Center is to prevent and end homelessness by serving as the legal arm of the nationwide movement to end homelessness. To achieve its mission, the Law Center pursues three main strategies: impact litigation, policy advocacy, and public education. NLCHP offers numerous publications and reports in the areas of education, housing, domestic violence, and income.

Washington Low-Income Housing Alliance

www.wliha.org 206.442.9455

The Alliance advocates for improved state housing policies and seeks to expand funding for the state Housing Trust Fund. The Alliance also works to improve tenant protections and other policies that will increase the availability and security of housing for low-income people. In addition, the agency works with statewide groups and local coalitions to make sure public policy is informed by housing providers and those who are experiencing housing need.

Washington State Coalition for the Homeless

www.endhomelessnesswa.org 253.572.4237 wsch@earthlink.net

Dedicated to ensuring that everyone has access to shelter, the Coalition trains, educates, and advocates with and on behalf of individuals and families who are homeless in Washington State. The Coalition is comprised of representatives elected by their county coalitions as well as service providers, agencies, legislators, and business leaders.

Literacy

National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)

www.familit.org 877.326.5481 (info. line)

The Center's mission is to create educational and economic opportunity for the most at-risk children and parents. NCFL works with educators and community builders through an array of services to design and sustain programs that meet the most urgent educational needs of disadvantaged families. NCFL's services include professional development for practitioners, model program development, and policy and advocacy support to sustain and expand literacy services for families.

Nutrition

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)

www.frac.org 202.986.2200

FRAC is a nonprofit agency seeking to harness the nation's resources on behalf of those who are least able to provide for themselves. FRAC's activities include research, education, legislative monitoring, and program support. Fact sheets regarding federal food programs are available online.

Youth

National Network for Youth

www.nn4youth.org 202.783.7949 info@NN4Youth.org

The mission of the Network is to champion the needs of runaway, homeless, and other disconnected youth through advocacy, education, and services. The National Network is committed to ensuring that opportunities for growth and development be available to youth who face greater odds due to abuse and neglect, homelessness, lack of resources, community prejudice, differing abilities, and other life challenges.

Child Care

DSHS, Working Connections Child Care

<https://www2.wa.gov/dshs/onlinecso/WCCC.asp>

For families with working parents (or participating in DSHS-approved work activity) and whose children meet citizenship requirements, Working Connections Child Care helps families pay for child care. Applications are available online or through local Community Services Offices.

Clothing

Assistance League/Operation School Bell

www.assistanceleague.org

Operation School Bell provides new clothing, including jackets and shoes, to over one million elementary school children. Volunteers fit children and help them select clothing from inventory purchased through vigorous fundraising. Washington Chapters managing Operation School Bell include Bellingham, Eastside (Bellevue, Lake Washington, and Northshore), Everett, Seattle, and Southwest Washington.

Domestic Violence

DSHS, Domestic Violence Program

www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/victimservices/dvicservbut1.asp 800.562.6025 (State DV Hotline)

DSHS administers state and federal funding for domestic violence shelter and advocacy services. The Domestic Violence Victim Services Program contracts with 44 domestic violence shelter

agencies and 12 nonshelter based agencies throughout the State of Washington. (List of agencies is available online.) DSHS also contracts for the statewide domestic violence hotline program and for statewide technical assistance and training services from the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (www.wscadv.org).

Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP sites)

http://www.cted.wa.gov/portal/alias__CTED/lang__en/tabID__233/DesktopDefault.aspx

ECEAP is a statewide system of comprehensive early childhood education and assistance services to support the healthy development and future success of less advantaged children. ECEAP targets four-year old children whose family incomes are at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty level. ECEAP has 231 program sites statewide and operates locally through 33 contractors—school districts, educational service districts, local governments, nonprofit organizations, childcare providers, community colleges, and tribal organizations.

Head Start

www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/about/index.htm

Head Start and Early Head Start are comprehensive child development programs that serve children from birth to age 5, pregnant women, and their families. They are child-focused programs and have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families. An online tool is available to search for Head Start programs by specific type or geographical location (www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsweb/index.jsp#HS).

Emergency Shelter and Housing Assistance

Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED)

www.cted.wa.gov

CTED shelter assistance program supports a network of 172 community-based emergency shelters in Washington State. The Emergency Shelter Assistance Program Report details outcomes of these programs and is available online (<http://housing-information.net/report>).

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

www.liheapwa.org 360.725.2866 liheap@cted.wa.gov

LIHEAP provides funds to help low income households make home heating more affordable, avoid shutoff of utility services during the winter, and maintain a warm, safe, and healthy environment for households with young children, the elderly, and the disabled. Both energy assistance and weatherization services are offered. Applications are available at local agencies (list available online).

Food

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/CACFP/aboutcacfp.htm

CACFP provides federal funds for healthy meals and snacks served in a variety of child care settings, e.g., Head Start, child care centers, day care homes, afterschool programs, and emergency shelters (including homeless, runaway, and domestic violence). To be eligible, a sponsor must be a licensed or approved child care provider or a public or nonprofit private school which provides organized child care programs for children during off-school hours.

Regarding participant eligibility:

- Children age 12 and younger are eligible to receive up to two meals and one snack daily at a child care home or center. Migrant children age 15 and younger and persons with disabilities of any age are also eligible.
- Afterschool snacks are available to children through age 18.
- Homeless shelters may be reimbursed for up to three meals each day for resident children age 18 and younger. **The 2004 Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act recently raised the age limit from a maximum age of 12 to the current age limit of 18.**

To apply, please contact Carol Griffith, OSPI Child and Adult Care Food Program Supervisor by phone (360.725.6200) or by email (griffith@ospi.wednet.edu).

DSHS, Washington Basic Food Program (Food Stamp Program)

https://wws2.wa.gov/dshs/onlinecs/Food_Assistance_Program.asp

The Basic Food Program helps low-income individuals and families obtain a more nutritious diet by supplementing their income with Basic Food benefits. Regarding eligibility:

- Youth who live in a shelter or entirely alone should be able to apply for benefits on their own. Their parents' income should not be used in determining eligibility. If youth are living in a shelter, service providers may assist them by providing letters to bring to local community services offices.
- Homeless people living in shelters are eligible for food stamps, even if the shelter provides meals. The food stamp office has special rules that allow homeless families to receive food stamps, even if they lack photo identification or a regular address.

Applications are available online (<https://wws2.wa.gov/dshs/onlineapp>) or through local DSHS Community Services Offices.

Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP)

http://cted.wa.gov/portal/alias__CTED/lang__en/tabID__271/DesktopDefault.aspx

EFAP provides funding, technical assistance, and information to community and tribal programs that deliver emergency food services to hungry people in Washington State. A list of service contractors is available online.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Afterschool Snack Program

www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Afterschool

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) now offers cash reimbursement to help schools serve snacks to children after the regular school day. For eligibility, a school district must run the NSLP and sponsor or operate the afterschool care program that provides children with regularly scheduled educational/enrichment activities in a supervised environment. To apply, please contact either the school food service director in your district or OSPI's Child Care Food Program Supervisor, Carol Griffith (360.725.6200, griffith@ospi.wednet.edu).

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer

SFSP provides free meals and snacks to low-income children through age 18 when school is not in session. (People over age 18 who are enrolled in school programs for persons with disabilities may also participate.) Regarding eligibility:

- Local governments, school districts, and nonprofits can sponsor program sites.
- Possible site locations include schools, parks, recreation centers, housing projects, migrant centers, Indian reservations, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, houses of worship, summer camps, and others.
- Most sites are open to all community children. These "open sites" are eligible for federal funds if the site is located in an area in which at least 50 percent of the children are from households that would be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. (Two primary sources of data that may be used to determine eligibility are school or census data.)
- Other sites serve only children enrolled in their programs. These "enrolled sites" are eligible for federal funds to serve all the children enrolled in the program if at least 50 percent of the enrolled children can be documented to qualify for free or reduced-price school meals.
- Most program sites can provide up to two meals (breakfast and lunch or breakfast and dinner) or one meal and a snack. Sites that serve migrant children and certain summer camps can serve up to three meals per day, but operate under different eligibility rules.

Grant Sources

Diverse Needs

Gates Foundation, Pacific Northwest Community Grants

www.gatesfoundation.org

The Pacific Northwest Community Grants program supports nonprofit organizations in Washington and Oregon that provide direct human services to economically vulnerable children and families. These services include, but are not limited to: domestic violence, parenting programs, child care, substance abuse treatment, job training, youth leadership/civic involvement, mentoring, mental health services, and afterschool programs. The majority of grants are made to support capital campaigns and specific projects, although the Foundation occasionally provides general operating support to Washington State nonprofit organizations only. Directions for submitting a Letter of Inquiry can be found on the Foundation's Web site.

Medina Foundation

www.medinafoundation.org 206.652.8783 info@medinafoundation.org

The Foundation makes grants to 501(c)(3) organizations and 509(a) public charities in the following funding areas: preschool to Grade 12 educational opportunities (tutoring, mentoring, but does not fund public schools directly), emergency and critical human services, job training, substance abuse prevention and treatment, domestic violence prevention and assistance, and services for those with disabilities. Funding is available in the following Greater Puget Sound counties: Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, and Whatcom.

Ray of Hope Foundation

www.rayallenfoundation.com

The Foundation's foremost priority is to help Washington's and Connecticut's citizens through nonprofit organizations. Grant applications are due by June 30. Application guidelines and procedures are available on the Foundation's Web site.

Windermere Foundation

www.windermere.com 206.527.3801

The Windermere Foundation distributes funds to nonprofit agencies dedicated to serving homeless and low-income families. Public schools with at least a 50 percent student population on free and reduced-priced meals are also eligible to apply for funding. A significant portion of Windermere Foundation dollars goes toward programs that help children. Establishing and funding literacy programs, underwriting the costs of summer camp, and providing basic necessities such as new school shoes, socks, and underwear are among the many projects that the Foundation supports.

Literacy

The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy

www.barbarabushfoundation.com

The Foundation's grant-making program seeks to develop or expand projects that are designed to support the development of literacy skills for adult primary care givers and their children. Applying organizations must have been in existence two or more years and must have operated an instructional literacy program for at least two years which includes one or more of the following components: literacy for adults, parent education, pre-literacy or literacy instruction for children preschool to Grade 3, and intergenerational literacy activities. The application deadline for the 2006 National Grant Competition is September 9, 2005. Grant application and guidelines can be accessed on the Foundation's Web site.

First Book

www.firstbook.org

First Book is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to give low-income children the opportunity to read and own their first new books. Organized to distribute books through local

advisory boards, First Book grants an initial donation of free books to new boards. Subsequently, First Book provides ongoing national grant-matching opportunities to support local fundraising and offers deeply discounted book prices through its partners, at an average cost of \$2.50 per book.

Reach Out and Read (ROR)

www.reachoutandread.org 617.629.8042 startup@reachoutandread.org

ROR is a program that promotes early literacy by bringing new books and advice about the importance of reading aloud into the pediatric exam room. Doctors and nurses give new books to children at each well child visit from 6 months of age to 5 years, and accompany these books with developmentally-appropriate advice to parents about reading aloud with their child. The ROR program model is based on research that shows a connection between the frequency of sharing books with babies, toddlers, and young children and enhanced language development. The ROR Web site also provides a listing of established programs by state and information on starting a program. Program benefits include start-up funding to aid in book purchasing, access to children's books at great discounts, materials such as stickers, bookmarks, poster, technical assistance, and training sessions.

Target Foundation, Reading Grants

http://target.com/target_group/community_giving/arts_in_education_grants.jhtml

Reading Grants award funds to schools, libraries, and nonprofit organizations with programs promoting a love of reading or encouraging families to read together (particular focus on programs that inspire the youngest readers—birth through Grade 3). Examples of Reading Grants are Saturday Superstars Book Club, Readers for Life, After School Read Aloud, and Families Read Together. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$3,000. Applications are available at Target stores and online at Target.com. 2006 grants will be accepted March 1 through May 31, 2006. Applications will be reviewed as they are received; therefore, early submission is encouraged. Funding decisions will be communicated no later than September 30, 2006.

Health

Healthy Kids Now!

www.healthykidsnow.net 877.543.7669

Healthy Kids Now is a campaign and hotline designed to enroll Washington's uninsured, low-income children and teenagers residing in the state's two main children's medical programs, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

National Health Care for the Homeless Council

www.nhchc.org 615.226.2292

The mission of the National Council is to help bring about reform of the health care system to best serve the needs of people who are homeless, to work in alliance with others whose broader purpose is to eliminate homelessness, and to provide support to Council members through advocacy, training, research, education, and collaboration.

Job Training

Job Corps

<http://jobcorps.doleta.gov> 800.733.JOBS

Job Corps centers provide youth ages 16–24 with room and board, health care, a monthly allowance, and an education and job training program free of charge. Currently, local centers include:

- (1) Cascades Job Corps Center (Sedro-Woolley, Washington)
360.854.3400
- (2) Columbia Basin Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (Moses Lake, Washington)
509.779.6053
- (3) Curlew Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (Curlew, Washington)
509.779.4611
- (4) Fort Simcoe Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center (White Swan, Washington)
509.874.2244

WorkFirst (TANF)

www.workfirst.wa.gov/index.htm

WorkFirst is Washington State's welfare reform program that provides temporary assistance to needy families. Services are available to help obtain jobs, retain jobs, and build better lives for families. Applications are available online (<https://wws2.wa.gov/dshs/onlineapp>) or through local DSHS Community Services Offices.

Scholarships

Pacific Northwest Scholarship Guide-Online

www.collegeplan.org/cpnow/pnwguide/pnwguide.htm

The Scholarship Guide is an online search engine detailing scholarship opportunities for students in the Pacific Northwest. The Guide is a free and personalized tool operated by the College Planning Network.

University of Washington School of Medicine Office of Multicultural Affairs U-Doc Summer Program

<http://depts.washington.edu/omca/UDOC> 206.685.2489

U-DOC is a free six-week program for students who have completed their junior high school year and have a strong interest in medicine. U-DOC's goal is to foster, affirm, and encourage high school students' interest in the medical profession by allowing them to further explore medical careers and to get a valuable introduction to college life. Applicants must be a resident of Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, or Idaho. Underrepresented minority, rural-area and/or disadvantaged students are encouraged to apply. Applications are available online.

Washington Education Foundation (WEF)

www.waedfoundation.org

Achievers Scholarship Program

College scholarships are available for low-income juniors attending an Achievers High School (see Web site for list of schools). Scholarships are expected to average \$5,000 per year per student, or \$20,000 for a four-year program. Applications are available on WEF's Web site and are typically due in the fall.

Governor's Scholarship Program

College scholarships are available for Washington youth who will emancipate from state or federally recognized foster group or kinship care. Scholarships are expected to range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per year. Applications will be available on WEF's Web site by December 15, 2005.

Make it Happen, The College Experience!

For Washington State foster youth, this free college enrichment summer program provides an opportunity for students to spend four days on a college campus and learn about applying to colleges and obtaining financial aid. Students also receive a \$100 stipend if they complete the summer program. Applications for the summer 2006 program will be available on WEF's Web site in January 2006.

School Supplies

World Vision, The Storehouse, Kids in Need Resource Center

www.worldvision.org/worldvision/wvusuf/nsf/stable/metro_seatac_kidsneed

253.872.5900 (Marilee Peterson)

Kids in Need Resource Center is part of World Vision's Storehouse ministries, providing free school and office supplies to schools in the Seattle-Tacoma area, Olympic Peninsula, and Yakima Valley. Schools in which at least 70 percent of the students are eligible for free and reduced-priced meals qualify to "shop" regularly at the resource center. Educators (teachers, teacher's assistants, principals, and librarians) can pick up free school and office supplies that range from books, pens, pencils, paper and craft supplies, to binders, backpacks, rulers, and toys and gifts that can be used as incentives or rewards. Blankets for health rooms and even socks and underwear are necessary items educators can find at the center. Applications may be requested by phone.

V. APPENDICES

Dear Teacher,

We moved to a shelter and it's not too bad. The people are nice and I like being warm. I still feel lonely and sad though. I think I miss our home and the way things used to be. Did I do OK on the math test? I tried to study for it but couldn't find my book. When I grow up, I'm going to be a teacher and live in a house.

Love,
Amanda



McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Reauthorized January 2002

Subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

Subtitle B — Education for Homeless Children and Youths

SEC. 721. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

The following is the policy of the Congress:

- (1) Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.
- (2) In any State that has a compulsory residency requirement as a component of the State's compulsory school attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths, the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.
- (3) Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.
- (4) Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

SEC. 722. GRANTS FOR STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTHS.

- (a) GENERAL AUTHORITY- The Secretary is authorized to make grants to States in accordance with the provisions of this section to enable such States to carry out the activities described in subsections (d) through (g).
- (b) APPLICATION- No State may receive a grant under this section unless the State educational agency submits an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing or accompanied by such information as the Secretary may reasonably require.
- (c) ALLOCATION AND RESERVATIONS-
 - (1) ALLOCATION- (A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary is authorized to allot to each State an amount that bears the same ratio to the amount appropriated for such year under section 726 that remains after the Secretary reserves funds under paragraph (2) and uses funds to carry out section 724(d) and (h), as the amount allocated under section 1122 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to the State for that year bears to the total amount allocated under section 1122 of such Act to all States for that year, except that no State shall receive less than the greater of —
 - (i) \$150,000;

(ii) one-fourth of 1 percent of the amount appropriated under section 726 for that year; or

(iii) the amount such State received under this section for fiscal year 2001.

(B) If there are insufficient funds in a fiscal year to allot to each State the minimum amount under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall ratably reduce the allotments to all States based on the proportionate share that each State received under this subsection for the preceding fiscal year.

(2) RESERVATIONS- (A) The Secretary is authorized to reserve 0.1 percent of the amount appropriated for each fiscal year under section 726 to be allocated by the Secretary among the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, according to their respective need for assistance under this subtitle, as determined by the Secretary.

(B)(i) The Secretary shall transfer 1 percent of the amount appropriated for each fiscal year under section 726 to the Department of the Interior for programs for Indian students served by schools funded by the Secretary of the Interior, as determined under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.), that are consistent with the purposes of the programs described in this subtitle.

(ii) The Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior shall enter into an agreement, consistent with the requirements of this subtitle, for the distribution and use of the funds described in clause (i) under terms that the Secretary determines best meet the purposes of the programs described in this subtitle. Such agreement shall set forth the plans of the Secretary of the Interior for the use of the amounts transferred, including appropriate goals, objectives, and milestones.

(3) STATE DEFINED- For purposes of this subsection, the term 'State' does not include the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(d) ACTIVITIES- Grants under this section shall be used for the following:

(1) To carry out the policies set forth in section 721 in the State.

(2) To provide activities for, and services to, homeless children, including preschool-aged homeless children, and youths that enable such children and youths to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school, or, if appropriate, in preschool programs.

(3) To establish or designate an Office of Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths in the State educational agency in accordance with subsection (f).

(4) To prepare and carry out the State plan described in subsection (g).

(5) To develop and implement professional development programs for school personnel to heighten their awareness of, and capacity to respond to, specific problems in the education of homeless children and youths.

(e) STATE AND LOCAL SUBGRANTS-

(1) MINIMUM DISBURSEMENTS BY STATES- From the sums made available each year to carry out this subtitle, the State educational agency shall distribute not less than 75 percent in subgrants to local educational agencies for the purposes of carrying out section 723, except that States funded at the minimum level set forth in subsection (c)(1) shall distribute not less than 50 percent in subgrants to local educational agencies for the purposes of carrying out section 723.

(2) USE BY STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY- A State educational agency may use funds made available for State use under this subtitle to conduct activities under subsection (f) directly or through grants or contracts.

(3) PROHIBITION ON SEGREGATING HOMELESS STUDENTS-

(A) IN GENERAL- Except as provided in subparagraph (B) and section 723(a)(2)(B)(ii), in providing a free public education to a homeless child or youth, no State receiving funds under this subtitle shall segregate such child or

youth in a separate school, or in a separate program within a school, based on such child's or youth's status as homeless.

(B) EXCEPTION- Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), paragraphs (1)(J)(i) and (3) of subsection (g), section 723(a)(2), and any other provision of this subtitle relating to the placement of homeless children or youths in schools, a State that has a separate school for homeless children or youths that was operated in fiscal year 2000 in a covered county shall be eligible to receive funds under this subtitle for programs carried out in such school if —

- (i) the school meets the requirements of subparagraph (C);
- (ii) any local educational agency serving a school that the homeless children and youths enrolled in the separate school are eligible to attend meets the requirements of subparagraph (E); and
- (iii) the State is otherwise eligible to receive funds under this subtitle.

(C) SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS- For the State to be eligible under subparagraph (B) to receive funds under this subtitle, the school described in such subparagraph shall —

- (i) provide written notice, at the time any child or youth seeks enrollment in such school, and at least twice annually while the child or youth is enrolled in such school, to the parent or guardian of the child or youth (or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth) that —
 - (I) shall be signed by the parent or guardian (or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth);
 - (II) sets forth the general rights provided under this subtitle;
 - (III) specifically states —

(aa) the choice of schools homeless children and youths are eligible to attend, as provided in subsection (g)(3)(A);

(bb) that no homeless child or youth is required to attend a separate school for homeless children or youths;

(cc) that homeless children and youths shall be provided comparable services described in subsection (g)(4), including transportation services, educational services, and meals through school meals programs; and

(dd) that homeless children and youths should not be stigmatized by school personnel; and

(IV) provides contact information for the local liaison for homeless children and youths and the State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths;

- (ii)(I) provide assistance to the parent or guardian of each homeless child or youth (or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth) to exercise the right to attend the parent's or guardian's (or youth's) choice of schools, as provided in subsection (g)(3)(A); and
- (II) coordinate with the local educational agency with jurisdiction for the school selected by the parent or guardian (or youth), to provide transportation and other necessary services;
- (iii) ensure that the parent or guardian (or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth) shall receive the information required by this subparagraph in a manner and form understandable to such parent

or guardian (or youth), including, if necessary and to the extent feasible, in the native language of such parent or guardian (or youth); and
(iv) demonstrate in the school's application for funds under this subtitle that such school —

- (I) is complying with clauses (i) and (ii); and
- (II) is meeting (as of the date of submission of the application) the same Federal and State standards, regulations, and mandates as other public schools in the State (such as complying with sections 1111 and 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and providing a full range of education and related services, including services applicable to students with disabilities).

(D) SCHOOL INELIGIBILITY- A separate school described in subparagraph (B) that fails to meet the standards, regulations, and mandates described in subparagraph (C)(iv)(II) shall not be eligible to receive funds under this subtitle for programs carried out in such school after the first date of such failure.

(E) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY REQUIREMENTS- For the State to be eligible to receive the funds described in subparagraph (B), the local educational agency described in subparagraph (B)(ii) shall —

(i) implement a coordinated system for ensuring that homeless children and youths —

- (I) are advised of the choice of schools provided in subsection (g)(3)(A);
- (II) are immediately enrolled, in accordance with subsection (g)(3)(C), in the school selected under subsection (g)(3)(A); and
- (III) are promptly provided necessary services described in subsection (g)(4), including transportation, to allow homeless children and youths to exercise their choices of schools under subsection (g)(3)(A);

(ii) document that written notice has been provided —

- (I) in accordance with subparagraph (C)(i) for each child or youth enrolled in a separate school under subparagraph (B); and
- (II) in accordance with subsection (g)(6)(A)(v);

(iii) prohibit schools within the agency's jurisdiction from referring homeless children or youths to, or requiring homeless children and youths to enroll in or attend, a separate school described in subparagraph (B);

(iv) identify and remove any barriers that exist in schools within the agency's jurisdiction that may have contributed to the creation or existence of separate schools described in subparagraph (B); and

(v) not use funds received under this subtitle to establish —

- (I) new or additional separate schools for homeless children or youths; or
- (II) new or additional sites for separate schools for homeless children or youths, other than the sites occupied by the schools described in subparagraph (B) in fiscal year 2000.

(F) REPORT-

(i) PREPARATION- The Secretary shall prepare a report on the separate schools and local educational agencies described in subparagraph (B) that receive funds under this subtitle in accordance with this paragraph. The report shall contain, at a minimum, information on —

- (I) compliance with all requirements of this paragraph;
- (II) barriers to school access in the school districts served by the local educational agencies; and
- (III) the progress the separate schools are making in integrating homeless children and youths into the mainstream school environment, including the average length of student enrollment in such schools.

(ii) COMPLIANCE WITH INFORMATION REQUESTS- For purposes of enabling the Secretary to prepare the report, the separate schools and local educational agencies shall cooperate with the Secretary and the State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths established in the State under subsection (d)(3), and shall comply with any requests for information by the Secretary and State Coordinator for such State.

(iii) SUBMISSION- Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, the Secretary shall submit the report described in clause (i) to —

- (I) the President;
- (II) the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives; and
- (III) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.

(G) DEFINITION- For purposes of this paragraph, the term covered county' means —

- (i) San Joaquin County, California;
- (ii) Orange County, California;
- (iii) San Diego County, California; and
- (iv) Maricopa County, Arizona.

(f) FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICE OF COORDINATOR- The Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths established in each State shall —

- (1) gather reliable, valid, and comprehensive information on the nature and extent of the problems homeless children and youths have in gaining access to public preschool programs and to public elementary schools and secondary schools, the difficulties in identifying the special needs of such children and youths, any progress made by the State educational agency and local educational agencies in the State in addressing such problems and difficulties, and the success of the programs under this subtitle in allowing homeless children and youths to enroll in, attend, and succeed in, school;
- (2) develop and carry out the State plan described in subsection (g);
- (3) collect and transmit to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require, a report containing such information as the Secretary determines is necessary to assess the educational needs of homeless children and youths within the State;
- (4) facilitate coordination between the State educational agency, the State social services agency, and other agencies (including agencies providing mental health services) to provide services to homeless children, including preschool-aged homeless children, and youths, and to families of such children and youths;
- (5) in order to improve the provision of comprehensive education and related services to homeless children and youths and their families, coordinate and collaborate with —
 - (A) educators, including child development and preschool program personnel;
 - (B) providers of services to homeless and runaway children and youths and homeless families (including domestic violence agencies, shelter operators,

transitional housing facilities, runaway and homeless youth centers, and transitional living programs for homeless youths);

(C) local educational agency liaisons designated under subsection (g)(1)(J)(ii) for homeless children and youths; and

(D) community organizations and groups representing homeless children and youths and their families; and

(6) provide technical assistance to local educational agencies in coordination with local educational agency liaisons designated under subsection (g)(1)(J)(ii), to ensure that local educational agencies comply with the requirements of section 722(e)(3) and paragraphs (3) through (7) of subsection (g).

(g) STATE PLAN-

(1) IN GENERAL- Each State shall submit to the Secretary a plan to provide for the education of homeless children and youths within the State. Such plan shall include the following:

(A) A description of how such children and youths are (or will be) given the opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic achievement standards all students are expected to meet.

(B) A description of the procedures the State educational agency will use to identify such children and youths in the State and to assess their special needs.

(C) A description of procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youths.

(D) A description of programs for school personnel (including principals, attendance officers, teachers, enrollment personnel, and pupil services personnel) to heighten the awareness of such personnel of the specific needs of runaway and homeless youths.

(E) A description of procedures that ensure that homeless children and youths who meet the relevant eligibility criteria are able to participate in Federal, State, or local food programs.

(F) A description of procedures that ensure that —

(i) homeless children have equal access to the same public preschool programs, administered by the State agency, as provided to other children in the State;

(ii) homeless youths and youths separated from the public schools are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services; and

(iii) homeless children and youths who meet the relevant eligibility criteria are able to participate in Federal, State, or local before- and afterschool care programs.

(G) Strategies to address problems identified in the report provided to the Secretary under subsection (f)(3).

(H) Strategies to address other problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youths, including problems resulting from enrollment delays that are caused by —

(i) immunization and medical records requirements;

(ii) residency requirements;

(iii) lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documentation;

(iv) guardianship issues; or

(v) uniform or dress code requirements.

(I) A demonstration that the State educational agency and local educational agencies in the State have developed, and shall review and revise, policies to

remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youths in schools in the State.

(J) Assurances that —

(i) the State educational agency and local educational agencies in the State will adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youths are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless;

(ii) local educational agencies will designate an appropriate staff person, who may also be a coordinator for other Federal programs, as a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths, to carry out the duties described in paragraph (6)(A); and

(iii) the State and its local educational agencies will adopt policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin, as determined in paragraph (3)(A), in accordance with the following, as applicable:

(I) If the homeless child or youth continues to live in the area served by the local educational agency in which the school of origin is located, the child's or youth's transportation to and from the school of origin shall be provided or arranged by the local educational agency in which the school of origin is located.

(II) If the homeless child's or youth's living arrangements in the area served by the local educational agency of origin terminate and the child or youth, though continuing his or her education in the school of origin, begins living in an area served by another local educational agency, the local educational agency of origin and the local educational agency in which the homeless child or youth is living shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school of origin. If the local educational agencies are unable to agree upon such method, the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally.

(2) COMPLIANCE-

(A) IN GENERAL- Each plan adopted under this subsection shall also describe how the State will ensure that local educational agencies in the State will comply with the requirements of paragraphs (3) through (7).

(B) COORDINATION- Such plan shall indicate what technical assistance the State will furnish to local educational agencies and how compliance efforts will be coordinated with the local educational agency liaisons designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii).

(3) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY REQUIREMENTS-

(A) IN GENERAL- The local educational agency serving each child or youth to be assisted under this subtitle shall, according to the child's or youth's best interest —

(i) continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness —

(I) in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or

- (II) for the remainder of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- (ii) enroll the child or youth in any public school that nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

(B) BEST INTEREST- In determining the best interest of the child or youth under subparagraph (A), the local educational agency shall —

- (i) to the extent feasible, keep a homeless child or youth in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child's or youth's parent or guardian;
- (ii) provide a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal under subparagraph (E), to the homeless child's or youth's parent or guardian, if the local educational agency sends such child or youth to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian; and
- (iii) in the case of an unaccompanied youth, ensure that the homeless liaison designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii) assists in placement or enrollment decisions under this subparagraph, considers the views of such unaccompanied youth, and provides notice to such youth of the right to appeal under subparagraph (E).

(C) ENROLLMENT- (i) The school selected in accordance with this paragraph shall immediately enroll the homeless child or youth, even if the child or youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation.

(ii) The enrolling school shall immediately contact the school last attended by the child or youth to obtain relevant academic and other records.

(iii) If the child or youth needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the child or youth to the local educational agency liaison designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii), who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records, in accordance with subparagraph (D).

(D) RECORDS- Any record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, regarding each homeless child or youth shall be maintained —

- (i) so that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or school district; and
- (ii) in a manner consistent with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g).

(E) ENROLLMENT DISPUTES- If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school —

- (i) the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute;
- (ii) the parent or guardian of the child or youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision;
- (iii) the child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the local educational agency liaison designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii), who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as described in paragraph

(1)(C) as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute;
and

(iv) in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

(F) PLACEMENT CHOICE- The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

(G) SCHOOL OF ORIGIN DEFINED- In this paragraph, the term school of origin' means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

(H) CONTACT INFORMATION- Nothing in this subtitle shall prohibit a local educational agency from requiring a parent or guardian of a homeless child to submit contact information.

(4) COMPARABLE SERVICES- Each homeless child or youth to be assisted under this subtitle shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected under paragraph (3), including the following:

(A) Transportation services.

(B) Educational services for which the child or youth meets the eligibility criteria, such as services provided under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 or similar State or local programs, educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency.

(C) Programs in vocational and technical education.

(D) Programs for gifted and talented students.

(E) School nutrition programs.

(5) COORDINATION-

(A) IN GENERAL- Each local educational agency serving homeless children and youths that receives assistance under this subtitle shall coordinate —

(i) the provision of services under this subtitle with local social services agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to homeless children and youths and their families, including services and programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.); and

(ii) with other local educational agencies on interdistrict issues, such as transportation or transfer of school records.

(B) HOUSING ASSISTANCE- If applicable, each State educational agency and local educational agency that receives assistance under this subtitle shall coordinate with State and local housing agencies responsible for developing the comprehensive housing affordability strategy described in section 105 of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 12705) to minimize educational disruption for children and youths who become homeless.

(C) COORDINATION PURPOSE- The coordination required under subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall be designed to —

(i) ensure that homeless children and youths have access and reasonable proximity to available education and related support services; and

(ii) raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness.

(6) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY LIAISON-

(A) DUTIES- Each local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths, designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii), shall ensure that —

- (i) homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- (ii) homeless children and youths enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools of that local educational agency;
- (iii) homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which such families, children, and youths are eligible, including Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the local educational agency, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services;
- (iv) the parents or guardians of homeless children and youths 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;
- (v) public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated where such children and youths receive services under this Act, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens;
- (vi) enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with paragraph (3)(E); and
- (vii) the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin, as described in paragraph (1)(J)(iii), and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school that is selected under paragraph (3)(A).

(B) NOTICE- State coordinators established under subsection (d)(3) and local educational agencies shall inform school personnel, service providers, and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the local educational agency liaisons.

(C) LOCAL AND STATE COORDINATION- Local educational agency liaisons for homeless children and youths shall, as a part of their duties, coordinate and collaborate with State coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths.

(7) REVIEW AND REVISIONS-

(A) IN GENERAL- Each State educational agency and local educational agency that receives assistance under this subtitle shall review and revise any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths in schools that are selected under paragraph (3).

(B) CONSIDERATION- In reviewing and revising such policies, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship.

(C) SPECIAL ATTENTION- Special attention shall be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school.

SEC. 723. LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY SUBGRANTS FOR THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTHS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY-

(1) IN GENERAL- The State educational agency shall, in accordance with section 722(e), and from amounts made available to such agency under section 726, make subgrants to local educational agencies for the purpose of facilitating the enrollment, attendance, and success in school of homeless children and youths.

(2) SERVICES-

(A) IN GENERAL- Services under paragraph (1) —

(i) may be provided through programs on school grounds or at other facilities;

(ii) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, be provided through existing programs and mechanisms that integrate homeless children and youths with nonhomeless children and youths; and

(iii) shall be designed to expand or improve services provided as part of a school's regular academic program, but not to replace such services provided under such program.

(B) SERVICES ON SCHOOL GROUNDS- If services under paragraph (1) are provided on school grounds, schools —

(i) may use funds under this subtitle to provide the same services to other children and youths who are determined by the local educational agency to be at risk of failing in, or dropping out of, school, subject to the requirements of clause (ii); and

(ii) except as otherwise provided in section 722(e)(3)(B), shall not provide services in settings within a school that segregate homeless children and youths from other children and youths, except as necessary for short periods of time —

(I) for health and safety emergencies; or

(II) to provide temporary, special, and supplementary services to meet the unique needs of homeless children and youths.

(3) REQUIREMENT- Services provided under this section shall not replace the regular academic program and shall be designed to expand upon or improve services provided as part of the school's regular academic program.

(b) APPLICATION- A local educational agency that desires to receive a subgrant under this section shall submit an application to the State educational agency at such time, in such manner, and containing or accompanied by such information as the State educational agency may reasonably require. Such application shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the educational and related needs of homeless children and youths in the area served by such agency (which may be undertaken as part of needs assessments for other disadvantaged groups).

(2) A description of the services and programs for which assistance is sought to address the needs identified in paragraph (1).

(3) An assurance that the local educational agency's combined fiscal effort per student, or the aggregate expenditures of that agency and the State with respect to the provision of free public education by such agency for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made, was not less than 90 percent of such combined fiscal effort or aggregate expenditures for the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made.

(4) An assurance that the applicant complies with, or will use requested funds to comply with, paragraphs (3) through (7) of section 722(g).

(5) A description of policies and procedures, consistent with section 722(e)(3), that the agency will implement to ensure that activities carried out by the agency will not isolate or stigmatize homeless children and youths.

(c) AWARDS-

(1) IN GENERAL- The State educational agency shall, in accordance with the requirements of this subtitle and from amounts made available to it under section 726, make competitive subgrants to local educational agencies that submit applications under subsection (b). Such subgrants shall be awarded on the basis of the need of such agencies for assistance under this subtitle and the quality of the applications submitted.

(2) NEED- In determining need under paragraph (1), the State educational agency may consider the number of homeless children and youths enrolled in preschool, elementary, and secondary schools within the area served by the local educational agency, and shall consider the needs of such children and youths and the ability of the local educational agency to meet such needs. The State educational agency may also consider the following:

(A) The extent to which the proposed use of funds will facilitate the enrollment, retention, and educational success of homeless children and youths.

(B) The extent to which the application —

(i) reflects coordination with other local and State agencies that serve homeless children and youths; and

(ii) describes how the applicant will meet the requirements of section 722(g)(3).

(C) The extent to which the applicant exhibits in the application and in current practice a commitment to education for all homeless children and youths.

(D) Such other criteria as the State agency determines appropriate.

(3) QUALITY- In determining the quality of applications under paragraph (1), the State educational agency shall consider the following:

(A) The applicant's needs assessment under subsection (b)(1) and the likelihood that the program presented in the application will meet such needs.

(B) The types, intensity, and coordination of the services to be provided under the program.

(C) The involvement of parents or guardians of homeless children or youths in the education of their children.

(D) The extent to which homeless children and youths will be integrated within the regular education program.

(E) The quality of the applicant's evaluation plan for the program.

(F) The extent to which services provided under this subtitle will be coordinated with other services available to homeless children and youths and their families.

(G) Such other measures as the State educational agency considers indicative of a high-quality program, such as the extent to which the local educational agency will provide case management or related services to unaccompanied youths.

(4) DURATION OF GRANTS- Grants awarded under this section shall be for terms not to exceed 3 years.

(d) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES- A local educational agency may use funds awarded under this section for activities that carry out the purpose of this subtitle, including the following:

(1) The provision of tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched educational services that are linked to the achievement of the same challenging State academic content standards and challenging State student academic achievement standards the State establishes for other children and youths.

- (2) The provision of expedited evaluations of the strengths and needs of homeless children and youths, including needs and eligibility for programs and services (such as educational programs for gifted and talented students, children with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency, services provided under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 or similar State or local programs, programs in vocational and technical education, and school nutrition programs).
- (3) Professional development and other activities for educators and pupil services personnel that are designed to heighten the understanding and sensitivity of such personnel to the needs of homeless children and youths, the rights of such children and youths under this subtitle, and the specific educational needs of runaway and homeless youths.
- (4) The provision of referral services to homeless children and youths for medical, dental, mental, and other health services.
- (5) The provision of assistance to defray the excess cost of transportation for students under section 722(g)(4)(A), not otherwise provided through Federal, State, or local funding, where necessary to enable students to attend the school selected under section 722(g)(3).
- (6) The provision of developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs, not otherwise provided through Federal, State, or local funding, for preschool-aged homeless children.
- (7) The provision of services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, in public school programs and services provided to nonhomeless children and youths.
- (8) The provision for homeless children and youths of before- and afterschool, mentoring, and summer programs in which a teacher or other qualified individual provides tutoring, homework assistance, and supervision of educational activities.
- (9) If necessary, the payment of fees and other costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records necessary to enroll homeless children and youths in school, including birth certificates, immunization or medical records, academic records, guardianship records, and evaluations for special programs or services.
- (10) The provision of education and training to the parents of homeless children and youths about the rights of, and resources available to, such children and youths.
- (11) The development of coordination between schools and agencies providing services to homeless children and youths, as described in section 722(g)(5).
- (12) The provision of pupil services (including violence prevention counseling) and referrals for such services.
- (13) Activities to address the particular needs of homeless children and youths that may arise from domestic violence.
- (14) The adaptation of space and purchase of supplies for any nonschool facilities made available under subsection (a)(2) to provide services under this subsection.
- (15) The provision of school supplies, including those supplies to be distributed at shelters or temporary housing facilities, or other appropriate locations.
- (16) The provision of other extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youths to attend school.

SEC. 724. SECRETARIAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

- (a) REVIEW OF STATE PLANS- In reviewing the State plan submitted by a State educational agency under section 722(g), the Secretary shall use a peer review process and shall evaluate whether State laws, policies, and practices described in such plan adequately address the

problems of homeless children and youths relating to access to education and placement as described in such plan.

(b) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE-** The Secretary shall provide support and technical assistance to a State educational agency to assist such agency in carrying out its responsibilities under this subtitle, if requested by the State educational agency.

(c) **NOTICE-** The Secretary shall, before the next school year that begins after the date of enactment of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, create and disseminate nationwide a public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths and disseminate such notice to other Federal agencies, programs, and grantees, including Head Start grantees, Health Care for the Homeless grantees, Emergency Food and Shelter grantees, and homeless assistance programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(d) **EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION-** The Secretary shall conduct evaluation and dissemination activities of programs designed to meet the educational needs of homeless elementary and secondary school students, and may use funds appropriated under section 726 to conduct such activities.

(e) **SUBMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION-** The Secretary shall require applications for grants under this subtitle to be submitted to the Secretary not later than the expiration of the 60-day period beginning on the date that funds are available for purposes of making such grants and shall make such grants not later than the expiration of the 120-day period beginning on such date.

(f) **DETERMINATION BY SECRETARY-** The Secretary, based on the information received from the States and information gathered by the Secretary under subsection (h), shall determine the extent to which State educational agencies are ensuring that each homeless child and homeless youth has access to a free appropriate public education, as described in section 721(1).

(g) **GUIDELINES-** The Secretary shall develop, issue, and publish in the Federal Register, not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, school enrollment guidelines for States with respect to homeless children and youths. The guidelines shall describe —

(1) successful ways in which a State may assist local educational agencies to immediately enroll homeless children and youths in school; and

(2) how a State can review the State's requirements regarding immunization and medical or school records and make such revisions to the requirements as are appropriate and necessary in order to enroll homeless children and youths in school immediately.

(h) **INFORMATION-**

(1) **IN GENERAL-** From funds appropriated under section 726, the Secretary shall, directly or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, periodically collect and disseminate data and information regarding —

(A) the number and location of homeless children and youths;

(B) the education and related services such children and youths receive;

(C) the extent to which the needs of homeless children and youths are being met; and

(D) such other data and information as the Secretary determines to be necessary and relevant to carry out this subtitle.

(2) **COORDINATION-** The Secretary shall coordinate such collection and dissemination with other agencies and entities that receive assistance and administer programs under this subtitle.

(i) **REPORT-** Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the President and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report on the status of education of homeless children and youths, which shall include information on —

- (1) the education of homeless children and youths; and
- (2) the actions of the Secretary and the effectiveness of the programs supported under this subtitle.

SEC. 725. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this subtitle:

- (1) The terms enroll' and enrollment' include attending classes and participating fully in school activities.
- (2) The term homeless children and youths' —
 - (A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and
 - (B) includes —
 - (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
 - (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));
 - (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - (iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).
- (3) The terms local educational agency' and State educational agency' have the meanings given such terms in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.
- (4) The term Secretary' means the Secretary of Education.
- (5) The term State' means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
- (6) The term unaccompanied youth' includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Washington State School Directors' Association
Sample Policy 3115 Regarding Homeless Students
HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school.

Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented pro-grams and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- A. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
- B. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- C. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- D. Are abandoned in hospitals;
- E. Awaiting foster care placement;
- F. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
- G. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
- H. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families.

According to the child's or youth's best interest, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in which attendance area the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to home-less families on the same terms as families resident in the district.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state policy. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. However, enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including academic records, medical records, proof of residency,

mailing address or other documentation. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. However, emergency contact information cannot be demanded in a form or manner that constructs a barrier to enrollment and/or attendance at school.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students where such children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, such as schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

Cross References:	Board Policy 3120 Board Policy 3231 Board Policy 3413	Enrollment Student Records Student Immunization and Life Threatening Conditions
Legal References:	RCW 28A.225.215 Title I, Part C 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.	Enrollment of children without legal residences No Child Left Behind Act, 2002 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
Management Resources:	<i>Policy News</i> , October 2002 <i>Policy News</i> , October 2004	NCLB Addresses Homeless Students Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services Update

Adopted:
School District Name:
Revised: 10.02; 10.04
Classification: Essential

Revised Code of Washington

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

RCW 28A.225.215 Enrollment of children without legal residences.

(1) A school district shall not require proof of residency or any other information regarding an address for any child who is eligible by reason of age for the services of the school district if the child does not have a legal residence.

(2) A school district shall enroll a child without a legal residence under subsection (1) of this section at the request of the child or parent or guardian of the child.

RCW 74.13.550 Child placement – Policy of educational continuity.

It is the policy of the state of Washington that, whenever practical and in the best interest of the child, children placed into foster care shall remain enrolled in the schools they were attending at the time they entered foster care.

RCW 74.13.560 Educational continuity -- Protocol development.

The administrative regions of the department shall develop protocols with the respective school districts in their regions specifying specific strategies for communication, coordination, and collaboration regarding the status and progress of foster children placed in the region, in order to maximize the educational continuity and achievement for foster children. The protocols shall include methods to assure effective sharing of information consistent with RCW 28A.225.330.

RCW 74.13.580 Educational stability during shelter care hearing -- Protocol development.

The department shall work with the administrative office of the courts to develop protocols to ensure that educational stability is addressed during the shelter care hearing.

Washington Administrative Code

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

WAC 392-141-148 Definition -- Special transportation. As used in this chapter, "special transportation" means students transported from home to school for special education programs pursuant to chapter 28A.155 RCW and who are either not ambulatory or capable of protecting his or her own welfare while traveling to or from schools or agencies where special education services are provided. Also included are students who require special transportation to special education, gifted, bilingual, or homeless programs located outside their basic transportation service area or at an alternative program time.

WAC 392-172-100 Child find.

- (1) The local district or other public agency shall conduct child find activities that apply to students ages birth through twenty-one for the purpose of locating, evaluating and identifying students with a suspected disability, regardless of the severity of their disability, who are residing within the boundaries of the district or other public agency and who are not currently receiving special education and related services.

These activities shall extend to students attending private schools, including religious schools. The activities undertaken to carry out child find in private schools shall be:

- (a) Comparable to activities undertaken in public schools; and
 - (b) Developed in consultation with appropriate representatives of private school students on how to carry out the activities described in this section.
- (2) Child find activities must be calculated to reach:
 - (a) Highly mobile students with disabilities, such as homeless and migrant students; and
 - (b) Students who are suspected of being a student with a disability and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade.
 - (3) The local school district, or other public agency shall have policies and procedures in effect that describe the methods it uses to conduct child find activities in accordance with subsections (1) and (2) of this section. Methods used may include but are not limited to: Written notification to all parents of students in the district's or other public agency's jurisdiction regarding access to and the use of its child find system; posting notices in school buildings and other public areas describing the availability of special education programs; offering preschool developmental screening; conducting local media informational campaigns; coordinating distribution of information with other

child find programs within public and nonpublic agencies; screening districtwide test results; inservice education to staff; and other methods developed by the school district to identify, locate and evaluate students. Such methods may also include a systematic, intervention based, process within general education for determining the need for a special education referral.

- (4) The collection and use of data to meet the requirements of this section are subject to the confidentiality requirements in WAC 392-172-400 through 392-172-426.

**DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS
SCHOOL DISTRICT PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTHS
IN HOMELESS SITUATIONS**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (also referred to as the Act or the McKinney-Vento Act) acknowledges that disputes may arise between the school district and homeless students and their parents, or unaccompanied youth, when the district seeks to place a student in a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or unaccompanied youth. The Act includes dispute resolution among the required duties of the local education agency (LEA) liaison. The Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has developed a dispute resolution process as required by the McKinney-Vento Act.

Districts should bear in mind that disputes related to school selection or enrollment should be initiated at the request of the parent or unaccompanied youth and not at the request or convenience of the school district. Additionally, issues related to the definition of homelessness, the responsibilities of the school district to serve homeless children and youth, and/or the explicit rights of homeless children and youth are addressed in the McKinney-Vento Act. Disputes related to the school placement and enrollment of homeless children and youths shall be resolved within the parameters of the federal McKinney-Vento Act. The dispute resolution process for the school placement of homeless children and youths shall not be used in an effort to circumvent or supersede any part of the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

The following procedures are specified in the Act:

Enrollment: If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.

Written Explanation: The district must provide a written explanation of the school placement decision to the parent or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, to the unaccompanied youth. (The written explanation must include a description of the parent's or unaccompanied youth's right to appeal the decision.)

Liaison: The designated LEA homeless liaison is assigned to carry out the dispute resolution process in an expeditious manner.

Responsibility: The school district, usually the district's homeless liaison, is responsible to inform the parent of the homeless student(s) or the unaccompanied youth of the dispute resolution process.

OVERVIEW

In a case where a dispute occurs regarding the enrollment of a homeless child or youth, the following process must be used: Level I of the appeal is to the district's homeless liaison. If unresolved at this level, the case is appealed to the local school district superintendent (Level II), and if the dispute continues to be unresolved, the final appeal (Level III) is to OSPI. **Every effort must be made to resolve the complaint or dispute at the local level before it is brought to OSPI.**

INITIATION OF THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

If a school district seeks to place a homeless child or youth in a school other than the school of origin, or the school requested by the parent or unaccompanied youth, the child's/youth's parent or the unaccompanied youth shall be informed in a language and format understandable to the parent or unaccompanied youth of their right to appeal the decision made by the school district and be provided the following:

1. Written contact information for the LEA homeless liaison and State Coordinator, with a brief description of their roles.
2. A simple, written detachable form that parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth can complete and turn in to the school to initiate the dispute process (the school should copy the form and return the copy to the parent, guardian, or youth for their records when it is submitted.)
3. A written step-by-step description of how to dispute the school district's decision.
4. Written notice of the right to enroll immediately in the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute.
5. Written notice of the right to appeal to the state if the district-level resolution is not satisfactory.
6. Written timelines for resolving district- and state-level appeals.

Level I: LEA Liaison Communication

If a parent or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal a school district's decision related to a student's placement:

1. The parent or unaccompanied youth must file a request for dispute resolution with the district's homeless liaison by submitting a form that initiates the dispute resolution process. The request for dispute resolution must be submitted by the parent or the unaccompanied youth to the district liaison within fifteen (15) business days of receiving notification that the district intends to enroll the student in a school other than that requested by the family or the unaccompanied youth. The parent or unaccompanied youth may submit the request directly to the homeless liaison or they may submit the request to the school where the dispute is taking place. If the request is submitted to the school where the dispute is taking place, the school shall immediately forward the request to the district's homeless liaison. In the event that the district's homeless liaison is unavailable,

a school district designee may receive the parent's or unaccompanied youth's request to initiate the dispute resolution process.

2. The homeless liaison must log their receipt of the complaint, including the date and time, with a written description of the situation and the reason for the dispute, and a copy of the complaint must be forwarded to the liaison's immediate supervisor and the district superintendent.
3. Within five (5) business days of their receipt of the complaint, the liaison must make a decision on the complaint and inform the parent or unaccompanied youth in writing of the result. It is the responsibility of the district to verify the parent's or unaccompanied youth's receipt of the written notification regarding the homeless liaison's Level I decision.
4. If the parent or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made at Level I and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level II, the parent or unaccompanied youth shall notify the district's homeless liaison of their intent to proceed to Level II within ten (10) business days of receipt of notification of the Level I decision.
5. If the parent or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal the liaison's Level I decision, the district's homeless liaison shall provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with an appeals package containing:
 - a. A copy of the parent's or unaccompanied youth's complaint which was filed with the district's homeless liaison at Level I,
 - b. The decision rendered at Level I by the LEA liaison, and
 - c. Any additional information from the parent, unaccompanied youth, and/or homeless liaison.

Level II: LEA Superintendent Communication

(If the dispute remains unresolved after a Level I appeal)

1. If a parent disagrees with the decision rendered by the district's homeless liaison at Level I, the parent or unaccompanied youth may appeal the decision to the local school district's superintendent, or the superintendent's designee, (the designee shall be someone other than the district's homeless liaison) using the appeals package provided at Level I.
2. The superintendent, or superintendent's designee, will arrange for a personal conference to be held with the parent or unaccompanied youth. The personal conference will be arranged within five (5) business days of the parent or unaccompanied youth's notification to the district of their intent to proceed to Level II of the dispute resolution process. Once arranged, the meeting between the superintendent, or superintendent's designee, and the parent or unaccompanied youth is to take place as expeditiously as possible.
3. The local superintendent, or superintendent's designee, will provide a decision in writing to the parent or unaccompanied youth with supporting evidence and reasons, within five (5) business days of the superintendent's, or superintendent's designee, personal conference with the parent or unaccompanied youth. It is the responsibility of the district to verify the parent's or unaccompanied youth's receipt of the written notification regarding the superintendent's Level II decision.
4. A copy of the appeals package, along with the written decision made at Level II is to be shared with the district's homeless liaison.

5. If the parent or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made at Level II and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level III, the parent or unaccompanied youth shall notify the district's homeless liaison of their intent to proceed to Level III within ten (10) business days of receipt of notification of the Level II decision.
6. If the dispute remains unresolved, the process then moves to Level III.

Level III: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Communication

(If the dispute remains unresolved after a Level II appeal)

1. The district superintendent shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the OSPI homeless education coordinator, or designee, for review, within five (5) business days of notifying the parent or unaccompanied youth of the decision rendered at Level II.
2. The entire dispute package including all documentation and related paperwork is to be submitted to OSPI in one consolidated and complete package via hard copy mail delivery. Documents submitted separately from the dispute package, documents submitted after the fact, or documents submitted outside of the dispute package in an attempt to extend the dispute timeframe or impact a pending dispute outcome may not be reviewed by OSPI. It is the responsibility of the district to ensure that dispute packages are complete and ready for review at the time they are submitted to OSPI.
3. The OSPI homeless education coordinator, or designee, along with the appropriate agency director, and/or agency assistant superintendent, shall make a final decision within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the complaint.
4. The final decision will be forwarded to the local school district's homeless liaison for distribution to the parent and the local superintendent.
5. The decision made by OSPI shall be the final resolution for placement of a homeless child or youth in the district.
6. The office of the school district superintendent shall maintain a record of all disputes related to the placement of homeless children and youths. These records shall include disputes resolved at Level I, Level II, and/or Level III and shall be made available to OSPI upon request.

INTER-DISTRICT DISPUTES

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

Disputes arising between school districts (LEAs) regarding the placement of a homeless child or youth in a district should be resolved between the districts at the local level in the best interest of the child and according to the law. Disputes between LEAs that remain unresolved shall be forwarded in writing by either of the disputing districts to the OSPI homeless education coordinator, or designee. A decision will be made by the OSPI homeless coordinator, or designee, along with a committee of OSPI staff within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the

dispute and will be forwarded in writing to the districts' superintendents, the districts' homeless liaisons and the parent(s) of the homeless child, or the homeless youth.

The decision made by OSPI shall be the final resolution between the disputing LEAs for placement of a homeless child or youth in a district.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act of 2001
42 U.S.C. §§ 11431, et. seq. (Chapter 119) , as amended by the
No Child Left Behind Act.

POLICY STATEMENT

Section 721(1)(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act:

The following is the policy of the Congress:

- (1) Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.
- (2) In any State that has a compulsory residency requirement as a component of the State's compulsory school attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths, the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.
- (3) Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.
- (4) Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

DEFINITIONS

Homeless Children and Youths: According to Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, "the term 'homeless children and youths'--

- (A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)) [‘one who (1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate residence or (2) has a primary nighttime residence in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter for temporary accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.’]; and

- (B) includes--
- (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
 - (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));
 - (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - (iii) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii)."

Section 103(c) of the Act specifically excludes from the definition of homeless individuals any person who is imprisoned or otherwise detained by Act of Congress or State law.

Unaccompanied Youth: Section 725(6) of the Act indicates that the term “unaccompanied youth” includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." Youth living on their own in any of the homeless situations described in the law, are covered by the law.

Fixed Residence: A residence that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.

Regular Residence: A residence which is used on a regular (i.e., nightly) basis.

Adequate Residence: A residence which is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

Parent: For the purpose of this policy, a parent means a parent, legal guardian, or person having legal custody of a child.

School of Origin: The school of origin, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, Section 722 (g)(3)(G), is the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

Enrollment: The terms “enroll” and “enrollment” include attending classes and participating fully in school activities.