

Title IX, Part A – Education for Homeless Children and Youth

What it is

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program, authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act), is designed to address the needs of homeless children and youth and ensure educational rights and protections for these children and youth.ⁱ

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, SEAs must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth. Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and related services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging state academic standards to which all students are held.ⁱⁱ

All districts, regardless of whether they receive a McKinney-Vento subgrant, must comply with required identification, reporting, and service responsibilities to homeless children and youth (such as enrollment, transportation, free lunch, equal access to education and extracurricular activities, services, and more).

Districts engage in coordination and collaboration with other departments, local organizations, and agencies to provide comprehensive services to homeless children and youth and their families. Districts also offer expedited evaluations of the needs of homeless children to help them enroll in school, attend regularly, and achieve success.

The local homeless education program can be funded through two funding sources: the McKinney-Vento Subgrant and Title, I Part A homeless set-aside funds. The local liaison should consult with the state McKinney-Vento coordinator if uncertain about whether an activity can be supported by one of the specified funding sources.

McKinney-Vento Subgrant

Districts must use McKinney-Vento funds to assist homeless children and youth in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Allowable use of funds include:ⁱⁱⁱ

- Tutoring, supplemental instruction, and other educational services that help homeless children and youth reach the same challenging state academic standards the state establishes for other children and youth.
- Expedited evaluations of eligible students to measure their strengths and needs. Evaluations for other programs and services, including educational programs for gifted and talented students; special education and related services for children with disabilities under Part B of the IDEA; special education or related aids and services for qualified students with disabilities under Section 504; early intervention services for eligible infants and toddlers with disabilities under Part C of the IDEA; programs for English learners; career and technical education; meals through the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program; and other appropriate programs or services under ESEA.

- Professional development and other activities for educators and specialized instructional support personnel that are designed to heighten the understanding and sensitivity of such personnel to the needs of homeless children and youth, the rights of such children and youth under the McKinney-Vento Act, and the specific educational needs of runaway and homeless youth.
- Referrals of eligible students to medical, dental, mental, and other health services.
- Assistance to defray the excess cost of transportation not otherwise provided through federal, state, or local funds, to enable students to remain in their schools of origin.
- Developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs for preschool-aged homeless children that are not provided through other federal, state, or local funds.
- Services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain homeless children and youth, particularly homeless children and youth who are not enrolled in school, in public school programs and services provided to non-homeless children and youth.
- Before- and after-school, mentoring, and summer programs for homeless children and youth in which a teacher or other qualified individual provides tutoring, homework assistance, and supervision of educational activities.
- Payment of fees and costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records necessary to enroll homeless children and youth in school. The records may include birth certificates, immunization or other required health records, academic records, guardianship records, and evaluations for special programs and services.
- Education and training for parents and guardians of homeless children and youth about the rights of, and resources available to, such children and youth, and other activities designed to increase the meaningful involvement of parents and guardians of homeless children or youth in the education of such children or youth.
- Coordination between schools and agencies providing services to homeless children and youth in order to expand and enhance such services. Coordination with programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act must be included in this effort.
- Specialized instructional support services, including violence prevention counseling, and referrals for such services.
- Programs addressing the particular needs of homeless children and youth that may arise from domestic violence and parental mental health or substance abuse problems.
- Providing supplies to non-school facilities serving eligible students and adapting these facilities to enable them to provide services.
- Providing school supplies, including those to be distributed at shelters or temporary housing facilities, or other appropriate locations.
- Providing extraordinary or emergency services needed to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and participate fully in school activities.

Title I, A Homeless Set-Aside Fund:

Title I, Part A homeless set-aside is governed by two principles:

1. The services must be reasonable and necessary to assist students experiencing homelessness to take advantage of educational opportunities.
2. The funds must be used only as a last resort when funds or services are not available from other public or private sources.

Determining the homeless set-aside amount requires collaboration between the district's Title I, Part A and McKinney-Vento programs. There are various methods used to calculate the set-aside amount. Here are a few methods that can help you calculate the set-aside amount:

- multiply the number of students experiencing homelessness identified by the Title I, Part A per pupil allocation;
- match the amount of McKinney-Vento Subgrant dollars received by the district, if applicable;
- adjust previous set-aside amounts based on past set-aside expenditures and trend data (academic outcome and educational needs, changes in poverty levels and/or economy in the community, number of students experiencing homelessness);
- reserve the set-aside amount based on free or reduced-price lunch count.

Title I, Part A Homeless Set-Aside Approved Activities

Title I, Part A Homeless set-aside approved activities include purchasing:

- items of clothing, particularly if necessary to meet a school's dress or uniform requirement;
- clothing and shoes necessary to participate in physical education classes;
- student fees that are necessary to participate in the general education program;
- personal school supplies;
- copies of birth certificates;
- immunizations;
- food;
- medical and dental services;
- eyeglasses and hearing aids;
- counseling services to address anxiety related to homelessness that is impeding learning;
- outreach services to students living in shelters, motels, and other temporary residences;
- extended learning time (before and after school, Saturday classes, summer school) to compensate for lack of quiet time for homework in shelters or other overcrowded living conditions;
- tutoring services, especially in shelters or other locations where homeless students live;
- parental involvement specifically oriented to parents of homeless students;
- fees for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) testing;
- fees for college entrance exams such as the SAT or ACT; and
- GED testing for school-age students.ⁱⁱ

District Requirements

Every district, whether or not it receives a McKinney-Vento Subgrant, is required to designate a local liaison (Section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii)). The liaison coordinates services to ensure that homeless children and youths enroll in school and have the opportunity to succeed academically.

Districts are required to have policies and procedures focusing on best interest, immediate enrollment, transportation, and dispute resolution to ensure school stability.

Districts are required to submit the homeless immunization report annually to the state coordinator. The report includes the number of homeless children who are enrolled in public schools without immunization or proof of immunization. The average length of time required for the children to be immunized or to obtain immunization records.

ⁱ U.S. Department of Education. *Supporting the Success of Homeless Children and Youth*. (July 27, 2016). [Web](#).

ⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Education. *Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance*. (July 27, 2016). [Web](#).

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Education. *Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance*. (July 27, 2016). (H-1) [Web](#).