

HOMELESS ED NEWS

DATES TO CONSIDER



FY24 EHCY Year 1 Grant opens March 1, 2023, and closes May 1, 2023

Professional Learning opportunities hosted by the ADE HEP Team.

Wednesday, March 22, 2023, 10:00 am to 11:00 am

Wednesday, March 29, 2023, 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 10:00 am to 11:00 am

Wednesday, April 26, 2023, 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

See page 2 for information and registration links.

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE), SchoolHouse Connection, and National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) are offering webinars in the coming months. See page 3 & 4 for more information.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

The <u>Arizona Homeless Education Program</u> (HEP) is a federally funded program, under Subtitle VII-B of The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The act authorizes the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program and is the primary piece of federal legislation related to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. It was reauthorized in December 2015 by Title IX, Part A, of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The mission of the Homeless Education Program is to ensure positive comparable academic outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness through implementation of the McKinney-Vento statute.

Our office provides support to the Local Education Agency (LEA) to improve the provision of comprehensive education and related services to homeless children and youths and their families. Our office strategically gathers and makes available dependable, valid, and comprehensive materials and professional development. The goal of this coordination is to provide higher quality learning experiences and improve education and other outcomes for children and families experiencing homelessness.

For oversight of HEP program, please contact <u>Dr. Brittani (Didi) Roy</u>, Director of Educational Policy and Program Integrity, or <u>Rita</u> <u>Rodriguez</u>, State Homeless Education Program Coordinator.

For questions or technical assistance, email us at <u>Homeless@azed.gov</u>.

Please note that you are receiving this newsletter because you either you have signed up for it or, are currently listed as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison for your district. To update contact information contained in this list, you may email our office <u>Homeles@azed.gov</u>. If you are a new homeless liaison, please complete the form. <u>Click on this link</u> to access the form.

Professional Learning

The McKinney-Vento Act requires State Coordinators to provide professional development opportunities for LEA personnel and the LEA liaison to assist them in identifying and meeting the needs of homeless children and youths, and to provide training on the definitions of terms related to homelessness. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(f)(6)] - Title 42 of the U.S. Code

In addition, the law requires States to adopt policies and practices to ensure participation by liaisons in professional development and other technical assistance activities. Based on this guidance, as determined appropriate by the Office of the State Homeless Education Program Coordinator, McKinney-Vento Liaison(s) in the State of Arizona will meet the required *minimum of eight professional learning hours* each school year to ensure that the McKinney-Vento requirements and best practices are current. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iv)] - Title 42 of the U.S. Code

To better understand the role of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison, it is helpful to know the requirements of LEAs. LEAs are instrumental in ensuring that rights and services are protected, and McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons are the key individuals responsible for making this happen at their LEAs. The McKinney-Vento Act includes a "job description" for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison in the form of a list of duties (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)). You can read the document here Local Educational Agency Liaison Duties.

Our office has received questions related to training offered from our office, as well as what is required to receive verification of participation. Please view this guidance document <u>"Guidance on Attending</u> <u>ADE HEP Professional Learning" for information regarding training</u>.

- Professional Learning Requirements
- Registration
- During a Session

- Following a Session (verification of participation certificate)
- Not Able to Attend the Live Training



Our office is hosting professional learning opportunities for McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons!

McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison Training - Attendance & Transportation Best Practice

Learn best practices and strategies to address chronic attendance issues with homeless children and youth. Attendance often impacts transportation services; learn how to develop communication strategies to increase consistent usage of transportation and increase attendance overall. In addition, explore transportation best practices including how to determine supporting school of origin enrollment and transportation to accompany that decision as well as assessing which mode of transportation is most appropriate for the student based on best interest, and safety.

- Wednesday, March 22, 2023, 10:00 am to 11:00 am, click here to register.
- Wednesday, March 29, 2023, 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm, click here to register.

Determining Eligibility & Written Notification Requirements

Learn tips to guide your conversation to make McKinney-Vento eligibility determinations, and school enrollment. Incorporate best practice principles for proper notification of the decision, including the Dispute Resolution process.

- Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 10:00 am to 11:00 am, <u>click here to register</u>.
- Wednesday, April 26, 2023, 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm, <u>click here to register</u>.



FY24 EHCY Grant Informational Webinars!

Earlier this month our office provided a webinar session to support LEAs with the FY24 EHCY Grant application process. The session offered a project overview of the FY24 EHCY Competitive Grant by detailing eligibility requirements, joining a consortium, allowable uses of funds, how to apply, and what to expect when applying. LEAs learned how to develop and apply for a data-centered program to address the unique needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness. If you are a McKinney-Vento Liaisons and you missed the live webinar, we strongly encourage you to watch the recording. Feel free to share the information with any LEA staff that make programmatic and funding decisions related to homeless children and youth.

- FY24 EHCY Informational Webinar Recording (March 2023)
- FY24 EHCY Informational Webinar Presentation Slides

Additional Professional Learning Opportunities

<u>National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)</u> operates the U.S. Department of Education's technical assistance and information center for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program. NCHE SERVE offers resource publications for organizations, parents, and students to help educate them regarding their rights and the tools available to them. <u>Register for training</u> today!

Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness

Date: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 | 2:00PM-3:00PM ET

Description: In this interactive webinar, presenters will review key concepts related to the education of unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness included in the McKinney-Vento Act.

McKinney-Vento School Selection Rights

Date: Tuesday, March 28, 2023 | 2:00PM-3:00PM ET

Description: In this interactive NCHE webinar, presenters will review important changes related to school selection for homeless children and youth under the McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

McKinney-Vento 101: Basic Requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act

Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 | 2:00PM-3:00PM ET Description: In this interactive webinar, presenters from the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) will provide a high-level overview of the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Determining McKinney-Vento Eligibility

Date: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 | 2:00PM-3:00PM ET Description: In this interactive webinar, presenters will review the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless children and youth.

<u>SchoolHouse Connection-Q & A</u> is a national non-profit organization working to overcome homelessness through education. They provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with early childhood programs, schools, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth. <u>Click here</u> to view the webinar schedule.

Home Visiting for Homeless Families

Date: Tuesday, March 28, 2:00-3:00PM Eastern

Description: Co-presented by researchers from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, we dive into this program model and key findings from their formative evaluation study. We also talk breaking down the barriers of access to home visiting programs like this one and being more responsive to the needs of families experiencing homelessness.

How TRIO Student Support Services Can Help Students Experiencing Homelessness

Date: Wednesday, April 12, 1:00-2:00PM Eastern

Description: Under the FAFSA Simplification Act, TRIO and GEAR UP programs are newly authorized to determine unaccompanied homeless youth on the FAFSA. There is often overlap between students experiencing homelessness and students within TRIO programs. During this panel, webinar participants learn a general overview about FAFSA simplification and the implications for TRIO Student Support Services (SSS), as well as hear from two TRIO SSS on how they support students experiencing homelessness and how they will implement these new FAFSA provisions.

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) is a national membership association dedicated to educational equity and excellence for children and youth experiencing homelessness. 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 achieves these goals through advocacy, partnerships, and education.

Watch prior webinars by visiting the Professional Development page.

Other Learning Materials for Consideration

Title 42 of the U.S. Code (Part B: Education for Homeless Children and Youths)

U.S. Department of Education (2018). Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance

ADE Sample Forms

Local educational agencies (LEAs) or school districts are instrumental in ensuring that the rights and services guaranteed in the McKinney-Vento Act are implemented throughout the school district. All LEAs must follow the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, regardless of if they are McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) subgrantees.

The local McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison is the key to ensuring homeless children and youths receive the services they need. The liaison is the primary contact between homeless families, school LEA staff, shelter workers, and other service providers.

LEAs must develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of children and youth experiencing homelessness in school, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(I)] - Title 42 of the U.S. Code

To support the LEAs in their development of procedures and guidance documents, our office has created examples for use by liaisons. The documents and forms provided are to serve as <u>examples</u> and may be <u>adapted</u> for LEA use to ensure best practice pertaining to statutory requirements. Your LEA may be required to upload evidence of guidance documents and forms for the FY24 EHCY Grant review process as well as upcoming monitoring. Please check the <u>Guidance and Procedures page on the ADE Homeless Education Program website</u> for additions and revisions on an ongoing basis.

Below you will find several sample documents. We invite you to join this month's professional learning sessions where we will discuss these documents in more details. Learn best practices and strategies to address chronic attendance issues with homeless children and youth. Attendance often impacts transportation services; learn how the two intersect and how to implement strategies to improve attendance and manage transportation services.

ADE McKinney-Vento Attendance Procedure Sample

State educational agency and local educational agencies must demonstrate they have developed, reviewed and revise, policies to remove barriers to the identification of homeless children and youths, and the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youths in schools in the State, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences. Title 42 of the U.S. Code

There is no set timeline to resolve issues surrounding chronic absences due to the nature of homelessness. Federal law requires that districts remove barriers to attendance and that retention procedures are established. Zero tolerance policies may imply a barrier has been created. <u>ADE Best</u> <u>Practice for 10 Day Unexcused Absences Drop from Enrollment</u>, Established 11/07/2020.

In line with statute, LEA/charters will establish a written procedure to address attendance policies to ensure removal of barriers to enrollment and retention of homeless children and youths. This procedure is a sample of what LEA/charters may consider. Important to note, is the importance of

notifying the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison *prior* to the 10-day threshold of unexcused **absences.** Review the sample for additional information about how your LEA/charter can streamline and enhance communication between your school sites and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison.

ADE Transportation Best Practice Guidance Document (Updated 3/2023)

This document serves as guidance and a best practice overview to ensure your LEA/charter is arranging transportation so that barriers are removed for homeless children and youth, allowing them to participate for the full school day, neither arriving late nor leaving before the school day has ended.

The McKinney-Vento Act requires schools to immediately enroll homeless students with "enrollment" defined as "attending classes and participating fully in school activities." The law also requires LEA/charter to coordinate transportation services with other LEA/charters. Therefore, LEA/charter must arrange transportation *without delay*. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)], [42 U.S.C. § 11434a(1)], [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g) (5)(A)(ii)]

McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons must ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin, and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school selected in accordance with the best interest determination [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(viii)].

The LEA/charter of origin and the LEA/charter 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 LEA/charter is unable to agree upon such method, the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)].

The LEA determines the mode of transportation, and it should be the result of a student-centered decision with consideration given to viability and must align with LEA/charter pupil transportation policies. Additionally, safety standards must be considered, and the transportation option offered must not create a barrier to the student logical option.



ADE Transportation Agreement Sample Form

As a best practice, it is highly recommended that your LEA develops transportation agreement forms. The agreement should be written in a manner that is easily understood and accessible to all parties. A transportation agreement is a terrific way to communicate district transportation expectations, and guidelines and it ensures all parties are held accountable. ADE Bus Pass Agreement Sample Form

In some circumstances, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison may find that the best mode of transportation is **public transportation** (bus pass). This sample form clearly outlines the expectations for all parties. LEA/charters will find implementation of this type of agreement is helpful in ensuring all parties are held accountable.

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ADE Transportation Non-Usage Notification Letter Samples <u>ADE Transportation 3rd Occurrence Letter Sample</u> <u>ADE Transportation 5th Occurrence Letter Sample</u> <u>ADE Transportation 10th Occurrence Letter Sample</u>

There may be circumstances when an established bus route or vendor/contractor transportation service is not utilized on a consistent basis. If this occurs, it is imperative to address the incident for several reasons, 1) To ensure barriers are removed to prevent homeless children and youth from receiving a quality education. 2) To address daily attendance concerns. 3)To ensure LEA/charters are being good stewards of resources and funding allocations to support the transportation needs of homeless children and youth enrolled in the LEA/charter.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison should work closely with their transportation routing team or vendor to devise a notification and tracking system to monitor transportation attendance and usage. With a streamlined process in place, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison can address non-usage expeditiously which results in increased usage and improves daily school attendance.

Providing written notification of transportation concerns is an effective way to open the lines of communication between all parties and to discuss strategies to help the student re-engage and achieve daily, on time attendance. Proper written notification should happen *prior to cancelling transportation* so that additional barriers are not created. Consider the following sample letters to communicate concerns in writing.



Date: Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver/Unaccompanied Youth: Address:

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian/Caregiver/Unaccompanied Youth,

The purpose of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is to assist families that are experiencing homelessness or a temporary transition. We strive to remove barriers that would prevent your child from receiving a quality education.

(Enter district name) has been providing transportation for your child(ren), listed below, since (enter date transportation began).

Student Name Student ID Grade School of Origin

Our district has communicated with you on several occasions regarding issues with the regular use of transportation. Enclosed with this letter, you will find a copy of the Transportation Agreement you signed. The agreement outlines the expectations to receive transportation services under the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Below is a summary of the Transportation Agreement:

Technical Assistance

Through strong leadership, collaboration, and communication with local McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons, the State Coordinator can help ensure that districts carry out the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act. State Coordinators should establish clear-cut policies and procedures at the State level and communicate this information to districts to facilitate the smooth and consistent implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act (U.S. Department of Education (ED), 2016, p.11).

Examples of questions that are frequently addressed through technical assistance include:

- Access to community resources
- Attendance
- Best Interest Determination (BID)
- Data Reporting
- Dispute Resolution procedures
- Enrollment and identification
- Eligibility dates
- ESS and McKinney-Vento guidance
- Grant related questions
- Immunizations
- Mentoring
- Preschool and Head Start enrollment

- Procedures & Sample forms
- Roles & Responsibilities of LEA
- School supplies/clothing
- School of origin
- Training opportunities
- Transportation
- Unaccompanied youth enrollment
- Written notification
- *General inquiries

If you encounter a situation that you are unsure of and would like support, our office is available to provide technical assistance, please contact us at (602) 542-4963 or via email at <u>Homeless@azed.gov</u>.

Grants & Monitoring Updates

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is enacted via the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, which was reauthorized by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Through the EHCY program the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) provides annual grant award to State Education Agencies (SEAs) to then subgrant to Local Education Agencies (LEAs). The purpose of the EHCY subgrant funds is to <u>supplement</u> the services provided to all students to eliminate the specific barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, and academic success of children and youth experiencing homeness (42 U.S.C. § 11433(a)(3)).

Grant Application Details and Submission Window: The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) awards EHCY subgrants through a competitive and discretionary process. While the subgrant awards are contingent upon the annual state allocation provided by the USDE, the EHCY subgrants run on a three-year grant cycle. FY24 constitutes the first year of the forthcoming three-year EHCY grant cycle, and its grant application submission window is from **March 1st to May 1st, 2023**.

Next Steps: LEAs should begin submitting their FY24 EHCY grant applications and ensure the thorough review and utilization of the grant application materials below:

FY24 EHCY Grant Application Materials – ALL LEAs and Consortia Fiscal Agents

 General Grant Application Components

- Program Information and Instructions
- EHCY Assurances
- <u>FY24 EHCY Program Narrative Questions</u>
- <u>Grant Application Evaluation Rubric</u>
- Funding Formula
- Related Documents
 - <u>Checklist of Supplemental Materials to be Uploaded into the Related</u>
 <u>Documents</u>
 - Collaborations within the LEA
 - <u>Collaborations with CBOs</u>
- Resources
 - <u>McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Funding Uses</u>
 - <u>EHCY Use of Funds Tip Sheet</u>
 - USFR for Arizona School Districts
 - <u>EHCY Grant Budget Cheat Sheet</u>
 - <u>EHCY Budget Revision Guidance</u>
- FY24 EHCY Grant Application Materials ONLY Consortia Fiscal Agents
 Related Documents
 - <u>Sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</u>
 - Required EHCY Program Assurances and Certifications
 - Fiscal Agent EHCY Grant Application Checklist

Additional information, including the FY24 EHCY grant application webinar recordings and presentations, as well as other resources, are available on the <u>EHCY Funding website</u>.

Please email <u>Homeless@azed.gov</u> with any questions and feedback regarding the FY24 EHCY grant application.

Did you know?

Foster Care & McKinney-Vento

<u>Per Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act</u>, "awaiting **foster care** placement" was removed from the definition of homeless in December 2015; the only exception to this removal is that "covered states" had until December 2016 to remove "awaiting foster care placement" from their definition of homelessness. For support with Foster Care, contact <u>Joey Taylor</u>, Foster Care Education Coordinator and visit <u>the ADE Foster Care website</u>.

Post-secondary Education & FAFSA

Youth experiencing homelessness experience a facet of unique barriers in comparison to that of their peers. One of the barriers they encounter following high school is the promise of attaining a postsecondary education. The obvious hindrance is access to financial resources to make a dream of attending college a reality. For many of these youth, the lack of financial resources and knowledge of how to obtain support may perpetuate their situation. These youth run a substantial risk of facing homelessness and financial hardships as adults without the ability to goal set and plan or post-secondary opportunities.

According to an article published by the National College Attainment Network (NCAN), it's become

apparent that the first step in ensuring college access for youth is the completion of the <u>Free</u> <u>Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA</u>). Deadlines to submit the FAFSA application are quickly approaching we would like to provide McKinney-Vento Liaisons with resources to support the youth with which you are working.



For additional support contact the following resources: (click on the picture to connect to website)

Federal Student Aid





Defining School of Origin

School of origin is defined as **"the school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed orthe school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool"**. Further, "when the child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term school of origin shall include the designated **receiving** school at the **next grade level** for all **feeder** schools <u>42 USC1432(g)(3)(I)(i)</u>.

Students in homeless situations have the **right** either to **continue attending** the **school of origin**, OR to **enroll** immediately in the **local school**, according to each student's best interest [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(A); (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)].

When it is determined to be in a **student's best interest** to **continue** attending the **school of origin**, the student may **remain** in the school of origin for the **duration of homelessness**, and for the **remainder** of the **academic year** in which the student becomes permanently housed [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(A)(i)]. Students who lose housing between academic years may attend the school of origin the following academic year [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(A)].

We invite you to join the school of origin discussion during the upcoming trainings where we will dive into this topic.

Celebrating the Work You Do!

Amazing work is going into the support of homeless children and youth across Arizona, and we would love to celebrate it. Please continue to share events you will be hosting throughout the year so that we can highlight your work. Send your pictures and event information to <u>Rita Rodriguez</u>, State Homeless Education Program Coordinator.