



Transportation & the McKinney-Vento Act

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Agenda

- Impact of Student Mobility
- Overview of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- McKinney-Vento Requirements Related to Transportation
- Strategies to Fund Transportation
- Best Practices, Resources, & Questions
- Round Table Discussion



Impact of Mobility on Students Experiencing Homelessness



Homelessness Creates Barriers

- Students experiencing homelessness may:
 - Be unable to meet standard school enrollment requirements,
 - Move around and change schools a lot,
 - Be hungry, tired, and stressed,
 - Not have school supplies or a quiet place to study,
 - Not have access to reliable transportation, and
 - Not have a parent or guardian to help them (unaccompanied youth).

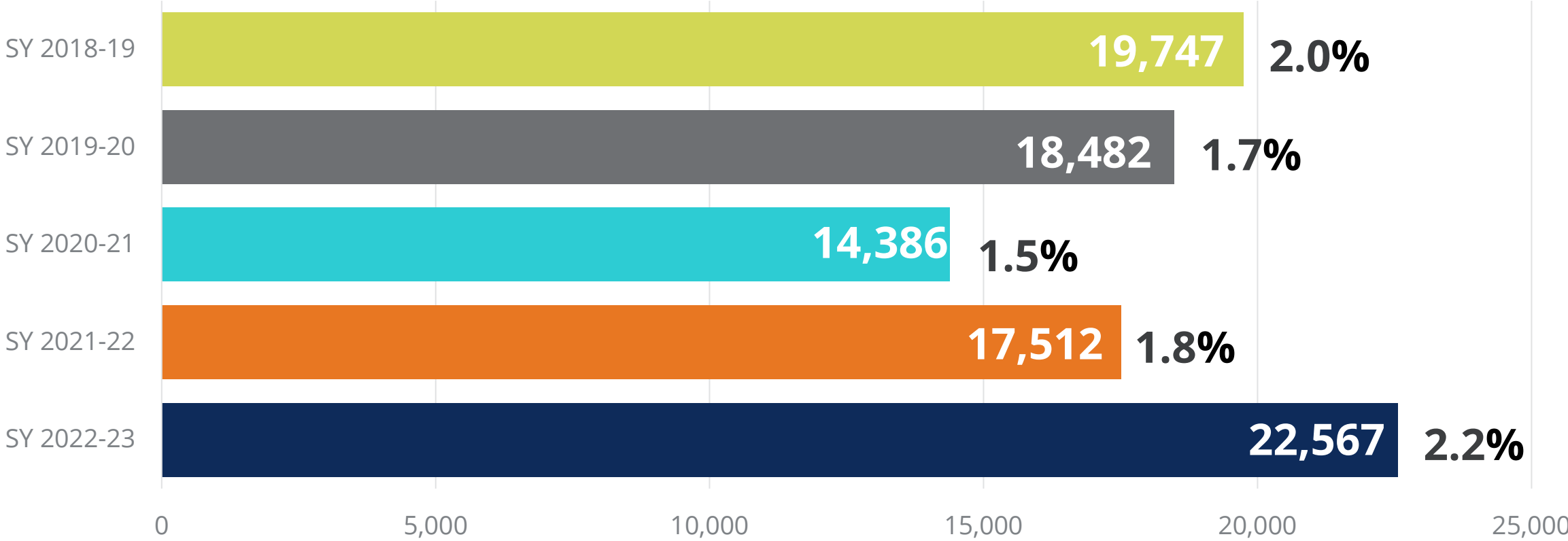


Homelessness Affects Education

- Students experiencing homelessness are more likely to:
 - Be chronically absent from school,
 - Get lower grades,
 - Have special education needs,
 - Score poorly on assessment tests, and
 - Drop out of school.



Homeless Student Enrollment: School Years 2019-2023



Source: Data Reporting, Office of the Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Education.
Data downloaded from EIS Discoverer on 6/16/23 for 2022-23

McKinney-Vento Act Requirements



Purpose of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program

- The purpose of the McKinney-Vento EHCY program is to ensure that each homeless child or youth **has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education**, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.

McKinney-Vento Act (42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq.)

- Establishes the definition of homeless used by public schools
 - Covers all public schools, including charter, magnet, & virtual schools
- Focuses on identification, enrollment, stability, and success of homeless children and youth (HCY), pre-K through high school
- Requires every school district to appoint a local homeless education liaison and every state to have a coordinator for homeless education
- Requires state educational agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of HCY





Fixed, Regular, and Adequate

- **Fixed** (stationary, permanent, not subject to change)
- **Regular** (used on a nightly basis)
- **Adequate** (sufficient for meeting the physical, psychological, and safety needs typically met in a home environment)



McKinney-Definition of Homeless

- **Lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence:**
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters, or are abandoned in hospitals;
 - Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
 - Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - Migratory children living in the above circumstances.



McKinney-Vento Awareness and Identification Resources

- [Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: An Introduction to the Issues](#)
 - This NCHÉ brief explains the definition of homeless established in the education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; describes some of the challenges faced by families, children, and youth experiencing homelessness; and provides an overview of the educational rights and supports available to students experiencing homelessness.
- [Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations](#)
 - This NCHÉ brief summarizes the key provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act related to the identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness and provides an overview of implementation strategies at the state and local levels.
- [Common Signs of Homelessness](#)



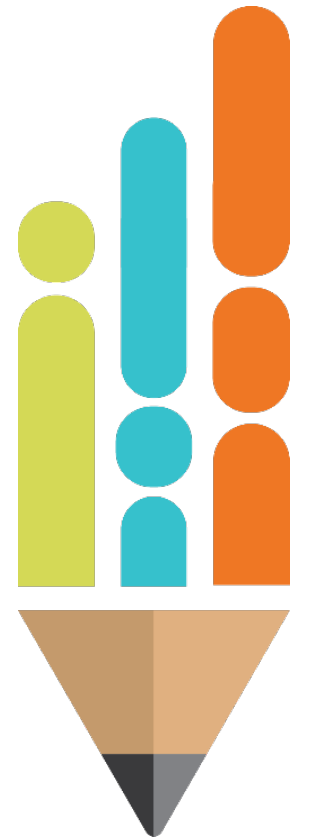
Local Homeless Liaisons

- Required in every LEA
- Responsibilities include:
 - Determine McKinney-Vento Eligibility
 - Work with others in the district and community to identify students
 - Assist families and unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) with enrollment and school selection decisions
 - Ensure parents and UHY are informed about services, including transportation to the school of origin.



Best Practices to Determine Eligibility

- Re-evaluate prior homeless situations before the beginning of each school year
- After each move, the liaison should determine:
 1. Whether the new living situation meets the MV criteria for homeless; and if so,
 2. If it is still in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin.
- No limit on how long a student can be eligible
- Temporary situations often become permanent over time



Resources on Eligibility

- [Determining Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services](#)
 - This NCHÉ brief: summarizes the key provisions related to eligibility included in the McKinney-Vento Act; provides recommended practices for confirming the McKinney-Vento eligibility of children and youth; and informs training and collaboration practices on confirming eligibility.
- [Confirming Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services](#)
 - This NCHÉ brief: summarizes the key provisions related to eligibility included in the McKinney-Vento Act; provides recommended practices for confirming the McKinney-Vento eligibility of children and youth; and informs training and collaboration practices on confirming eligibility.



Resources on Eligibility Training Webinars

- [Understanding Doubled-Up Webinar](#)
 - Description: Doubled-up is the informal wording used to describe a concept included in the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless. It refers to shared living arrangements, some of which may be considered homeless, while others may not be, depending on various factors.
- [Determining McKinney-Vento Eligibility Webinar](#)
 - This recorded webinar reviews the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), covering:
 - McKinney-Vento Act basics and context
 - Understanding the dynamics of family and youth homelessness
 - The McKinney-Vento definition of homeless
 - McKinney-Vento provisions on dispute resolution, including disputes related to eligibility



School Selection Criteria



Students experiencing homelessness may attend either:

- **The 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.
- Includes:
 - Public preschool programs
 - Receiving schools at the next grade level

- **The local attendance area school:**

- Any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend.

School of Origin

- When in their best interest, students may continue attending the school of origin:
 - The entire time they are homeless;
 - Until the end of any school year in which they moved into permanent housing; and
 - When they become homeless between school years and are still homeless at the beginning of the school year.
 - Decisions are based on each student’s best interest.

*Note: There is no time or distance limits for transportation under McKinney-Vento.



Best Interest Determination

- When making best interest determination in accordance with the statute:
 - presume that remaining in the school of origin is in the student’s best interest;
 - consider the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety; and
 - give priority to the request of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth.
- If the school and parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth disagrees after the best interest determination, initiate your LEA’s dispute resolution process.



McKinney-Vento Transportation Requirements

Transportation for Students Experiencing Homelessness



- LEAs must provide the following transportation:
 1. School of origin transportation
 - When requested by a parent or guardian or local liaison on behalf of an unaccompanied homeless youth
 - Until the end of the school year after a homeless student obtains permanent housing
 2. Transportation comparable to what is provided to other students
- [Transporting Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)
 - This brief explains the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act related to the transportation of children and youth experiencing homelessness and offers strategies for implementing the law.

Comparable Transportation

- LEAs must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.
 - If a student is on a normal bus route, or within the LEA policy to take public transportation- those typical methods should be used.
 - If a student is temporarily living somewhere that is in the LEA walk zone, that student should follow the walk zone policy.
 - Exceptions do exist within offering comparable services, usually if there is an unsafe route to school or concerns for the child's safety.





Extracurricular Activities

- LEAs must eliminate barriers to, among other things, the enrollment of students experiencing homelessness (including transportation barriers). **Enrollment includes attending classes and “participating fully in school activities”.**
- Full participation includes participation in extracurricular activities, and McKinney-Vento emphasizes that students must not face barriers to accessing extracurricular activities.
- If transportation is a barrier for a child or youth to participate in extracurricular activities, transportation must be provided.



Preschool Transportation

- Preschool is included in the definition of school of origin.
- If transportation is a barrier, the LEA(s) must provide it for LEA-administered public preschool programs (4K, Head Start, IDEA services, etc.).
- Transportation to the school of origin must be provided even if a child who is enrolled in a public preschool in one LEA moves to another LEA that does not provide widely available or universal preschool.





Modes of Transportation

- LEA determines and can use any mode of transportation that meets the state standards, is safe, and allows the student to fully participate in school.
- Transportation options include:
 - Standard school bus (**should always be the goal and priority**)
 - Special education bus
 - Other LEA-owned vehicles, e.g., van, activity bus, etc.
 - Public transportation
 - Private contractor
 - Parents or youth
 - If they are willing and have reliable transportation
 - Can be reimbursed for mileage



Sharing Transportation Costs

- LEAs must agree on how to split the responsibility and cost of transportation or share them equally when a student's school of origin is different from the local attendance area school.
- If crossing LEA lines, both LEAs must determine how to divide the responsibility and share the cost, or they must share the cost equally.
- It is recommended that the homeless liaison reach out to the sharing district, rather than simply sending a bill.
- Discuss options - one LEA may have transportation options that are more cost-effective than the other.



Transportation Funding for Students Experiencing Homelessness

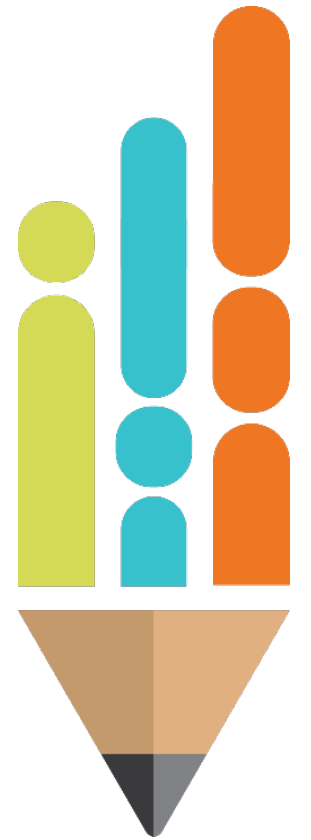
Funding Options

- McKinney-Vento subgrant funds can be used to:
 - Defray the excess cost of transportation to the school of origin.
 - Excess cost is the amount that exceeds the cost of transporting permanently housed students.
 - Prove extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable students to attend school and participate fully in school activities
- Title I, Part A homeless set-aside funds can be used to:
 - Cover the excess cost of transportation to the school of origin.



Excess Cost of Transportation

- **How should an LEA calculate the excess cost of transportation for a homeless child or youth to the school of origin?**
 - The excess cost is the difference between what an LEA normally spends to transport a student to school and the cost of transporting a homeless student to school. If the LEA provides transportation through a regular route, there is no excess cost. If the LEA provides special transportation only for the homeless student (e.g., through a private vehicle or transportation company), the entire cost can be considered excess. If the LEA must re-route busses to transport students enrolled in one of the schools, the additional cost of this rerouting can be considered excess cost.



Best Practices, Resources, and Discussion

Best Practices From the Field– LEA Staff Tips

- Train transportation staff on the rights and needs of homeless students, as well as on the need for sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Convene a meeting of local homeless liaisons and transportation directors to develop a plan that addresses cost, responsibility, and logistics before the need occurs;
 - Students experiencing homelessness move frequently and transportation plans must be adjusted accordingly.
- Encourage families and youths to inform the local liaison when they are moving.



Best Practices From the Field– Transportation Procedures

- Use technology, such as a transportation database, to make electronic transportation requests, maintain current records of students receiving transportation, and determine what specialized bus routes have been established.
- Develop forms, such as transportation requests and parent and youth transportation agreements that may be accessed easily at any school or online.



Best Practices From the Field— Transportation Procedures

- Identify a transportation staff member who will serve as the point person to arrange transportation for homeless students.
- Explore flexible bus routes that can be implemented easily.
- Maintain list of shelters, hotels, motels, campgrounds, and other areas where homeless families and youth may live so that these locations can be included in bus routes on short notice.
 - Recognizing that establishing a stop directly in front of these locations can stigmatize students.
- If using public transportation, offer support for parents to accompany young children to and from school.



Best Practices From the Field— Cost Saving Tips

- Develop a system of providing gas vouchers, cards, or reimbursements to parents or youth who are able and willing to drive to school.
- Explore possibilities for volunteers to provide transportation for homeless students.
 - Consider this only when pupil transportation safety policies allow this, and sufficient driver background checks are conducted.
- Brainstorm time and cost-saving solutions with the LEA and community stakeholders.
- Explore state and other special funds that can be used to reimburse LEAs for special transportation for students experiencing homelessness.



Resources



- [U.S. Department of Education \(ED\): McKinney-Vento Law and Guidance](#)
- [Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance](#)
- [ePlan > TDOE Resources > ESSA Information, Guidance, PPTs, & Webinars > Title IX, Part A Education for Homeless Children & Youth > McKinney-Vento Toolkit and Resources 2021](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth \(NAEHCY\)](#)
- [National Center for Homeless Education \(NCHE\):](#)
 - [NCHE Homeless Liaison Toolkit](#)
 - Homeless Education Helpline: 800-308-2145 or homeless@serve.org



Team Discussion

Team Discussion Questions

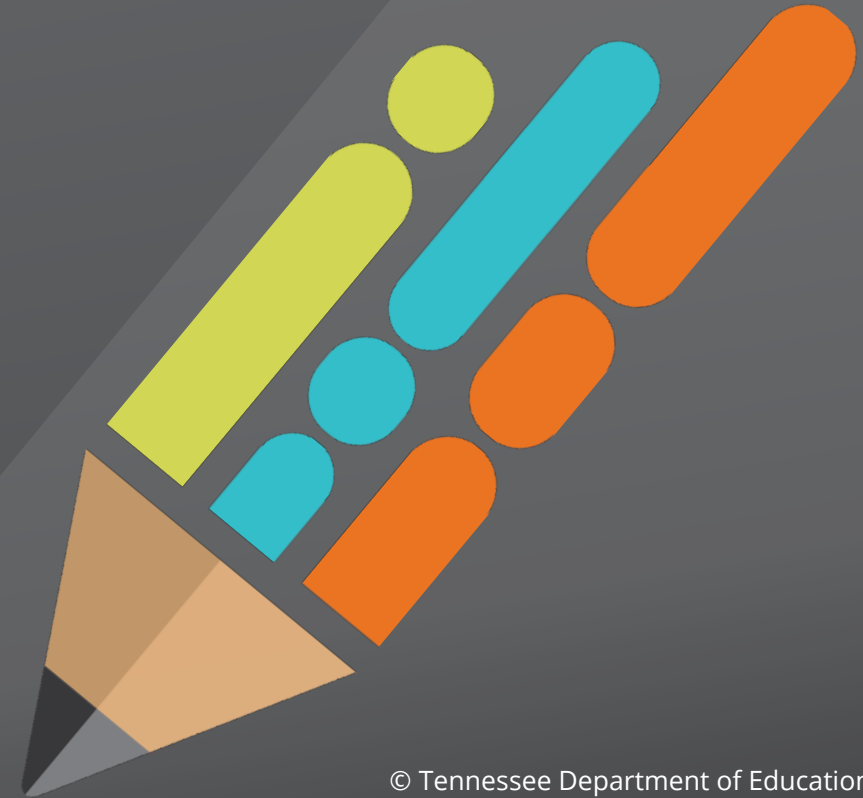
1. What challenges have you experienced with transportation for students experiencing homelessness in your LEA?
2. What is the most difficult transportation scenario you've had to navigate? What was your solution?
3. What is the most creative way you've met a transportation need?
4. What procedures do you have in place to ensure transportation is set up quickly and effectively?
 - What collaboration needs to happen? Who needs to be involved?
 - What available funding sources are available for student transportation cost?
5. When applicable, what is the process used to work with the sharing LEA's transportation staff and liaison?



Please Share your Feedback:

You may access the PD by navigating here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/eVtWEAZ9xZ>





Thank You!

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