Coordination & Collaboration Under the McKinney-Vento Act

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Agenda

- Education for Homeless Children & Youth (EHCY) Program Purpose
- McKinney-Vento & Program Collaborations
- Federally Required Collaborations
- From the Field
  - Memphis-Shelby County Schools
  - Hardin County Schools
- Questions, Resources, & Contacts

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Program Purpose

Purpose of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

- The purpose of the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youths (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.

42 U.S.C.A. § 11431

McKinney-Vento Act & Collaborations

McKinney-Vento Act Program Collaboration

- Collaboration is a means to expand the capacity of programs and agencies to provide services in a coordinated way.

- Per the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Non-Regulatory Guidance (2018), coordination and collaboration are required under the McKinney-Vento Act.

- Local education agencies (LEAs) must collaborate and coordinate specifically with:
  - community-based organizations (CBOs), and
  - federal programs that are required to identify and serve homeless children and youth and to coordinate with LEAs.

(42 U.S.C. §11432)

Examples of Effective Collaborators

LEA Level

- Federal Programs department
- Family Resource Center
- IT/EIS departments
- Fiscal and Accountability departments
- School Nutrition
- Social Workers
- Transportation department

School Level

- School staff
- Administrators
- Enrollment personnel and front office staff
- Attendance/Truancy personnel
- School Counselors
- School Nurses
- Cafeteria workers and bus drivers

Federal Collaborations

Collaborations with Federally Funded Programs

ED's Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance includes a wealth of information on collaboration and coordination between LEAs and federally funded homeless service providers.

- Head Start Services
- Higher Education & Federal Student Aid
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Families First- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Preschool

- ESSA places an increased emphasis on identifying homeless preschool children.

- The school of origin also includes public preschool programs.

- Homeless children must have access to and receive services through:
  - Head Start and Early Head Start;
  - IDEA Part C, early intervention; or
  - other preschool programs administered by the LEA.

Head Start/Early Learning

- Head Start programs support children's growth from birth to age five through services that support early learning and development, health, and family well-being.

- Head Start services are available at no cost to children ages birth to five in eligible families. Head Start Preschool services work with families with children ages three to five.

- Early Head Start services work with families with children ages birth to three, and many also serve expectant families. Many programs operate both Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start services.

- For more details on Head Start Programming, visit Head Start.gov.

Head Start/ Early Learning, Cont.

- LEAs and Head Start programs are required to coordinate and establish collaborative relationships and partnerships with community organizations.

- Cross-coordination is necessary to improve education and other outcomes for children and their families; it is essential for determining eligibility, identifying, and enrolling children consistently across programs, as well as coordinating referrals for services.

  - Find Head Start locations: nhsa.org/head-start-center-locations/

Institutions of Higher Education

- Unaccompanied homeless youth can be qualified as "independent students" for the purposes of filling out the FAFSA.

- Documentation from an LEA's homeless liaisons can be used to determine "independent status."
  - Higher Education Act 20 USCA § 1087 et al.

National School Meals Programs

- [Section 107 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Act)](#) establishes that homeless children are categorically eligible for free meal benefits under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

  - See 7 C.F.R. § 245.2

- These students and families do not have to complete an application for free meals.

  - See 7 C.F.R. § 245.2(2)

- [National School Lunch Program](#)

- [Feeding America](#)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- Formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, SNAP helps low-income people buy food.

- Although it is a federal government program, SNAP is administered by state or local agencies.

- [TN SNAP Nutrition Information](#)

- [Tennessee State SNAP-Ed Program](#)

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) Program

▪ The RHYA is a funding source for three programs that address the needs of runaway youth and youth experiencing homelessness.

1. Basic Center Programs meet the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth by providing emergency shelter, food, clothing, counseling, and referrals for health care. The program serves youth aged 18 and up for 21 days. (See RHYA at 34 USC §§ 11211-14)

2. Transitional Living Programs provide long-term residential services to help homeless youth aged 16-21 successfully transition to self-sufficient living. (See RHYA at 34 USC §§ 11221-22)

3. Street Outreach Programs offer outreach, services, and referrals to youth living on the street to move them into stable housing and prepare them for independence. (See also Violence Against Women Act of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 at 34 USC § 12451)

U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

- HUD currently administers a [variety of programs](#) dedicated to preventing or ending homelessness within the United States.
- The Continuum of Care (COC) Program is designed to:
  - promote community commitment to ending homelessness;
  - provide funding for nonprofits and government entities to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness;
  - promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs; and
  - optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness.

Additional CoC Supports

- Continuum of Care (CoC) Program

- State of Tennessee Area CoCs:
  - Jackson/West Tennessee CoC
  - Tennessee Valley Continuum of Care (East Tennessee)
  - Homeless Advocacy for Rural Tennessee (HART) (Upper Cumberland/ Middle Tennessee)

Local Social Services or Human Services Agencies

- The Families First program emphasizes work, training, and personal responsibility.

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds can be used to help families avoid homelessness.

- The funds can be used for short-term assistance, such as rent or utility payments, without triggering the 60-month lifetime limit for assistance.

- Tennessee Department of Human Services: Families First
  - Families First Eligibility information can be found here.

MSCS Special Populations: Partnering to Support Homeless Families & Youth

Karen Ball-Johnson, Senior Manager-Special Populations

Vequitia Barnes, McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison

TN Department of **Education**

How It Started – Raising Awareness & Building the Right Team

- Our work began with raising awareness—first internally, then throughout the community.

- We shared our story through local media to help the public understand what homeless students were facing.

- As the pandemic unfolded, it exposed and intensified housing instability.

- We quickly saw how chronic absenteeism, truancy, and declining enrollment were closely tied to housing loss and family crises.

How It Started – Staffing

- We intentionally selected staff who had: deep knowledge of the local community resources, a strong drive to serve vulnerable students, and experience building partnerships and working across agencies.

- With the right team in place, we trained, trained some more, built trust, and committed to serving, responding quickly, and strengthening cross-sector collaboration.

- One band, one sound—all boots on the ground!

Why Partnerships Matter

- No single program or department can meet the needs of homeless families and students alone.

- Collaborating with community partners helps us identify and respond quickly to families in crisis.

- Some things are beyond our scope, including providing emergency housing and after-hours essentials such as meals, mental health support, medical care, etc.

- Partnerships promote stability and reduce learning disruptions.

- These relationships help keep students connected to school and on track academically, socially, and emotionally.

- Partnerships extend our reach in the community and make long-term support for our families possible.
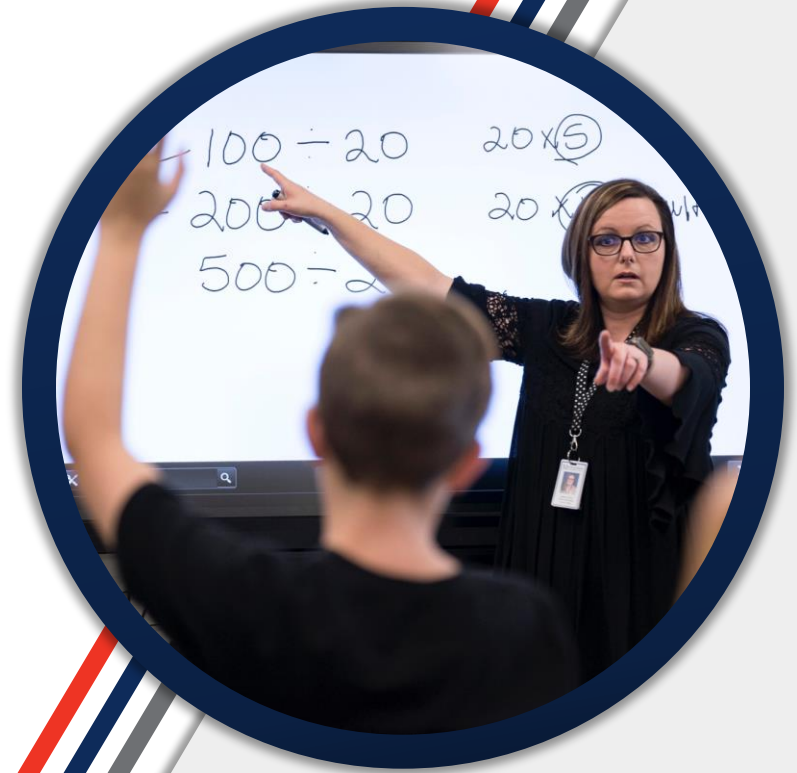
Partnerships That Drive Impact

- **MIFA, Hospitality Hub, and Catholic Charities** - Secure emergency housing and shelter for families in crisis.

- **Su Casa** - Identifies and supports non-English-speaking families experiencing homelessness.

- **Agape & the City of Memphis** - Newly launched Student Housing Initiative will house 80 families.

- **Shelby County Community Services Agency (CSA)** – Pending funding, provides up to $5,000 per family to assist with rent, deposits, and utilities.

- **MSCS FACE Department** - Strengthens family outreach and provides wraparound support through the Community Schools model.

Partnerships That Drive Impact

- **MSCS Mental Health Centers & Kindred Place** - Offer trauma-informed counseling and mental health services to students and families.
- **Christ Community Health Services** - Delivers low or no-cost medical support, including immunizations and physical exams.
- **The SchoolSeed Foundation** - Secures donations for emergency supports and provides YHDP system navigation for youth, 18-24.
- **Community Alliance for the Homeless** - Connects us to COC agencies and provides homeless data trends for funding.
- **The Salvation Army Family Shelter, Room in the Inn, and an undisclosed hotel** - Allows us to meet families at their locations and provide rent-free space for tutoring programs (meals and snacks provided by MSCS Nutrition Services).

Why This Work Matters for Everyone

- Homelessness is not just a student issue—it's a community issue!
- When schools, agencies, donors, and neighbors work together, families move from crisis to stability—and students stay connected to learning and opportunity.
- When a student is housed, fed, supported, and seen, everyone wins.
- Safe, stable families make safer, stronger communities.

Key Takeaways for Other Districts

- Start with awareness.
- Telling your story builds understanding and opens doors.
- Build the right team.
- Staff with community knowledge and compassion are your greatest asset.
- Invest in relationships.
- Partnerships are built on trust, not transactions.
- Consistency matters.
- Leverage every resource.
- Do not leave federal, local, or private dollars untapped—combine them strategically.
- Meet families where they are.
- Flexibility and dignity go a long way in restoring stability.

Contact Information

- Vequitia Barnes
  - Homeless Liaison
  - Phone: (901) 416-9875
  - Email: barnesvl@scsk12.org

- Dr. Karen Ball-Johnson
  - Senior Manager-Special Populations
  - Phone: (901) 416-7393
  - Email: ballkf@scsk12.org

Hardin County Schools

Theresa McCormick

Federal Programs/Homeless Liaison – West TN

Savannah, TN

District Information

- Rural Area

- Five Elementary Schools, one Middle School, one High School

- About 3,200 students

- Average Poverty Level around 64 percent

- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) District for 12 years

- Homeless Students Identified – 2021-22 (91 students), 2022-23 (160 students), 2023-24 (157 students), 2024-25 (149 students)

- Use Direct Certification

- Household Surveys

Leveraging Grant Funding

- Title I, Part A Homeless Set-Aside Funds
- Took advantage of the ARP Homeless 2.0 Funds and spent every penny (these funds were a game changer for our LEA)
- Title V Funds – Stipends for Homeless Navigators
- Donated Fund Account (talk to your finance department)

Successful Collaborations

- Community Donated Items & Funds
- Our Daily Bread Food Pantry
- House of Hope
- Jesus Cares
- The Table
- Local Churches & Businesses

Design Team Partnership

Northside Elementary School
Feb 6, 2024

We are so grateful for community partners! Design Team built, delivered and supplied a new care closet that will help Northside ensure the needs of our students are met. We appreciate the generosity and thoughtfulness from Design Team!

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ⊙ Send   ↪ Share

West Hardin Elementary
Jan 26, 2024

👏👏👏 Thank you to Design Team for donating a closet full of supplies for our care closet at school! Student council members are pictured with Design Team employees during their donation this week. Thanks for thinking of us and our students! 🧡

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ⊙ Send   ↪ Share

Michael Davis is with Keith Pierce at Hardin County Schools.
Jun 15, 2023

The Hardin County School System would like to thank Design Team and all their employees for an incredible donation today. Because of their generosity, some students within our school system will be receiving a care package over the summer. We are forever grateful for all the support Design Team and their employees continue to provide our community. 👏👏👏

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ⊙ Send   ↪ Share

Ways Partnerships were Initiated and Cultivated:

- Calls and in-person visits
- Volunteer (food drives, packing food boxes, serve on committees or board of directors, etc.)
- Show appreciation (thank you notes, social media shout-outs, etc.)
- Share success stories

Internal Partnerships (Collaboration within our LEA)

- Homeless Navigators at each school
- Social Workers
- Guidance Counselors
- Nurses
- Administrators/Teachers/Support Staff
- School Nutrition – Work closely with the school nutrition supervisor to identify homeless students
- Transportation – Attend annual meeting each year before school starts

Best Practices & Lessons Learned

- Thank you notes to show appreciation
- Shout-outs on social media
- Updating donors on how funds were spent
- Homeless Navigators in each school
- Donated Fund Account (Funds used for: short-term motel stay, dental procedures, eye exams, glasses, food, clothing, books, art supplies, bedding, games, etc.)
- Care Packages for homeless students
- ARP Homeless 2.0 funds helped us expand our homeless program

Contact Information

- Theresa McCormick
  – Federal Programs Supervisor/Homeless Liaison
  – Hardin County Schools
  – Office: 731-925-3943
  – Email: theresa.mccormick@hctnschools.com

Questions?

Questions & Resouces

Resources

- [ePlan > TDOE Resources](#) > ESSA Information, Guidance, PPTs, & Webinars > Title IX, Part A Education for Homeless Children & Youth > McKinney-Vento Toolkit and Resources 2023

- [U.S. Department of Education: Identifying and Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness from Pre-School to Post-Secondary Ages](#)

- [Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance](#)

- [National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE):](#)
  – [NCHE Homeless Liaison Toolkit](#)
  – Homeless Education Helpline: (305)306-8495 or NCHE.helpline@safalpartners.com

- [SchoolHouse Connection](#)

Effective Collaborations with Community-Based Organizations

- A Guide to Effective Collaborations with Community-Based Organizations to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness.

- nche.ed.gov/a-guide-to-effective-collaborations-with-community-based-organizations-to-support-students-experiencing-homelessness/

A GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE COLLABORATIONS WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

NCHE

National Center for Homeless Education
September 2023

Housing and Education Collaborations

HOUSING AND EDUCATION COLLABORATIONS TO SERVE HOMELESS CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

NCHE

National Center for Homeless Education
October 2023

- The brief provides basic information to help homeless service providers and homeless education staff understand each other's roles in supporting children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness, while offering tools to enhance collaboration among agencies.

- nche.ed.gov/housing-and-education-collaborations-to-serve-homeless-children-youth-and-families/

Coordinated Entry Processes

- This brief is designed for educators, including State Coordinators for Homeless Education and local homeless education liaisons, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CoC Program recipients. It provides a brief overview of HUD coordinated entry processes and suggests strategies for building local coordinated entry engagement and collaboration between schools and CoCs.

- nche.ed.gov/coordinated-entry-processes-building-mutual-engagement-between-schools-and-continuums-of-care/

About the Point-In-Time Count

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is an annual count of people experiencing homelessness on a single night in the last 10 days in January. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires its Continuum of Care (CoC) grantees to conduct an annual count of sheltered homeless persons. CoCs also must conduct a count of unsheltered homeless persons every other year (odd numbered years).[i] Each count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally by service providers and trained volunteers.

The Importance of Data

In its Home Together: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) underscores the importance of collecting, reporting, and analyzing high-quality, timely data on homelessness, and leveraging a variety of data sets to plan, target, and scale needed housing and service interventions. Important sources of data on homelessness in the United States include
- Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program data;
- HUD Point-In-Time count (AHAR Part 1), Homeless Management Information System (HMIS; AHAR Part 2), and Worst Case Housing Needs data;
- Runaway and Homeless Youth Act grantee (RHY-HMIS) data;
- U.S. Census Bureau American Housing Survey (AHS) data; and
- other relevant data sources, as appropriate to the specific federal, state, or local context.

Each source provides unique insights; as such, the most accurate and complete picture of family and youth homelessness can be developed only when considering all of these sources. CoCs and schools are encouraged to work together to share and leverage their respective data sets, in accordance with applicable law, by referencing each other's numbers in reports and public talking points, as appropriate, and using multiple sources of data to inform local efforts to serve families and youth.

Statutory Guidelines under PPRA and FERPA

The two key pieces of federal legislation that guide how local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools may engage in PIT count planning and implementation are the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). PPRA addresses the administration of surveys, while FERPA addresses the sharing of personally identifiable information (PII) about students with third parties.

Survey administration under PPRA: PPRA [20 U.S.C. § 1232h(c)] requires LEAs to develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding
- the right of a parent of a student to inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student;
- any applicable procedures for granting a request by a parent for reasonable access to such survey within a reasonable period of time after the request is received;
- arrangements to protect student privacy that are provided by the agency in the event of the administration or distribution of a survey to a student containing certain protected categories of information; and
- offering an opportunity for the parent to opt the student out of participation in such surveys.

The rights provided to parents under PPRA transfer to the student when the student turns 18 years old or is an emancipated minor [20 U.S.C. § 1232h(c)(5)(B)].

Information-sharing under FERPA: FERPA generally prohibits LEAs and schools that receive funds under any program administered by the U.S. Department of Education from disclosing student education records, and the personally identifiable information (PII) contained therein, without the prior written consent of a parent [20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)]

Housing and School Partnership on the Point-In-Time Count

- The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is an annual count of people experiencing homelessness on a single night in the last 10 days in January.

- HUD requires its CoC grantees to conduct an annual count of sheltered homeless persons.

- CoCs also must conduct a count of unsheltered homeless persons every other

- nche.ed.gov/housing-and-school-partnership-on-the-point-in-time-count/

Partnering to Support Educational Success for Runaway and Homeless Youth

- This NCHE brief provides an overview of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth and Runaway and Homeless Youth programs, reviews McKinney-Vento Act and Runaway and Homeless Youth Act requirements related to cross-systems collaboration, and suggests cross-systems collaboration strategies in support of the education of runaway and homeless youth.

- nche.ed.gov/partnering-to-support-educational-success-for-runaway-and-homeless-youth/

Questions?

Please share your session feedback

You may access the PD Survey by navigating here:
https://forms.office.com/r/sbRAwQUV0d
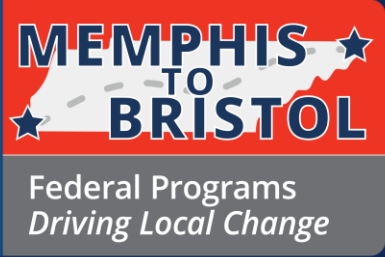
Up Next...
Click one of the links below to seamlessly join the next session of your choice.

Educational Stability for Youth in Foster Care **Jackie Jacobson**	**2025 FPI Foster Care Presentation.pptx**
Section 504 Responsibilities & Requirements **Shaundraya Hersey, Courtney Boykin**	*link coming by 8/26*

Thank You!

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