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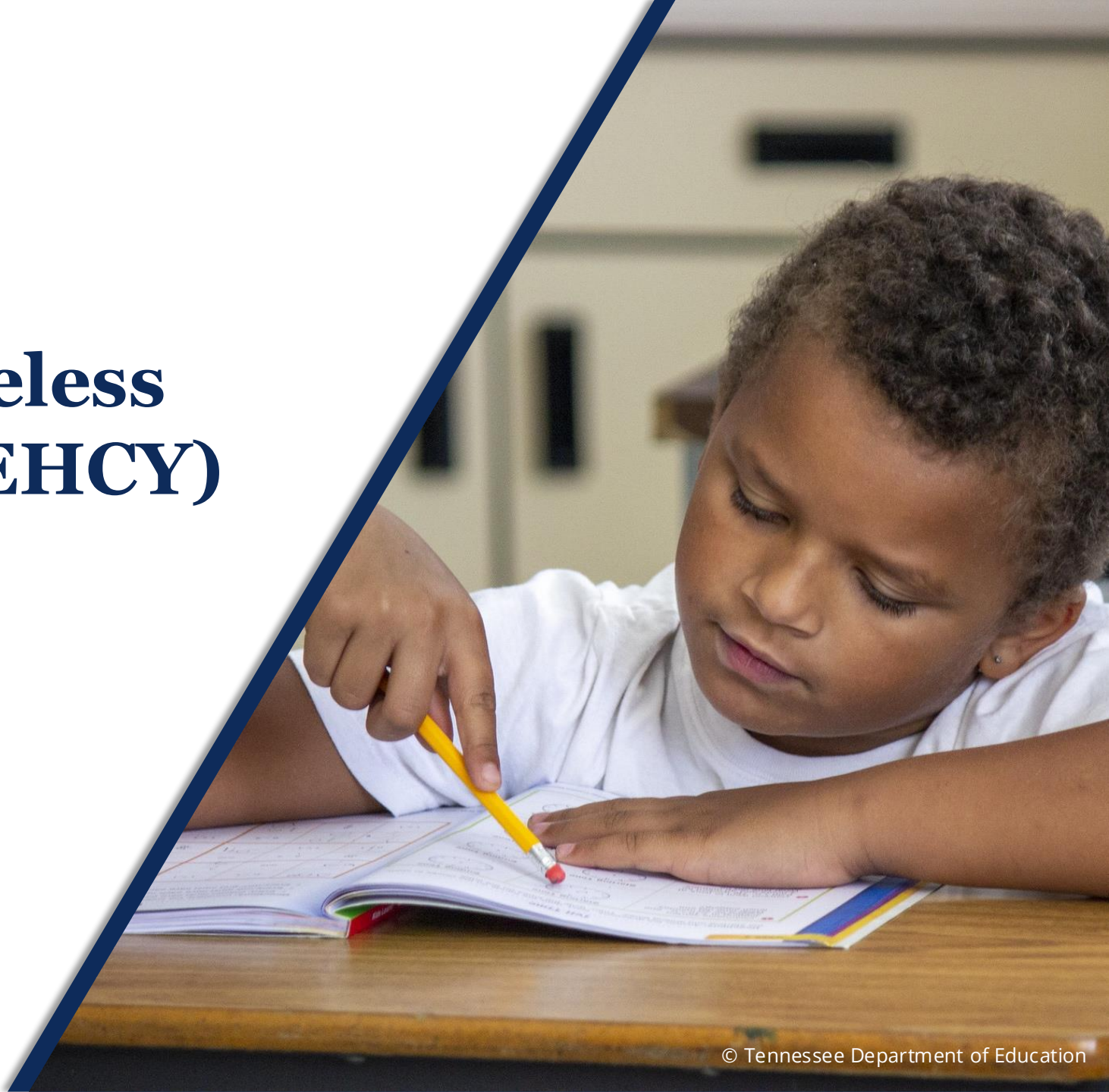
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TO
★ **BRISTOL**

Federal Programs
Driving Local Change

Education for Homeless Children & Youth (EHCY) Annual Training

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DISCLAIMER

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Agenda

- Program Purpose
- Definitions and Rights Under McKinney-Vento
- Local Liaison Responsibilities
 - Identification, Enrollment, and School Selection
 - Transportation
 - Best Interest and Dispute Resolution
 - Professional Development, Coordination, and Collaboration
- Important Reminders and Resources



Program Purpose & Definitions and Rights Under McKinney-Vento



Purpose of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

- The purpose of the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EH CY) 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

Defining Homelessness

- Children or youth who **lack 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 regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
 - living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - who are migratory children living in the above circumstances.

42 U.S.C.A. § 11434a(2)

Key Definitions

- ***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

Right to Privacy

- Schools must treat information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation as a student education record, which is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Local education agencies (LEAs) must obtain prior written consent from the parent or eligible student to disclose any information from a student's educational record.

42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(G)

Local Homeless Liaison Responsibilities

Local Liaisons

- Every LEA must designate an appropriate staff person to serve as the local homeless education liaison (42 USC § 11432 (g)(1)(J)(ii)).
 - This person may be the coordinator for other federal programs.
- Local liaisons serve as the key homeless education contact for the LEA and play a critical role in the implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act.



Local Homeless Liaison Responsibilities Summary

- Identification, Enrollment, and School Selection Criteria
- Transportation
- Best Interest Determination and Dispute Resolution
- Professional Development
- Coordination and Collaboration
 - Preschool, higher ED, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and other federally funded programs

National Center for Homeless Education, Homeless Liaison Toolkit (August 2020)



Local Homeless Liaison Responsibilities:

Identification, Enrollment, and
School Selection

Identifying Students

- Identification is the first step to connecting students in homeless situations with the information, resources, and supports necessary to ensure their equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as is provided to other children and youth.

National Center for Homeless Education, Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations (March 2021)



Methods to Identify Students

Housing Questionnaire

- Include in the LEA's enrollment packet
- Sample questionnaires: <https://nche.ed.gov/translations/> (See *Sample Forms, Materials, and Policies*)

McKinney-Vento Student Rights Poster

- Placed in high-visibility areas where students and families can view
- Must include state and LEA homeless liaison contact information

McKinney-Vento Eligibility Information

- Include in student handbooks, on the LEA's website, and in brochures

Student Observation

- Look for the [Common Signs of Homelessness](#)

Housing Questionnaire

- **Every** student gets one **every** year.
 - Include in the LEA enrollment packet or online enrollment process.
 - Translate forms used to identify homeless students into the different languages used in the LEA.
 - Remember, schools must communicate information to limited English proficient parents, in a language they can understand, about any program, service, or activity that comes to the attention of parents who are proficient in English.
 - Designate someone at each school to process forms.
 - Forward to the district homeless liaison or the designated point of contact.

National Center for Homeless Education, Determining Eligibility for McKinney-Vento and Services (March 2021)

U.S. Dep't. Of Justice and U.S. Dep't. Of Educ., Information for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Parents and Guardians and for Schools and School Districts that Communicate with Them (2015)



Housing Questionnaire

- Samples can be found in [ePlan](#) > TDOE Resources > ESSA Information, Guidance, PPTs, & Webinars > Title IX, Part A Education for Homeless Children & Youth > McKinney-Vento Toolkit and Resources 2023.
- There are two templates:
 - [Housing Form](#)
 - [Housing Questionnaire](#)
- Department resources can be accessed in ePlan without having to log in.



Barriers to Identification

Challenges

- Lack of understanding of the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless
- Desire to avoid the stigma often associated with homelessness
- Discomfort discussing the circumstances, which often are very personal and sensitive, that led to them being homeless and on their own
- Fear of being treated differently by school personnel or other students

Strategies

Create a welcoming and supportive school environment.

Develop youth-friendly outreach materials and distribute them where youth are likely to see them.

Use youth-friendly means of communications (e.g., social media, text, websites).

Immediate Enrollment

- LEAs must develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless students, including barriers related to outstanding fees, fines, or absences (42 USC § 11432 (g)(1)(I)).
- Enrollment is defined as “attending classes and participating fully in school activities” (42 USC § 11434a (1)).
 - Includes removing barriers to extracurricular activities, before and after-school programs.
- Homeless children and youth have the right to enroll in school **immediately, even if lacking documentation normally required for enrollment** (42 USC § 11432(g)(3)(C)).



Immediate Enrollment for Unaccompanied Youth

- Unlike most education laws, McKinney-Vento gives rights **directly to unaccompanied youth, above the rights of their parents/guardians.**
 - To enroll and make decisions
 - To choose between the school of origin and the local school
 - To file disputes
- LEAs can handle enrollment in any way that ensures immediate participation; the most common procedure is for youth to enroll themselves.



Removing Barriers to Enrollment and Retention

Challenges

- Chronic absenteeism
- Mobility
- Trauma and related mental health struggles
- Lack of adult support
- Gaps in learning

Strategies

Ensure access to tutoring, after-school, and summer enrichment programs by prioritizing McKinney-Vento students and providing transportation.

Provide one-on-one academic support and regular “check-ins.”

Monitor attendance and provide interventions quickly.

Award and accept partial credits and provide credit recovery options.

Provide behavioral support and intervention when needed.

School Selection Criteria

Students experiencing homelessness may attend either:

- **The local attendance area school:**
 - Any public school where students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend.
- **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.

42 USC § 11432(g)(3)(C)



Receiving Schools

- 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 (42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(I)(ii)).



Test Your Knowledge

Enrollment- True or False

- A family experiencing homelessness comes to register and states that they are living with a family friend and are not able to provide a lease agreement or receipts of payment. The LEA can require that the owner/landlord of the home come in with the family to validate that the family is living there.
- True or false

Enrollment

- **False**—The McKinney-Vento Act states that school districts cannot insist that families or youth provide documents like eviction notices, utility bills, occupancy permits, or notarized letters from the party whose housing they are sharing. The homeless liaison should work with the family to determine **if** there is any documentation that could confirm their living situation.
- Schools must enroll students seeking McKinney-Vento eligibility immediately, even if they are unable to provide paperwork normally required for enrollment, including proof of residency [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C)(i)(I)].

Enrollment True or False

- A parent comes to enroll her child and states that they are homeless. The enrollment staff asks the parent to provide an address for the Student Information System. The parent refuses to give the address where they are staying. The LEA can require an address to move forward with enrollment.
- True or false

Enrollment

- **True**—The parent must provide a current address to the school so that proper school selection can be determined. If the parent is living in their car and has no address to provide, the parent will use the address of where the car is parked, e.g., street intersections, public library, store parking lot.
- **Note:** As stated on slide 24, eviction notices, utility bills, occupancy permits, or notarized letters from the party whose housing they are sharing, letters from shelters, libraries, etc., can only be requested but are **not required**. The LEA may only confirm the address, after full enrollment, for zoning purposes.

Local Homeless Liaison Responsibilities: Transportation

Transportation

- LEAs must provide transportation for McKinney-Vento students:
 - transportation to and from the school of origin (42 USC § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)), or
 - comparable transportation (42 USC § 11432(g)(4)(A)).
- Local homeless liaisons must inform the parent/guardian of a homeless child or youth and any unaccompanied youth of all transportation services that are available by the LEA (42 USC § 11432(g)(6)(A)(viii)).



Transportation

- LEAs must transport homeless students to and from the school of origin, at a parent's or guardian's request, or the local liaison's request for unaccompanied homeless youth.
- If the child or youth lives and attends school within the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation.
- 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.

42 USC § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)



Transportation MOU Template

<LEA Letterhead>

Dear Parent/Guardian/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY),

Your child(ren) or you, as an unaccompanied homeless youth, are currently eligible for services through the McKinney-Vento program. Per the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, transportation will be provided to your child(ren) or you, as an unaccompanied youth, to and from school.

The following describes our agreement with you regarding transportation:

Pick-Up: Students must be at the bus stop or selected location at the time provided by the transportation department. Drivers can wait no more than [X] minutes from the scheduled time.

Drop-Off: An adult pre-approved by parents and guardians must be present at the bus stop or selected location to pick-up students too young to be left unsupervised. The transportation department will provide the time that the adult must be present for the pick-up of students; parents and guardians must notify the liaison or the transportation department if an adult other than the parent or guardian will be picking up the student.

Communication of Absences: If a student is going to be absent from school and therefore does not need transportation for part or all of a day, parents or guardians must call and inform the designated driver no later than [X] a.m. on the day of the absence so the driver can adjust the route accordingly.

Driver's Name: [Insert]

Contact Phone Number: [Insert]

Behavioral Expectations: Students and parents are expected to follow the [Insert LEA Name] policies for student behavior. Disciplinary actions for students who violate the behavior policies will be followed as they are for any student in the district.

If [Insert LEA Name] fails to provide the agreed upon transportation services, the liaison should be contacted. Your liaison is [Insert Name] and may be reached at [Insert Contact Info].

If a student's residence changes, the transportation department must be contacted by [Insert Time] to allow for transportation to be arranged. Transportation requests and changes may take up to [insert number] days to be routed, so temporary transportation may be provided while routing is arranged.

The transportation department may be contacted at:

[insert info].

Please sign below to acknowledge that you understand and agree with these expectations and terms.

_____ Parent/Guardian/UHY Name (Printed)	_____ Signature	_____ Date
_____ Name of Liaison (Printed)	_____ Signature	_____ Date

Transportation Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)

Additional Considerations When Developing LEA MOU

School Bus	Share Ride or Taxi	In Lieu Of	Bus Pass/Tokens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student should be outside at least five minutes early, waiting for the bus. Proper school bus behavior is expected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must call (XXX) XXX-XXXX by 7:45 a.m. if your student is ill or does not need the taxi. The student should be outside waiting for the taxi five minutes early. If you have questions, call the Homeless Program number, (XXX) XXX-XXXX, not the ride-share company. A parent/guardian must be home to meet the student when the student is dropped off. Too many infractions could result in the loss of ride-share privileges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can only be used when other methods of transportation are not available. Checks are issued once each month—checks are to be picked up at the Central office; you will be called. LEA will measure mileage and check attendance—you will receive no pay for days the student is tardy or absent. Mileage, when approved, will begin on the day the "in lieu of" form is signed. It will not be retroactive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus passes are left at the end of each month in the school office—the student will be notified. Adult pass expectations are that the parent/guardian will accompany the student(s) to and from school. Lost bus passes will NOT be replaced—the student will be placed on the "two tokens a day" program. Loss of second bus pass will result in the "two tokens a day" program for the remainder of the school year. Lack of attendance will result in the loss of bus pass.

Local Homeless Liaison Responsibilities:

Best Interest & Dispute Resolution

School Stability

- Students experiencing homelessness are three times more likely than their housed peers to transfer schools in the middle of the year.
- Changing schools can greatly impede students' academic and social growth and predispose many children and youth experiencing homelessness to:
 - significant academic challenges, and
 - the risk of dropping out of school.



Determining Best Interest

- Local liaisons play an instrumental role in assisting parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness in selecting the school that will best meet the student's needs.
- To support the implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act's school of origin provisions on a school-wide level, local liaisons should:
 - provide training for school personnel on school selection rights for children and youth experiencing homelessness and on the importance of school stability;
 - work with school staff to inform parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth of their rights immediately upon identification or enrollment;



Determining Best Interest, Cont.

- develop a brochure or include information in an LEA handbook for parents, or provide NCHE's guide entitled, [What You Need to Help Your Child in School: A Guide for Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers](#);
- provide this information to all enrollment and school staff to utilize when working with parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth to determine which school is in the student's best interest; and
- ensure forms for enrollment and written notice about the right to appeal the school's or LEA's school selection decision are written in a form that parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth can understand, including versions that are written in their native language.



Determining Best Interest, Cont.

- Questions for staff members and liaisons when determining the best interest of each student include:
 - How permanent does the family’s current living arrangement appear to be?
 - How deep are the child’s or youth’s ties to his or her current school?
 - How anxious is the child or youth about an upcoming or recent move?
 - How has the student been set up for success in their academic learning? Is the student facing any academic challenges?
 - How do the programs and activities at the local school compare to those at the school of origin?
 - Does one school have programs and activities that address the unique needs or interests of the student that the other school does not have?
 - Would the timing of the school transfer coincide with a logical juncture, such as after testing, after an event significant to the child or youth, or at the end of the school year?
 - What are the parents’ or guardians’ preferences for schools?
 - How would the length of the commute to and from the school of origin impact the child’s or youth’s education?
 - Are there any safety issues to consider?



An Interview Checklist for Supporting School Selection: Parents

- ☐ **Step One:** Explain the rights and significance of school selection.
- ☐ **Step Two:** Help the parents/guardians consider their options.
- ☐ **Step Three:** Ensure continuity of instruction in the current school or a smooth transition to the new school.

- [SchoolHouse Connection: Interview Checklists for Supporting School Selection](#)

- Adapted with permission from NCHE's [Guiding the Discussion on School Selection](#).

School of Origin Considerations (Check if yes)		Local School Considerations (Check if yes)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Overall continuity Has your child attended the school of origin for a long time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Overall continuity Has your child attended the school of origin for only a brief time?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Length of anticipated stay at current residence Do you expect that you and your child will have to move again very soon, or are you unsure how long you can stay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Length of anticipated stay at current residence Do you expect that you and your child will be able to stay where you are staying now for a while?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Time of year Is it late in the academic year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time of year Is it early in the academic year?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal safety of the student Does the school of origin have advantages for the safety of your child?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal safety of the student Does the local school have advantages for the safety of your child?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interaction with peers Is maintaining school friends important to your child's emotional well-being, meaningful school experience, and participation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interaction with peers Would your child benefit from developing relationships with school peers who live closer to his/her new community?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic strength Is your child likely to fall far behind if he/she transfers to another school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic strength Is your child likely to recover academically from a school transfer?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Social and emotional state Has your child developed strong ties to the current school, and does not want to leave the school? Do changes in the environment or routine provoke anxiety or other difficulties for your child?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social and emotional state Has your child experienced challenges at the current school, and/or does not mind transferring to a new school?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Impact of the commute on the student's education Do the advantages of continuing to attend the school of origin outweigh any potential disadvantages presented by the commute?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Impact of the commute on the student's education Would a shorter commute help your child's concentration in, attitude toward, or readiness for school?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student's need for special instruction Does your child receive, or is he/she currently being evaluated for, special education or other special services at school? Is it best for your child to continue receiving those services or complete the evaluation at the school of origin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student's need for special instruction If your child receives, or is currently being evaluated for, special education or other special services at school, can the local school better meet your child's needs?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participation in extracurricular activities Is your child active in extracurricular activities that are meaningful and important to him/her at the school of origin, and will your child be able to continue those activities while living in your current living situation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participation in extracurricular activities Would your child be better able to take advantage of extracurricular activities, if he/she so desired, at the local school?
Total checks:		Total checks:	

Supporting Best Interest School Decision

- When supporting a student experiencing homelessness and their family to attend the school that is right for them, the local liaison should:
 - ensure that parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness understand the school selection options;
 - reinforce the importance of school stability and educational continuity;
 - discuss with the parents, guardians, and student experiencing homelessness their unique circumstances, and assist them in making the most appropriate choice; and



Supporting Best Interest School Decision, Cont.

- If, after conducting the best interest determination, the LEA determines that it is not in the child's or youth's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested, the LEA **must** provide the parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the reasons for the determination, in a manner and form understandable to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, including information regarding the right to appeal.

42 USC § 11432(g)(3)(B)





BEST PRACTICES IN HOMELESS EDUCATION BRIEF SERIES
Guiding the Discussion on School Selection

INTRODUCTION

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 USC §§11431-11435, 2001; hereafter referred to as *The McKinney-Vento Act*), reauthorized in 2001 by Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act, guarantees a child or youth identified as homeless the right to attend either the school of origin or the local attendance area school. This brief will assist local homeless education liaisons (hereafter referred to as *local liaisons*) and school personnel in working with homeless parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth in selecting the school of attendance that is in the student's best interest. Briefs on additional homeless education topics are available at <http://center.serve.org/nche/briefs.php>.

This brief is designed to be used in conjunction with NCHE's *School Selection* brief, which explains the basic rights included in the McKinney-Vento Act related to school selection, and offers strategies for linking homeless students to services in their school of origin or for helping homeless students transition to a new school.

KEY SCHOOL SELECTION PROVISIONS

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, homeless children

Who is homeless?

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (as reauthorized by Title X, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended)

The term "homeless children and youth"—

- A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and
- B. includes —
 - 2. 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;
 - 3. 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...
 - 4. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - 5. migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).



National Center for Homeless Education
Supporting the Education of Children and
Youth Experiencing Homelessness
www.serve.org/nche

Guiding the Discussion on School Selection

← • [Guiding the Discussion on School Selection](#)

• [School Selection](#)



McKINNEY-VENTO LAW INTO PRACTICE BRIEF SERIES
School Selection

Local Liaison Responsibilities: Dispute Resolution Process

- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires SEAs and LEAs to follow a dispute resolution process when parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth and schools disagree on the eligibility, enrollment, or educational placement of homeless children and youth. [McKinney-Vento Into Law Brief Series: Dispute Resolution](#).
- Tennessee's process can be found in [ePlan > TDOE Resources](#) > ESSA Information, Guidance, PPTs, & Webinars > Title IX, Part A Education for Homeless Children & Youth > Resources for Homeless Liaisons > [McKinney-Vento State-Level Dispute Resolution](#).



Tips for an Effective Dispute Resolution Process

- In establishing a strong, effective dispute resolution process, LEAs should include the following items in information distributed to parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth when discussing decisions regarding enrollment:
 - Notice of the right to file a complaint, raise a compliance issue, or file an appeal.
 - A step-by-step description of how to appeal the school's decision that includes a simple form parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth can complete and submit to the school to initiate the dispute process.
 - Copies must be provided to the parent, guardian, or youth for their records.



Dispute Resolution Process Brief and TDOE Template



National Center for Homeless Education
Supporting the Education of Children
and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
<https://nche.ed.gov>



McKINNEY-VENTO LAW INTO PRACTICE BRIEF SERIES

Dispute Resolution

This NCHE brief:

- summarizes the key provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act related to dispute resolution, and
- provides an overview of implementation strategies at the State and local levels



McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Process Sample Form

Instructions for Using this Template:

Before sharing, place this document on LEA letterhead, delete or update all red font areas, and provide the most up-to-date McKinney-Vento Liaison contact information.

This form can be used to initiate the dispute resolution process required by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. It can be used when a parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the LEAs eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision. If a dispute arises under the McKinney-Vento Act over eligibility, school selection, or school enrollment [42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(3)(E)], the Act requires LEAs initiate the McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Process. Federal law [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(C)] requires that the State have a [Dispute Process](#) and that the LEA policy must align with the State's policy.

Sources: [NCHE McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Brief](#)
[TEMPLATE McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Process Sample Form 2021-04-16](#)

Enrollment Disputes

- If a dispute arises over **eligibility, school selection, or school enrollment**:
 - the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the local liaison, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute;
 - the child or youth shall be ***immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought***, pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals; and
 - the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of any decisions related to dispute made by the school, LEA, or SEA, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to appeal such decisions.

42 USC § 11432(g)(3)(E)



Ensuring a Smooth Transition

- When the LEA and parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth agree that enrolling in the local attendance area school is in the best interest of the student, the sending school can ease the transition to the new school by implementing the following strategies:
 - Encourage the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to make the transition at a time when disruption could be minimized, such as at the end of a grading period or over a holiday break.
 - Send school records immediately to the new school.



Ensuring a Smooth Transition, Cont.

- Collect samples of the student's work to send to the new school, or provide a folder for the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to include samples.
- Contact the local liaison at the new school to ensure immediate enrollment and discuss what services the student may need.
- Provide the parent, guardian, or student with information on the new school, including activities in which the student may be interested.



Strategies for Receiving Schools

- The receiving school can ease the transition to the new school by implementing the following strategies:
 - Welcome the student and determine if they need any material supports (e.g., school supplies or uniforms).
 - Provide orientation materials to the student and the parent or guardian.
 - Provide a tour of the school, including meeting the student's teachers.
 - Review the student's academic records – including conducting a credit audit for partial credit – and discuss interests and needs with the student and their parent or guardian to determine what academic and other supports may be needed.



Strategies for Receiving Schools, Cont.

- Link the student with all needed services, such as free school meals, transportation, and tutoring.
- Provide expedited testing for Special Education, English learners, or other programs for which a student might be eligible.
- Ensure that all teachers have procedures for welcoming and integrating new students into the classroom.
- Implement policies and practices to ensure the student can obtain school credit, even if the student enrolls mid-semester.



Test Your Knowledge

Dispute True or False

- A family comes to register and states that they are “McKinney-Vento,” and the LEA enrolls the student immediately. A few months later, it comes to the LEA’s attention that the family/student is not experiencing homelessness. The LEA now has the right to unenroll the student.
- True or false

Dispute

- **False**—If the LEA has determined that the student does not meet the definition under McKinney-Vento, the student must remain enrolled in the school. The LEA must then start the LEA-level dispute process. This will include the LEA's written decision along with information with the parents/UHY right to appeal the LEA's decision 42 USC § 11432(g)(3)(B).

Dispute True or False

- A parent comes to enroll their children in school and states that they are homeless. The parent tells the enrollment staff that because they are homeless, they have a right to select any school that is best for the student(s). Based upon further conversation with the parent, the LEA suspects that the family may be “school shopping.” The LEA informs the parent that under the McKinney-Vento Act, the student only has the right to attend their school of origin or the local school.
- True or false

Dispute

- **True**—The McKinney-Vento Act states that students experiencing homelessness have the right to attend either the
 - **The local attendance area school:**
 - Any public school where students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend.
 - **Note:** The student must be living in this local area.
 - **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 42 USC § 11432(g)(3)(C).
- Even though the LEA suspects that the family is not truly eligible for McKinney-Vento services, the LEA will enroll the student in the zoned local school or school of origin and begin confirming eligibility after full enrollment has taken place.
- If the LEA determines the student is not eligible for services, it will begin the LEA-level dispute process.

Enrollment- True or False

- A parent comes to enroll his two children and provides an address for enrollment. The LEA enrollment staff know for a fact that the address provided does not have a house on the property, no parked camper, or visible tent, and the grass has overgrown the property. The LEA tells the parent this is not a valid address and, therefore, can deny enrollment.
- True or false

Dispute

- **False**—The LEA must immediately enroll the student(s) and will confirm eligibility and living situation only after full enrollment has taken place. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C)(i)(I)]
- Once the student(s) have been enrolled under the McKinney-Vento Act, the homeless liaison has the legal right to confirm eligibility.
- After the LEA has completed its investigation and determined that the student does not meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness, the homeless will begin the LEA-level dispute process. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E)]

Local Homeless Liaison Responsibilities:

Professional Development,
Coordination, & Collaboration

Professional Development

- Local liaisons must ensure that school personnel receive professional development and other support focused on McKinney-Vento.
 - **At a minimum**, liaisons should provide training annually to:
 - school leaders,
 - front office staff/enrollment staff, and
 - school counselors.
 - **Best practice** suggests that **all staff should be trained annually**, including the above, as well as:
 - LEA staff,
 - classroom teachers, and
 - educational assistants.



Professional Development Topics

- Professional Development topics should include the following:
 - Identifying Students
 - Enrollment
 - Transportation
 - Best Interest Determination
 - Right to Privacy
- The National Center for Homeless Education has several [training materials and resources](#) to use for training staff.



Preschool

- 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 (42 USC § 11432(g)(6)(A).
- The school of origin also includes public preschool programs.



Higher Education

- Local liaisons must inform unaccompanied homeless youth of their status as independent students on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and that youth may obtain assistance in verification of this status (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(x)).
- School counselors must advise homeless youth about college and support their college readiness.
- See these [Federal Student Aid resources](#) for additional information.



Access to HUD

- Local liaisons are authorized to affirm whether children and youth meet the eligibility requirements for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(D)).
- Although a liaison may affirm, the family must still meet the other requirements of HUD projects.
- Local liaisons may make this affirmation in the form of a signed letter on district letterhead that, at minimum, identifies the most recent primary nighttime residence of the homeless child or youth.



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

Reminders & Resources

Important Reminders

- **Provide documentation of decisions.**

- The McKinney-Vento Act requires liaisons to provide parents with information on their right to dispute if denied enrollment.
- LEAs should have **written policies and procedures** focused on:
 - identification,
 - enrollment,
 - best interest determination,
 - Transportation, and
 - dispute resolution.
- **All written policies and procedures should be kept on file and provided to families upon identification.** If a dispute arises, the LEA may refer to its written policies and procedures when discussing enrollment, transportation, school selection, and other issues with families.



Information for Parents



IF YOU ARE STAYING IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:

In a shelter or transitional housing

In a motel, hotel, or campground
because you don't have another
safe and stable place to stay

In a car, park, public place,
abandoned building, or bus or
train station

In someone else's house because
you lost your housing or are going
through a hard time financially and
don't have another safe and stable
place to stay

Your school-age child(ren) might
qualify for help at school under
the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

If your child(ren) qualify under the McKinney-Vento Act,
they have the right to:

Go to public school for free and
participate fully in school activities.

Enroll in school immediately and go
to class, even if you don't have the
documents normally required for
school. The school where you are
enrolled is responsible for helping
you get any documents needed to
keep attending classes.

**Enroll in the local school near where
you're staying or continue going
to your school of origin** (the school
you went to when you last had a safe
and stable place to live or the school
where you were last enrolled), based
on where you think would be best
for you to go to school.

If the school district thinks that
where you want to go to school is

not in your best interest, the district
has to tell you in writing why it thinks
another school would be better for
you and give you the opportunity to
appeal its decision if you want to do
that. The district also has to connect
you with the McKinney-Vento
district liaison, who has to help you
understand your right to appeal.

**Get transportation to and from
your school of origin**, if you keep
going to this school and ask for
transportation.

Get help at school that is similar
to the help other students get,
based on what you might need.
These services could include
transportation, academic help,
and free meals at school.

If you think your child(ren) might qualify, contact the district
McKinney-Vento local liaison or the McKinney-Vento state coordinator
to find out what help might be available for your child(ren) at school.

Local Liaison Name
McKinney-Vento Local Liaison

Vanessa Waters
McKinney-Vento State Coordinator
(615) 917-3750
Vanessa.Waters@tn.gov



Important: New Homeless Rights Posters

- Ensure every school has an updated homeless poster posted in a common area of the school.
- Contact information should include both the local homeless liaison as well as the state coordinator:
 - **Vanessa Waters**
 - **(615) 917-3750**
 - **Email: Vanessa.Waters@tn.gov**
- Posters can be downloaded from:
 - [ePlan](#) > TDOE Resources > Title IX, Part A Education for Homeless Children & Youth > Educational Rights Posters > [Parents' Right to Know](#) and [Youth Right to Know](#) or
 - [National Center for Homeless Education \(NCHE\)](#)

LEA/School Handbook and Website

- Include information about the McKinney-Vento Act in your district handbook that is given to every student.
- Clearly display information about McKinney-Vento on your LEA/school website in a place where parents and students can find it easily, including:
 - name and contact information for the local liaison,
 - definition of homeless under McKinney-Vento, and
 - rights and services available to students experiencing homelessness.



Resources

- [ePlan](#) > TDOE Resource > 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 \(ED\): McKinney-Vento Law and Guidance](#)
- [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](#)





Questions?

2025
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MEMPHIS ★
TO
BRISTOL ★

Federal Programs
Driving Local Change

Please share your session feedback



You may access the PD Survey by navigating here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/sbRAwQUV0d>

2025

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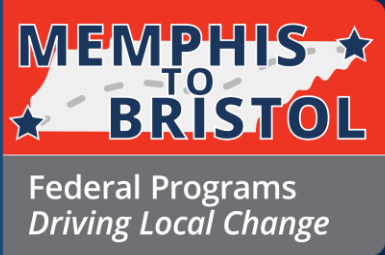
Federal Programs
Driving Local Change

Up Next McKinney-Vento EHYC

[Homeless Programming & Building
Collaborations with Federal Partners & CBOs](#)

Wednesday, August 27

1:00-2:10 p.m. CT | 2:00-3:10 p.m. ET



Up Next...

Click one of the links below to seamlessly join the next session of your choice.

11:40-12:50 p.m. ET 10:40-11:50 a.m. CT	Flex with Federal Muscle: Consolidating Federal Funds Lynn Dotson
	ELD Standards Crosswalks: From Standards to Student Success Raven Cleveland
	Licensure Update Jessie Gold



Thank You!



Vanessa Waters | McKinney-Vento and Immigrant Grant Manager
Vanessa.Waters@tn.gov

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