

McKinney-Vento 101

*Identifying and Meeting
the Needs of Students
Experiencing Homelessness*

ACSD 1 Awareness Training



New Information

- Please note that the following presentation contains new information and changes that stem from the recent authorization of the Every Student Succeeds Act. This act is formerly known as the No Child Left Behind Act.
- All new changes to the law will be in red.
- New changes to the language in the law will be in blue.



Purpose

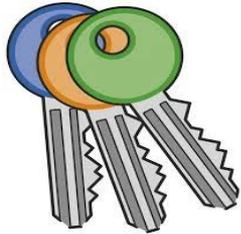
The purpose of the following information is to provide a general overview of what the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is and how it impacts students, families and schools.

All school district personnel are required to receive training on the McKinney-Vento Act.

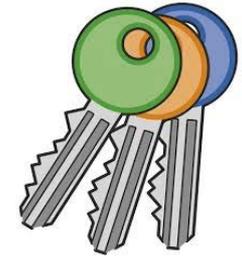


Why is the Following Information Important to Me?

- Each and everyone of us that works within Albany County School District, regardless of our position, may encounter a situation in which we observe, overhear or receive direct information about a student that may potentially be living in a homeless situation.
- Through this informational process we as a district will be able to better identify homeless students so that we can provide them with the resources and support necessary so that obstacles can be overcome and student success can prevail.



Key Points



- Updated information related to the McKinney-Vento Act and ACSD1 School Success Liaison Assistance
- Description of the McKinney-Vento Act
- Definition of Homeless Student
- Identification and Determining Eligibility
- Student Rights Under the McKinney-Vento Act
- Albany County School District Homeless Student Policy
- Student Resources
- Liaison Role and Information
- Referral Process
- Resources

What is the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act?





In a Nutshell



The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is intended to remove barriers pertaining to **enrollment, attendance** and overall **success** in school for students living in a homeless situation. By removing these barriers homeless students will have **equal** access to the same free, appropriate public education that other students do.

The McKinney-Vento Act supersedes state or local law or practice when there is a conflict. [

What is the Definition of Homeless for Students?



Being homeless means...

- That a student lacks a **fixed, regular and/or adequate** nighttime residence due to the loss of individual/family housing or financial hardship.



What does fixed, regular, and adequate mean?

- **Fixed:** Stationary, permanent, and not subject to change
- **Regular:** Used on a predictable, routine, or consistent basis (e.g., nightly);
- **Adequate:** Sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments

In other words: Can the student go to the **SAME PLACE** (fixed) **EVERY NIGHT** (regular) to sleep in a **SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SPACE** (adequate)?

How is Eligibility Determined?



Eligibility is Determined...

- By trained district or site liaisons
- By the reason/s for the current living situation. Is it due to financial hardship, loss of housing, choice, etc.
- By using fixed, regular, and adequate as guiding principles; if the living arrangement does not meet **all three** criteria, it is likely that the student is living in a homeless situation.
- On a case-by-case basis. Some instances will be clear-cut, while others will require a judgment call. The **trained, designated liaisons will make the determination** of whether or not a student is living in a homeless situation.



Examples of living situations of those who may be homeless...

- "Doubled Up"-Sharing the housing of others
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- **Awaiting foster care (This will be removed. Children in foster care will be supported as a separate group but in similar ways as students under the McKinney-Vento Act.)**
- Living in a public/private place not designed for humans to live in
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances
- Unaccompanied youth living in the above circumstances



Unaccompanied Youth



An unaccompanied youth is...

- Any child or youth who meets the McKinney-Vento definition and who is “not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian” **and**
- Whose living arrangements meet the criteria under the McKinney-Vento Act’s definition of homeless.

Unaccompanied Youth (cont.)

More information about unaccompanied youth...



- There is **no age limit** for a student to be an unaccompanied youth.
- As long as a student is **eligible** to receive K-12 schooling s/he may be served as an unaccompanied youth.
- A student **cannot** be denied the opportunity to register and enroll in school even if guardianship papers are unavailable.
- It is **not necessary** for the school to understand and/or agree with all aspects of a student's home life in order to provide services.
- A student can be eligible **regardless** of whether s/he was asked to leave the home or "chose" to leave.

What Rights do Eligible Students Have Under the McKinney-Vento Act?





School Selection...

Students experiencing homelessness, **including students attending preschools**, have the right to attend one of two schools:

- **Local Attendance Area School**
 - Any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend
- **School of Origin**
 - The school attended when permanently housed **or**
 - The school in which the student was last enrolled
 - **The feeder school or the school in which a student would transition to at the next grade level (ex. Elementary school to middle school or middle school to high school)**



School Selection...(cont.)

- When determining which school a homeless student will attend a **"best interest"** determination is made.
- This means keeping the student in his/her school of origin, to the extent **feasible**, unless this is against the parent's or guardian's wishes.

Feasibility factors listed in the US Department of Education Guidance:

- **Age** of the child or youth
- Commuting **distance** and the impact it may have on the student's education
- Personal **safety** issues
- Student's need for **special instruction**
- **Length of anticipated stay** in a temporary shelter or other temporary location
- The **time** remaining in the school year



School Selection...(cont.)

- Students can continue attending their school of origin the **entire time** they are homeless, and until the end of any school year in which they move into permanent housing
- If a student becomes homeless in between school years, he or she **can continue attending** the school of origin for the following school year



Enrollment

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines enrollment as **attending classes and participating fully** in school activities.



Enrollment...(cont.)

- Schools are required to enroll any homeless student in school **immediately**, even if they do not have a parent/guardian assisting in the enrollment process or the typically required documents.
- Students/families can **request assistance** from the school district to obtain records.
- When enrolling a student, **priority** must be given to parent/guardian request or youth's request of school selection.



Enrollment...(cont.)

- **At no time**, will a homeless student be refused entry into school.
- Students are entitled to **immediate enrollment** even if they have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.
- Contact Central Administration in special cases to receive additional enrollment guidance.



Dispute Resolution

Should there be a disagreement about which school a student is placed parents, guardians or the student, if an unaccompanied student, have the right to dispute the decision.

- Whenever a dispute arises, the parent, guardian, or youth must be provided with a **written explanation** of the school's decision, including the right to appeal.
- The school **must** refer the parent, guardian, or youth to the designated district staff who will assist in the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.
- While a dispute is being resolved, the student **must be admitted immediately** into the requested school and provided with services.



Transportation

- Districts must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services **comparable** to those provided to other students.
- Even after a student moves into permanent housing transportation **must be provided to homeless students until the end of the school year.**
- Districts **must** transport homeless students to and from the **school of origin**, at a parent's or guardian's request (or at the liaison's request for unaccompanied youth).
- If the student's temporary residence and the school of origin are in the same district, that district must arrange transportation.
- If the student is living outside the district of origin, the district where the student is living and the **district of origin** must determine how to divide the responsibility and cost, or they must share the responsibility and cost equally.



District Policy

According to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act...

- All school districts are **required** to adopt a policy that states that homeless children and youth are not stigmatized or segregated based on their homeless status.
- The homeless status of a student must be kept **confidential** for the reasons stated above.

Albany County School District Policy

The Albany County School District policy on Homeless Students can be viewed online in Chapter VI Section 33 at the following link:

<http://www.boarddocs.com/wy/acsd1/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=ACNSZX752CF8>



What Resources are Available to Students Who are Homeless?





Student Resources

Financial assistance is available to help purchase the following items for homeless students:

- Clothing/shoes
- Sports/class/college fees (physicals, SAT/ACT)
- School supplies
- Copies of birth certificates and other required documents necessary to enroll in school
- Medical/Dental Services (glasses, hearing aids, immunizations)
- Counseling for issues affecting learning
- Outreach services to students living in shelters, motels, and other temporary residences
- Extended learning time or tutoring support
- Pre-school programs administered by the district for pre-school aged children

***List is not all inclusive (other items may be included as needed)**



Student Resources

- Due to the established guidelines under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funds available to homeless students may **only** be used to provide **direct support to the students**.
- This means that the funds available under this act **cannot** be used for items such as:
 - Rent
 - Furniture
 - Utilities
 - Clothing or other support for parents/guardians

Who Provides District Support for Students Who are Homeless?





District Liaisons

Every school district must designate a Homeless Education Liaison.

For Albany County School District we have **four**. This means that each school has a designated liaison that is able to assist in identifying and supporting students who may be living in a homeless situation. If you have questions, concerns or information please feel free to contact your site liaison at any time.



District Liaisons (cont.)

District Liaison

Lisa Theis 721-4430
● LJHS, Lab School, LMS, SRA, ICARE, Rock River

Site School Success Liaisons

Megan Plant 721-4439
● Linford, Beitel, Slade, IPES, SCES, Harmony, Centennial

Jason Uitterdyk 721-4420
● LHS

Jessica Huhn-Taylor 721-4449
● Whiting



District Liaisons (cont.)

The responsibilities of the liaisons include, but are not limited to:

- **Identifying** students living in homeless situations.
- Ensuring that homeless students can **enroll immediately** and **participate fully** in school.
- **Identifying and removing barriers** that prevent unaccompanied youth from receiving full or partial coursework credit satisfactorily completed at prior schools.
- **Informing** parents, guardians, or youth of educational rights.
- **Supporting** unaccompanied youth in school selection and the dispute resolution process.

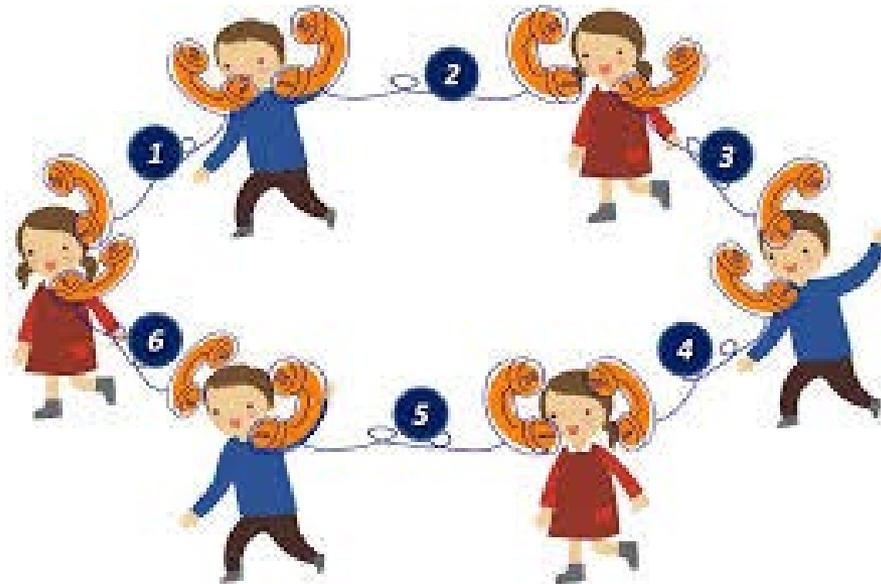


District Liaisons (cont.)

As well as...

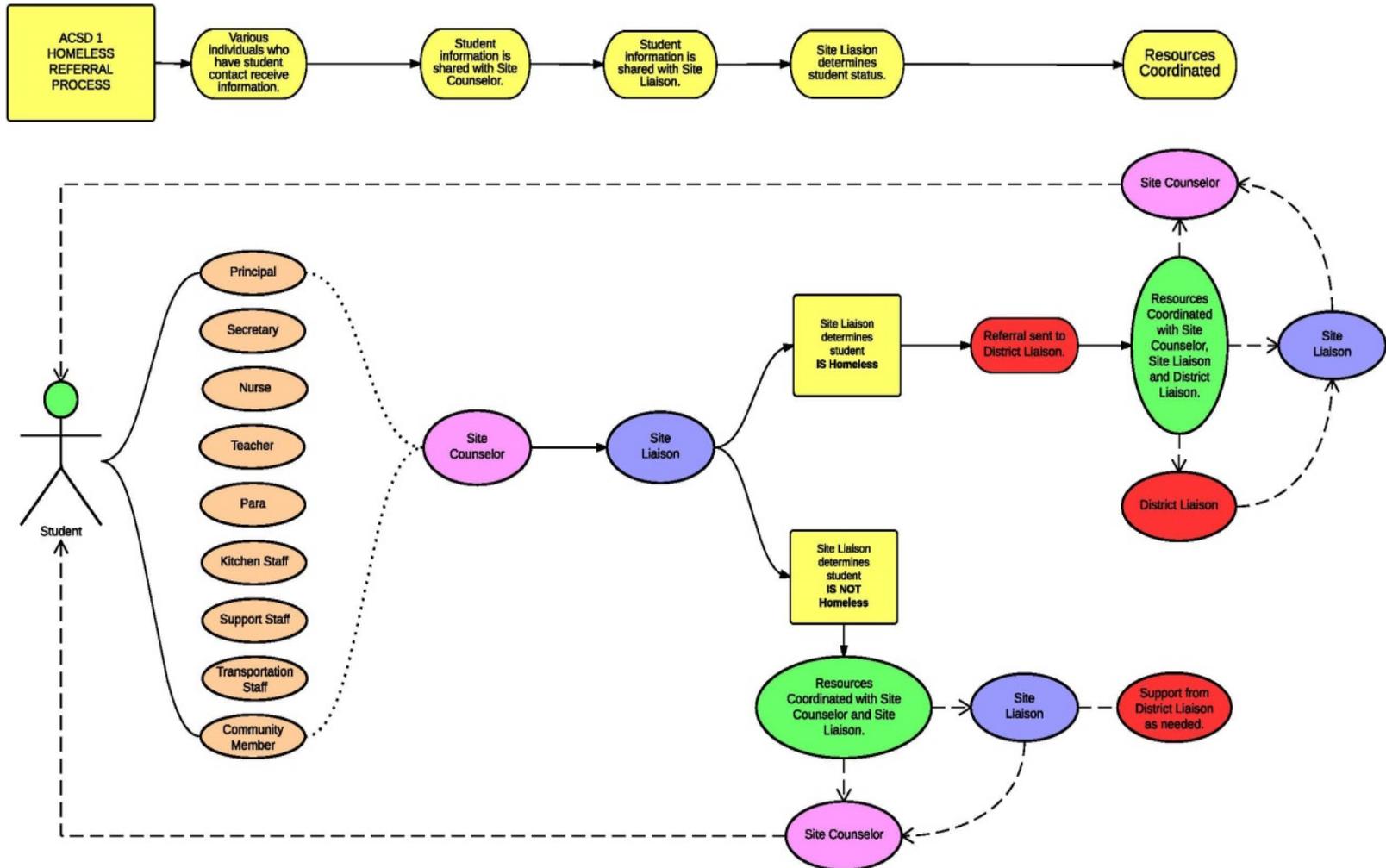
- **Linking** homeless students to educational services.
- **Posting** the educational rights of homeless students throughout the school district and community.
- Ensuring that district homeless data is **recorded** and **tracked** as required by WDE/USDE.
- Ensuring that disputes are resolved **promptly**.
- **Collaborating** with other district programs and community agencies in order to connect students with all possible resources.

How Do I Refer a Student Who May Be Homeless?





Referral Process



Where Can I Find More Information About the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act?





Resources

- **The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)**
 - US Department of Education Technical Assistance and Information
 - Provides information, resources and local and national news pertaining to students who are homeless
 - <http://center.serve.org>
- **The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)**
 - Provides a variety of educational resources
 - Provides updates on national legislation pertaining to the education of homeless students
 - Provides college scholarships to students who have experienced homelessness
 - <http://naehcy.org>