

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN & YOUTH



OVERVIEW



FACTS ABOUT YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

- Local data
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act
- Definition of homeless under MV Act
- Barriers
- County Office of Education and local districts responsibilities

EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & RELATED LEGISLATION

- Equal Access
- Immediate Enrollment
- School of Origin & Best Interest
- Dispute Resolution
- Transportation
- AB 1806 & Graduation Requirements

HOMELESS FACTS AND DATA

Homeless children and youth enrolled in the 2013-2014 :

Area	Number of Homeless Children and Youth Enrolled
Nationwide	1.5 million
Statewide	310,002
Contra Costa	3,435

- Over 40% of all homeless children are under the age of five
- School districts with the highest populations of homeless youth are West Contra Costa Unified (1,842), Antioch Unified (742) and Mt. Diablo Unified (464)





McKinney-Vento Act

Federal Legislation

- Ensures the educational rights and protections of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Originally authorized in 1987
- Reauthorized in 2015 with the Every Student Succeeds Act

Homelessness is defined as individual who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.

- Motels and hotels
- Shelters
- Cars, parks and abandoned buildings
- Emergency or transitional shelter
- Substandard housing
- Trailer parks or campgrounds
- Shared housing due to economic hardship (also called “doubled-up”)
- Public or private spaces not designed for sleeping

May also be homeless:

- Migratory children
- Children abandoned in hospitals
- Unaccompanied youth

HOMELESS EDUCATION LIAISONS

Under the law, every LEA must designate a Homeless Liaison

■ LIAISON DUTIES INCLUDE:

- Ensuring homeless children and youth are promptly **identified**
- Ensure **access is provided** and **barriers** to enrollment and retention are **removed**
- Disseminate public **notice of education rights**
- **Inform** parents, guardians and unaccompanied youth of educational opportunities
- Must be **trained** and able to assist homeless youth

■ LIAISON DUTIES (cont.):

- **Coordinate and Collaborate** services for students and their families
- **Collaborate** with the state coordinator, community services and school personnel
- **Refer** parents, guardians and unaccompanied youth to other public agencies and community service organizations for needed services.
- Assist with mediation of **dispute resolution process.**
- **Assist unaccompanied homeless youth** with enrollment, transportation and services.



REMOVING BARRIERS



Liaisons ensure barriers such as lack of immunizations, school supplies and transportation are removed so children and youth can attend and fully participate in school

■ OTHER BARRIERS INCLUDE:

- Lack of outreach to and identification of homeless families, and lack of awareness
- Misunderstanding of situations
- Fear authorities will be contacted
- Unaccompanied youth lack parent or adult

HOMELESS STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE **EQUAL ACCESS** TO

- Gifted and Talented Education
- Special Education
- Migrant Education
- English Learner programs
- Vocational education
- Title I funded programs
- State meal program
- Before and/or after school programs



IMMEDIATE ENROLLMENT



- “Enroll” and “Enrollment” means attending classes and participating fully in school activities.
- Lack of prior records can not be a barrier to enrollment (including birth certificates, immunization records, transcripts, proof of address.)
- Unaccompanied youth have the right to enroll without a legal guardian.

SCHOOL OF ORIGIN OR RESIDENCE

- School of origin is the school the child attended when permanently housed or the last school enrolled.
- Students can stay in their school of origin for the duration of homelessness or until the end of the school year in which they became housed.
- School of residence is the school closest to where the youth is temporarily staying while homeless.

SCHOOL PLACEMENT AND BEST INTEREST

School placement is determined in collaboration with student and education rights holder and based on:

- Student and guardian school preference
- Age and grade level of the student
- Distance and time of commute to school
- Student's need for special education services
- School siblings attend
- Transportation availability
- Length of stay in current location
- Connection with extracurricular activities.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION



- If a student is sent to a school other than requested by the parent or guardian, the LEA must provide a written explanation of it's decision and their **right to appeal**.
- When there is a disagreement, the school must **immediately enroll** the student and keep the student enrolled until the dispute is settled.
- If the dispute is not resolved at the district level, it will go to the county liaison and then to the state liaison.

TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL OF ORIGIN



- If requested by parent or guardian, transportation to and from the school of origin must be provided.
- In addition to providing transportation to the school of origin, LEA's must provide students in homeless situations transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.
- If the student is living outside the school of origin's LEA, the LEA of residence and school of origin will share the costs of providing transportation.



State Legislation

AB 1806: Graduation requirements

- Passed September 2014 and went into effect January 2015
- Notice of potential expulsions: Requires the district homeless liaison to be included in certain situations.
- Partial credits: Requires school accept credit for full or partial credits that have been satisfactorially completed.
- Graduation Requirements: Homeless youth can qualify to graduate from high school by completing only the state graduation requirements (130 credits) in certain circumstances.

AB 1806 Graduation Requirements

A homeless youth can opt to graduate under AB 1806 with the reduced state graduation requirements if they:

- Are homeless and transfer schools after the 2nd year of high school
- Are significantly behind in credits and unlikely to graduate on time
- Student will be notified date if they may qualify for the exemption **within 30 days of transfer**

Other Considerations:

- Students also have the right to stay in high school for a 5th year to complete all graduation requirements
- Graduating with reduced credits under AB 1806 may impact post-secondary options

Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for homeless and unaccompanied youth

- The FAFSA includes questions regarding unaccompanied youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- If students answer “yes” to the homelessness questions on the FAFSA they can submit application without providing information on their parents.
- Once a student answers “yes” to homelessness question they will be asked if they received a homeless determination.
- The following can be contacted to provide a homeless youth determination letter: high school or school district liaison, director of an emergency or transitional shelter, or director of a runaway or homeless youth or transitional living program.

Other State **legislation** related to homeless children and youth

SB 177

Homeless Youth
Education Success Act:
Deems homeless
students meet residency
for extra-curricular
activities immediately,
requires liaisons ensure
public notice of
educational rights

AB 309

CalFresh (SNAP)
benefits for Homeless
Youth

AB 1733

Free ID Cards and birth
certificates for homeless

AB 652

Being a homeless,
unaccompanied minor
is not grounds for a
CPS report

AB 1006

Juvenile court records:
petition to seal and
destroy (non-violent
crimes) records

THANKS!

Any questions?

Alejandra Chamberlain

Youth Development Services Manager

(925) 942-3300

achamberlain@cccoe.k12.ca.us

Denise Clarke

Youth Development Services Supervisor

(925) 942-3322

dclarke@cccoe.k12.ca.us