

A Focus on Improving the Role of Schools in Providing Student/Learning Supports for Homeless Students

As we all are aware, the number of homeless families with school aged children is growing.

While districts are outreaching to local homeless families, we know that some do more than others.

In response to those who have asked at various times, we are trying to amass and share more examples of how districts are aiding homeless families.

As a stimulus to start the process, below are (1) a few references and resources and (2) a request for input.

(1) References and Resources

>From: *Chronic Absenteeism Among Students Experiencing Homelessness in America*

<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Homeless-Student-Absenteeism-in-America-2022.pdf>

“...The McKinney-Vento Act defines a student experiencing homelessness as one who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The McKinney-Vento Act requires public school districts to appoint a liaison to ensure the identification of students experiencing homelessness in coordination with other school personnel and community agencies....

Circumstances which meet the criteria of lacking fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence include students:

- sharing housing with others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- staying in hotels, motels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative, adequate housing;
- staying in emergency or transitional shelters;
- abandoned in hospitals;
- staying in public or private places not designed for humans to live; and
- staying in cars, parks, bus or train stations, abandoned buildings, or substandard housing...

Attending school regularly and consistently is an essential element to helping educators identify and provide supports to students. As a result, identifying students experiencing homelessness who are chronically absent, and identifying and removing barriers to their attendance is critical to meeting these students’ needs...”

>For a sample of references to research and resources focusing on homeless students, see:

Educating Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/AnnotatedResearchSummaryReport-2023.pdf>

Supporting Students Who Are Experiencing Homelessness

https://www.aft.org/ae/spring2021/hallett_skrla

Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness: District Approaches to Supports and Funding

<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/supporting-students-homelessness-report>

<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/supporting-students-homelessness-brief>

Homeless Education -- <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/>

Homeless Children and Youth -- <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/homeless.htm>

>For a range of specific suggestions for supporting homeless students, see

Partnering with School Social Workers to Expand Local Homeless Liaison Capacity and Provide Wraparound Services

<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/SSW.pdf>

Leveraging Systems Navigators to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness

<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Systems-Navigators-to-Support-HCY.pdf>

Homeless Students: Program Examples <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/homelessprogs.pdf>

>For a brief discussion of embedding homeless concerns into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching, see

About Homeless Youth <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/homeless.pdf>

(2) Request from our Center:

Housing, of course, is a critical concern. Aiding families to find housing is a major factor in enhancing school enrollment and attendance. At a minimum, temporary housing during the summer can provide enough stability to ensure homeless families enroll their children for the fall. So our initial request focuses on housing.

Please take a few minute to share what districts are doing to enhance housing for homeless students. For instance:

(1) Let us know about any districts that are using closed schools as temporary housing.

(2) Given that every neighborhood has places that could be used for temporary housing (e.g., churches, empty offices and stores, college dorms that are empty during the summer), are districts working with other entities to use such spaces for transitory housing for homeless families?

(3) Are you aware of any county/city agencies that are offering funding incentives for schools and other entities to provide temporary housing?

In addition to sharing about housing, please feel free to share *any resources and ideas* you have about improving the role of schools in providing student/learning supports for homeless students and their families.

Send responses to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Looking forward to hearing from you.

