

Homeless Information Update

Fall 2015

STATE HOMELESS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Susannah Wayland is the Ohio Department of Education's state homeless education coordinator. She is available to assist with homeless student issues throughout the year. Susannah can be reached at susannah.wayland@education.ohio.gov or 614-387-7725.

WHO IS HOMELESS?

The term "homeless children and youth" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes the following:

1. 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 accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
2. 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;
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described above.

For more information, see the National Center for Homeless Education's [Who is Homeless?](#) fact sheet and the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) from the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty.

LOCAL LIAISONS

The law requires local districts, community schools and other educational agencies to designate an appropriate staff person as a local liaison for homeless children. Assigning someone this designation through the CCIP consolidated application process meets this requirement. The person is then identified as the contact for homeless education in the CCIP address book and will receive important communication about homeless education. A district may refer to the Re- authorization note below that allows for Title I funds to support a homeless liaison.

The duties of the local liaison are to ensure:

1. School staff members identify homeless children through interaction with other organizations and agencies.
2. Homeless children enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in schools of the district or a community school.
3. Homeless families, children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the district or school. Additionally, they receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services and other appropriate services.
4. The parents or guardians of homeless children receive information about the educational and related opportunities available to their children and about meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. The parent or guardian of a homeless child or an unaccompanied youth receives complete information about all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin. This also includes assistance in accessing transportation to the school that the child has a right to attend. This means distribution of a public notice about the educational rights of homeless children should include places where they may receive services, such as schools, family shelters and soup kitchens.

To assist local liaisons in meeting these responsibilities, a brochure titled [*A Parent's Guide to the Rights of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness*](#) is available. The guide includes an overview of the McKinney-Vento program and links to external resources.

Other helpful links from the National Center for Homeless Education include:

- [Local Homeless Education Liaisons](#)
- [Confirming Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Services: Do's and Don'ts for Local Liaisons](#)
- [Confirming Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Services: Do's and Don'ts for School Districts](#)
- [Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services Under the McKinney-Vento Act](#)
- [Liaison Tool Kit](#)

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Recent Re-authorization

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, provided new authority regarding the use of Title I funds for a local homeless liaison and for transportation to and from the school of origin. The Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, extended this authority to the use of federal fiscal year 2015 (state fiscal year 2016) Title I funds. The costs that may be charged to transport include the incremental costs above what the district would otherwise provide to transport a student to his or her assigned school.

For more information, see the attached [guidance letter](#) from the U.S. Department of Education.

AWARENESS TRAINING

All districts are required to conduct an awareness training to ensure that ALL personnel know the McKinney-Vento law and to refer questions or concerns to the local liaison. Federal Programs monitoring will include this training as part of the checklist, therefore maintenance of documentation about this training is needed. Many districts have a “testing” portal for staff trainings that have a McKinney-Vento training program. This is also a way to ensure that 100% of staff have received training.

The links above may be helpful for training district personnel as well as the following:

- [Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness \(power point presentation\)](#)
- [Videos: Awareness Videos on Homelessness and Homeless Education.](#)

HOMELESS POLICY/DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

Districts are required to have a Board adopted homeless policy. It is highly recommended that the district include a dispute resolution procedure within this policy. A recommended [McKinney Vento Dispute Resolution Procedure](#) is available for district use.

TITLE I SET ASIDE FUNDS

[CCIP Note # 78](#) explains the required Title I Set Aside Funds. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires districts to reserve funds to provide services to homeless children who are not attending participating Title I schools. These services must be comparable to the services the district provides to children in Title I schools. All local districts and schools receiving Title I allocation must “set aside” an amount equal to the estimated number of homeless children and youth in non-Title I served buildings or grade spans multiplied by the “per pupil amount” as indicated on the “School Allocation PPA List” page in the CCIP. Districts not identifying any homeless children and youth in non-Title I served buildings or grade spans must set aside an amount equal to one student at the listed per pupil amount.

HEAD START AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION (IDEA)

Please note that serving students experiencing homelessness is in the reauthorization of both Head Start and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Both acts include a definition of homelessness that matches the definition of homelessness in the education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which applies to all schools.

COMPLIANCE TRACKING SYSTEM

The requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act are part of the compliance review system. It is important the district and building leadership conduct a brief awareness training on the McKinney-Vento law and the requirements (see resources above for training). It also is important that all buildings have a poster displaying the contact information for the district liaison and the state coordinator. Resources are available from the National Center on Homeless Education. Districts will find review items within the self-evaluation addressing these requirements. Additionally, homeless items are in the desk review and the on-site review. Please take the time to make sure all buildings have information posted with current liaison contact information, that the district has and understands the dispute resolution procedure and that all staff members receive a briefing in the proper procedures when encountering possible homeless situations. Please keep supporting documentation for all items included in the compliance review.

HOMELESS CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The national association's annual conference is Nov. 15-17, 2015 (with a preconference workshop on Nov. 14) in Phoenix, Arizona. You must preregister to attend this conference. For more information, please click [here](#).

OAASFEP FALL CONFERENCE

The Ohio Association of Administrators of State and Federal Education Program (OAASFEP) Fall Coordinators Conference will take place at the Hyatt Regency at The Greater Columbus Convention Center October 12-14, 2015. The agenda includes a breakout session focused upon the competitive grant application process. For more information and registration, please click [here](#).

REGIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

A series of regional training sessions will take place in the month of January, 2016. McKinney-Vento subgrantee recipients should plan to attend the full day of the training. Homeless liaisons from neighboring districts should plan to attend in the afternoon to focus upon collaboration among districts. Look for follow up information as a CCIP note and registration will be through the System to Achieve Results for Students (STARS) system. The schedule includes:

January 6, 2016

Wilmington, Ohio
Roberts Convention Center
123 Gano Road
Wilmington, Ohio

January 13, 2016

Mansfield, Ohio
Mansfield Convention Center
24 N. Main Street
Mansfield, Ohio

January 20, 2016

Sandusky, Ohio
Sawmill Creek Resort
400 Sawmill Creek Dr.
Huron/Sandusky, Ohio

UNACCOMPANIED IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

The United States Department of Education has provided several documents concerning educational services for immigrant children who recently arrived in the United States. The two documents can be found by clicking [here](#) and [here](#).