

Welcome to our Webinar today, McKinney Vento: Law Into Practice in New Hampshire. During this webinar we will cover eligibility, enrollment, safety strategies, transportation, school selection, and the dispute process under McKinney-Vento. We will also briefly discuss the Migrant Education Program. Finally, we will wrap up this webinar with a brief Question and answer period so please hold your questions until then. If you have an immediate question type it in the chat box and we will answer it at the end of the webinar. Alright, now first let's get started by introducing our presenters. I am Ananda Tomas, I'm Brittany Perez, I'm Nick McIntyre, and I'm Samantha Sansom. Alright, now let's start with a brief overview of homelessness and how it affects our students academically, physically, and mentally.

Definition of homelessness: children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime resident are considered homeless. This covers 1.35 million children in the United States, which is 10% of all children living in poverty.

In New Hampshire 3,306 students were identified as homeless in the 2011-2012 school year. The majority of these students, 78%, were living in doubled up situations, which includes sharing the housing of other family or friends due to a lack of financial stability.

Causes of homelessness. Causes of homelessness include lack of affordable housing, deep poverty (which includes generational poverty), health problems, domestic violence, natural and other disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, or escaping an abusive or neglectful situation.

Our homeless children and youth face many barriers to education including enrollment requirements such as school records, immunizations, and proof of residence and guardianship, high mobility resulting in a lack of school stability and educational continuity. A lack of transportation, school supplies, and clothing. They suffer from poor health, fatigue, and hunger, and also face prejudice and misunderstanding due to their homeless status. Students also generally have a lack of knowledge about their rights.

Research on School Mobility: High mobility has been shown to have a negative effect on our homeless students. It takes an average of 4 to 6 months to recover academically after changing schools. Students also suffer psychologically, socially, and academically once again from mobility. They are less likely to participate in extracurricular activities and more likely to get into trouble. They are also less likely to graduate high school if they moved during high school.

To give evidence to the effects of homelessness on academics we have here the 11th grade mathematics NECAP scores from the 2011-2012 school year. The gray bar represents all students, while the orange bar represents homeless students. As you can see, 63% of all students tested not proficient in mathematics. This is greatly outshined by the number of homeless students that did not score proficient in mathematics, which was 84%. Also, if you look at the data on the side of the slide you can see that this number increases over time as the students are moving more and more throughout their school career.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act: Was reauthorized in 2002 by No Child Left Behind. Main themes are school stability, school access, support for academic success, and a child-centered, best interest decision making approach.

Who is covered by this act? Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes children and families in situations such as sharing the housing of others due to a loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons, living in motels, hotels, campgrounds, or even trailer parks. Trailer parks aren't necessarily double wide trailer homes, so much as RV's and other camping vehicles. Children living in emergency or transitional shelters are also covered by McKinney-Vento, as well as children abandoned in hospitals.

Children placed in emergency foster care placement are covered under McKinney-Vento, as well as children and families living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live, such as cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus stations, train stations, and other similar situations. Also note migratory children living in the above circumstances are also covered under McKinney-Vento. And we will discuss this more a little later on during our webinar.

Rights under McKinney-Vento: Our homeless students have the right to immediate enrollment in school, even if they are lacking paperwork normally required such as school records, proof of guardianship, proof of residence, or immunization records. They also have the right to attend his/her school of origin if requested by the parent and it is feasible, or they have the right to attend school in the attendance area where the family or youth is currently residing. Homeless students also have the right to receive transportation to his/her school of origin, if requested by the parent.

Homeless students have the right to services comparable to those received by other schoolmates, including transportation and supplemental education services such as tutoring or afterschool programs. They have a right to attend a school along with children not experiencing homelessness. Segregation based on a student's homeless status is strictly prohibited.

Alright, now I'm going to pass this off to Nick McIntyre. We're going to talk about homeless liaisons. Every LEA or Local Education Agency or school district must designate a homeless liaison. They have several responsibilities. They are to ensure that children and youth in homeless situations are identified. They are to ensure that homeless students enroll in and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school.

They are also tasked to link students with educational services, including preschool and health services. They should inform parents, guardians, or youth of educational and parent involvement opportunities. They should also post public notice of educational rights, they should inform parents, guardians, or youth of transportation services, including to the school of origin. They are also responsible for resolving any disputes that come from their situation.

They should also train their school personnel to alert the school or homeless liaison if they suspect a student is homeless. And some of the signs of homelessness to look for include poor health or lack of

nutrition, poor hygiene, transportation and attendance problems, social and behavioral issues, or any mention of staying with family or couch-surfing.

So who is a homeless unaccompanied youth? This is a youth that meets the definition of homeless and is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Liaisons must help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in school, after considering the youth's wishes, and inform him or her of their appeal rights. School personnel must be made aware of the specific needs of runaway and homeless youth.

So who are homeless children and youth under the McKinney-Vento Act? Homeless children and youth are children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Fixed is not subject to change. So is it a legal place for the child to be? Do they have a right to be there? Regular is recurring, used on a regular basis. Does the child go to this location every night or are they having to move to different housing situations and transitional places on the regular? Adequate is lawfully and reasonably sufficient, healthy for physical and psychological purposes. Are they staying in a place that can fit everyone in the building or do they have heat and hot water?

This also includes homeless unaccompanied youth, who are homeless children and youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. And there are many possible causes including parental incarceration, illness, hospitalization, or death. They could end up on their own due to a lack of space in temporary accommodations or shelter policies that prohibit adolescent boys. They may have fled abuse or parental drug use. They may have been neglected by their parent. And some may have been kicked out of their house due to sexual orientation, religious beliefs, teen pregnancy, or more.

So is there an age range? Again, no. McKinney-Vento applies to all school-aged children and youth. Is there a time limit on how long a child is considered homeless? No. Determination of homelessness is evaluated each academic year and depends on the child's living situation. Once eligible, a child remains covered by McKinney-Vento services until the end of the school year. Is there a citizenship requirement? No. McKinney-Vento must be applied equally to undocumented students.

So here's some strategies for enrollment. You should enroll children and youth experiencing homelessness immediately, as required by the McKinney-Vento Act. School is the safest place for children who are in danger. Talk with parents, students, and the previous school about potential dangers and develop a safety plan together. Talk to runaway youth about their home situation with care and sensitivity. Understand that youth may hesitate to admit that home is an unhealthy or dangerous environment for them.

You should never share any information about a student with anyone who cannot prove they have a legal right to receive it. Make sure everyone requesting information about a student completes and signs an information request form, and maintain a record of all requests. You should always check the database and paper records to see if there is a protective order or other restriction to access to school records and information.

You can also transfer school records to the State Coordinator's Office if necessary to restrict information about where a student is enrolled in school. And if you suspect a child is abducted or has been reported

missing, you can contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. And we've provided the contact information here.

And now I'm going to move this over to Samantha Sansom. Enrollment. The McKinney-Vento Act requires immediate enrollment of homeless children and youth. Lack of a parent or guardian and/or enrollment documents cannot delay or prevent enrollment. School districts must eliminate barriers to youth's enrollment in school. Can you enroll without a parent or guardian? Yes! Without other enrollment documents such as school records, immunizations, proof of residency? Yes!

Can a school require a caregiver to get legal guardianship to enroll a student in school? No! School districts must enroll youth in school even if they do not have guardianship documents. Schools/districts cannot require caregivers to obtain guardianship of youth after enrollment, or within a specified number of days, in order for youth to remain enrolled and attending.

What if an unaccompanied youth has been suspended for misbehavior from his/her former school? Must the school enroll the child? The McKinney-Vento Act does not overrule state or local discipline policies. If a youth is suspended for behavior unrelated to his or her homelessness, regular enrollment procedures apply. If discipline action was taken against a youth for reasons related to homelessness (for example excessive absences caused by homelessness), the youth must not be penalized or denied enrollment and the policy should be revised.

Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to attend either the school of origin, if in the child's best interest, or the local attendance area school. The school of origin is the school the child or youth attended while permanently housed or last enrolled in. The local attendance area school is the school that is in the attendance area of where the child/youth is currently residing.

LEA's must keep homeless students in their school of origin, to a feasible extent, unless the parent/guardian wishes differently for the extent of their homelessness. LEA's are responsible for providing transportation for the student to school if needed. If a student is sent to a school other than the one requested by the parent/guardian the district must provide the parent with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal.

What should a school district consider when determining if it is feasible to educate a homeless child/youth in their school of origin? Things to consider include the child/youth's age and the distance of commute. For instance, a younger child can do a short commute, where as an older child can do a longer commute. Personal safety issues, a student's need for special instruction, time remaining in the school year, and the length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or location.

Collaboration between an LEA's homeless education and transportation programs is key. Seek out collaborations with other local transportation services and community agencies. Examples include local shuttles, service vans, and public transit where available. Interdistrict collaborations such as the LEA of origin and the LEA where the student is living share the cost of transportation. LEA's either make an agreement on cost or split the cost equally.

Set Aside Funds: Title I Part A set-aside funds may be used to provide transportation to enable parents to be more involved in their child's education. They may also be used to provide transportation to enable students to participate in extended day programming with an academic focus. For example, tutoring or other afterschool programs. These funds cannot be used to provide transportation to and from the school of origin.

When there is an issue with enrolling a student the local LEA should follow a dispute process. While working with the dispute process, they should enroll the child/youth immediately. When inter-district disputes arise, representatives from all involved districts should be present. If still unresolved, the local homeless education liaison should contact the State Coordinator.

Now I'm going to turn this over to Brittany Perez who is going to discuss the Migrant Education Program.

As you may or may not know New Hampshire is home to the Migrant Education Program. This program covers anyone from birth to age 22 years old who has moved to obtain or seek work in agriculture or fishing, including livestock processing and forestry. IT also includes anyone who has moved with a family member who is seeking or obtained work in agriculture or fishing. And this qualifying move must have occurred within the past three years.

Educational support services are provided through federal funding through the Department of Education for up to three years from the qualifying move, until the student graduates from high school, receives a GED, or turns 22 years old. Some services include tutoring, GED prep, providing school supplies, and providing internet connectivity.

The homeless/migrant liaisons are not responsible for determining migrant education eligibility. They're only responsible for referring suspected migrant students to the DOE. If you know of any farms, nurseries, or fisheries in the area that may hire migrant workers please inform the Doe. The director is Barbara Patch and her information is below.

Today's presenters were Ananda Tomas, Nick McIntyre, Samantha Sansom, and me Brittany Perez. Please feel free to email us if you have any questions regarding this information or if you would like a copy of this presentation emailed to you.

The New Hampshire State Coordinator of Homeless Education is Dr. Lynda Thistle-Elliott and her email is below.

Some additional resources for homeless education liaisons are seen on this slide and we encourage you to visit the websites for information and trainings.

Thank you for attending this webinar. We'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.