Homelessness and Chronic Absenteeism in Rural Communities

[Webinar] Wednesday, Nov. 13, 2019, 1:00 – 2:15PM ET
About SchoolHouse Connection

SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness through education. We provide strategic advocacy and technical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

- Website: [http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org](http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org)
- Facebook Group
- Newsletter: [https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up/](https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up/)
- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships
**HAVE A QUESTION?**
This webinar is for you. Enter your questions in the questions pane and click ‘Send’. We will save time at the end of the webinar to answer them.

**RECORDING & HANDOUTS**
An archive of this webinar and all materials will be posted [here](#).

If you’ve signed up for this webinar, you will receive a link to the recording in an email after the webinar is over.
Education Leads Home: A National Campaign
Building Stronger Futures for Homeless Students

- Young children will participate in quality early childhood programs at the same rate as their housed peers by 2026.
- High school students will reach a 90 percent graduation rate by 2030.
- Post-secondary students will reach a 60 percent post-secondary attainment rate by 2034.

www.educationleadshome.org
About Education Leads Home

ICPH
ICPH is a New York City-based policy research organization focused on family homelessness in New York City and throughout the United States.
www.icphusa.org

SCHOOLHOUSE CONNECTION
SchoolHouse Connection is a national organization working to overcome homelessness through education. www.schoolhouseconnection.org

CIVIC
Civic is a public policy and strategy firm that helps corporations, nonprofits, foundations, universities, and governments develop and spearhead innovative public policies to strengthen our communities and country.
www.civicenterprises.net

AMERICA'S PROMISE ALLIANCE
APA is the nation's largest partnership of its kind, bringing together hundreds of national nonprofits, businesses, communities, educators, and ordinary citizens behind the idea of making the promise of America accessible to all young people.
www.americaspromise.org

EDUCATIONCOUNSEL
EducationCounsel is a mission-based education consulting firm that combines significant experience in policy, strategy, law and advocacy to drive improvements in the U.S. education system at the local, state, and national levels from early childhood through postsecondary education.
http://educationcounsel.com/
Butte County, CA Demographics

• Located in Northern California (1,677 square miles)
• Population 223,000
• Student Population: 32,000
  • 13 Districts, BCOE programs
• Families at or Below Poverty Level: 18.6%, State: 13.3%
• County unemployment rate: 3.7%, State: 3.5%
The Definition of Student Homelessness

• Individuals who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including:
  o Sharing the housing of other persons *due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason*.
  o Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds *due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations*.
  o Living in emergency or transitional shelter.
  o 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.
  o Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
Overview of the McKinney Vento Act

- Originally passed in 1987
- Reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
  - Amendments took effect October 1, 2016
- Works hand-in-hand with Title I, Part A and other federal education programs
- 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.
- Sections 721 and 722 of the McKinney-Vento Act
Main Themes of ESSA

- Identification
- School stability
- School enrollment
- Support for academic success
- Child-centered, best interest decision making
Rights of Homeless Students

• Immediate enrollment without proof of residency, prior school records, immunization records, etc.
• School of Origin
• Automatic approval of free/reduced-priced meals
• Transportation
• No segregation
• Homeless Liaison
• Dispute Resolution
• Partial credits and graduation under AB 1806 in California
• Full participation in all school activities and programs for which they are eligible, including sports, clubs, and other special programs
Exempts a homeless student who transfers schools any time after the completion of the student’s second year of high school from coursework/requirements that are in addition to statewide requirements (unless the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements by the end of their fourth year of high school).
Student Homelessness in Butte County, CA

• 1,500 students experiencing homelessness identified pre-Camp Fire (November 8, 2018 in Paradise, CA)

• Expected to be more than double for the current school year

• 80% of those students are “doubled-up” or sharing housing
Rates of Chronic Absence

**Butte County**
- Homeless Youth: 40.3%
  - Foster Youth: 30.4%
  - All Students: 14.6%

**Region**
- Homeless Youth: 38.2%
  - Foster Youth: 25%
  - All Students: 16.2%

**California**
- Homeless Youth: 23.1%
  - Foster Youth: 26.2%
  - All Students: 11.1%
Legislative Intent for Supervisors of Attendance

California *Education Code* (EC) Section 48240 specifies that it is the intent of the Legislature that the supervisor of attendance *promote a culture of attendance and establish “a system” to accurately track pupil attendance* ...

AB 2815 further amended EC Section 48240 by adding 48240 (d) which specifies the potential tools—*specific support services and interventions*—that supervisors of attendance may use but are not limited to...
**ALL STUDENTS**

**Universal Support**
Evidence-based priorities and practices that support the academic, behavioral and social-emotional success of all students in the most inclusive and equitable learning environment.

**SOME STUDENTS**

**Supplemental Support**
Additional services provided for some students who require more academic, behavioral and social-emotional support.

**FEW STUDENTS**

**Intensified Support**
Targeted academic, behavioral and social-emotional support directed toward the few students with greater needs.
Promoting a Culture of Attendance

- Site Attendance Team
  - Are they identifying if students are experiencing homelessness?

- Review and update policies and procedures to reflect a positive school culture
  - Do policies/procedures identify how housing status will be determined and procedures for connecting homeless students to support?

- Positive messaging about the importance of attendance

- MTSS – Tier 1 includes attendance

- Restorative/Trauma Responsive Discipline Practices

- Welcoming environments for students and parents

- Staff attendance

- ALL staff support attendance
  - Do all staff know where to access support for students?

How do we as adults ensure building strong relationships for every student to feel successful and a valuable part of the school community?
Tracking and Utilizing Student Data

● Attendance Team at site looks at data regularly
  ○ Are they looking at student group data as well?

● Early Warning System
  ○ Is support for homeless students offered early, before attendance may become an issue?

● Outcome data – How are schools measuring if strategies are working?
Chronic Absenteeism

All Students
Explore information about the percentage of students in kindergarten through grade 8 who are absent 10 percent or more of the instructional days they were enrolled.

Student Group Details
All Student Groups by Performance Level
11 Total Student Groups

- Red
  African American
  Hispanic

- Orange
  Foster Youth
  Homeless
  Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
  Two or More Races

- Yellow
  American Indian
  Students with Disabilities
  White

- Green
  English Learners

- Blue
  Asian

- No Performance Color
  Filipino
  Pacific Islander
Responding to Attendance Issues – System Level

- BCOE Case Manager split between homeless education program and attendance program
- Targeted Case Managers at school sites
- Outreach to grocery stores, laundromats, etc.
- Back-to-School Connect Event
- Higher Education partnerships
- Youth Advisory Board/ Homeless Youth Task Force
- Engaging with the local Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC)
- Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Social-Emotional Learning, Mental Health
  - Implemented with fidelity
- Restorative/trauma responsive discipline and attendance policies and practices
- Site Attendance Teams
- ALL staff support attendance
If these school conditions are consistently present, then student attendance, and engagement will increase.

**SCHOOL CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT**
1. Safety
2. Connectedness & relationships
3. Academic & emotional support
4. Challenging & relevant instruction
5. SEL opportunities
6. Culturally responsive

**OUTCOMES**
- Student attendance
- Student engagement
- Teacher retention
- Trust

**EDUCATOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CAPACITY**

**Conducive Conditions**
- Teacher leadership
- School leadership
- Shared goals & expectations
- Professional Learning
- Instructional Support
- Community Involvement
- Time
- Facilities & Resources

**Social and Emotional Competencies**
- Self awareness, self management/stress management, social awareness, relationship skills, decision-making skills

**Will**
- To understand different contexts
- To make learning make sense
- To orchestrate the conditions

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School conditions affect student engagement and attendance—as mediated by educator social and emotional capacity.
Homeless Liaison Role

• Post information at every school site.
• Train school personnel.
• Identify homeless students.
• Ensure immediate enrollment (and participation in extra-curricular activities).
• Set up free and reduced lunch.
• Arrange school of origin transportation.
• Utilize Title 1 funds for homeless students.
• Make referrals to community services.
Responding to Attendance Issues – Student Level

• Maintaining relationships is a priority
  o How are homeless students connected to an adult on campus?

• Identifying barriers (push or pull)
  o Do staff know what supports are available specific to homelessness on campus?
  o Gas cards, bikes, ride shares, and other creative transportation options

• Mental health supports

• Restorative/trauma responsive approach to attendance meetings

• Case management

• Community partnerships

• Mentors

• Communication with parents

• Home visits
Push vs. Pull Factors for Attendance

**Push-out Factors**
- Feeling:
  - Ignored
  - Unsafe
  - That you don’t belong
- Experiencing:
  - Bullying
  - Boredom
  - Exclusionary discipline

**Pull-away Factors**
- Feeling:
  - Conflicted
  - Failure
  - Pressure/stress
- Experiencing:
  - Family obligations
  - Chronic illness including mental health

**Pull-in Factors**
- Feeling:
  - Cared for
  - Safe
  - That you belong
- Experiencing:
  - Engagement
  - Supported
  - Valued
  - Belonging
Oscar’s Story
Barriers and Challenges

• Limited shelter beds for families.

• No youth shelter in the county or region.

• Very limited social services in the rural areas of the county.

• No public transportation to the most rural areas of the county.

• School is often the only available place to receive any support services.
Considerations

• What are your LEA’s LCAP goals related to attendance, supporting homeless students or that impact attendance?
• Do you have an existing team that could be utilized? If not, build your team
• Assess your data regularly, including at the student group level
  ▪ Can attendance supervisors and site administrators monitor attendance daily?
  ▪ Identify root causes of poor attendance, including homelessness
    o Student/family and system
  ▪ Comparison to State, County, other Districts
• Review and update policies and procedures
  ▪ Supportive vs. punitive
  ▪ When to enroll and exit students
• Identify and Implement tiered supports
  ▪ What do you currently have in place?
  ▪ What is needed?
“For every one of us that succeeds, it’s because there’s somebody there to show you the way out. The light doesn’t always necessarily have to be in your family; for me, it was teachers and schools.”

–Oprah Winfrey
Resources to Support School Attendance

Images link to the resource:

- Attendance Improvement
- Parent Engagement Toolkit
- Using Chronic Absence Data to Improve Conditions for Education, Building Effective Relationships in Schools, Fostering Resilience, Reducing Chronic Absence in Connecticut’s Schools
- Tiered Interventions
- Self Assessments
- Attendance Playbook & Writing the Rubric: Ensuring Chronic Absence Data Workshops
- Attendance Challenge and Messaging

Attendance Resources
Q&A
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