Charter Schools Serving Students Experiencing Homelessness During the COVID-19 Crisis

Friday, April 24, 12:00 - 1:15PM
About SchoolHouse Connection

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

- Website: http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org
- Facebook Group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/SchoolHouseConnection/
- Newsletter: https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up/
- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships
About the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (National Alliance) is the leading national nonprofit organization committed to advancing the public charter school movement.
Today’s Agenda: Listen, Learn, Share

- Where to Find Resources
- Facilitated conversation:
  - Outreach and communications
  - Access to Learning
  - Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
  - Young Children
  - Health, Safety, Basic Needs
- Federal Legislative Update
- Resources links
Education Week Map: Coronavirus and School Closures

As COVID-19 disrupts education, services and life across the country, children and youth experiencing homelessness are exceptionally vulnerable. This page offers resources to help meet their needs as we respond to this global crisis.

- FAQ on COVID-19 and Homelessness
- COVID-19 Checklist for State Education Leaders on Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Opportunities for Impact Survey: Child and Youth Homelessness, Schools, and COVID-19
- Five Strategies to Help Homeless Youth Transition to College During COVID-19
- Five Ways to Protect Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers Experiencing Homelessness During COVID-19
- Checklist for Local Education Agencies and Early Childhood Providers
- Fact Sheet on Stimulus Payments and Homeless Youth
- Strategies for Schools and Early Learning Programs
- Higher Education Resource: COVID-19 Response for Youth Who Are Homeless or in Foster Care
- Upcoming and Archived Webinars
- Policy Updates
- [Guest Perspective] Supporting Our Students Amidst the Unknown: Evolving Lessons During COVID-19
- News on COVID-19 and Homelessness
- Other Resources
Coronavirus Resources for Charter Schools
https://covid.publiccharters.org/

- News
- Webinars
- SBA Loans
- Federal Resources
- Educational Equity
- Distance Learning
Facilitated conversation on known challenges/responses
Outreach, Identification, Communication

CHALLENGES

- McKinney-Vento students staying outside of school district.
- Maintaining contact with M-V students, including Unaccompanied Youth.
- Identifying families and youth who become homeless after schools closed.

STRATEGIES

- Coordinating with area liaisons to get resources to MV students living in their attendance areas (resource lists)
- Pre-paid cell phones
- Coordinated outreach to families, students, campgrounds, motels

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Strategies from AppleTree, Washington DC

“We are meeting families on the platform that they can most easily access (i.e. calls, texts, emails, Class Dojo, calling relatives to share messages) and being flexible with them about time of day to connect (within reason). We are also making sure to remain connected with all vulnerable families, not just those in transition, so we have a pulse on any support needed to help prevent instability.”
E-Learning

CHALLENGES
● Mobile hotspots
● Devices (laptops, tablets, phones)
● Places to charge devices
● Stable environment conducive to learning

STRATEGIES
● Spectrum internet
● Comcast offer
● Xfinity offer
● Cox offer
● Wifi in school parking lots and on school buses
● Donations to cover insurance on devices

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Strategies from AppleTree, Washington DC

“As a preschool, AppleTree's distance learning activities are largely focused on at-home learning opportunities or lessons that can be done with no technology; however, teachers are holding virtual class meetings and recording related lessons. Our liaisons, through their consistent communication with families, are key in advocating for technology supports if needed (one phone in the home, no wifi and small data plan, etc.)

We are also tag teaming with teachers to coordinate communication to not overwhelm families and have had success mailing resources such as work packets.”
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

CHALLENGES

● Isolation
● FAFSA determinations
● Consent to health care for minors
● Access to Recovery Rebates

STRATEGIES

● Regular check-ins
● Prepare FAFSA determinations in advance for all identified UHY, and also as new UHY are identified

● State Laws on Minor Consent for Routine Medical Care
● State Laws to Support Youth Experiencing Homelessness

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**Young Children (Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers)**

**CHALLENGES**
- Appropriate food items
- Safety of physical environment
  - are shelters, other temporary locations
- Preschool enrollment for next school year (deadlines, etc.)

**STRATEGIES**
- Ask about the presence of young children
- Connect to [WIC](#) and [CACFP](#) and [Head Start](#) about appropriate food
- [Child-proofing checklist](#) - electric sockets, removal of sharp objects and toxics, and provision for adequate security
Health, Safety, Basic Needs

**CHALLENGES**
- Access to temporary housing for self-isolation/recovery/safety
- Food: access, delivery
- Access to hygiene and health services
- Providing food and materials safely

**STRATEGIES**
- Motel vouchers, RVs, dorms
- Gift cards
- Repurposing bus drivers for delivery of items
- Community foundations, faith-based supports, businesses
- Leaving items outside doors, in bins

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“We have a shared resource drive that we seek to keep updated with food bank and distribution sites, and unemployment and benefits resources. For those families that are not able to access the free provision sites or are afraid to (they reside far from bus lines, have multiple children, etc.), we engage in active problem solving. For those most in need, we are providing grocery delivery.”
Challenges & Responses
Federal Legislative and Policy Update
**COVID-19 Bills Overview**

**Phase 1**

*Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, enacted March 6, 2020*

$8.3 billion emergency funding bill designed to treat and prevent the spread of COVID-19

**Phase 2**

*Families First Coronavirus Response Act, enacted March 18, 2020*

Provides for free testing, paid sick leave, increased food assistance, and unemployment provisions

**Phase 3**

*The CARES Act, enacted Friday, March 27, 2020*

$2.2 trillion for coronavirus response and economic stimulus, including loans, grants, tax credits, and deferrals to help small- and mid-sized businesses.

**Phase 4**

In progress

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$13B to SEAs based on Title IA formula.
• Timing: Application available NOW.
• SEA must award grants to LEAs also based on Title IA formula.
• Allowable uses of funds specifically include activities authorized under the McKinney-Vento Act and activities to address the unique needs of students experiencing homelessness, including how outreach and service delivery will meet their needs.
Other allowable uses of funds include:

- Planning for and coordinating how to provide meals and technology.
- Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software and connectivity) for students.
- Mental health services and supports.
- Ensuring access to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs for students experiencing homelessness.
$14B to higher education institutions based primarily on percent of Pell Grant recipients.

Institutions must use at least 50% of funds to provide emergency financial aid grants to students.

A list of funding by institution including the minimum allocation for emergency financial aid grants, is [here](http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org).
Third Coronavirus/Economic Stimulus - H.R. 748
Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund

- **$3B** to states, based on combination of number of children and youth ages 5-24, and Title IA-eligible children.
- For grants to LEAs most significantly impacted by coronavirus.
- For grants to institutions of higher education.
- For grants for emergency educational services for K-12, higher education, child care and early childhood education, social and emotional support, and protection of education-related jobs.
Third Coronavirus/Economic Stimulus - H.R. 748

ACF: Early Care/Child Care

- $3.5B for Child Care and Development Block Grant
- $750M for Head Start
- $45M for Family Violence and Prevention Act
Third Coronavirus/Economic Stimulus - H.R. 748

Federal Education Laws Remain in Effect With Limited Waivers

Children and youth experiencing homelessness retain all educational rights under current federal law.

- Secretary is permitted to waive various sections of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act related to assessments, accountability, state plans, and allocation of funding.
- Does not allow Secretary to waive:
  - McKinney-Vento Act requirements
  - Title I Part A reservation of funds for homeless students
  - Requirements to serve children/youth with disabilities who are homeless
  - Independent student status for unaccompanied youth on the FAFSA
New funding flexibility to allow funds from previous fiscal years to be spent over the next school year. Specifically, states can request waivers to allow LEAs to:

- Carry over more than 15 percent of their FY 2019 Title I, Part A funds into FY 2020 (to be used after September 30, 2020); and
- Extend the availability of FY 2018 Title I, Part A and McKinney-Vento funds until September 30, 2021. (This extension also applies to funds under: Title I, Part C; Title I, Part D; Title III, Part A; 21st Century; and several other ESEA programs.)
$4B in Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)
$5B in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Can be used for rental assistance.
$685M Public Housing
$1.25B in Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)
$1B in Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)
An additional $30B in Disaster Relief Funds. Can supplement some ESG and CDBG uses.
Third Coronavirus/Economic Stimulus - H.R. 748
HUD: A Closer Look at Emergency Solutions Grant

● $4 billion in Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)
  ○ Up to $2 billion to 2020 grantees under same formula, allocations to be made within 30 days.
  ○ Remaining $2 billion to be allocated to states or local units of government by formula determined by Secretary.
  ○ Includes “at risk of homelessness” for prevention activities. Per HUD, it would include those defined as homeless by ED and HHS.

● Eligible uses include emergency shelters, motels/vouchers, and essential services.

● Find who in your community is getting these funds.
Recovery Rebate is only available to individuals who cannot be claimed as a deduction on someone else’s tax return (tax years 2018 and 2019).

SHC is working on advocacy so all unaccompanied homeless youth, and all students considered independent on the FAFSA, can receive the benefit regardless of whether their parents claimed them on their taxes.

**Strategy:** Work with unaccompanied youth to file 2019 taxes as soon as possible.

- Free tax return software is available.
- Unaccompanied homeless youth with no income should complete an online registration with the IRS.
Federal Waivers and Other Action as of April 8, 2020

More from ED

- By April 10, all payments on federally held student loans will be suspended, without interest or penalties, through Sept. 30.

USDA

- [Waived requirement to provide school meals in group setting](#)
- [Waived meal time requirements](#)
- [Allowing delivery of school meals](#)
- [Allowing parents/guardians to pick up meals without children present](#)
- Districts can provide food to students in their area who are not enrolled in the district.

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Questions
Mental Health Resources

- Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19 | CDC
- Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health During an Infectious Disease Outbreak
- Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks
- Talking to Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus): A Parent Resource
Thank you!

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