



Dropout Prevention and College Access for Homeless Youth

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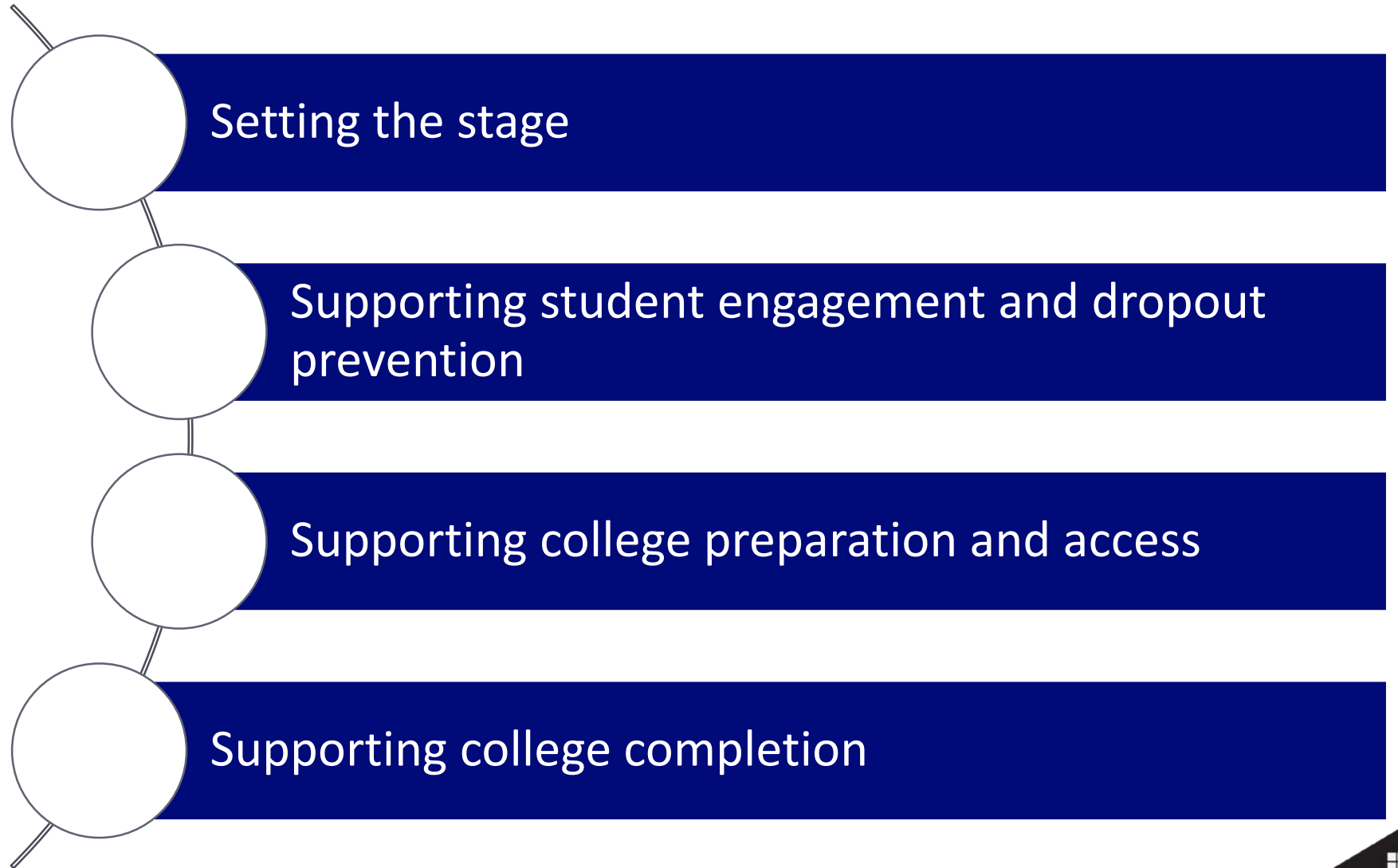
Laramie, WY | June 8, 2017

About NCHE

- NCHE operates the U.S. Department of Education's technical assistance center for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program
 - Website: <http://nche.ed.gov>
 - Webinars: <http://nche.ed.gov/web/group.php>
 - Helpline: 800-308-2145 or homeless@serve.org
 - Listserv: <http://nche.ed.gov/listserv.php>
 - Products: <http://nche.ed.gov/products.php>
 - Social media: <http://nche.ed.gov/social-media.php>



OUTLINE

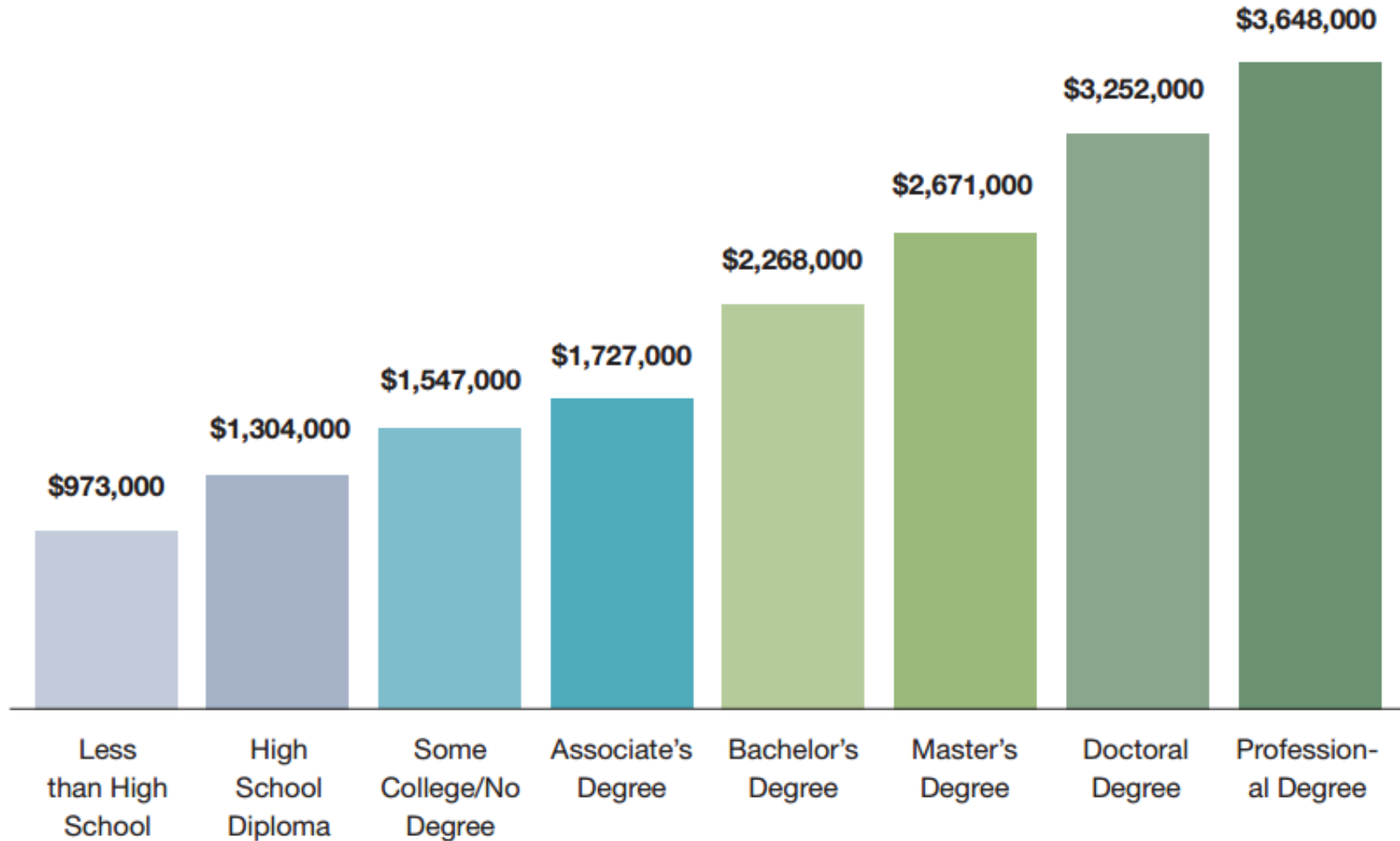




Setting the Stage

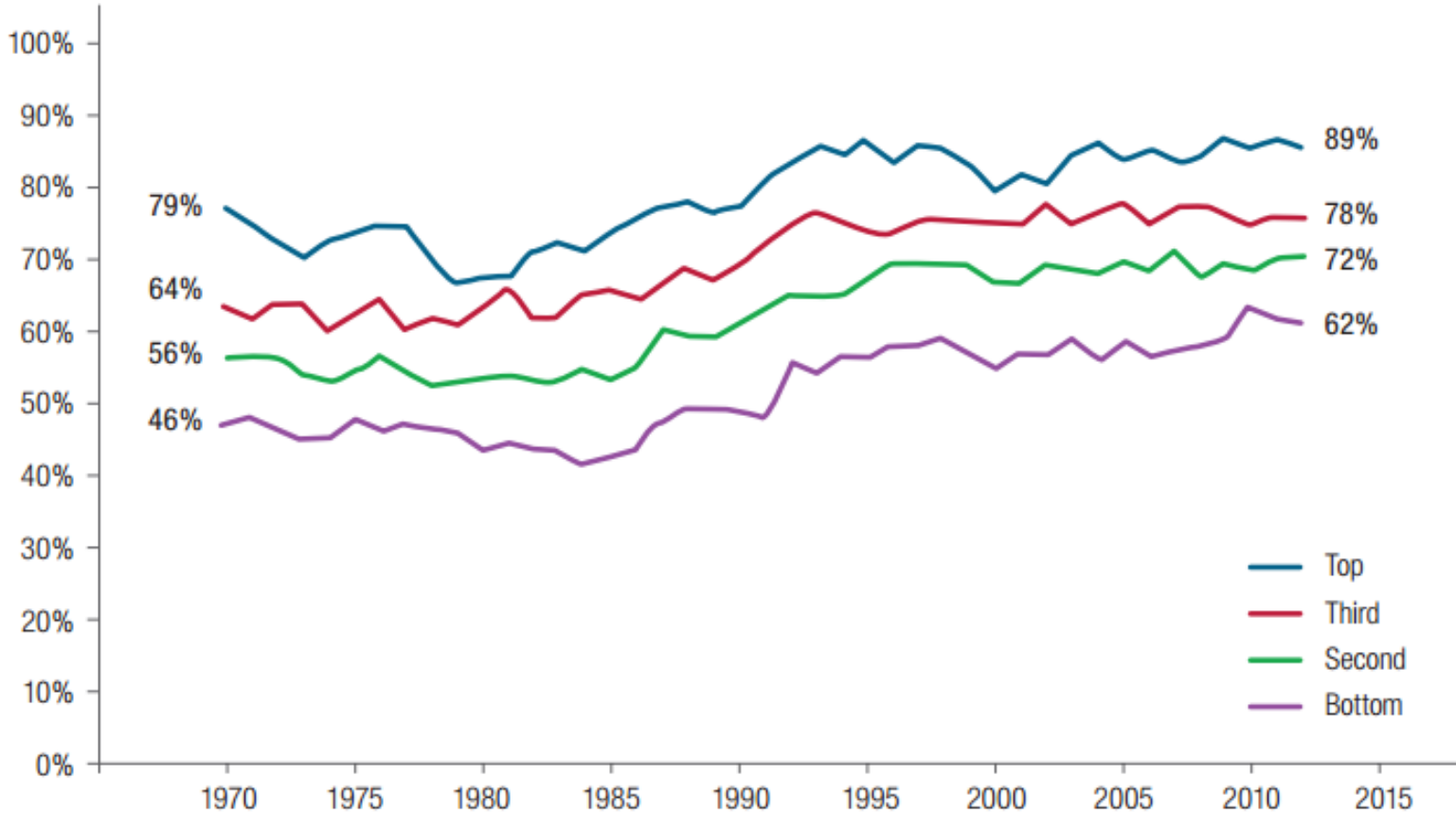
The Value of a College Degree

FIGURE 1: MEDIAN LIFETIME EARNINGS BY HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 2009 DOLLARS



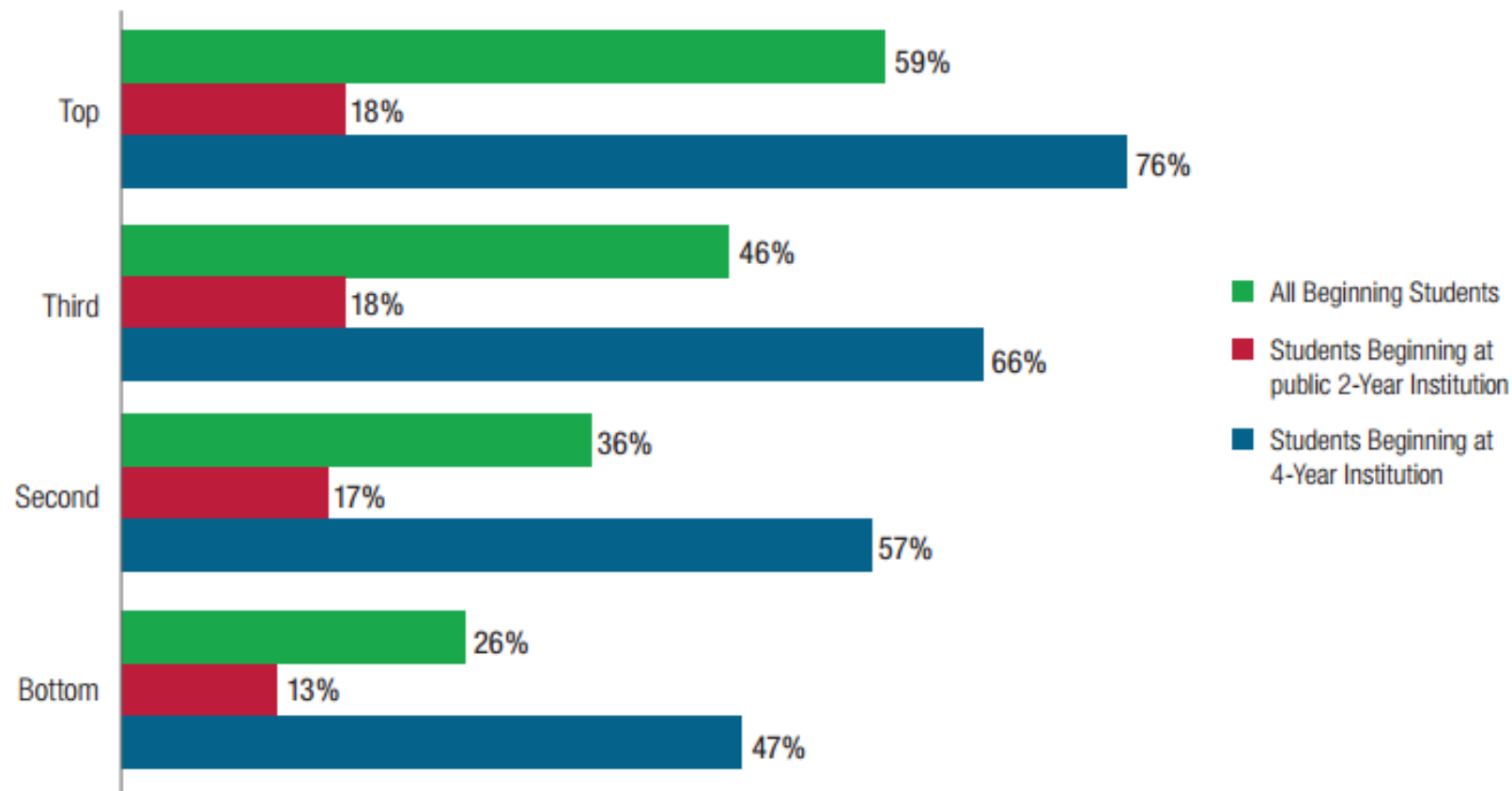
College Continuation Rates

Equity Indicator 1b: High School Graduates College Continuation Rate (HSGCCR) by family income quartile for 18 to 24 year olds: 1970 to 2012



Bachelor's Degree Completion

Revised Equity Indicator 5b: Percent of dependent first-time students who first enrolled in a postsecondary education institution in the 2003-04 academic year, who obtained a bachelor's degree within six years by level of first institution attended and family income quartile: Spring 2009





**Supporting Student
Engagement and Dropout
Prevention**

Why Do Students Drop Out?

- **Push:** A student is **pushed out** when adverse situations within the school environment lead to consequences, ultimately resulting in dropout
- **Pull:** A student is **pulled out** when factors inside the student divert them from completing school
- **Fall Away:** A student **falls out** when he/she does not show significant academic progress in schoolwork and becomes apathetic or even disillusioned with school completion

Source: *Why Students Drop Out:*

<http://dropoutprevention.org/resources/statistics/quick-facts/why-students-drop-out/>

Dropping Out: Push Factors

– The student

- Missed too many days of school
- Was doing poorly/getting behind in school
- Could not complete course requirements
- Was suspended or expelled
- Could not get along with teachers or others at school
- Did not feel safe at school

Dropping Out: Pull Factors

– The student

- Thought it would be easier to get a GED
- Had to support his/her family financially or needed to care for a family member
- Got a job and could not work and go to school at the same time
- Got married or planned to get married
- Was pregnant or became a parent

Dropping Out: Fall Away Factors

- The student

- Did not like school

- Did not feel like he/she belonged at school

- Changed schools and did not like new one

Dropout Prevention Strategies

- School districts can and should address dropout prevention in a variety of ways, including
 - Addressing **policies** that create barriers to school success or are ineffective
 - Creating a safe and supportive **environment** for students
 - Providing group and individual **supports**
- Visit <http://dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/> for more information

Absenteeism and Dropping Out

The U.S. education system is founded on the idea that students are in class every weekday; simply put, to benefit from school, a student must be in attendance.

See http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/FINALChronicAbsenteeismReport_May16.pdf

- Researchers estimate that homeless students are **chronically absent at least twice as often** as the overall student population
- Chronic absenteeism is correlated with **negative outcomes**, like lower test scores and GPAs, and higher rates of grade retention and dropping out
- The more times a student **changes schools**, the more likely the student is to be chronically absent

Supporting Attendance and Stability

- ☑ ESSA requires states and school districts to develop, review, and revise policies to **remove barriers** to school retention for homeless students, **including barriers related to absences**
- ☑ Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, the U.S. Department of Education instituted a **new required data point on chronic absenteeism** among homeless students
- ☑ ESSA requires school districts to **provide school stability** for homeless students by presuming it is in a student's best interest to continue in the school of origin unless this is contrary to the wish of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth

Supporting Credit Accrual

- ESSA requires states to develop procedures to identify and remove barriers that prevent homeless students from **receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed** in a prior school
- **State examples:** CA, TX, and WA passed state laws requiring districts to address credit accrual for homeless students
- **California model policy** provides specific guidelines for calculating and awarding partial or full credit
- Visit <https://nche.ed.gov/ibt/credit.php> for more information

What do you
think?

What policies might have unintended consequences that negatively affect school engagement or high school graduation?

Questions?

Comments?



Supporting College Preparation and Access

ESSA Higher Education Provisions

- ESSA requires the state EHCY plan to include a description of how homeless youth will receive **assistance from school counselors** to prepare and improve their readiness for college
- Local liaisons must inform unaccompanied homeless youth of their **independent student status** when applying for federal financial aid and assist these youth with verification of this status for the FAFSA
- Visit <http://nche.ed.gov/legis/essa.php> for more information

Supporting College Readiness

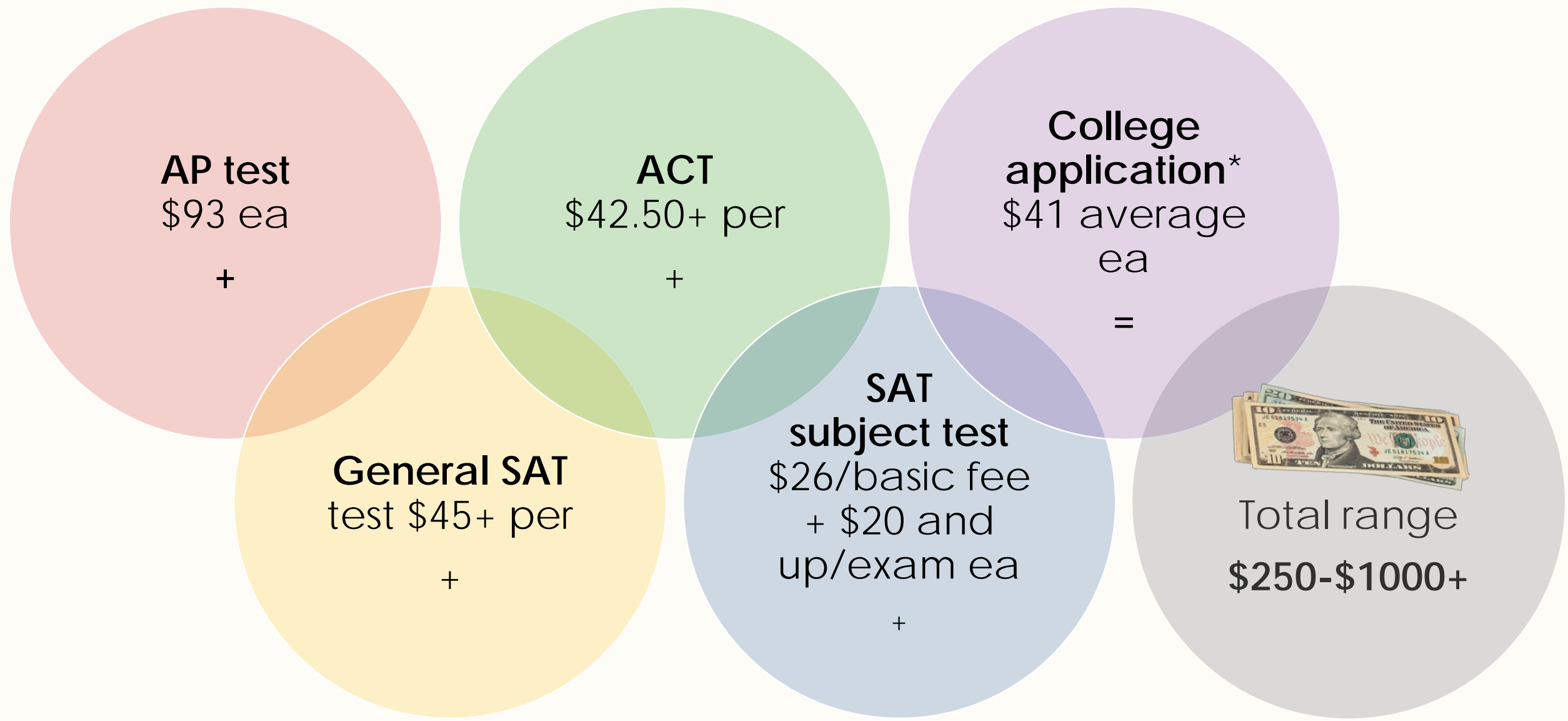
- Local liaisons, school counselors, and other school personnel can help prepare homeless youth for college by:
 - ✓ Working to create a **college-going culture**
 - ✓ Encouraging a **college-going mindset**
 - ✓ Providing one-on-one **assistance** and school-level **programming** for students and parents
 - ✓ Encouraging students to **connect with supports** quickly once at college

Fee Waivers

- Homeless youth qualify for the following waivers
 - AP exam fee waivers:
<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/waivers/guidelines/ap>
Note potential changes due to ESSA block granting
 - ACT exam fee waivers:
<http://www.actstudent.org/faq/feewaiver.html>
 - SAT exam fee waivers:
<http://sat.collegeboard.org/register/sat-fee-waivers>

Fee Waivers

- SAT College Application Fee Waiver:
<http://sat.collegeboard.org/SAT/public/pdf/sat-fee-waiver-directory.pdf>
- NACAC College Application Fee Waiver:
<http://www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo/feewaiver/Pages/default.aspx>



*The College Board recommends that students apply to between 5 and 8 colleges.

FAFSA Basics

- FAFSA = Free Application for Federal Student Aid
- The official FAFSA web address is www.fafsa.gov
- Students applying for federal aid must complete a FAFSA for each school year for which they are seeking federal aid

October 2016 FAFSA Changes

- Beginning with the 2017-2018 FAFSA, ED began releasing the new FAFSA in October (“early FAFSA”)
- Students will submit income from an earlier year (“prior prior year”)
- Visit <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/about/announcements/fafsa-changes> for more information

CHANGES TO THE FAFSA® PROCESS FOR 2017–18

SUBMIT A FAFSA EARLIER: Students will be able to submit a 2017–18 FAFSA as early as Oct. 1, 2016, rather than beginning on Jan. 1, 2017. The earlier submission date will be a permanent change, enabling students to complete and submit their FAFSAs as early as October 1 every year. (There is NO CHANGE to the 2016–17 schedule. The 2016–17 FAFSA became available Jan. 1, 2016.)

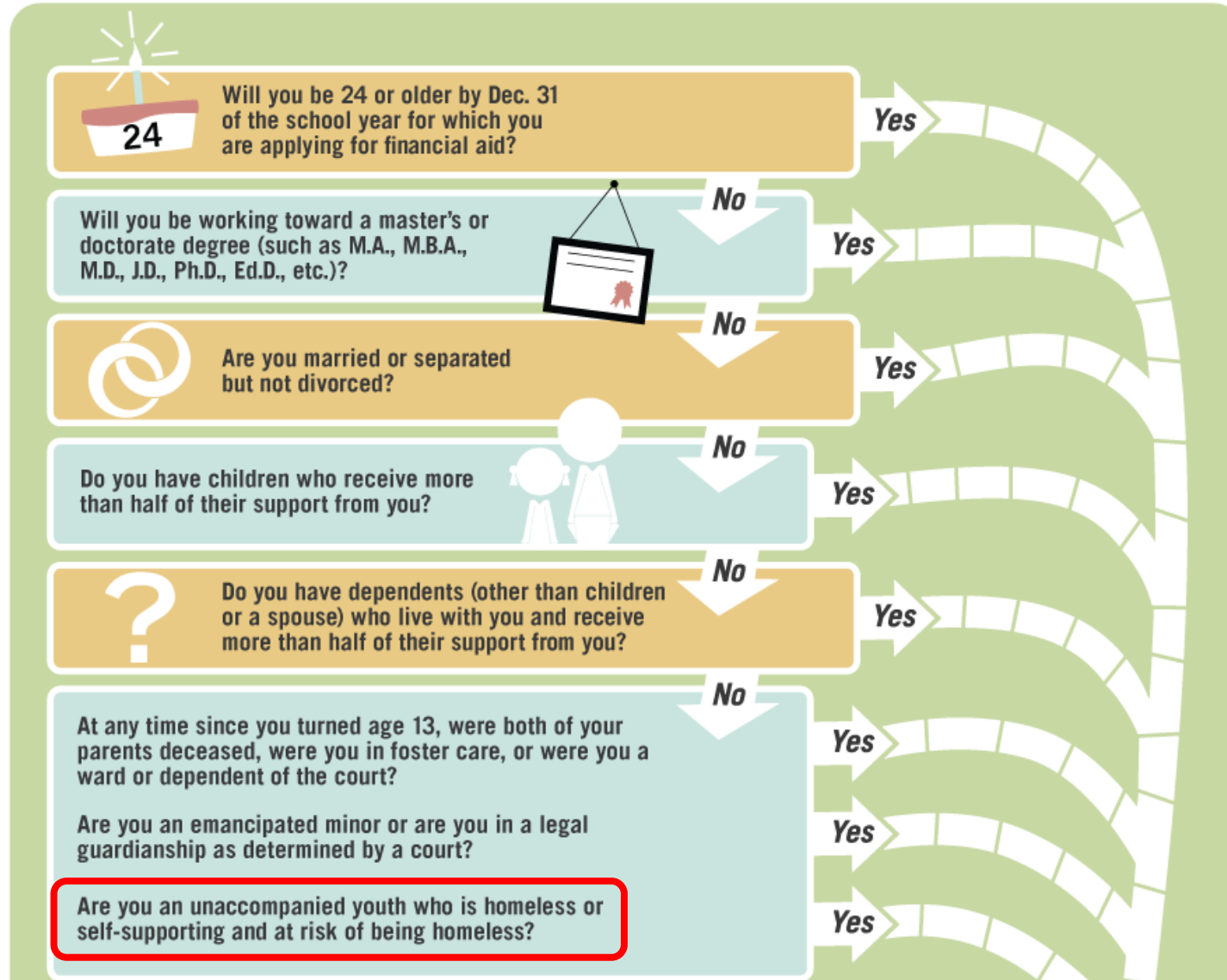
USE EARLIER INCOME AND TAX INFORMATION: Beginning with the 2017–18 FAFSA, students will report income and tax information from an earlier tax year. For example, on the 2017–18 FAFSA, students (and parents, as appropriate) will report their 2015 income and tax information, rather than their 2016 income and tax information.

Here's a summary of key dates for submitting the FAFSA depending on when you plan to go to school:

IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND COLLEGE FROM	YOU WILL SUBMIT THIS FAFSA	YOU CAN SUBMIT THE FAFSA FROM	USING INCOME AND TAX INFORMATION FROM
July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016	2015–16	January 1, 2015–June 30, 2016	2014
July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017	2016–17	January 1, 2016–June 30, 2017	2015
July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018	2017–18	October 1, 2016–June 30, 2018	2015
July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019	2018–19	October 1, 2017–June 30, 2019	2016

Do I Have to Provide My Parents' Information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSASM)?

All applicants for federal student aid are considered either "independent" or "dependent." Dependent students are required to include information about their parents on the FAFSA. By answering a few questions, you can get a good idea of which category you fit into.





You may be a Dependent Student

If none of the criteria listed above apply to you, you may be considered a dependent student and may be required to provide your parents' financial information when completing the FAFSA.

You may be an Independent Student

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you may be an independent student. You may not be required to provide parental information on your FAFSA.

If you have questions about your dependency status or need more information, please visit StudentAid.gov/dependency.

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

- **Unaccompanied**

Not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian

- **Homeless**

McKinney-Vento definition - <http://nche.ed.gov/legis/mv-def.php>

- **Youth**

Age 21 or under, plus ages 22-23 under July 2015 US ED Dear Colleague Letter -

<http://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/attachments/GEN1516Attach.pdf>

**Note: The draft 2018-2019 FAFSA removes the definition of youth, which has caused confusion about age criteria. The draft FAFSA is currently out for public comment.*

Determiners of Student Status

- **Local liaisons**

- Required under ESSA for graduating high school seniors

- Allowed for college students through age 23 for whom liaisons have the needed information

- **Directors of shelters** (or their designees) funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act or by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (student received services)

- College **financial aid administrators** (any student)

Documenting Student Status

- **For local liaisons and shelters**

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Documentation of Independent Student Status for the FAFSA

<http://www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/higher-ed>

- **For financial aid administrators**

Making Student Status Determinations for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Eligibility Tool for Financial Aid Administrators

http://center.serve.org/nche/pr/faa_tool.php

“Accompanied” Homeless Students

- Include parental information on the FAFSA
- Federal aid package is calculated based on the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and will reflect the family’s low-income status
- Understanding the EFC
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/next-steps/how-calculated>

Scholarships

- List from high school counselor
- SchoolHouse Connection: <http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/scholarship-program/>
- Horatio Alger: <https://scholars.horatioalger.org/>
- Reputable scholarship search engines
 - Fastweb!: <http://www.fastweb.com/>
 - College Board: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>
 - U.S. Department of Education: <http://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/finding-scholarships>

What do you
think?

District Policy and Practice

You are the local liaison for your district. Your supervisor calls you to discuss new ESSA requirements regarding support for the transition to higher education for homeless youth. She asks you to draft a document that:

1. Describes the process your district will use to ensure that UHY receive documentation for the FAFSA
2. Describes a recommended program of support for college readiness that will be implemented by your district's school counselors and other relevant staff.

Take a few minutes to craft a draft approach for either #1 or #2 with your neighbor.

Questions?

Comments?



Supporting College Completion

Low College Completion Rates

- Homeless students' college completion may be affected negatively by:
 - The **destabilizing effects of homelessness** (physical, mental/emotional, financial, and academic)
 - Having **no educational role model** (no experience of a "college-going culture", feel "out of place" or overwhelmed)
 - Having **no place to stay** during the semester or over extended breaks
 - **Pressing demands** outside the classroom
 - Others?

Community College?

- Risk factors common among non-traditional students, many of whom attend community college
- Myriad of responsibilities competing for time and attention
- Lower level of student engagement
- Poor planning for transferring to a 4-year institution
- The 2-year vs. 4-year issue should be considered for each individual student based on a variety of factors (not just cost)

College Completion Supports

- College students experiencing homelessness may need
 - Financial assistance/help meeting basic needs
 - Housing assistance
 - Relational support
 - Academic support
 - Career support
 - Mental health support
 - Other supports?

Institutions Taking the Lead

- Florida International University (FIU) Fostering Panther Pride Program - <http://sas.fiu.edu/fpp/>
- Florida State University
 - Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement - <http://care.fsu.edu/>
 - Unconquered Scholars Program - <http://care.fsu.edu/College-Programs/Unconquered-Scholars-Program>
- Kennesaw State University CARE Center - <http://studentsuccess.kennesaw.edu/care/>
- University of Massachusetts Boston U-ACCESS Program - https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/uaccess
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas Hope Scholars Program - https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/UNLV_CCS_D_Hope_Scholars_profile.pdf

Things to Remember

- Dedicated funding is not required (although it helps...)
- Leverage existing resources (funding, programs, people)
- Invite in-kind donations (funding and volunteering)

What do you
think?

Based on what you've learned today, what step will you take to “get the ball rolling” on providing greater support for high school graduation and the transition to higher education for homeless youth in your district?

Questions?

Comments?

Resources

- NCHE Homeless Education Helpline
homeless@serve.org, 800-308-2145
- *Supporting College Completion for Students Experiencing Homelessness*
<http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/he-success.pdf>
- *College Access and Success for Students Experiencing Homelessness: A Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers*
<http://naehcy.org/sites/default/files/dl/toolkit.pdf>

Resources

- *Hungry and Homeless in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education*
- *Serving Displaced and Food Insecure Students in the CSU*
- Visit https://nche.ed.gov/ibt/higher_ed.php



Thank You

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