

# Get to Know the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)



- Operates U.S. Department of Education's homeless education technical assistance & information center. Has
  - Comprehensive website: <http://nche.ed.gov>
  - Toll-free helpline: Call 800-308-2145 or e-mail [homeless@serve.org](mailto:homeless@serve.org)
  - Listserv: Visit <http://nche.ed.gov/listserv.php> for subscription instructions
  - Free resources (Liaison Toolkit, posters, briefs): <http://nche.ed.gov/listserv.php/nche/products.php>

# Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Homeless Education Liaison



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# Local Liaison Requirements

- Every school district must designate a local homeless liaison
  - Must have adequate capacity and training to be able to carry out duties sufficiently
  - Must participate in professional development and technical assistance activities provided by the State Coordinator's office

NCHE's *Homeless Liaison Toolkit*

[http://center.serve.org/nche/pr/liaison\\_toolkit.php](http://center.serve.org/nche/pr/liaison_toolkit.php)

# Capacity and Training

- Increased emphasis on ensuring adequate capacity and training for State Coordinators & local liaisons
- Requires states to adopt policies & practices to ensure liaisons participate in professional development & technical assistance activities
- Requires training for liaisons & other LEA personnel on the identification & needs of homeless students

# Capacity and Training

- Specifies a broader list of role groups to be trained, including
  - Local liaisons & other LEA personnel
  - School administrators, principals, & other school leaders
  - Teachers
  - Special education & specialized instructional support personnel
  - Enrollment personnel
  - Attendance officers
  - Early education personnel
  - Child welfare, social service, law enforcement, mental health, & domestic violence agencies
  - Housing, RHYA, & child care providers

# Local Liaison Responsibilities

- Ensure HCY are
  - Identified through outreach and coordination
  - Enrolled in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school, including services through
    - ❖ Head Start & Early Head Start
    - ❖ IDEA, Part C, early intervention
    - ❖ Other preschool programs administered by the LEA
  - Assisted in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or required health records
  - Provided referrals to health care, dental, mental health, substance abuse, housing, & other services

## Local Liaison Responsibilities (cont.)

- Inform parents, guardians, & unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) of educational & related opportunities & provide opportunities to participate
- Ensure educational rights are posted in places frequented by parents, guardians or UHY, including schools, shelters, public libraries, & soup kitchens
- Inform parents, guardians, & UHY about transportation services & assist with access
- Mediate disputes promptly, according to a process established by the SEA

# Local Liaison Responsibilities (cont.)

- Support UHY with school selection & disputes
  - Ensure students are enrolled & have opportunities to meet academic standards
  - Inform UHY of independent student status for FAFSA & how to get verification
- Coordinate & collaborate with State Coordinator & school personnel who work with HCY
- Once trained on HUD homeless definition, liaison may affirm students/families meet eligibility requirements for Continuum of Care (CoC) & Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) programs



# Local Liaison Responsibilities (cont.)

- Provide professional development to LEA personnel including
  - School administrators, principals, & other school leaders, teachers, enrollment personnel, special education & specialized instructional support personnel, & attendance officers
  - Early education program personnel (in and outside the LEA)
  - Housing, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) programs, & child care providers
  - Child welfare, social service, law enforcement, mental health, and domestic violence agencies

# LEA Responsibilities

- LEAs should use data to inform training, collaborations
- LEAs must start collecting chronic absenteeism data
- For students who are homeless or in foster care, Title I state report cards must disaggregate
  - Student achievement data
  - High school graduation rates

# How to Make this Manageable

- Assess specific needs of HCY in your LEA & prioritize where you spend your time
  - See handout: Sample Needs Assessment
- Plan your activities over time; don't try to do everything at once
- Use data to document the amount of time needed to carry out requirements & request more time be allocated to your position
- Train school personnel on the McKinney-Vento Act
- Take care of what's important so you don't operate in crisis mode

# Keep Key Information Close at Hand

## Law & Guidance

- MV Legislation
- 2016 Non-regulatory Guidance
- Selected NCHE briefs (Determining Eligibility, Unaccompanied Homeless Youth, etc.)
- NCHE's Homeless Liaison Toolkit
  - Appendix 2.B: Quick Guide to Key MV Provisions

# Keep Key Information Close at Hand

## Contact information

- School-based contacts
- Title I coordinator
- Pupil transportation director
- Child nutrition director
- Special education coordinator
- Community collaborators
- State Coordinator
- NCHE

# Keep Key Information Close at Hand

## State & Local Information

- MV dispute resolution policies – SEA & LEA
- Other state laws & policies related to homeless students, including Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY)
- District policies
- Memos
- Forms & templates
- Data on homeless students
- Communication logs
- Subgrant application

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# Needs Assessment & Programmatic Thinking

## List of activities

- Every activity is just as important as any other; difficult to distinguish level of importance
- Short-term focus
- Success is measured by whether the activity is completed, not whether this is the best activity

## ✓ Programmatic approach

- Limited set of goals derived from needs; long-term planning
- Activities not related to goals are eliminated; prioritization leads to better use of time & resources
- Success is measured by whether goal is reached & need is addressed

*There are specific things you must do, but all activities do not need the same level of effort; it all depends on the needs.*



# NCHE's LEA Needs Assessment

- Questions represent major provisions of the law & expectations for LEAs
- Can be used flexibly, depending on resources & time
  - Best to include responses based on data & stakeholder input
  - Can use to describe what you know from observation & hunches to identify major needs

*LEA Informal Needs Assessment*

LEA:  
Local Liaison:  
Date Completed:

<i>Awareness</i>			
<i>Guiding Questions</i>	<i>What's in Place (Successes and Challenges)</i>	<i>What's Needed</i>	<i>Priority Level (High, Med., Low)</i>
What professional development activities take place to increase the awareness of LEA program administrators and school personnel regarding the statutory requirements of McKinney-Vento and Title I, Part A legislation relative to the education of homeless children and youth?			
What activities take place to increase the level of awareness/education in other community agencies, shelters, and service providers?			
Are homeless education posters displayed in each school and throughout the community where families and youth experiencing homelessness will see them?			
How are homeless parents and guardians informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children?			

# NCHE's LEA Annual Plan Template

- Use needs assessment to create annual plan
  - Select resources to address major needs
  - Think long range & short range
- Good for awareness & advocacy
  - Provides a rationale & logic for describing your work to others (such as those who can provide resources)
  - Defines & shows progress
- Can be used flexibly

**NCHE**  
National Center for Homeless Education at SEVI

Local Educational Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Action Plan \_\_\_\_\_ School Year

Local liaisons should take the goals identified from the informal needs assessment and develop an action plan by providing the information requested in the tables below. The key is to select a reasonable number of goals and activities that can be accomplished in a year, given staff and resources. As you prioritize goals for the plan, consider the following:

1. What goals are the most critical to accomplish to strengthen the foundation of the homeless education program?
2. What goals, when accomplished, will have the biggest impact on the identification, enrollment, access, and success of homeless children and youth?
3. What goals, when accomplished will impact the most number of homeless students?
4. What goals are reasonable and attainable?

This template is designed for you to customize it for your needs and program. You may not have goals for all of the focus areas. (The template is very comprehensive.) You may have several strategies for one goal, depending on the importance of the goal. This template is a Word file-rows can be added, or deleted, or adjusted in any way.

Awareness					
Goal	Strategies or Activities	Who Needs to be Involved	Timeline/Target to Complete	Resources/Supports Needed	Evidence of Success

Policies and Procedures					
Goal	Strategies or Activities	Who Needs to be Involved	Timeline/Target to Complete	Resources/Supports Needed	Evidence of Success

Disputes					
Goal	Strategies or Activities	Who Needs to be Involved	Timeline/Target to Complete	Resources/Supports Needed	Evidence of Success

# Plan Your Year

- Calendar of key dates
  - Beginning/end of the school year
  - Liaison PD: trainings & conferences
  - Holidays & breaks
  - State assessments
  - Deadline for submission of data
  - Deadline for submission of grant applications
    - ❖ MV & Title I
- Plan activities over time
  - Training of LEA & school staff
  - Collaboration activities

# Anticipate Busy Times


- Checklist for Back to School and Major Breaks
  - ❑ Posters in schools & community
  - ❑ Info on procedures & protocols in schools
  - ❑ Contact community agencies for referrals & resources
  - ❑ Schedule training events
  - ❑ Update contact list for school contacts, LEA program administrators, community agencies
  - ❑ Arrange extra help for determining eligibility, best interest & connecting students to services

# Have Clear Procedures & Protocols

- Enrolling homeless students including UHY
- Determining best interest for school selection
- Arranging transportation to the school of origin
  - Working with other LEAs
  - Utilizing community options
- Arranging free meals
- Handling fines & fees that may create barriers
- Resolving disputes on eligibility, enrollment, & school selection, including written notice to parents/UHY
- Signing consent for UHY, e.g., dr's appointments, field trips, extracurricular activities, etc.

# Collaborate Purposefully

- Increase awareness
- Coordinate services
- Expand resources
- Align policies & practices
- Support community initiatives & policy making



**Collaborative Partnerships**

<i>Organization or Program</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>	<i>Purpose for Collaboration</i>	<i>Type of Collaboration or Communication Needed</i>	<i>Date of Last Contact and Current Status</i>	<i>Action Needed</i>	<i>Deadline for Next Planned Contact</i>

Developed by NCHE, October 2016

# Collaboration Tips

- Be selective; prioritize efforts based on your needs assessment and annual plan
- Focus on meetings where homeless education is on the agenda - or should be
- Determine if there are meetings where you can review minutes instead of attending
- Designate staff or school leaders to attend some meetings
- Don't expect too much too early; building relationships takes time

# Distinguish Between Levels of Importance

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	<p><u>QUADRANT I</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arranging transportation to the school of origin</li> <li>• Resolving a dispute</li> </ul>	<p><u>QUADRANT II</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing local policies &amp; procedures to remove educational barriers</li> <li>• Providing awareness &amp; training to school &amp; school district staff</li> </ul>
NOT IMPORTANT	<p><u>QUADRANT III</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending mandatory staff meetings not related to homeless students &amp; their needs</li> <li>• Searching through files to compile information to prepare for a monitoring visit</li> </ul>	<p><u>QUADRANT IV</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with colleagues on issues not related to serving homeless children &amp; youth</li> <li>• Attending community meetings in which you do not have a specific role</li> </ul>



# Table Talk



- What challenges do you face with carrying out the responsibilities of the position?
- What are some time-saving strategies you currently use or could use?
- What help do you need – within and outside the LEA - to make the role of local liaison more manageable?

# Resources

- NCHE *Homeless Liaison Toolkit* – **just revised!**  
[nche.ed.gov/pr/liaison\\_toolkit.php](http://nche.ed.gov/pr/liaison_toolkit.php)
- Resources for Learning & Training
  - Briefs [nche.ed.gov/pr/briefs.php](http://nche.ed.gov/pr/briefs.php)
  - Webinars [nche.ed.gov/web/group.php](http://nche.ed.gov/web/group.php)
  - Online Tutorials, Recorded Webinars, PowerPoint Presentations [nche.ed.gov/web/s\\_p.php](http://nche.ed.gov/web/s_p.php)
- NCHE's *Guide to Collecting & Reporting Data*  
[nche.ed.gov/downloads/data-guide-15-16.pdf](http://nche.ed.gov/downloads/data-guide-15-16.pdf)

# Resources

- NCHE's McKinney-Vento Legislation Web Page  
[nche.ed.gov/legis/mv.php](http://nche.ed.gov/legis/mv.php)
- EHCY Program Non-regulatory Guidance  
[ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/16024oehcyguidance072716.pdf](http://ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/16024oehcyguidance072716.pdf)
- NAEHCY's "Red-line Version" of the McKinney-Vento Act  
[naehcy.org/sites/default/files/dl/legis/mvstrikethrough.pdf](http://naehcy.org/sites/default/files/dl/legis/mvstrikethrough.pdf)
- NAEHCY's Frequently Asked Questions  
[naehcy.org/sites/default/files/dl/legis/2016-09-26\\_FAQ\\_FINAL.pdf](http://naehcy.org/sites/default/files/dl/legis/2016-09-26_FAQ_FINAL.pdf)

# Final Questions?

