

ANNUAL FALL TRAINING

Session 1: September 23–24

Session 2: October 21–22

2026

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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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The purpose of this handbook is to follow along with the Fall Training slide deck and have the activities available to you before the training. It also includes all the scenarios we will review together on Day 2. The end of this document includes important information you can print and have ready and available.

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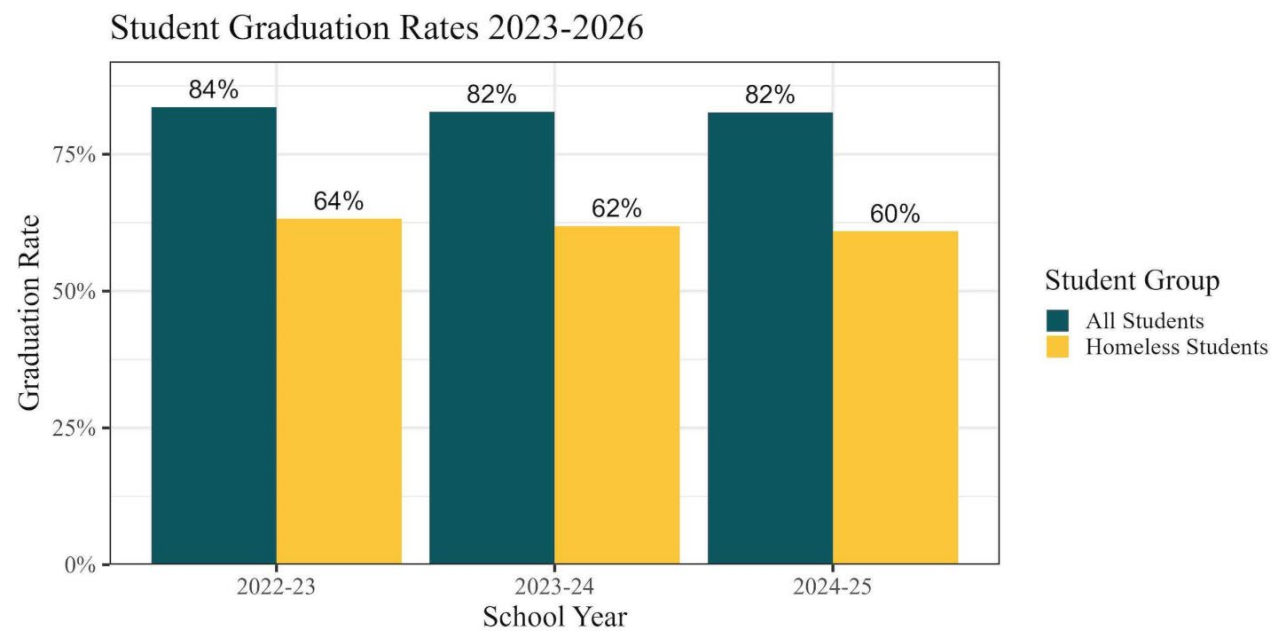
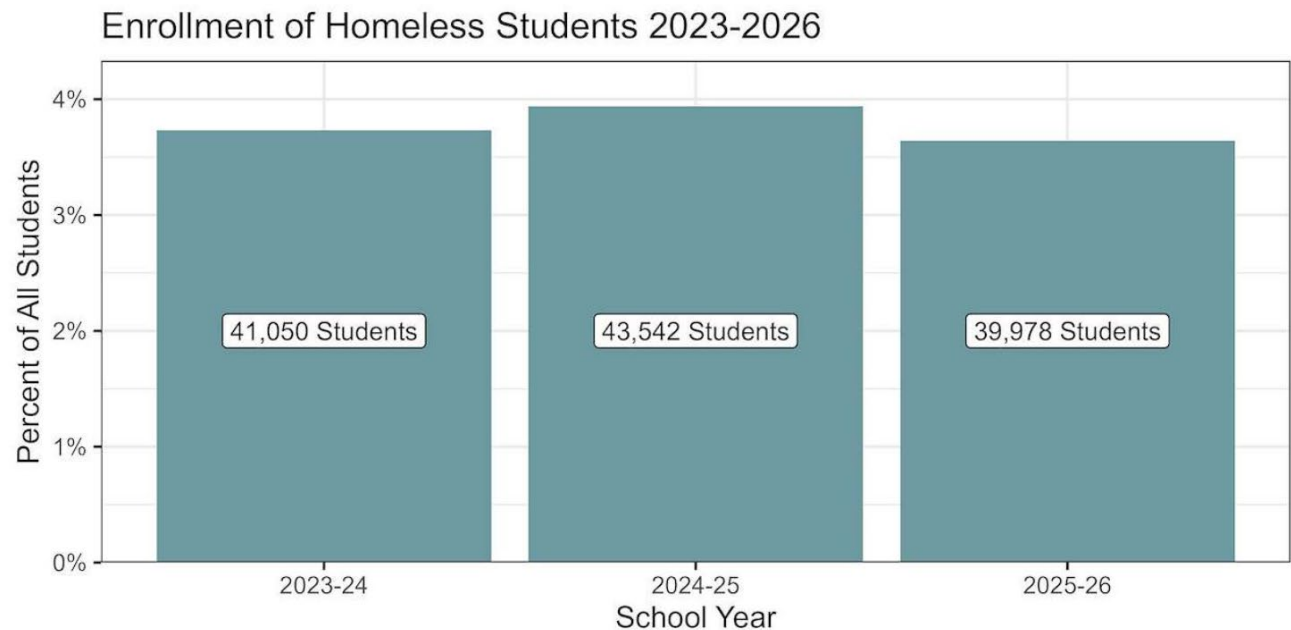
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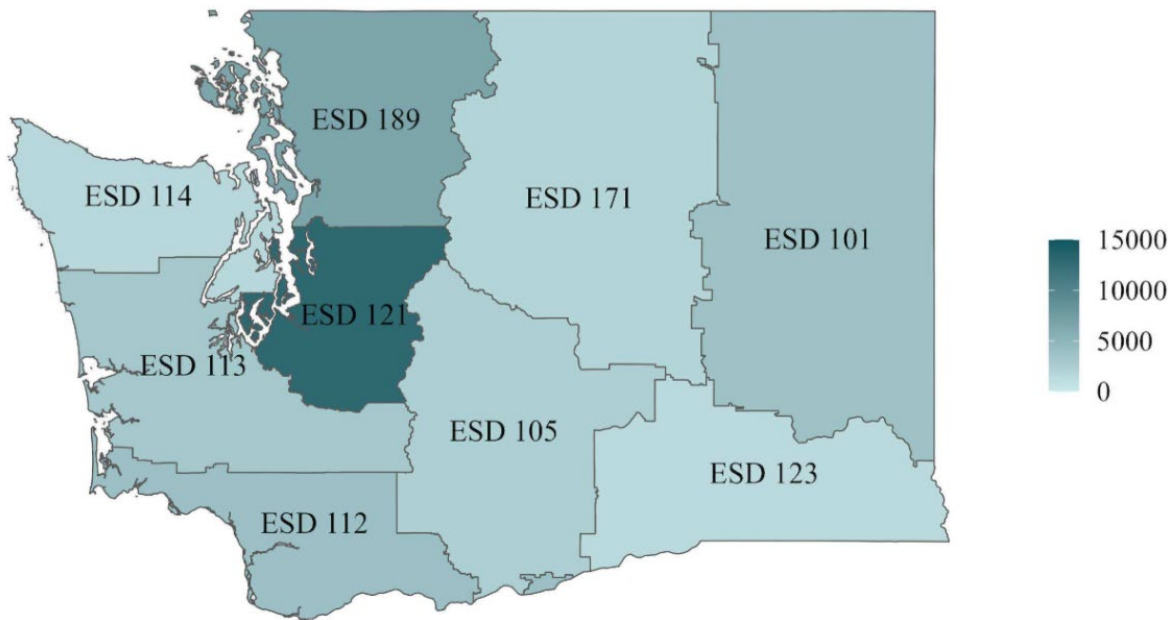
DATA

The following data represents what is happening in the state of Washington.

The data source is the OSPI report card, accessed 7/10/2026



Homeless Student Population by ESD



ACTIVITY 1

What Increases or Decreases the Likelihood of Homelessness in Your Community?

Consider each of the circumstances below relative to your community. Indicate with +1 (increased likelihood of homelessness), 0 (no impact on homelessness), or -1 (decreased likelihood of homelessness).

Example: "In my community, there is hardly any affordable housing available, so I will write +1 to indicate that this would likely contribute to increased homelessness."

____ Poverty (high or low)

____ Unemployment (high or low)

____ Wages (high-wage jobs or low-wage jobs)

____ Jobs (new jobs coming to the community, jobs leaving)

____ Support services (well-funded or poorly funded)

____ Affordable housing (lack of affordable housing or sufficient)

____ A natural or human-caused disaster

____ Pandemic or epidemic

____ Childcare (lack of childcare or sufficient)

____ Graduation rate (high or low)

____ Families with post-secondary education (high or low)

____ Civic engagement (high or low)

____ Non-profits and churches active in social issues (sufficient or few)

____ Awareness of poverty and homelessness (high or low) What is your community's score?

____ out of 14

Explain what your community's score indicates about homelessness in your community.

DEFINITIONS

Immediate Enrollment- Students who qualify under McKinney-Vento must be enrolled immediately even if they are unable to provide paperwork normally required for enrollment. [42 U.S.C 11432(g)(3)(C)(i)(I)]. Immediate enrollment means that a school district must admit and enroll a homeless child or youth immediately when they are present for enrollment, regardless of missed application or enrollment deadlines. The law defines “enrollment” as attending classes and participating fully in school activities

School of Origin- The school of origin is the school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool. (Section 722(g)(3)(I)(i)). When a child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools (such as when an elementary school feeds into a middle school). (Section 722(g)(3)(I)(ii)).

Doubled- Up- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason.

Substandard Housing- A dwelling unit that is either dilapidated or unsafe, thus endangering the health and safety of the occupant, or that does not have adequate plumbing or heating facilities.

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth- A student not living with or in the physical custody of a parent or guardian **AND** lacks a fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence.

Unaccompanied minors: Youth under age 18 who come to the U.S. without an accompanying parent or guardian. The term “unaccompanied” in this context refers to their immigration status, not their McKinney-Vento status.

Asylees: Refugees who are in the U.S. when going through the initial immigration process.

Parolees: People who receive temporary legal status to enter the U.S. due to

urgent humanitarian or significant public benefit reasons. Typically, they are not eligible for the same kinds of services as a refugee.

Migrant: Someone who moves because the student or family are involved in seasonal agricultural or fishing work.

Immigrant: A person who moves to a country and plans to stay permanently.

Refugees: People who have fled their home country due to fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, and are not in the U.S. while they are going through the initial immigration process.

ACTIVITY 2 - PRIMARY CATEGORIES OF HOMELESSNESS

Can you think of two more examples for each of the primary categories of homelessness in the McKinney-Vento definition?

Fixed	Not fixed
• Apartment	• Tent
•	•
•	•
Regular	Not regular
• Living in a place with a lease	• Staying with a relative on a temporary basis (you could be asked to leave at any time)
•	•
•	•
Adequate	Not adequate
• House in good repair with heat	• Non-working utilities
•	•
•	•

LIAISON JOB DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The local liaison serves as the district's lead homeless education contact and is required to fulfill the duties of the position as established in the Act [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)].

- Ensure homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination with other agencies.
- Ensure homeless children and youths are enrolled in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in school.
- Ensure homeless families, children, and youths have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start programs, early intervention services under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other preschool programs administered by the LEA.
- Inform the parents or guardians of homeless children and youths of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
- Ensure homeless families, children, and youth receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
- Ensure public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, in a manner and form understandable to parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth.
- Ensure enrollment disputes are mediated according to 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E).
- Ensure the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any

unaccompanied homeless youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin.

- Ensure unaccompanied homeless youths are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards established for other students, and are informed of their status as independent students and assistance receiving verification of their status for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Ensure school personnel who serve homeless children and youths receive professional development and other support.

ACTIVITY 3 - EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS

Match the circumstances of homelessness with the educational barriers that homelessness creates. You may identify up to three circumstances for each barrier.

<i>Circumstance</i>	<i>Educational Barrier</i>
a. Leaving friends behind	_____ Educational disruption
b. Experiencing the trauma of homelessness	_____ Poor school performance
c. Changing schools	_____ High rates of absenteeism or dropping out
d. Lacking clothing	_____ Undiagnosed learning or special education needs
e. Hunger	_____ Lost credits
f. Moving frequently to temporary locations	_____ Feeling embarrassment or shame
g. Parental stress	_____ Behavior problems
h. Children's fear of not knowing where they will be staying each night	_____ Inability to trust or make friends
i. Stigma of homelessness	_____ Inability to concentrate
j. No place to do homework or study	
k. Insufficient medical care	

STRATEGIES AND TIPS

- Participate in all professional development and technical assistance offered in your region.
- Plan your activities over time and prioritize what is needed most to support your students who are experiencing homelessness.
- Develop written procedures and protocols for identifying, enrolling, and serving homeless students.
- Train district personnel on the McKinney-Vento Act and related policies and procedures to generate district wide awareness and effective implementation.
- Network with other LEA liaisons by sharing best practices.
- Develop relationships and/or partnerships with local service providers, faith-based organizations, food banks, housing agencies, public preschool programs, and local businesses.
- Use a trauma-informed approach when communicating with parents, guardians, and students about their needs.

DAY 2- BREAKOUT ROOMS/SCENARIOS

We will have a breakout session that will split participants up into 6 rooms. Each room will be led by either a seasoned liaison or a member of our Homeless Education team. Every breakout room will be given one scenario to read through, discuss, and produce a plan to help support the family or youth. After 20 minutes we will come back to the large group to share.

To Begin

Step 1: Choose a READER to read the scenario

Step 2: Choose a SCRIBE to take notes

Step 2. Choose a REPORTER to report back to group

Each scenario will be different.

Keep each of the following questions in mind while discussing your scenario:

- Does this family or youth identify as McKinney-Vento? Why or why not?
- What services can be provided?
- Who needs to be contacted?
- Are outside agencies involved?
- Are funds needed?

Scenarios

Doubled-Up – Scenario 1

Christopher, his two brothers, and his parents have been living with his uncle since their house was damaged in a flood last month. They were glad that relatives were willing to take them in, but their living situation is tense because the house is not large enough for both families to live comfortably. It is also all the way across town from the school the children have always attended. Christopher and his brothers are sleeping on the living room floor in sleeping bags, and they don't have anywhere to do their homework. Does Christopher qualify for McKinney-Vento services? Could they stay at their

school? What do you think? What questions would you ask?

School of Origin - Scenario 2

Brandy is 16 years old and is in 11th grade. At her school, Southwest Green High School, she had been getting poor grades and was skipping school often. Early in the school year, she got involved in the school's drama club. Soon after, her grades and attendance improved.

In March, her family was evicted, and they moved in with Brandy's grandmother who lives 25 miles from Southwest Green High School in the neighboring school district. Before the family moved in with her grandmother, Brandy was practicing the lead role in the school's annual musical production. If Brandy remained in her school of origin, she would have to get up at five o'clock each day to catch one school bus and transfer to another bus to get to school on time. She is not an early riser. There would also be challenges in arranging for her to get home after play practice. What school would be in Brandy's best interests to attend? Why? What do you think? What questions would you ask?

Doubled-up - Scenario 3

Cheyenne is an 8th grade student at Moode Jr. High in Thelma School District. She recently moved into her aunt's home in Thelma School District, along with her mother and her mother's boyfriend. The three of them moved in with the aunt when their apartment complex was sold to a new owner and the new rental rate became too expensive for Cheyanne's mom to afford. Cheyanne's aunt agreed to allow the family to move in with her only until a new apartment can be located. In the meantime, Cheyanne's mom is helping to pay for groceries, and she is also paying a small amount of rent to help with utilities.

Cheyenne feels fortunate to be living with her aunt because the condominium complex includes amenities such as a swimming pool and a rec room, and her aunt's condo is nearly new. Cheyanne only wishes she didn't need to share a one-bedroom condo with three adults as the space is crowded and she has little privacy. Is Cheyanne homeless according to the McKinney-Vento Act?

What do you think? What questions would you ask?

Immediate Enrollment - Scenario 4

Jack is 21 and a single parent, raising his son Tony who has just turned 5. Tony came to stay with Jack when his mom died a year ago. Jack is familiar with loss, having lived on his own since his own mom passed away when he was 16.

Jack has worked hard to get his life together and has applied and been accepted to Clackamas Community College. He is looking forward to starting his new college program but also worried about how he is going to be able to make it as a single dad living in a weekly rental trailer managed by the local hotel and working part time. His biggest problem has been finding someone safe to watch Tony while he is at work and attending school.

Another problem Jack is facing is getting his son Tony enrolled. Jack tried to enroll Tony in kindergarten at Lamington Elementary, the local school. Tony is an enthusiastic child and is very excited to go to school and see other kids his age.

When Jack met with the registrar, she told him that for Tony to enroll, the district would need evidence that Tony was current on his immunizations. Jack explained that Tony was up to date on all immunizations, but that his medical records had been lost when he couldn't pay the rent on their storage unit and their belongings were sold at a public auction. The secretary said that she was sorry to hear about the issue with the storage unit, but that she simply could not allow Tony to enroll without the proper paperwork. She further explained that the district was "really cracking down" on student immunizations because there was an outbreak of whooping cough last winter that forced the entire district to shut down.

Jack is not sure what to do since Tony has already been immunized for whooping cough and he does not want to have him immunized again... all he really needs is the medical records from Tony's pediatrician across the state. Frustrated, he leaves the school office with Tony, who is still not enrolled in school. Does Tony qualify as homeless under McKinney-Vento? Why or why

not? What do you think? What questions would you ask?

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth - Scenario 5

Sally is a high school senior in Locking School District. She is a 4.0 student and is involved in several afterschool clubs and activities in addition to her AP courses. Her orchestra teacher, Ms. "M," notices that Sally's parents never come to concerts or show up at music booster activities, but this is not unusual. Many parents tend to "drop" their kids at activities and choose not to be involved. But, at the spring orchestra concert, Ms. "M" notices that Sally's violin bow needs repair... she also notices that Sally is wearing shoes borrowed from another student. When Ms. "M" asks Sally about her bow, Sally bursts into tears.

She shares that orchestra is her favorite class, and she knows that her bow needs repair, but she has no money and she cannot ask her parents for help. Sally wants to attend college. She only has 7 weeks until graduation and she is anxious to hear if she might qualify for financial aid to assist with higher education costs.

The following Monday morning, Sally missed orchestra class and Ms. "M" discovers from another student that Sally had to move away over the weekend, fleeing a domestic violence situation at the home where she's been "couch surfing." Sally is now staying at her cousin's house, which is in the Canby School District and is a 45-minute drive from the Locking School District. Does Sally qualify as homeless under McKinney-Vento? Why or why not? What do you think? What questions would you ask?

Scenario 6 - Refugee

Olga, her two brothers, and her parents have come from Ukraine to the US as refugees. Through a local refugee assistance program, they have been able to get short term financial support with an apartment rental, while the parents secure work permits. Unfortunately, it is taking much longer to get work visas than the parents had planned for, and now that the rental assistance has come to an end, they can no longer afford to pay for the apartment. This has led them to bring in another family they know that came over from Ukraine,

resulting in an overcrowded living situation, with 9 people living in a 3-bedroom apartment. Would Olga qualify under McKinney-Vento? Why or why not? What questions would you ask?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Program Review

The Program Review & Support process includes multiple aspects of OSPI's oversight of federal and state programs. The process emphasizes a partnership approach to oversight and monitoring that focuses on student outcomes. Below you will find the description of each reviewed section of district homeless education programs. Checklist can be found on [Program Review Checklist](#)

10.1 LEA Policy - The LEA has developed, reviewed, and revised policies to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youths in schools.

10.2 Dispute Resolution - When a dispute arises regarding the enrollment of a homeless child or youth, the LEA follows Washington state's homeless enrollment dispute process according to the McKinney-Vento Act. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(3)(E)(i,ii,iii,iv)

10.3 Transportation - The LEA ensures that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(1)(J)(iii)(I, II)

10.4 LEA Liaison - The LEA has a designated homeless liaison, who is able to carry out the duties described in the McKinney-Vento Act and who has participated in PD and other technical assistance activities as determined appropriate by OSPI, to assist with identification, enrollment, attendance, and academic success of homeless children and youth. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(7)(J)(ii) and 722(g)(7)(J)(I)(iv)

10.5 Identification of Students - The LEA's homeless liaison ensures that homeless children and youth are identified and enrolled by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(6)(A)(i)

The LEA ensures that the liaison for the education of homeless children and youths has participated in PD and other technical assistance activities as determined appropriate by OSPI. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(1)(J)(I)(iv)

The LEA liaison for homeless children and youth shall ensure that school personnel receive PD and other support. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(6)(A)(ix)

10.6 Enrollment, Intake, and Access - The LEA's homeless liaison ensures that homeless children and youths enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools in the LEA; and homeless families receive referrals for services, and parents/guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities for students as well as meaningful opportunities for parental involvement. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(6)(A)(i)-(vi), and SSB 6074, WA State Laws of 2074, ch. 272

10.7 Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Higher Education/FAFSA - Each LEA liaison for homeless children and youth shall ensure that unaccompanied youths are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic standards as other students, are informed of their status as independent students per the Higher Education Act of 1965, and that the youths obtain assistance from the LEA liaison to receive verification of such status for purposes of the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(6)(A)(x)(I, II, III)

10.8 Early Childhood - The LEA's homeless liaison ensures that homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the LEA. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(6)(A)(iii)

10.9 Community Collaboration - The LEA shall coordinate the identification and provision of services with local social service agencies and other agencies

or programs providing services to homeless children and youth and their families, including those funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, other local education agencies, state and local housing agencies, and others. McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(5)(A)(B)(C)

10.10 Posting of Rights and Parent Information - The LEA's homeless liaison ensures that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth is disseminated where such children and youths receive services (all school district buildings and throughout the community). McKinney-Vento Section 722(g)(6)(A)(vi); SSB 6074, WA state Laws of 2004, ch. 272

For example, refer to the following [Program Review Combined Checklist](#).

Funding

McKinney-Vento Grant

The McKinney-Vento Grant is available through a **competitive** grant process and runs on a three-year grant cycle. The purpose of McKinney-Vento Grant funding is to facilitate the identification, enrollment, retention, and educational success of students experiencing homelessness.

The goal of McKinney-Vento Grant funding is to:

- improve identification and immediate enrollment,
- improve academic outcomes,
- reduce chronic absenteeism,
- increase graduation rates, and
- bolster student engagement and student success.

A district should consider applying for a McKinney-Vento Grant when:

- The district has an increased number of students experiencing homelessness.
- The district sees a need for additional funding/services for students experiencing homelessness.
- The district needs supplemental funding beyond basic education and

the required Title I, Part A set aside.

Who may apply:

- Every district in the state is eligible to apply for McKinney-Vento Grant funding.
- Funding is based on need as well of the quality of proposal per the federal McKinney-Vento Act.
- The next McKinney-Vento Grant funding opportunity will be in spring 2028.

Criteria for determining the need for grant funding:

- The number and percentage of homeless children and youth enrolled in early childhood programs, preschool programs, elementary schools, and secondary schools.
- The extent to which the district's proposed use of funds will facilitate identification, enrollment, retention, and educational success for students experiencing homelessness.
- The designated McKinney-Vento liaison must have the time and capacity to accomplish all liaison duties outlined under the federal McKinney-Vento Act.
- A comprehensive needs assessment is a required element of the grant application.

The Homeless Student Stability Education Program Grant

The Homeless Student Stability Education Program (HSSEP) Grant provides educational stability for students experiencing homelessness by promoting housing stability. This is also **competitive** grant.

The goal of HSSEP Grant funding is to:

- Build collaborations with housing providers and other community service providers.
- Increase support for unaccompanied youth.
- Address opportunity gaps and other systemic inequities that negatively impact students experiencing homelessness and students of color.

A district should consider applying for the HSSEP Grant when:

- The district has an increased number of students experiencing homelessness.
- The district sees a need for additional funding/services for students experiencing homelessness.
- The district needs supplemental funding beyond basic education and the required Title I, Part A set aside.

Who may apply for funding:

- Every district in the state is eligible to apply for HSSEP Grant funding.
- Funding is based on need as well of the quality of proposal.
- The next HSSEP funding opportunity will be in spring 2027.

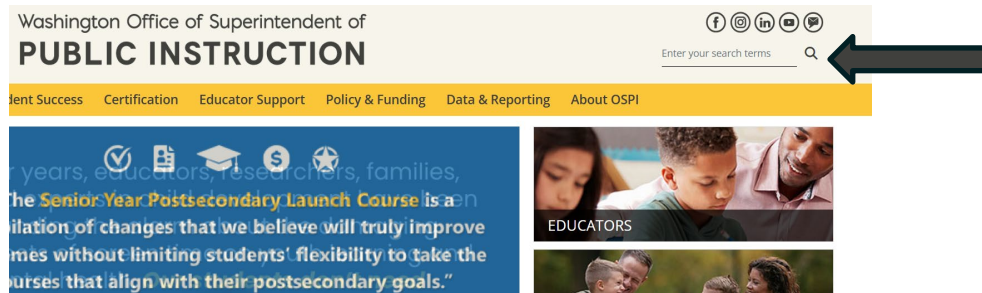
Criteria for determining the need for grant funding:

- Districts have conducted a comprehensive program needs assessment that includes input from students and families with lived experience of homelessness, community partners, liaisons, building points of contact, and other district staff who often interact with, and support SEH.
- Show a demonstrated ability to implement their proposed program immediately upon receiving an HSSEP grant.
- Have identified housing service providers with whom they have established (or will establish) a collaboration to implement strategies for improving housing stability for SEH.
- Successful applicants will have to demonstrate they have set aside other sources of funding to support their homeless education program.

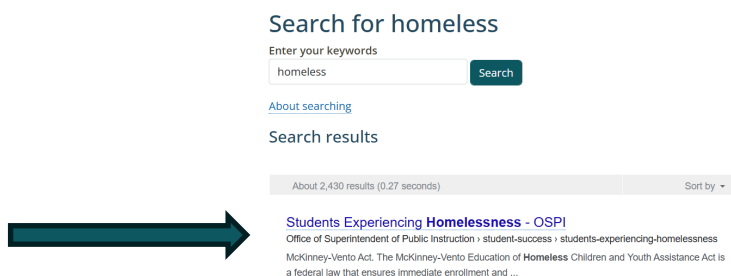
Website Navigation and Resources

How do I find the Students Experiencing Homelessness web page?

1. Navigate to the [OSPI website](#).
2. In the search bar, search for Homeless or Students Experiencing Homelessness

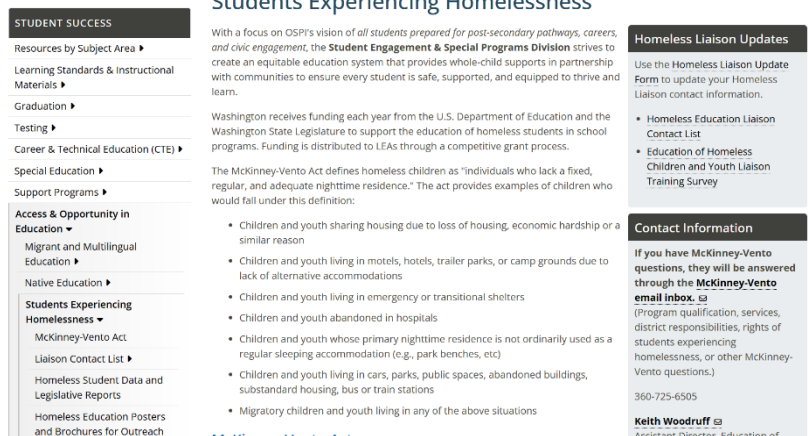


3. This will take you to a list of sites, choose the following:



4. Once on this page you have access to:

- Liaison Updates
- Contact Information
- Poster Ordering
- Legislation
- Grant Information
- Training and Webinars
- And Additional Resources



Helpful Tips

- Bookmark the OSPI [Homeless Education web page](#), for easy access.
- Email the [Homeless Education Technical Assistance email](#) with questions.
- Use the search bar in the upper right to do a key word search.
- Training and webinars are placed on the [Resources](#) web page under Trainings and Webinars as soon as they are edited for closed captions.
- [Office Hours](#) are on the first Friday of every month, 11:00am-12:00pm.

Quick Links

- [OSPI Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [OSPI Homeless Contact List](#)
- [OSPI Homeless Brochures/Posters](#)
- [OSPI Homeless Education Resources](#)
- [OSPI Healthcare Verification Letter](#)
- [OSPI Dispute Resolution Process](#)
- [Unlocking Federal and State Funds - OSPI](#)
- [Program Review Checklist](#)
- [SchoolHouse Connection \(SHC\)](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth \(NAEHCY\)](#)
- [National Center for Homeless Education \(NCHE\)](#)
- [Migrant Education Program School Directory \(MSDRS\)](#)

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