

MCKINNEY-VENTO IN ACTION

A MCKINNEY-VENTO TOOLBOX: CONSTRUCTING A ROBUST AND RIGOROUS HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM, IN CASE OF DISASTER AND EVERY DAY

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U.S. Department of Education - Hurricane Help for Schools: Providing Assistance for Schools Serving Students Displaced by Hurricane Katrina

<http://hurricanehelpforschools.gov/index.html>

For more information on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Program, contact the U.S. Department of Education, Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs (SASA), Office of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Phone: 202-260-0826

Website: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/index.html>

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) is a national resource center of research and information enabling communities to address the needs of children and their families and of unaccompanied youth in homeless situations.

NCHE is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and is housed at the SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Phone: 800-308-2145

Website: <http://www.serve.org/nche>

Visit the NCHE website for information on *In Their Own Words: School and Students Rising Above*. Based on interviews with school staff, relief agency staff, and students, *In Their Own Words* provides a window into the daily challenges and triumphs of schools and students affected by Hurricane Katrina and shows the crucial role that schools and McKinney-Vento programs play in the healing and recovery of individual families and entire communities following disasters.

** The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.*

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INTRODUCTION

“If we have it right all the time, then we don’t have to worry about being unprepared for specific disaster situations.”

Senior Program Coordinator, Texas Homeless Education Office*

The nation’s public schools played a critical role in the response to the hurricanes of 2005, and they continue to contribute to the recovery of individual families and entire communities. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the staff charged with implementing it form the basis for this contribution.

Following Hurricane Katrina, the Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings, acted immediately to contact impacted states to see what the U.S. Department of Education could do to support the enrollment of displaced students. The Department developed a Hurricane Help for Schools website (<http://hurricanehelpforschools.gov/index.html>) to provide quick responses to states asking for flexibility in operating school programs, as well as guidance and resources for states, districts, and schools, to identify helping agencies, organizations, places for donations, and federal aid for displaced and homeless students. One of the first resources the website identified was information on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Children and youth who lost their housing due to the hurricanes were eligible for McKinney-Vento services. This eligibility permitted their entry into schools and allowed schools to become a key to healing and recovery by enrolling displaced children with compassion and efficiency, providing parents with information and assistance, and supporting the mental, physical, and intellectual well-being of students and families on a daily basis.

Students who lose their housing due to other disasters, such as floods, tornadoes, fires, and mudslides, are also eligible for McKinney-Vento services. Since such disasters can occur with no warning, school districts must be prepared to respond efficiently to large numbers of homeless families and youth. Having a robust and rigorous McKinney-Vento program is a key element to a successful disaster response. Responding to a disaster is easier if the school district has in place strong policies and practices to enlist community support; to enroll and place students without documents; and to support basic needs, mental and physical health, and academic achievement. Rigorous McKinney-Vento programs allow school districts to serve all children and youth experiencing homelessness quickly and effectively.

This toolbox is designed to help school districts implement the McKinney-Vento Act fully, so they can address the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness on a daily basis and in times of disaster.

* Quotes throughout this document are from interviews in school districts highly impacted by the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes. The interviews are captured in the *McKinney-Vento in Action: In Their Own Words*. [Julianelle, (2006). *McKinney-Vento in Action: In Their Own Words-School and Students Rising Above*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.]

WHAT IS IN THE TOOLBOX?

This toolbox is meant to be exactly that: a package containing the basic tools necessary to construct a rigorous and robust McKinney-Vento program. It contains tools to assist in: (1) developing strong community collaborations, including disaster planning and mitigation; (2) implementing the McKinney-Vento Act, including disaster response (consisting of identification, immediate enrollment, meeting immediate academic and health needs, transportation, nutrition, and data management); and (3) promoting mental health and academic success, including disaster recovery.

The intent is not to focus on narrative or anecdotes, but to provide a collection of user-friendly tools: sample documents, templates, charts, checklists, etc. The toolbox also contains extensive lists of useful web links. Each link is accompanied by a detailed description of the information it provides.

WHO SHOULD USE THE TOOLBOX?

The toolbox should be used by school district local homeless education liaisons, district and school administrators, district federal program directors, and mental health personnel at all levels. It contains useful tools and information for personnel who are unfamiliar with the McKinney-Vento Act, as well as for the most experienced local liaisons.

The toolbox can also be used as a technical assistance and training tool by State Coordinators for Homeless Education; state administrators; state federal program directors; and mental health personnel at all levels. Appendix 21 is designed to assist State Coordinators in using this toolbox.

HOW DO WE USE IT?

It is not necessary or even advisable to read the entire toolbox from beginning to end. To help users develop their own course of study, the toolbox begins with a brief self-assessment. The substantive contents of the toolbox are modeled on the self-assessment, following the same order and offering hands-on tools to improve the school district's program in each area of the assessment. The self-assessment scores will inform users as to where they should begin in the toolbox. For example, areas where the assessment reveals a less-developed program are good places to begin work, while areas where the user's program is already functioning well may be lower priorities for improvement.

Since the goal of the exercise is to produce a robust and rigorous McKinney-Vento program, it is important for users to administer the self-assessment honestly and with a critical eye toward their programs. Each chapter of the toolbox concludes with a targeted self-assessment to assist the user in evaluating the district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in that chapter.

Of course, users interested in particular topics are welcome to go directly to the appropriate chapter, by consulting the table of contents or the topical index in Appendix 1.

WHAT IF I AM FACING A DISASTER RIGHT NOW?

The goal of the toolbox is to encourage school districts to utilize its tools as fully as possible prior to a disaster so that districts will be prepared and able to respond efficiently and effectively. However, for districts not entirely prepared for a disaster, Appendix 20 contains a Quick-Start Disaster Response Tool which provides a basic checklist to guide immediate responses. This tool can also help new local homeless education liaisons prioritize their efforts and quickly implement the basics of a strong McKinney-Vento program.

THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT:

- guarantees the rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness to a free and appropriate public education
- requires a local homeless education liaison in every school district ensures:
- immediate enrollment
- access to needed services
- school stability
- support for academic achievement

For more on the McKinney-Vento Act, visit the NCHE website at <http://www.serve.org/nche/m-v.php>

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Does your district have a robust and rigorous McKinney-Vento program?

School District Name: _____

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney Vento Program:

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**
No evidence In existence Moderately Successful but Strength of the
but not effective successful needs improvement program

I. Developing Strong Community Collaborations, Including Disaster Planning and Mitigation

A. Public, private, and community agencies are known to each other, communicating and engaged in interdisciplinary disaster planning.	1	2	3	4	5
B. Public, private, and community services are coordinated, integrated, and delivered collaboratively.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL SCORE FOR SECTION I (Community Collaborations) ____/10					

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

A. Local liaison understands the rights of homeless children and youth, and district policies are in line with the McKinney-Vento Act to support the full, efficient and effective implementation of federal law.	1	2	3	4	5
B. Local liaison has a full understanding of the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless. Expedited identification strategies ensure that children and youth eligible for services are identified.	1	2	3	4	5
C. Immediate enrollment strategies ensure that barriers to enrolling and remaining in school are eliminated.	1	2	3	4	5
D. Strategies are implemented for placing students in appropriate classes without academic records and for obtaining complete school records.	1	2	3	4	5

E. Aggressive and timely strategies ensure full, productive participation in educational activities and include tactics to address physical and mental health needs.	1	2	3	4	5
F. Strategies, policies, and procedures address anticipated transportation barriers.	1	2	3	4	5
G. Strategies, policies, and procedures are in place to expedite placement in school nutrition programs.	1	2	3	4	5
H. Policies and procedures are in place to manage data tracking and reporting of student outcomes effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
I. The district utilizes the media in a positive way.	1	2	3	4	5
J. Strategies, policies, and procedures are in place to deal with the coordination of donations.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL SCORE FOR SECTION II (Implementation of McKinney-Vento)____/50					

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Response

A. Strategies are in place to address the short- and long-term mental health and case management needs of students and families.	1	2	3	4	5
B. Strategies, policies, and procedures are in place to deal with staff fatigue.	1	2	3	4	5
C. Strategies are in place to address the short- and long-term academic needs of displaced students, including graduating seniors.	1	2	3	4	5
D. Funding: Needed services are available and accessible to all in a variety of settings using a combination of public, private, community, and personal resources.	1	2	3	4	5
E. Strategies, policies, and procedures are in place to address long-term recovery issues, including housing needs.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL SCORE FOR SECTION II (Mental Health and Academic Success)____/25					

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McKinney-Vento Toolbox

The toolbox follows the same order as the self-assessment. The tools focus on each point in the self-assessment and are designed to enhance the district's capabilities in that area.

I. DEVELOPING STRONG COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS, INCLUDING DISASTER PLANNING AND MITIGATION

A. PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES ARE KNOWN TO EACH OTHER, COMMUNICATING, AND ENGAGED IN INTERDISCIPLINARY DISASTER PLANNING.

“School districts need to be involved in the community, so there are strong connections already in place before a disaster, so the community is working together, ready and willing to help. The time of a crisis is not a good time to be asking for business cards. You need to have those relationships in place.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

School districts cannot meet the needs of families and youth experiencing homelessness alone. Homelessness is a community-wide problem, requiring a community-wide response that includes measures to address housing, health care, and employment, along with school attendance and success. Therefore, effective implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act requires a community-based approach to homelessness and education. Without the support of local agencies, local homeless education liaisons cannot identify and serve all the children and youth experiencing homelessness in the district.

Although initiating community collaborations demands an investment of time and energy, the returns on that investment can be remarkable. Collaborating with community organizations and agencies will make the school district McKinney-Vento program stronger and more successful.

WHAT CAN COMMUNITY AGENCIES OFFER THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S MCKINNEY-VENTO PROGRAM?

School Supplies

DENTAL CARE

Space For After-school Activities

Funding

Translation Of Awareness Materials

Clothing And Shoes

FIELD TRIPS

Help Finding And Identifying Homeless Children And Youth

Medical Care

School Uniforms

Social Work And Counseling Assistance

Mental Health Care

BOOKS

Payment Of School Fees

EMPLOYMENT FOR PARENTS

TUTORING AND MENTORING

Food

TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Eyeglasses

HOUSING FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES AND YOUTH

Similarly, community disaster planning also requires a collaborative and coordinated effort by public, private, and community agencies. Schools must be a part of that effort. Schools and relief agencies agree that the biggest barrier to getting displaced students into school and keeping them there, is a lack of communication between the agencies and the schools. Communicating early and often will help ease everyone's burden.

Through patience and persistence, local liaisons have established strong relationships with disaster relief agencies, thereby securing hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants and creating permanent housing programs to serve homeless children and families.

This section contains tools to assist in implementing strong, creative collaborations, including:

- 1. Getting started: Identifying key players/stakeholders**
- 2. Getting a seat at the table: Joining community forums and inter-agency taskforces**
- 3. Setting a new table: Convening community forums and inter-agency taskforces**
- 4. Getting prepared: Designing a comprehensive disaster plan**

I. GETTING STARTED: IDENTIFYING KEY PLAYERS/STAKEHOLDERS

The first step in building strong collaborations is identifying community members that can support the McKinney-Vento program's needs. Every community has agencies, organizations, and individuals with a stake in supporting the education of homeless children and youth and being prepared for disasters. In fact, every member of the community is a stakeholder. Experienced local liaisons emphasize that it is important to "think outside the box" when considering potential collaborative partners.

"I was in the Walgreens here in town, getting a prescription for a young man I was serving a few days after Katrina hit. The line was long, and I started talking with someone from Baton Rouge, we talked about our work and what we were doing, and he told me he was going to put someone in touch with me to help with my work. I had an e-mail waiting for me when I got back to the office, which put me in touch with ADRA, [Adventist Development and Relief Agency, an NGO relief program from the Czech Republic] and got me funding from the Czech Republic. \$90,000. I have used that donation to place different counseling personnel at different sites."

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Local liaisons who are new to community collaborations may have trouble knowing where to start. It may help to assess the program's needs, determine those that are most pressing, and identify community members that may be able to help meet those needs. Alternatively, the local liaison may wish to begin with those organizations with which he/she feels most comfortable, gradually expanding those collaborative relationships to other community members.

The following chart is a first step in starting collaborations. Local liaisons may wish to begin with the listed organizations and gradually add more groups and individuals as their collaborative relationships grow. For additional groups, consult Appendix 2, which contains a chart suggesting a large variety of stakeholders that can be important in supporting the McKinney-Vento program and planning for disasters.

Tip: One experienced local liaison advises: “*Never let anyone get away without talking to them about homeless kids.*” Such conversations can lead to important partnerships with everyday contacts: doctors, neighbors, coworkers, accountants, fishing buddies, Little League coaches, real estate agents, hairdressers, fellow chorus members, mechanics, friends from church, insurance agents, poker buddies, friends from book group, etc.

CHART 1: Key Collaborative Partners

Organization	Local Contact Information	Contacted?	Follow-up
CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS			
American Legion (http://www.legion.org/?content=post_locator)			
Boys' and Girls' Clubs			
Boys Scouts/ Girls Scouts of America			
Goodwill (http://www.goodwill.org/page/guest/about)			
Junior League (http://www.ajli.org)			
Kiwanis International (http://www.kiwanis.org/clubloc)			
Knights of Columbus (http://www.kofc.org/un/officers/findcouncil/index.cfm)			
Lions Club (http://www.lionsclub.org/EN/content/resources_club.shtml)			
Rotary International (http://www.rotary.org/support/clubs/index.html)			
Women's Clubs			
YMCA/YWCA (http://www.ymca.net or http://www.ywca.org)			
FAITH-BASED COMMUNITIES AND CONGREGATIONS			
In many communities, these organizations provide the bulk of social services, including shelter, food, mental and physical health support, legal assistance, and other services.			
HOMELESS COALITIONS			
To find local or state coalitions: http://www.nationalhomeless.org/resources/state/index.html			
SHELTERS FOR FAMILIES, YOUTH, AND SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE			
Check the phone book or Internet site of your town for local contact information.			
HUD CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC)			
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs administered by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) require communities to develop a CoC system. The CoC is designed to coordinate a community-based process of identifying and addressing needs. Members include all agencies and organizations providing services to homeless people in the community. To find local contact information: http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/cont/coc/			

Chart 1: Key Collaborative Partners

Organization	Local Contact Information	Contacted?	Follow-up
SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS (Food banks, employment agencies, subsidized day care providers, health and dental clinics, mental health clinics, etc.) Check the phone book or Internet site of your town for local contact information.			
YOUTH SHELTERS, INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS, DROP-IN CENTERS, AND STREET OUTREACH PROGRAMS To find local groups: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/youthdivision/programs/locate.htm			
AMERICAN RED CROSS To find your local chapter: http://www.redcross.org			
SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE http://www.safeschools.info http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/programs.html Contact your school district for local information.			
VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (VOAD) (Provides a venue for agencies to coordinate, collaborate, communicate, and cooperate on disaster planning, training and response.) http://www.nvoad.org			

2. GETTING A SEAT AT THE TABLE: JOINING COMMUNITY FORUMS AND INTERAGENCY TASKFORCES

Perspectives, a St. Louis Park, MN, non-profit agency, approached the St. Louis Park School District and proposed a collaborative effort. The two entities applied jointly for a McKinney-Vento subgrant and then invited public, private, non-profit, and faith-based social service agencies to partner with them, including those involved in health, housing, transportation, community education, the Parks and Recreation Department, the Police Department, and the Title I Coordinator. Super Target provides financial support and General Mills supplies financial and volunteer support.¹

Although it can be challenging given the urgency of individual student needs, local homeless education liaisons must prioritize networking. Experienced local liaisons agree that involvement in strong collaborations is the only way for them to accomplish their statutory tasks and fully support children and families in homeless situations. Strong collaborations are also the key to gaining access to the people and activities surrounding local and state disaster planning, response, and recovery. The community agencies and task forces that manage disaster planning may not think to invite the local homeless education liaison. Yet, as states and school districts affected by hurricanes have learned, McKinney-Vento representatives must participate in this process if it is to be efficient and effective.



Establishing any relationship, be it personal or professional, is a process. After introducing themselves, the parties get to know each other, assess their mutual interests and compatibility, and decide if a relationship is desirable. If so, they must negotiate how that relationship will develop and function and then work to keep it healthy and productive over time. Community collaborations develop along these same lines.

¹ Moore, J. (2005). *Collaborations of schools and social service agencies*. Retrieved August 9, 2006, from the National Center for Homeless Education website: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/collab_school_social.doc

STEP 1: INTRODUCTIONS

- Once stakeholders are identified and prioritized, make initial contact by phone or e-mail.
- If there is already a personal connection within the organization, begin by contacting that individual. If that person cannot help with the collaboration, he or she can at least direct you to the right staff member.
- If there is no personal connection, start by calling the central office.
- Don't be discouraged if initial contacts don't bear fruit. It may take a few calls or e-mails to find the right collaborative partner — the specific staff member who can most relate to the McKinney-Vento program, has the most time to meet, has the most interest in building partnerships, and/or has the authority to collaborate.

Tip: Be gutsy enough to just walk in and take a seat in pertinent groups, even if one is not offered. This may be an unfamiliar arena, but the school district has an essential contribution to make, and the local liaison has knowledge and experience to offer that other groups do not.

- Be prepared to explain the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless and the role of the local liaison, briefly and simply.
- Be prepared to explain the McKinney-Vento program, briefly and simply. Be able to report on the numbers of children and youth served by your program, the services provided, and how the program's work has translated into higher academic achievement, physical and mental health, family stability, funding for the school district, and other indicators of success. A simple PowerPoint presentation of five to ten slides with this information is an important networking tool.
- Join a local homeless coalition. Contact information is available at <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/resources/state/index.html>
- Pursue relationships with community decision-makers such as the mayor's office, city council, county supervisors, school board, PTA, religious leaders and interfaith organizations, civic organizations, etc. Their positions can provide access to disaster planning teams and processes and translate into broad-based support.

Good Example: Virginia's PTA passed a resolution supporting the McKinney-Vento Act, which may be helpful in advocacy with other state and local PTAs: <http://www.wm.edu/hope/vaptaresolution.pdf>

- Become involved with the local Continuum of Care (CoC). The CoC can be a critical source of funding and services for McKinney-Vento programs, as well as an entrée into disaster planning and response taskforces.

- * The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers an interactive web map with contact information for all the CoCs in the country. <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/cont/coc/>
- * Find out when local CoC network meetings are held and attend them. These meetings are usually held monthly or every other month. Participate in the CoC and other provider networks year-round and not just at funding time. Regular presence at these meetings will help the McKinney-Vento program gain credibility within the provider community and make an impact on the resources available for children, youth, and families.
- * Over time, increase the level of involvement as organizations learn more about the important contributions of your McKinney-Vento program.



STEP 2: GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

- Build a strong McKinney-Vento program that will be respected by community decision-makers and collaborative partners.
- Be prepared to explain the basics of the McKinney-Vento Act and implementation strategies.

Tip: A basic PowerPoint presentation on the McKinney-Vento Act may prove helpful. For sample presentations, visit the NCHE website at: <http://www.serve.org/nche/training.php>. An online audio tutorial can be accessed at: <http://www.serve.org/nche/training.php#breeze>

- Be creative and consistent with early contacts. For example: invite potential collaborators to visit your program; offer a school bus tour of shelters and motels; offer to visit collaborators' programs; show off artwork or other projects of the children who participate in the program; provide simple refreshments at early meetings.

Share your passion and energy with collaborative partners!

- Get to know collaborative partners. Visit their websites prior to meetings. At meetings, ask questions about their services, successes, and needs.
- Get to know the emergency response infrastructure in your community.
 - * Read the local emergency response and recovery plans (available from the city or county emergency response agency, police department, fire department, and/or mayor's office).
 - * Visit FEMA's website (<http://www.fema.gov/>), the local Red Cross office (www.redcross.org/where/where.html), and the local VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, <http://www.nvoad.org/>).
 - * Locate the local emergency operations or emergency response center (by searching on the web or in the phone book or checking with local government). Visit the center.
 - * Appendix 3 contains a glossary of key terms and acronyms in disaster planning and response.
- Find out if other school district staff members are involved in emergency or disaster-related committees or task forces in the community. The superintendent, safety department, or other personnel may already be involved, and the local liaison can collaborate with those staff members.

STEP 3: ASSESSING MUTUAL INTERESTS AND COMPATIBILITY

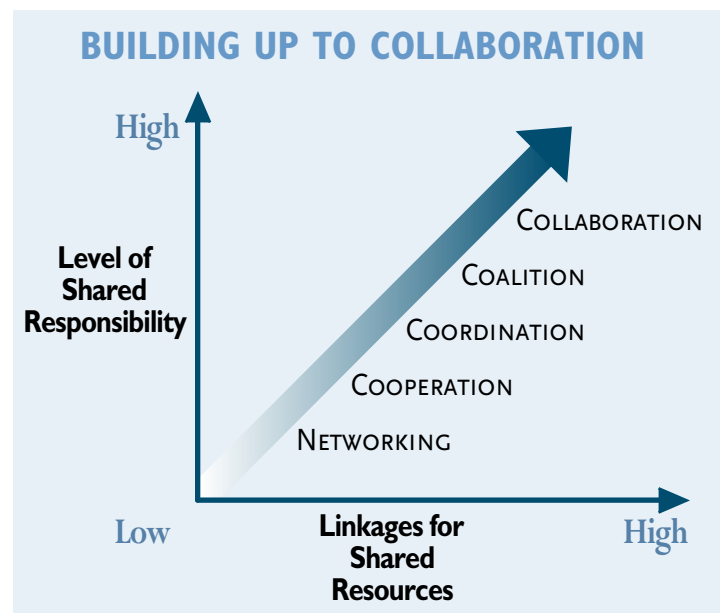
- Analyze what partners can offer the school district and students in light of the specific unmet needs of children, youth, and families.
- Think strategically about how the McKinney-Vento program fits into the overall school district and broader community.
 - * What specific expertise, information, and resources can the McKinney-Vento program offer?
 - * How can the program's data collection activities translate into additional funding for the school district and/or community?
 - * How do the McKinney-Vento program's needs and goals complement the needs and goals of potential partners?
 - * How do the academic, mental and physical health, and other support services the program provides help support academic achievement, prevent violent confrontations, and prevent youth and family homelessness?

* How can the program support the community's disaster planning, response, and recovery efforts?

- Be prepared to explain clearly and objectively how the McKinney-Vento program can enhance the work of collaborative partners.
- Communicate openly and honestly about needs and ideas for mutually beneficial collaborations.

STEP 4: DECIDING IF A RELATIONSHIP IS DESIRABLE

- When reaching out to other departments and agencies, it is important to consider the level of relationship that may be needed to realize goals. Consider working on lower-level relationships to assess the collaborations and to build trust before attempting more complex collaborations.



- Given the time demands on local liaisons, community collaborations must be prioritized based on needs. If it is not possible to pursue a particular relationship at the moment, leave the collaborators with a positive impression of your program and the door open for future collaboration.

STEP 5: NEGOTIATING HOW THE RELATIONSHIP WILL WORK AND KEEPING IT HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE OVER TIME

- Maintain open and honest communication with all partners.
- Set a pattern of frequent and clear communication with collaborative partners.

Tip: Consider informal lunches, tours of members' programs, or outdoor meetings in nice weather to complement more formal meetings and/or conference calls.

- Together with collaborative partners, conduct a community needs assessment and identify common priorities based on needs. It is important to start from a common understanding of needs, goals, and priorities.
- Base relationships on these common needs, goals, and priorities. Having goals that will benefit all parties in the long run is a key to successful, lasting collaborations.
- Take the time to write a mission statement and goals for the collaboration. These should be clear, concise, and with objective and specific expectations. A written action plan with clear objectives will help the group stay focused, productive, and aware of its successes.

Tip: Concentrating on the core vision instead of structures or processes helps maintain focus on what partners intend to accomplish instead of getting sidetracked by how to do it. This invites creative thinking and problem solving. It also helps the collaborative withstand changes in membership, organizational structure, etc.

- Work toward meeting initial, short-term goals so participants can see fairly immediate results of their collaborative efforts.
- Include a status report on the action plan in each meeting.
- Update and adjust the action plan and goals based on group evaluation and input as needs and priorities change.
- Have all partners evaluate their resources to determine efficient ways to share and leverage resources.
- Discuss the privacy laws and concerns that affect partner agencies, and develop procedures to share information, such as parent release forms.
- Don't be afraid. Encourage passionate leaders, creativity, and appropriate risk-taking.
- Work to maintain trust and respect within the group.
- Be patient. Gaining access and building productive collaborations can take time. It

may take years to gain meaningful access to disaster planning, response, and recovery committees. But every relationship built, every program success, and every joint initiative developed is another key step in the process.

Good Example: A simple conversation between the Broward County (FL) local homeless education liaison and the director of the local children's museum spawned ArtREACH (Reconnecting and Educating Homeless Adolescents through Creativity and Hope). A collaboration among the museum, the school board of Broward County, and the Salvation Army, ArtREACH is a daily after-school program that provides homework assistance, an arts-based curriculum, and recreation. The program also offers weekly counseling. Once a month the students visit the museum itself for more hands-on arts activities. ArtREACH has received a great deal of attention – even being featured in a *Time Magazine* article, which spawned generous local matching support.

For an in-depth guide to building successful collaborations, download NCHE's publication, *Collaborations Between Schools and Social Service Agencies* at http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/collab_school_social.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

A Place at the Table: Homeless Veterans and Local Homeless Assistance Planning Networks. US HUD, February 2002. Detailed guide to the Continuum of Care process with an emphasis on strategies for getting a seat at the table and becoming meaningfully involved in local homeless assistance planning.

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/hudvet/pdf/vetscocfinal.pdf>

Disaster Relief Agencies and Schools and School as a Safety Net. NCHE, March 2006. These two handbooks are designed to assist schools in collaborating with disaster relief agencies.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/dis_hb/relief_agencies.pdf

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/dis_hb/school_safety_net.pdf

Communicating About Collaborative Relationships. Iowa Association of School Boards. Tip sheet to help school board members and other educators build and maintain successful collaborative relationships in the community.

<http://www.ia-sb.org/communityrelations/collaborativerelationships.asp>

Building Meaningful Partnerships. Iowa Association of School Boards. Brief to help schools begin to build partnerships with the business community.

<http://www.ia-sb.org/communityrelations/partnerships.asp>

Homeless Education Awareness Folder. NCHE. Sturdy, laminated folder that can be customized to inform potential partners about the issues central to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. To order:

http://www.serve.org/nche/online_order.php#hard_copy

Collaboration Action Plan (Appendix F) of Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit. NCHE. A chart to aid districts and states in designing, prioritizing, and building collaborative relationships.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_f.pdf

Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit. NCHE. Chapter 5 of the toolkit offers strategies for beginning and nurturing productive collaborations.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/chapters.pdf>

3. SETTING A NEW TABLE: CONVENING COMMUNITY FORUMS AND INTERAGENCY TASKFORCES

As Glendale, CA, Local Homeless Education Liaison Carol Reynolds began implementing the McKinney-Vento Act, she realized she needed a greater understanding of how other agencies operated and what issues they had with the school district. As a result, the school district hosted a meeting of local homeless service agencies and the Children and Homeless Collaborative was born. The collaborative includes Project ACHIEVE, the Glendale YMCA and YWCA, the Salvation Army, the City of Glendale, the Glendale Police Department, the Glendale Council PTA and individual PTA units, and departments within the school district that support homeless students.¹

In many communities, local homeless coalitions, disaster planning committees, and interagency taskforces are already in place and functioning well. The local homeless education liaison's mission is to work with these pre-existing groups to engage in cooperative disaster planning and to maximize services for youth and families in homeless situations. To the greatest extent possible, local liaisons should work with pre-existing groups before attempting to establish a new forum.

If an interdisciplinary disaster committee or homelessness taskforce does not exist in the local community, or if consistent efforts to join them have not been successful, the school district may want to convene its own taskforce. Local liaisons may also want to convene other collaborative taskforces or committees to confront issues of family homelessness, young children, unaccompanied youth, school mobility, domestic violence, and/or other topics.



¹ Moore, J. (2005). *Collaborations of schools and social service agencies*. Retrieved August 21, 2006, from the National Center for Homeless Education website: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads?collab_school_social.doc

Tip: Convening a taskforce may seem overwhelming, particularly in the context of other local liaison responsibilities. It requires an investment of time and effort. However, although the local liaison may not feel that convening an interagency taskforce is a natural role, in practice schools often serve as the most logical and appropriate center for community-based collaborations. “Many communities are now focusing on schools as the basis for collaborations simply because that is where the children are.”²

Local liaisons should not attempt to convene interdisciplinary groups alone. They may lack the visibility or clout to bring the necessary stakeholders to the table, and they may be able to maximize their impact by having more powerful allies take the helm. Superintendents, established community agencies, or local government officials may lend weight to the effort and pull in additional allies, such as the press and business.

Convening a taskforce requires identifying the stakeholders and employing best practices for meaningful collaborative relationships. The strategies and resources outlined in Sections I.A.1 and I.A.2 above can assist in those tasks. Additionally, convening a taskforce will require the basic steps of inviting people to participate and conducting meetings.



² Moore, p.6.

Tips for a Taskforce Invitation

An invitation to participate in a collaborative taskforce should:

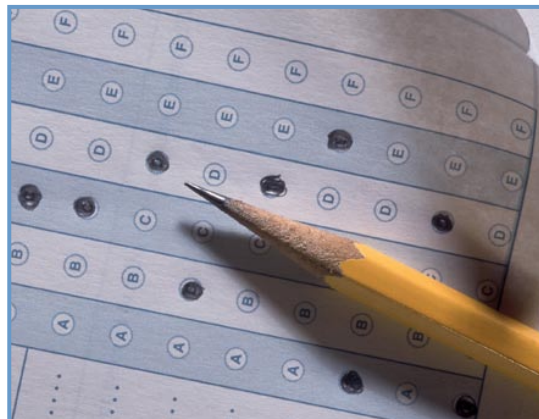
- Be addressed to a specific individual, rather than the organization
- Come from two or three organizations or individuals with the ability and authority to convene groups from different sectors
- Be signed or somehow endorsed by a community leader
- Recognize the contributions, experience, and knowledge of invitees
- Describe the basics of the McKinney-Vento program, highlighting services that may be unknown to the broader community that most closely align with the goals of invitees (for example, mental health services, physical health services, support for parents and young children, resources for unaccompanied youth, etc.)
- Emphasize that the children and families who participate in the McKinney-Vento program could receive added benefits if the program worked more collaboratively
- Convey the hope that through collaborations, community partners could leverage their resources and meet common goals
- Convey an openness to a group process of assessing needs, organizing priorities, and establishing goals
- Invite participants to an initial, introductory meeting at a convenient and comfortable location and at a convenient time
- Consider rotating future meeting sites among participants' programs, so agencies can get to know each others' programs; if possible, offer refreshments
- Express goodwill, humility, awareness, experience, and openness

A sample invitation letter is available in Appendix 4.

A sample agenda for an initial meeting should be clear and positive and should not be too ambitious.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR AN INITIAL COLLABORATIVE TASKFORCE MEETING

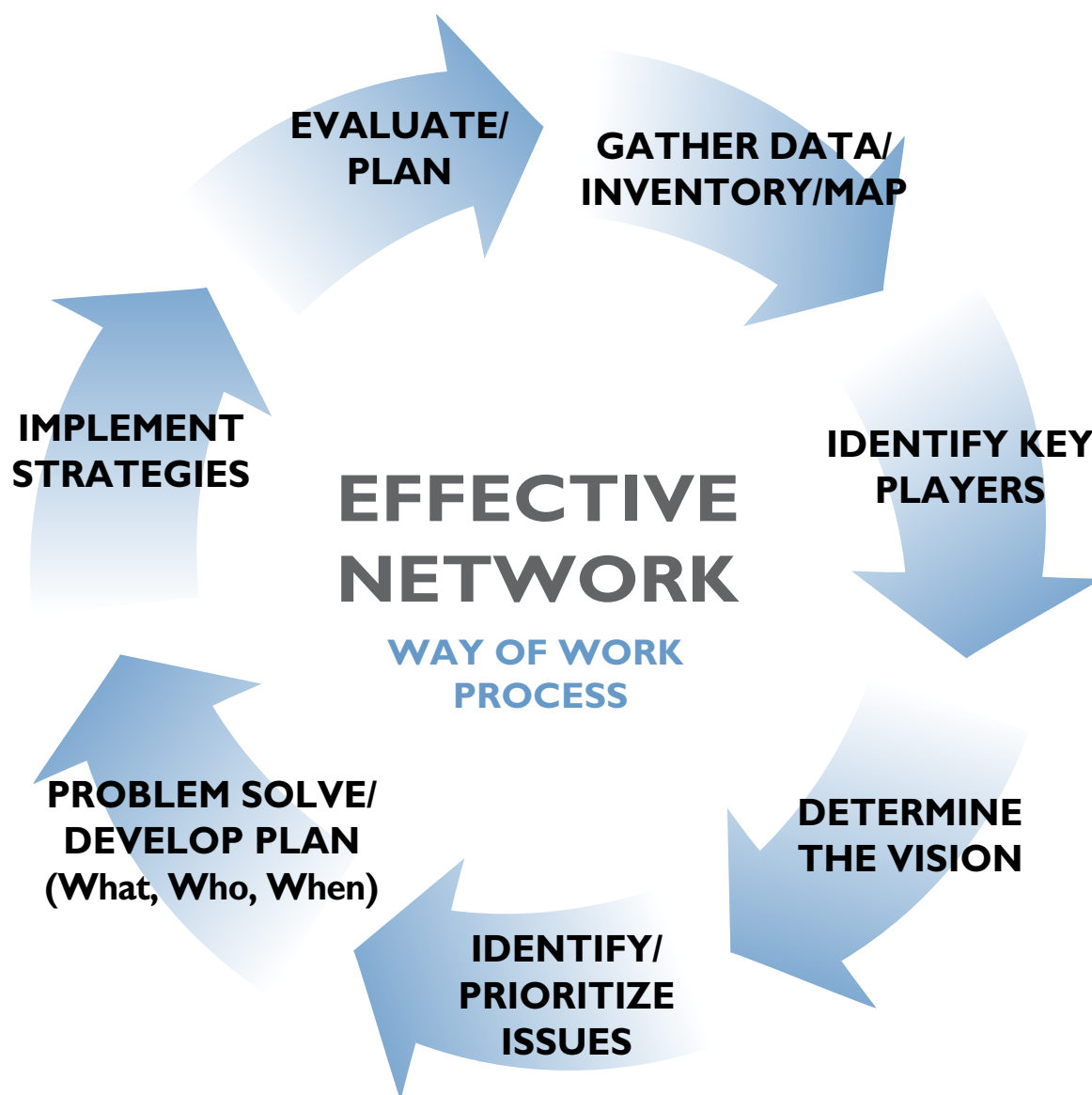
1. Warm welcome and optimistic vision of the tangible benefits of collaboration
2. Introductions: Opportunity for participants to introduce themselves and the programs they represent and to express their initial hopes and goals, both personal and organizational, for participation.
3. Goal setting: Participants should agree on one attainable, short-term goal for their collaboration, such as participating together in a pre-scheduled community event, conducting a needs assessment, considering a group response to a pending public policy issue, developing a protocol or standard consent form for sharing information, etc. This goal may be generated by the discussion in #2.
4. Next steps: Set the date, time, and location for the next meeting or delegate that responsibility to a participant.



A recorder should take good notes and circulate them promptly to all participants.

Subsequent meetings should work toward reaching the initial, short-term goal so that participants can see immediate results from their collaborative efforts. The group should work together to conduct a needs assessment and establish further goals and priorities based upon those needs. Eventually, goals should be incorporated into a written action plan with measurable objectives. Each meeting should include a status report on the action plan. The action plan may warrant subcommittees or targeted taskforces. A written plan with clear objectives will help the group stay focused, productive, and aware of its successes.

The following graphic illustrates the circular nature of the functioning of effective taskforces. The process involves continually revisiting the action plan as the group implements activities, collects data, and discusses progress.¹



¹ Florida Department of Education. (n.d) *Way of work manual: Shared service network*. (p. I-II). Retrieved August 3, 2006 from <http://ssn.usf.edu/documents/wayworkmanual/waywork.pdf>

When convening a taskforce specifically related to disaster planning, consider the following additional suggestions from the Pennsylvania Center for Safe Schools and Communities:

Form an interagency advisory group that meets on a regular basis. This group should include all government agencies in your municipality and county that serve students and their families (i.e., Children and Youth Services; Community Mental Health/Mental Retardation/ Drug and Alcohol Treatment programs; law enforcement, fire, and emergency agencies; juvenile justice and probation offices; the local and/or county Health Department,. etc.) as well as community leaders and businesses (e.g., NAACP, religious leaders, the mayor, the telephone company, etc.). These local partners are essential for the success of your crisis prevention and response efforts.

The interagency council should review policies and procedures at least annually. Check the link between policies and procedures. Are they current? Are they complete? Have they worked? Do procedures match the policies? Do they follow the most recent legal mandates?

Don't be alarmed if your policies and procedures fall short! Few districts have had the opportunity to prepare for all potential events. Here are some ideas for deciding what are the most likely crisis situations in your district:

- *Review last year's data.*
- *Ask outside agencies for their assessment of priorities.*
- *Consider your 'public(s).' What is important to them? For example, the local merchants may be upset about truant students loitering in town, while parents of young children may be concerned about the threat of kidnapping or a bus accident. Parents of teens may be anxious to prevent alcohol and other drug use. The juvenile court staff may want to address serious habitual offenders who transfer into your district.³*

³ Kerr, M. M. (1997, September). *Developing good crisis plans*. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Center for Safe Schools and Communities.

4. GETTING PREPARED: DESIGNING A COMPREHENSIVE DISASTER PLAN

“Our school district sits on this panel, and when there is an emergency that impacts our school district as well as the community, then we have district employees who report to the emergency operations center, and they’re part of this group that is in on the decision making.”

School District Administrator

Every school district should have a district crisis plan that contains each phase, and individual schools should have corresponding plans. Once the school district has gained a place on disaster planning committees or has independently convened such a committee, the task of planning for disaster begins. The U.S. Department of Education has developed a four-phase approach to disaster planning for schools, which includes mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery. Each of the phases below were taken from the Department’s brochure.⁴



⁴ U.S. Department of Education. (2004). *Practical information on crisis planning: A guide for schools and communities*. Retrieved August 3, 2006, from <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/crisisplanning.pdf>

CRISIS MANAGEMENT MITIGATION AND PREVENTION

The goal of mitigation is to decrease the need for response as opposed to simply increasing response capability.

- Connect with community emergency responders to identify local hazards.
- Review the last safety audit to examine school buildings and grounds.
- Determine who is responsible for overseeing violence prevention strategies in your school.
- Encourage staff to provide input and feedback during the crisis planning process.
- Review incident data.
- Determine major problems in your school with regard to student crime and violence.
- Assess how the school addresses these problems.
- Conduct an assessment to determine how these problems—as well as others—may impact your vulnerability to certain crises.

PREPAREDNESS

Good planning will facilitate a rapid, coordinated, effective response when a crisis occurs.

- Determine what crisis plans exist in the district, school, and community.
- Identify all stakeholders involved in crisis planning.
- Develop procedures for communicating with staff, students, families, and the media.
- Establish procedures to account for students during a crisis.
- Gather information about the school facility, such as maps and the location of utility shutoffs.
- Identify the necessary equipment that needs to be assembled to assist staff in a crisis.

RESPONSE

A crisis is the time to follow the crisis plan and make use of your preparations.

- Determine if a crisis is occurring.
- Identify the type of crisis that is occurring and determine the appropriate response.
- Activate the incident management system.
- Ascertain whether an evacuation, reverse evacuation, lockdown, or shelter-in-place needs to be implemented.
- Maintain communication among all relevant staff at officially designated locations.
- Establish what information needs to be communicated to staff, students, families, and the community.
- Monitor how emergency first aid is being administered to the injured.
- Decide if more equipment and supplies are needed.

RECOVERY

During recovery, return to learning and restore the infrastructure as quickly as possible.

- Strive to return to learning as quickly as possible.
- Restore the physical plant, as well as the school community.
- Monitor how staff are assessing students for the emotional impact of the crisis.
- Identify what follow up interventions are available to students, staff, and first responders.
- Conduct debriefings with staff and first responders.
- Assess curricular activities that address the crisis.
- Allocate appropriate time for recovery.
- Plan how anniversaries of events will be commemorated.
- Capture 'lessons learned' and incorporate them into revisions and trainings.

To assist schools in implementing all four phases of disaster planning, the U.S. Department of Education has developed an extensive website dedicated to emergency planning. The site is <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/index.html>. Among other resources, it includes the *Practical Information on Crisis Planning* brochure at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/crisisplanning.html> and *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities* at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>

The following additional tools will help school districts implement mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery strategies. First, there are two tools to complement the U.S. Department of Education's vision and help ensure that the school district's crisis plan contains all the necessary elements. Second, there are links to several sample emergency response plans. Finally, there is a list of reprintable tools, templates, and checklists to guide and facilitate the planning process.

NECESSARY ELEMENTS OF A GOOD CRISIS PLAN

"If it happens tomorrow, will we do a better job than we did last time? We need to have a plan in place! An evacuation plan, a response plan, and a recovery plan. And it needs to be a city plan, in conjunction with the school districts."

Local Homeless Education Liaison

The following information summarized from the Pennsylvania Center for Safe Schools and Communities provides critical elements for a good crisis plan:

WHAT'S IN A GOOD CRISIS PLAN?

A comprehensive crisis plan includes six elements:

- * **PREVENTION GUIDELINES**
- * **EARLY INTERVENTION GUIDELINES**
- * **CRISIS INTERVENTION GUIDELINES** (what to do if prevention fails)
- * **POSTVENTION OR ONGOING MANAGEMENT**
- * **DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES**
- * **IMPROVING THE PLANS**

***PREVENTION GUIDELINES** tell us how to prevent a problem. For example, crisis plans are only one part of a comprehensive school safety promotion plan (which should also include students' interpersonal skills development, staff training, school safety policies and procedures, etc.). Identifying school visitors when they first enter a building is another example of routine crisis prevention.

***EARLY INTERVENTION GUIDELINES** should tell people how to know if a problem is about to happen and what to do about it. For example, in the event of a telephoned bomb threat, does the school secretary know to record specific information about the threat and identifying information about the caller? Do students know what to do if there is a fire alarm?

***CRISIS INTERVENTION GUIDELINES** tell us how to get help, specific steps to take and those to avoid.

***POSTVENTION GUIDELINES** tell us how to support staff, students, and families in the hours, days, and weeks following a tragedy.

***DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES** remind us to examine the crisis and the crisis responses. All responders should meet to review the team's response and their personal reactions. This provides an opportunity for "Critical Incident Stress Debriefing," or CISD. CISD has proven helpful in reducing long-term maladaptive reactions to high stress events.

***IMPROVING THE PLAN** refers to the process whereby we take a look at how we responded and make plans to improve our efforts. This ensures that we learn from our experiences, mistakes, and successes.⁵

See also: Emergency Plan Checklist, from the Arizona Department of Education's Safety Planner, Appendix D. A checklist to ensure that the school district's emergency plan contains all necessary elements. Pages D-3 – D-7.

<http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/schoolsafety/safetyplans/jobaids.pdf>

SAMPLE EMERGENCY PLANS

Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, Easton, PA, Crisis Plan.

http://www.ciu20.org/departments/auxiliaryservices/resources/cm_chap6.pdf

Escambia County School District 2005-2006 Hurricane Plan

<http://www.escambia.k12.fl.us/eert/Comprehensive%20HURRICANE%20PLAN%202005-2006.pdf>

Nettleton Public Schools, Nettleton, AR, Crisis Plan.

<http://nettleton.crsd.k12.ar.us/crisis.htm>

Oregon School Boards Association Sample Policy.

<http://www.osba.org/hotopics/crisismgmt/policies.htm>

Pennsylvania Department of Education Sample School Emergency Operations Plan.

<http://www.pdenewsroom.state.pa.us/newsroom/lib/newsroom/SampleSchoolPlan-BasicPlan211.pdf>

Virginia Department of Education Sample Policy

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/model.html>

Links to emergency plans and planning toolkits from across the country.

http://www.edfacilities.org/rl/statelocal_emergency.cfm

⁵ Kerr, M. M. (1997, September). *Developing good crisis plans*. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Center for Safe Schools and Communities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Escambia Educational Recovery Team, a non-profit extension of the School District of Escambia County Florida, is dedicated to the preservation and recovery of educational processes disrupted by disasters. Their website contains a great deal of information to assist school districts in disaster planning, response, and recovery.

<http://www.escambia.k12.fl.us/eert/>

The National Organization for Victim Assistance offers a 40-hour Basic Crisis Response Team Training Institute. <http://www.trynova.org/crt/>

Scott Poland, National Association of School Psychologists, Chair, National Emergency Assistance Team. *School Crisis Planning: Questions Answered*. Checklists and basic information for school-level crisis planning. http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/neat_planning.html

Rebecca Fleischauer, *Crisis Communication Guide & Toolkit. Chapter 4: Hands-On Assistance — Tools for Educators*. National Education Association (January 2000).

<http://www.nea.org/crisis/images/crisisguide-b4.pdf>

Sample forms for Disaster Planning, from the Arizona Department of Education. <http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/schoolsafety/safetyplans/response.asp> (Under “Guidelines, Checklists, and Sample Forms” near the bottom of the page)

Crisis Management Workbook from the Office of Security and Risk Management Services of Fairfax County Public Schools, VA. A toolkit for crisis management and crisis readiness. <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/safety-security/planning/cmw.pdf>

Risk Index Worksheet from the Arizona Department of Education’s Safety Planner. A tool to categorize the risk priority of various types of disaster, to guide planning activities and priorities.

<http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/schoolsafety/safetyplans/RiskIndexWorksheet.pdf>

Incident Response Job Descriptions from the Arizona Department of Education. Detailed charts for essential roles and jobs in disaster response, their responsibilities, and tools for organization, at page C-6.

<http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/schoolsafety/safetyplans/job.pdf>

Organization and Responsibilities checklist from the Pennsylvania Department of Education Sample School Emergency Operations Plan. A list of school district personnel and their roles during a crisis.

<http://www.pdenewsroom.state.pa.us/newsroom/lib/newsroom/SampleSchoolPlan-Checklists1.pdf>

Emergency “Go Kits” from the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. Helpful hints for creating emergency supply kits for administrators and classroom teachers.

http://www.ercm.org/views/documents/HH_GoKits.pdf

Self Assessment I. A

I. Developing Strong Community Collaborations, Including Disaster Planning and Mitigation.

The following targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in developing strong community collaborations through interagency communication and interdisciplinary disaster planning.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1 No evidence 2 In existence but not effective 3 Moderately successful 4 Successful but needs improvement 5 Strength of the program

A. Public, private, and community agencies are known to each other, communicating, and engaging in interdisciplinary disaster planning.

Key stakeholders in the community are identified.	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison is involved in active collaborations with key stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district participates regularly in interagency councils/ coalitions that provide a wide variety of services for children, youth, and families such as housing and health care.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district participates regularly in boards or with organizations related to family services and disaster relief (e.g., United Way, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, VOAD, faith-based organizations, housing organizations, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
Collaborations yield tangible results for homeless children, youth, and families.	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison understands how the local disaster response infrastructure works and has relationships with key players in that infrastructure.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district and local liaisons are actively involved in disaster planning task forces and committees.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a comprehensive, interdisciplinary disaster plan that is coordinated with community disaster response agencies and local government.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

30-40 Points This is a strength of the program.

20-29 Points The program is moderately successful in this area.

<20 Points This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

B. PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES ARE COORDINATED, INTEGRATED, AND DELIVERED COLLABORATIVELY.

Families and youth in homeless situations, and particularly those displaced by disasters, are forced to navigate many systems and agencies to find housing, food, clothing, employment, health care, and other services. Collaborations that coordinate and integrate service delivery can streamline the process and help families and youth receive the support and services they need. Agencies can work together to meet logistical challenges, provide comprehensive services, and ease the practical burdens on families and youth.

“There is a Children’s Service Center diagonally across the street from Red Cross. It is designed to be only an administrative facility, but they were wonderful to give up both personnel and facilities to allow their offices to be converted into essentially a childcare area, while their family members were in line or receiving case management services and financial assistance.”

Relief Agency Staff Member

“We gave them resources in the community that could help them as well as helping parents. If they needed jobs we’d direct them to places for employment opportunities as well.”

School Counselor

“We also had several lawyers volunteer to conduct classes for the parents on the paperwork involved with hurricanes, insurance, FEMA, services and benefits, etc. That was really a good thing to do, because lowering the stress level for the parents lowered the stress level for the kids.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Such collaborations will be assisted greatly if service providers share information, develop memoranda of understanding, and establish reliable and flexible communications systems.

I. SHARING INFORMATION

Service providers cannot integrate service delivery if they do not share information.

“Children could benefit from data-sharing agreements among organizations.”¹

Different providers will be bound by different privacy laws and regulations, such as the Privacy Act, the Health Information Privacy and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Each of these laws and regulations requires different procedures and forms for releasing information. FEMA, school districts, and mental health providers are subject to some of the most rigorous privacy protections.

Communication is the key to sharing information among different service providers.

- First, different agencies must be convinced that sharing information is beneficial to them and their clients and that information will be used appropriately.
- Then, providers must talk to each other about the privacy regulations that apply to them and develop systems to protect confidential information while sharing the information that is necessary to streamline service delivery.
- One strategy is to develop joint release-of-information forms by combining the required elements of the different agencies. Using these forms upon intake should help clients receive all available and needed services as quickly as possible.

¹ U.S. Government Accounting Office. (2006, May). *Lessons learned for protecting and educating children after the Gulf Coast hurricanes*. Retrieved August 21, 2006, from <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06680r.pdf>

2. DEVELOPING MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

Memoranda of understanding are important tools for streamlining the provision of services. A signed memorandum of understanding among public and/or private service providers can make it possible for them to share information and provide holistic services in an accessible and efficient manner. For example, many school districts have memoranda of understanding with child welfare providers, which define the cooperation and cost-sharing guidelines among schools, child welfare agencies, family courts, and foster parents.

A memorandum among participants in a disaster planning taskforce is important to help ensure that response plans are followed during an actual crisis. This memorandum should spell out who does what during a crisis and describe expectations for each agency. It should clearly identify all critical roles and assign specific people to each task. This document should be updated and reviewed every year.

Good Examples: Sample Memorandum of Understanding from the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Center for the Prevention of School Violence.

http://www.ncdjdp.org/cpsv/Acrobatfiles/cirk_mou.pdf

Sample Memorandum of Understanding from the Kentucky Center for School Safety.

<http://www.kysafeschools.org/pdfs&docs/clearpdf/issuesbriefs/moa.pdf>

3. ESTABLISHING ROBUST COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

“I would have a source of communication, at least walkie-talkies or some type of communicator device, that I could communicate with my team of administrators.”

School District Administrator

Interruptions in communication systems during a disaster can make effective response within an agency extremely challenging. Coordination and collaboration among agencies may be nearly impossible unless robust, flexible communication strategies are developed prior to a disaster.

It may be helpful to envision methods of communication in terms of layers, based on the infrastructure needed for the method to function. The top layer, which represents the most technologically-sophisticated methods of communication, is generally the first to collapse in a disaster. Loss of electricity and damage of phone lines and cell phone towers are common occurrences in disasters. In fact, it is important to plan for the probability that in a disaster, almost every form of communication normally used by the school district and the community may be nonfunctional. Therefore, school districts must develop flexible, creative strategies for communication during and after disasters.

LAYER	
1	E-MAIL, WEBSITES
2	CELL PHONES
3	LANDLINES
4	PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT SYSTEMS ON TV OR RADIO
5	LOCAL PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT SYSTEMS WITHIN A SCHOOL OR TOWN CENTER
6	WALKIE-TALKIES
7	PHYSICALLY GOING TO A SITE TO SPEAK WITH SOMEONE
8	AIR HORNS AND WHISTLES

Satellite cell phones may be the most flexible and reliable form of communication in a disaster. To the extent possible, school districts may wish to purchase or find a donor to provide satellite cell phones for key personnel.

The following tips from the U.S. Department of Education can help school districts plan for good communication during emergencies.

PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATION DURING A CRISIS

Clear lines of communication are crucial to a successful response to a crisis. During the planning process, it will be important to establish effective lines of communication among and within the state, district, school, and community groups. When creating a crisis plan, there are several communication needs that should be addressed.

COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL BEFORE CRISES OCCUR:

- Use common terminology across a district.
- Identify several modes of communication for both internal and external communication. Keep in mind that in times of crisis, computers, intercoms, telephones, and even cell phones may not work or may be dangerous to use. Plan for several methods of communication in a crisis.
- Make sure that schools have adequate supplies of communication gear and that the appropriate individuals have access to it.
- Verify that school communication devices are compatible with emergency responder devices. A cell phone or two-way radio is of no use if it cannot be used with the emergency responder's phone or radio. Also, check to see that the school's communication devices do not interfere with the emergency responder's equipment.
- Create communication plans to notify families that a crisis has occurred at their child's school. These pathways should include several modes of communication, including notices sent home and phone trees, so the pathways can be tailored to fit the needs of a particular crisis.
- Establish communication pathways with the community. This may be in the form of a phone or e-mail tree, a community liaison, or media briefings. It is crucial to keep the community informed before, during, and after a crisis.
- Designate a Public Information Officer to deal with families, the community and the media. The designation of one individual will help all parties stay informed with identical information.

GOOD COMMUNICATION DURING A CRISIS IS ALSO CRUCIAL. BELOW ARE SOME KEY POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- Inform staff who are managing the students. Regardless of the amount of training staff members have received, there is going to be chaos and fear. Communication mitigates those reactions and helps regain a sense of calm and control.
- Notify families of action being taken. Understand that parents are going to want immediate access to their children. Safely begin reunification procedures as soon as possible. Keep families informed as much as possible, especially in the case of delayed reunification.

Communication often stops after a crisis subsides. However, during the recovery phase, keeping staff and community informed remains critical.²

² U.S. Department of Education. (2003, May). *Practical information on crisis planning: A guide for schools and communities*. (Pgs 47-49). Retrieved August 21, 2006, from: <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/crisisplanning.pdf>

Self Assessment I. B

I. Developing Strong Community Collaborations, Including Disaster Planning and Mitigation.

The following targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in developing strong community collaborations through coordinating and integrating service delivery.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1 No evidence 2 In existence but not effective 3 Moderately successful 4 Successful but needs improvement 5 Strength of the program

B. Public, private, and community services are coordinated, integrated, and delivered collaboratively.

Program eligibility and/or case management forms include parent signatures indicating permission to share information with other programs.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has current memoranda of understanding with relevant community agencies, including social services, child welfare, youth-serving agencies, and disaster response agencies.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has flexible, reliable systems for communication within the district in time of crisis.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has flexible, reliable systems for communication with community agencies, including disaster relief agencies, in time of crisis.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district regularly disseminates information about school-based programs and resources to community-based organizations and parents.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has facility-use policies in place that encourage delivery of services to children, youth, and families in the area of the community where they live.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a single point of intake (either at a school or community-based locations) where families receive information, complete paperwork, and participate in family-focused plans for the delivery of services.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

30-40 Points This is a strength of the program.
20-29 Points The program is moderately successful in this area.
<20 Points This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT, INCLUDING DISASTER RESPONSE

“We wanted to serve them, but we get hung up on the paperwork requirements. The [McKinney-Vento] law allowed the district to move very expediently. It gave us the flexibility to serve the human being, and not worry about the documentation.”

School District Administrator and Former Principal

“We just used our regular McKinney-Vento policies that we already had. If the McKinney-Vento Act was not in existence, a lot of our children would’ve fallen through the cracks, because of policy. So it really helped out—enrollment without a parent, immunizations, that they must have transportation. Otherwise, kids would’ve been turned away for no records, even though we knew their records were under water.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

School districts that have been impacted heavily by disasters agree that the McKinney-Vento Act was the cornerstone of their response. In fact, the procedures and systems that districts use to serve children and youth experiencing homelessness form the basis for responding to any disaster. From identifying families and youth in homeless situations, to ensuring immediate enrollment and appropriate placement, to providing critical supportive services such as physical and mental health care, transportation, and meals, McKinney-Vento programs are school districts’ “First Responders” in disaster situations.

Recognizing the importance of a robust McKinney-Vento program in disaster response, most of the tools in Section II are generally applicable to implement the basic requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act. Section II concludes with tools for managing data, the media, and donations.

A. LOCAL LIAISON UNDERSTANDS THE RIGHTS OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH, AND DISTRICT POLICIES ARE IN LINE WITH THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT, TO SUPPORT THE FULL, EFFICIENT, AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL LAW.

“We already had our program, and we were already working with homeless families, so it was easier to respond to the hurricanes.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

The McKinney-Vento Act confers various rights on children and youth experiencing homelessness, to ensure that they can enroll in and attend school. Those rights allow homeless children and youth to:

- Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there. Students must be given access to the same public education, including preschool education, provided to other children.
- Continue in their school of origin - the school they attended before they became homeless or the school in which last enrolled if that is their choice and is “feasible.”
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, upon request.
- Attend school and participate in school programs with those who are not homeless. Children and youth cannot be separated from the regular school program because they are homeless.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents required for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of their choice (school of residence or school of origin) even while they and the school seek to resolve a dispute over enrollment.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children served in these programs.
- Receive transportation to and from school, comparable to that of other children in the school district.

It is imperative that local homeless education liaisons understand these rights. More information on the McKinney-Vento Act is available from NCHE at <http://www.serve.org/nche>, as well as in the resources listed in Section II.B.2 below.

To ensure that the rights of children and youth are implemented fully in states and school districts, the McKinney-Vento Act requires all state and local educational agencies to develop, review, and revise their policies to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention in school of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Of course, this includes children and youth experiencing homelessness due to natural or other

disasters. Such policies are critical for the full, efficient, and effective implementation of the Act, resulting in the enrollment and attendance of homeless students in school.

During disasters, strong district policies are even more important. They provide schools with something tangible to uphold during the confusion of initial disaster response. If school and district personnel are familiar with McKinney-Vento policies and practices, the immediate school district response to a disaster will be more deliberate and appropriate. This section provides tools to assist in:

- 1. Developing strong McKinney-Vento policies in school districts**
- 2. Developing additional policies specific to disaster situations**

I. DEVELOPING STRONG MCKINNEY-VENTO POLICIES IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The following tips taken from a “Sample Local Educational Agency (LEA) Policy to Implement the McKinney-Vento Act” may help school districts develop flexible, appropriate policies to implement the McKinney-Vento Act and respond effectively to disasters.



TIPS FOR DEVELOPING A LOCAL POLICY FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION

The entire LEA community can be involved in developing a new policy. Often, one person taking the lead is enough to get a new policy enacted. Strategic allies in getting LEA policies revised may include:

- Superintendent and assistant superintendents
- School board members
- Title I and other federal programs directors
- School staff, including school counselors, social workers and teachers
- The mayor
- City council members
- County government officials
- Other city and county agencies, such as departments of housing, social services, child and families, transitional assistance, welfare and/or Medicaid
- Parents and students
- Homeless coalitions
- Domestic violence coalitions and agencies
- Legal aid attorneys
- Community advocates
- HUD Continuum of Care programs
- Family and youth shelter and service providers
- The faith-based community
- Higher education, including schools of education, law, public policy, social work, nursing, sociology and psychology
- State legislators
- The state educational agency
- The state board of education

Ways to involve these allies in the process initially may include:

- Using the requirements and rationale of the McKinney-Vento Act as support for needing new policies
- Sharing positive results from districts that have already revised their policies
- Taking them on tours of shelters and/or schools, as appropriate
- Making direct personal contact and explaining how the policies affect real children, schools, and the LEA as a whole ¹

In addition to the strategic allies listed above, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) can also support local liaisons' efforts in working with school boards. NSBA has featured the McKinney-Vento Act in its national publications and at its annual conference. For example, see Q&A at http://www.nsba.org/site/doc_cosa.asp?TrackID=&SID=1&DID=33536&CID=164&VID=50 and *Helping Homeless Students: Complying with the McKinney-Vento Act*, an April 22, 2004 audio conference, available to order at <http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/31500/31483.pdf>

¹ Julianelle, P. (2003). *Sample Local Educational Agency policy to implement the McKinney-Vento Act*. Retrieved August 6, 2006, from the National Center for Homeless Education website: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_g.pdf

SAMPLE LEA POLICY

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty drafted a sample LEA policy. The policy was adapted from the existing policies of LEAs around the country, the requirements of the reauthorized McKinney-Vento Act and No Child Left Behind Act, and U.S. Department of Education regulations and guidance. It is broad and specific and can be abbreviated or otherwise adapted to accommodate the needs of any LEA. It is located in Appendix E of the NCHE *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit* http://www.serve.org/ncche/downloads/toolkit/app_f.pdf

2. DEVELOPING ADDITIONAL POLICIES SPECIFIC TO DISASTER SITUATIONS

While McKinney-Vento policies form the backbone of a school district's disaster response, crisis situations also require additional policies beyond those mandated by the McKinney-Vento Act. For example, school districts should be prepared for disasters with policies that address the following challenges:

- Hiring temporary employees, including teachers, counselors, secretaries, bus drivers, and others
- Obtaining emergency certification and clearance for out-of-state or new staff, including teachers, bus drivers, and counselors
- Evaluating the structural safety of buildings to determine if students can return safely to damaged school sites
- Accepting monetary donations and donations of goods and services (See Section II. J for strategies and tools)
- Gathering and managing information needed for potential reimbursements from the state, FEMA, the U.S. Department of Education, or other sources (See Section II. H for data management strategies and tools)
- Requesting short-term, emergency waivers of class size limits
- Purchasing, renting, and/or installing necessary infrastructure, including portable classrooms, air conditioners, heating units, desks, books, buses, sanitary facilities, and others

"If we had to purchase something, if we had to purchase an air-conditioning unit, we utilized the emergency purchasing procedures that the law allows us to do in the case of emergency."

School District Administrator

The following tips from the Pennsylvania Center for Safe Schools and Communities may assist school districts in developing good policies for responding to the unique challenges posed by disasters.

TIPS FOR DEVELOPING POLICIES FOR DISASTER RESPONSE

Where to begin. . . A good crisis plan takes its lead from clear and supportive district policies. These policies, in turn, must mesh with local and state laws, ordinances, and procedures. For example, you would not want your district's policy on weapons to contradict the procedures of your local law enforcement agencies. Where to begin? Check federal, state, and local mandates (laws, standards, codes, regulations). Because the regulations are binding on a school district, it's a good idea to start with them. Here are some steps to follow:

First, examine federal, state, and local policies and procedures. You may find these in:

- *agency directives and memoranda*
- *bulletins from central office*
- *community agencies' files (police, protective services, emergency management agency, courts, mental health agencies, hospitals and health care agencies).*
- *individual school building guidebooks*

Second, be sure you have a policy and procedures for each of these potential crisis situations

- *facilities problems (electrical outage, heating, plumbing)*
- *unrest, protests, strikes*
- *natural disasters or events (weather)*
- *transportation delays, problems, and accidents*
- *individual child accidents (indoors and outside)*
- *medical problems affecting many (head lice, meningitis)*
- *individual medical crises (including alcohol and other drugs)*
- *individual mental health crises (depression, suicidality, trauma)*
- *intentional acts against persons (abuse; assault; rape; assaults with chemical, syringe, mace; bomb threats; sexual harassment; bullying)*
- *hostage situations*
- *kidnapping or missing person*
- *intentional acts against property (theft, vandalism, graffiti)*
- *events outside school that affect the school community (students/staff witnessing a crime or accident, airline crash)*

Third, collaborate on policies. "Swap" policies and procedures with other youth-serving agencies in your community. Request policies from comparable institutions. If you do not have a solid relationship with the other schools, law enforcement, and youth-serving agencies in your community, this policy-and-procedure discussion may be a good place to begin an ongoing dialogue. ²

² Note. From "Developing good crisis plans" by M. M. Kerr, 1997. Copyright 1997 by Center for Safe Schools and Communities. Adapted with permission. Retrieved September 25, 2006 from <http://www.safeschools.info/developcrisis.php>

Self Assessment II. A

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in applying the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless and implementing identification strategies.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

A. Local liaison understands the rights of homeless children and youth, and district policies are in line with the McKinney-Vento Act, to support full, efficient, and effective implementation of federal law.

The school district has reviewed and revised all its policies to ensure they are in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has reviewed and revised all its policies to ensure they provide for smooth implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has reviewed and revised all its policies to ensure they support the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth in school.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district conducts ongoing reviews of all its policies in light of the needs and legal rights of students experiencing homelessness.	1	2	3	4	5
School district policies contemplate and support positive, interdisciplinary disaster response and recovery.	1	2	3	4	5
School district policies contemplate and support effective, interdisciplinary disaster response and recovery.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

30-40 Points This is a strength of the program.
20-29 Points The program is moderately successful in this area.
<20 Points This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

B. LOCAL LIAISON HAS A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT'S DEFINITION OF HOMELESS, AND EXPEDITED IDENTIFICATION STRATEGIES ENSURE THAT CHILDREN AND YOUTH ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES ARE IDENTIFIED.

While not all students displaced by disasters are eligible for McKinney-Vento services, most are. Students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are considered homeless under the law and are eligible for services. Therefore, in most cases, children and youth made homeless by disasters should receive McKinney-Vento services.

Schools must know who and where students experiencing homelessness are in order to serve them. This requires both: (1) understanding how to apply the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless; and (2) increasing awareness of homelessness and the McKinney-Vento Act in schools and the broader community, including disaster relief agencies. This section offers tools to assist school districts in both of these tasks.

It is important to note that displaced children and youth may be harder to locate and draw into school than other homeless students. The practical burdens and overall trauma experienced by families and youth affected by disasters may tend to keep them away from school. Families may also believe they will return home shortly, and therefore be hesitant to enroll their children in a new school. Others may be traveling to their former home regularly to make repairs or look for work, causing their children to miss school.

"Also for many people, school just wasn't a priority. They'd had the opportunity at the Reliant Center, but didn't enroll there, and then they went to hotels. They were working on clothes, food, and housing, and not enrolling their kids. So we went out to hotels and enrolled there. HEB is a grocery store, and they donated \$100 gift cards, so we gave out a gift card when they enrolled, and then a second gift card when they got on the bus."

Local Homeless Education Liaison

"A lot of them are going back to [their former homes] every other week, and the kids are missing school."

Local Homeless Education Liaison

"We are also dealing with truancy issues in the trailer parks. We are working with truancy officers."

Local Homeless Education Liaison

STRATEGIES TO FIND DISPLACED STUDENTS AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO ENROLL IN AND ATTEND SCHOOL

- ☐ Use TV, radio, and school billboards to send a message to parents and youth that the school welcomes them. (See Section II.I for strategies and tools for media outreach).
- ☐ To the extent possible, register students where they are located rather than requiring them to come to a school or registration center, as lack of transportation or child-care may be a barrier. (See Section I.C.1.)

“My responsibility was to get teams out everywhere to register children—shelters, hotels, homes, etc. They were registered with a paper registration form.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

- ☐ Talk with parents and students about any reservations they may have about enrolling in school, including mental health concerns (See Section II.D.2.)
- ☐ Inform parents and students of all the services and supports school can offer them, including free meals, clothing, school supplies, and physical and mental health support.
- ☐ Provide snacks, a comfortable place to sit, and mental health support in registration centers to help families and youth feel comfortable.

“The fact that area restaurants donated lunch and we provided breakfast so there was always something to eat or drink at registration, was really important. People just went on and on about how nice we were to them. If they wanted to sit there all day, we let them. That worked really well.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

- ☐ Talk to parents about their housing options and intentions.
- ☐ Inform parents and students of their right to remain in the school of origin, to the extent this is feasible, even if they move.
- ☐ Inform parents and students of their transportation options.
- ☐ Take advantage of community relations and collaborations to locate students (see Sections I.A and I.B, pages for collaboration strategies and tools).

“Our outreach efforts that we had with our community worked really well. Churches and shelters all knew I was the homeless liaison, so they contacted me to tell me when they were bringing people from the Astrodome.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

- ☐ Take advantage of community relations and collaborations to provide services for parents on school grounds, such as pro bono legal assistance (see Sections I.A and I.B. for strategies and tools.)
- ☐ Put appropriate mental health supports in place in the schools (see Sections II.E.2 and III.A.)
- ☐ Provide welcoming activities for parents and students (See Section II.E.2.)

I. UNDERSTANDING HOW TO APPLY THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT'S DEFINITION OF HOMELESS

Understanding the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless is a critical first step to identifying and serving children and youth experiencing homelessness. Appendix 5 contains a brief entitled *Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services Under the McKinney-Vento Act*, which is a detailed tool to help school districts determine if particular students are eligible for McKinney-Vento services. The tool supports local liaisons in making case-by-case eligibility determinations by providing a flowchart, definitions of key terms, questions to solicit information from families and youth, and additional strategies.

Eligibility determinations should follow this general outline:

Step 1: Get the facts. What is the family's or youth's situation?

Strategies and questions designed to help determine the extent to which the children and their families or the youth are living in a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Step 2: Analyze the facts. Is the student eligible for McKinney-Vento services?

A. Does the child or youth's living situation fit into one of the specific examples of homeless listed in the law? These examples include:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or camping ground due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in an emergency or transitional shelter
- Abandoned in a hospital
- Awaiting foster care placement
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting

B. If the child's, family's, or youth's situation does not fit any of the examples provided in the definition, consider the following: Is the child or youth living in another situation that is not fixed, regular, and adequate?

Consult Appendix 5 for the detailed definitions and eligibility tool or visit the NCHE website at http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/det_elig.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Determining Homelessness by the Definition. National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (2003). A flowchart to help guide schools in determining if a child or youth is eligible for protections and services under the McKinney-Vento Act.

http://www.nlchp.org/fa_education/flowchart.pdf

Who Is Homeless? (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series). NCHE (2002). A brief explaining the definition of homeless.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/who_is_homeless.pdf

Identifying Students in Homeless Situations. (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series). NCHE (2002). A brief providing strategies to identify students experiencing homelessness.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/identification.pdf>

Who are Homeless Children and Youth? flyer from the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*. NCHE. A two-page summary and explanation of who is considered homeless under the MV Act.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_b.pdf

2. INCREASING AWARENESS OF HOMELESSNESS AND THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT IN SCHOOLS AND THE BROADER COMMUNITY

Local liaisons use varied strategies to increase awareness of homelessness and the McKinney-Vento Act in their communities including:



A particularly effective strategy for increasing awareness among school staff is to identify a homeless education contact in each school building. With support from the local liaison, this contact can increase awareness in the school and the local community. Appendix F in NCHE's *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit* contains a School-Level Point of Contacts form for naming school-level contacts and an information sheet explaining the role and importance of school-level contacts.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_f.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following additional resources can support awareness efforts:

Educational rights posters for parents and youth, in Spanish and English. NCHE. Posters for raising awareness throughout the community, including schools, shelters, motels, food pantries, social services offices, health clinics, laundromats, and other locations. Order online at http://www.serve.org/nche/online_order.php#hard_copy or call 1-800-308-2145

Parent brochure, in English and Spanish. NCHE. A brochure to explain the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness and inform parents about ways in which they can support their children's education during times of mobility.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/parentbrochure_eng.pdf

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/parentbrochure_sp.pdf

Homeless Education: An Introduction to the Issues. NCHE. A brief to introduce community and school district members to homelessness and the McKinney-Vento Act.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/introduction.pdf>

McKinney-Vento online training presentations. NCHE. These presentations, complete with audio and video, give brief introductions to key issues covered in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/training.php#breeze>

Enrollment Ready Reference for Schools. NCHE. A fold-out card for enrollment personnel that explains the basics of the McKinney-Vento Act and suggests enrollment strategies. Order online at http://www.serve.org/nche/online_order.php#hard_copy or call 1-800-308-2145

Educating Homeless Children and Youth: The 2005 Guide to Their Rights. National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (2005). A Q&A booklet that provides an overview to the McKinney-Vento Act.

[http://www.nlchp.org/FA%5FEducation/Basic%20McKinney%20Booklet%20\(2005\).pdf](http://www.nlchp.org/FA%5FEducation/Basic%20McKinney%20Booklet%20(2005).pdf)

Family Brochure. Project HOPE, Virginia (2005). Brochures for families in English and Spanish.

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/Engbrochure.pdf>

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/BrochureSpan.pdf>

Questions and Answers on Homeless Education. Project HOPE, Virginia (2005). A Q&A brief with basic information about the McKinney-Vento Act. <http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/QA.pdf>

Homeless Education Awareness Folder. NCHE. A sturdy, laminated folder that can be customized with local information to inform colleagues and potential donors about the issues central to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Order online at http://www.serve.org/nche/online_order.php#hard_copy or call 1-800-308-2145

Student Residency Questionnaire. Texas Homeless Education Office. In English and Spanish. http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/pdf/RP11_StuResidencyQues_RevFeb04.pdf

Introduction to Homelessness and Introduction to the McKinney-Vento Law. Texas Homeless Education Office. PowerPoint presentations. <http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/toolkits.html#powerpoints>

Poverty USA Tour. U.S. Conference of Bishops (2004). A multi-media, web-based presentation to increase awareness of poverty in the U.S. and explain why families in poverty confront homelessness.

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/cchd/povertyusa/tour2.htm>

Common Signs of Homelessness. NCHE. Flyer from the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_c.pdf

Tip Sheets. NCHE. *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*. For school administrators, school nurses, guidance counselors, teachers, school secretaries, and parents.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_i.pdf

Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit. NCHE. Chapter 6 offers strategies for increasing awareness in the school and community. <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/chapters.pdf>

Webpage Development Form. NCHE. *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*. A sample form for developing an LEA or SEA homeless education website.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_h.pdf

Kids Without Homes Toolkit: Awareness and Compliance Manual. Region 12 Education Service Center in collaboration with Region 10 Education Service Center and the Texas Homeless Education Office. A toolkit with awareness materials for a wide variety of school and district personnel.

<http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/KidsWithoutHomes.html>

Unaccompanied and Homeless Youth Review of Literature (1995-2005). NCHE (2005).

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/uy_lit_review.pdf

Domestic Violence, Homelessness, and Children's Education. (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series). NCHE. A brief describing the connection between domestic violence and homelessness, with strategies for service providers and schools.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/domestic.pdf>

Migrant Children and Youths Experiencing Homelessness: Rights and Services Through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series). NCHE. A brief describing the connection between migrant workers and homelessness, with strategies for collaborations and schools.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/migrant.pdf>

Self Assessment II. B

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in applying the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless and implementing identification strategies.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

B. Local liaison has a full understanding of the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless, and expedited identification strategies ensure that most children and youth are eligible for services and identified.

The local liaison and others understand how to apply the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless.	1	2	3	4	5
Awareness activities are sufficient to ensure that most educational personnel can identify children and youth who may be eligible for services.	1	2	3	4	5
The district utilizes a uniform method for identifying children and youth who may be eligible for services (e.g., residency information form, disaster response survey, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Awareness materials are available in bulk, present at every school, and can be disseminated to community agencies (e.g., program brochures, posters, pocket folders, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Disaster relief agencies in the community are aware of the McKinney-Vento Act and the extent to which the definition of homeless covers children and youth displaced by disasters.	1	2	3	4	5
The local liaison and others are trained in identification procedures to provide technical assistance.	1	2	3	4	5
A data management system is in place for tracking and reporting students identified for services.	1	2	3	4	5
Strategies are in place for identification and outreach to families coping with the trauma and practical burdens of displacement by a disaster.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

30-40 Points This is a strength of the program.

20-29 Points The program is moderately successful in this area.

<20 Points This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

C. IMMEDIATE ENROLLMENT STRATEGIES ENSURE THAT BARRIERS TO ENROLLING AND REMAINING IN SCHOOL ARE ELIMINATED.

Children and youth experiencing homelessness, including those displaced by disasters, often lack documents typically required for school enrollment. Upon fleeing a disaster, it is unlikely that families would have gathered immunization records, birth certificates, or school records. They are unlikely to be able to produce proof of residency in their temporary locations. Some youth may have been separated from their parents and are staying with friends or relatives or on their own, without any formal guardianship arrangement.

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that states and school districts eliminate barriers to immediate school enrollment for students experiencing homelessness. Local homeless education liaisons overcome the challenges associated with immediate enrollment by using practical strategies such as streamlining paperwork and using alternate forms to substitute for documents that are normally required.

Tip: When enrolling displaced students, school districts should consider trying to match students with the schools where they will feel most comfortable. Sensitive enrollments can help prevent mental health and academic problems later on.

“It was important to do due diligence in relocating students in school sites that closely matched where they came from, pairing them with students, pairing them with faculty members, and trying to lessen the emotional burden. We also had some folks that actually had relatives in the area, and we would try and locate them at schools where their relatives lived.”

School Administrator

This section contains tools and strategies to assist school districts with the immediate enrollment of all homeless students, including specific strategies related to displaced students:

1. Forms for use during the enrollment process
2. Talking to parents and youth: Timing of enrollment and school selection
3. Enrollment checklist
4. Dealing with overcrowding when receiving a large number of displaced students
5. Other enrollment tools

I. FORMS FOR USE DURING THE ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Many school districts use simple forms to assist in identifying, enrolling, and serving students experiencing homelessness. These forms are key strategies to help gather information immediately upon enrollment and to start appropriate services immediately. The following five forms are attached in Appendix 6 and available at the websites indicated.

Sample Student Residency Questionnaire. From *Education For Homeless Children And Youth Program Non-Regulatory Guidance*. U.S. Department of Education (Updated July 2004). A one-page sample student residency questionnaire to help identify students in homeless situations.(p.37)

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/guidance_jul2004.pdf

Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program Common Form. Illinois State Board of Education. A two-page enrollment form in Spanish and English to help identify students in homeless situations and assess their needs.

<http://homelessed.net/schools/default.htm> (under “Common Form”)

Educational Services For Homeless/Transitional Students Confidential Referral Form. Louisiana Department of Education (2003). This one-page form should be filled out upon enrollment to assess the basic services a student experiencing homelessness needs, including transportation, clothing, tutoring, school records, school supplies, mental health support, and medical attention.

<http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/2529.pdf>

Caregiver’s Authorization Form. NCHE. *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*, Appendix D. A reproducible form to allow caregivers to enroll unaccompanied youth in school.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_d.pdf

Dispute Resolution Process School Sample Form. From *Education For Homeless Children And Youth Program Non-Regulatory Guidance*. U.S. Department of Education (Updated July 2004). Sample forms for informing parents of an enrollment decision contrary to their wishes and beginning the dispute resolution process.(p.38)

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/guidance_jul2004.pdf

An additional resource for enrollment personnel is the *Enrollment Ready Reference for Schools* from NCHE. This fold-out card explains the basics of the McKinney-Vento Act and suggests enrollment strategies. Order online at:

http://www.serve.org/nche/online_order.php#hard_copy or call 1-800-308-2145

2. TALKING TO PARENTS AND YOUTH: TIMING OF ENROLLMENT AND SCHOOL SELECTION

The following strategies can help guide local homeless education liaisons and school enrollment personnel in discussing enrollment options with displaced parents and youth.

A. TIMING OF ENROLLMENT

After experiencing violence or a serious loss as a result of a major disaster or other event, children and youth may be traumatized. Local liaisons have reported that some students are so traumatized following a major disaster that they may need a few days with their parents to begin to feel safe again, prior to enrolling in school. In addition, following large-scale evacuations such as those caused by Hurricane Katrina, families and youth may be placed in large, congregate shelters for a few days pending a more stable placement. In instances of immediately pending moves, it may be in the students' best interests to delay enrollment for a few days so as to coordinate school enrollment with housing placements.

As a general practice, it is important for children and youth experiencing homelessness to be enrolled in school immediately. Immediate enrollment in school can provide students with safety, a routine, meals, clothing, academics, mental health services, and friendship. Immediate enrollment is also a legal right of homeless students under the McKinney-Vento Act. In certain individual cases, however, parents or unaccompanied youth may choose to delay school enrollment for a very brief period of time to give students a chance to regain their emotional footing and find a more stable housing situation. This delay must be the voluntary choice of the parent or youth; any school denying immediate enrollment to a student experiencing homelessness would be violating the McKinney-Vento Act.

Appendix 7 contains a checklist of suggested questions that local liaisons and enrollment personnel can ask to guide this discussion with parents and unaccompanied youth.

B. SCHOOL SELECTION

"[T]o the extent feasible, a district must educate a homeless child or youth in his or her school of origin, unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the parent or guardian. The placement determination should be a student-centered, individualized determination. Factors that an LEA may consider include the age of the child or youth; the distance of a commute and the impact it may have on the student's education; personal safety issues; a student's need for special instruction (e.g., special education and related services); the length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or other temporary location; and time remaining in the school year."³

³ U.S. Department of Education. (2004, July). *Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program Non-Regulatory Guidance*. [Sec 722(g)(3)]

Parents and youth experiencing homelessness may need assistance in choosing between the school of origin and the local school. This may be particularly true for those displaced by disasters, since they may be completely unfamiliar with the local schools and community. To assist parents and youth with school selection, the local liaison and/or school enrollment personnel can:

- Reinforce the importance of school stability and educational continuity for students.
- Provide input on the academic, social, and emotional impact that transferring to a new school may have.
- Help the parents and youth find out which programs at the two schools are comparable and appropriate for the child and make arrangements for the parents and youth to visit the school considered for a possible transfer.
- Provide information on the distance to the schools under consideration, both in terms of miles and travel time.

The checklist in Appendix 8 may help local liaisons guide a discussion on school selection. It is also available for download at: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/sch_sel_checklist.pdf. If a school district has large numbers of homeless and mobile students, it may be beneficial to train several staff members to assist parents in this decision-making process.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

“Determining Feasibility of School Placement.” NCHE. Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit, Appendix D. Instructions and questionnaire for determining the feasibility of students remaining in their schools of origin.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_d.pdf

3. ENROLLMENT CHECKLIST

Appendix 9 contains a checklist to help local homeless education liaisons and enrollment personnel ensure that students are enrolled in school immediately, placed in appropriate classes, welcomed warmly into the school community, and able to participate fully in school activities.



4. DEALING WITH OVERCROWDING WHEN RECEIVING A LARGE NUMBER OF DISPLACED STUDENTS

Overcrowding can be an issue in school districts that receive large numbers of displaced students. Several strategies can help districts address this issue, including:

- Consider capacity issues when determining school placements for students from large, congregate shelters.
- Work with disaster relief agencies and housing agencies to locate housing near schools with greater capacity.
- Request temporary waivers of class-size laws.
- Install portable classrooms on school grounds.
- Hire retired and displaced teachers.
- Re-open closed schools.
- Re-open schools that were closed temporarily for repairs.

5. OTHER ENROLLMENT TOOLS

- “Potential Enrollment Barriers and Possible Solutions.” NCHE. *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*. (Chapter 3 Table 2.). A chart that notes enrollment barriers and strategies to remove them. <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/chapters.pdf>
- *Enrollment*. (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series) NCHE (2002). A brief explaining the McKinney-Vento Act requirements for immediate enrollment with strategies for implementation. <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/enrollment.pdf>
- *School Selection*. (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series) NCHE (2002). A brief explaining the McKinney-Vento Act requirements for school of origin with strategies for implementation. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/school_selection.pdf
- *From the School Office to the Classroom*. NCHE (March 2006). A handbook with basic information and strategies for confronting various enrollment barriers, including issues related to guardianship, immunizations, academic records, special education, mental health needs, academic placement and support, and enrolling large numbers of displaced students. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/dis_hb/enrollment.pdf
- *Resolution of Disputes*. (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series). NCHE (2002). A brief explaining the McKinney-Vento Act requirements for dispute resolution with strategies for implementation. <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/resolution.pdf>
- “Ensuring Enrollment for Unaccompanied Youth.” NCHE. *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*. NCHE. Brief on suggested methods to ensure immediate enrollment for unaccompanied youth, including state laws, school board policies, and caregiver forms. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_d.pdf
- *Unaccompanied Youth*. (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series). NCHE. A brief explaining the McKinney-Vento Act’s requirements for unaccompanied youth with extensive strategies for implementation. <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/youth.pdf>

Self Assessment II.C

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in eliminating barriers to immediate enrollment.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1 No evidence 2 In existence but not effective 3 Moderately successful 4 Successful but needs improvement 5 Strength of the program

C. Immediate enrollment strategies ensure that barriers to enrolling and remaining in school are eliminated.

All enrollment personnel are aware of the McKinney-Vento Act's requirements for immediate enrollment and trained in enrollment procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
District personnel understand that the "immediate enrollment" rights of homeless children and youth temporarily exempts them from the requirement of providing academic, health, and discipline records in order to enroll in school.	1	2	3	4	5
Parents are active participants in the enrollment process – including making decisions about school location, timing, and the selection of programs.	1	2	3	4	5
District and school personnel have policies and procedures in place to collect information and guide a quick analysis of information based on available resources about the student being enrolled.	1	2	3	4	5
During times of disaster, enrollment procedures are coordinated with housing providers and shelters.	1	2	3	4	5
Parents, school administrators, and staff understand "school of origin" services, frequent mobility, and feasibility issues used to determine school placement with parent involvement.	1	2	3	4	5
Parents, school administrators, and staff understand the definition of "unaccompanied youth" and the procedures for establishing temporary guardianship or "in loco parentis" rights.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place for the purchase and provision of school uniforms.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place to accommodate sibling enrollments.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place to address over-crowding and safety concerns.	1	2	3	4	5
All schools have access to school supplies that may be required for participation and can be given to students in need.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has developed and adopted a federally-required dispute resolution procedure related to school of origin services.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

50-60 Points This is a strength of the program.
40-49 Points The program is moderately successful in this area.
<40 Points This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

D. STRATEGIES ARE IMPLEMENTED FOR PLACING STUDENTS IN APPROPRIATE CLASSES WITHOUT ACADEMIC RECORDS AND FOR OBTAINING COMPLETE SCHOOL RECORDS.

Due to their mobility, students in homeless situations often arrive to enroll in school without academic records. Students fleeing disasters and violence are even less likely to have records. Under the McKinney-Vento Act, receiving schools must contact previous schools immediately to obtain academic records. Schools must also maintain the records of homeless students such that they are available to be transferred to subsequent schools in a timely fashion. Despite these legal requirements, academic records may not always be available quickly. This is particularly true for displaced students whose home schools may have been destroyed or severely damaged in the disaster.

While waiting for records to arrive, schools must enroll students experiencing homelessness and place them in the most appropriate academic environment possible. Implementing creative strategies to make the best possible immediate placement is imperative for several reasons. First, as homeless students already suffer the effects of school mobility, it is important that their first classroom placement be appropriate to avoid further disruption of academic progress. The individual student's academic progress will be impacted negatively by inappropriate placement and subsequent changes, as will the well-being of classmates who are subjected to the student's entry and removal. Students with special needs are at an even higher risk of emotional, mental, and academic disruption caused by a change in placement.

When students are mobile between states, these risks are even more acute due to differences in academic standards. For example, 80 percent of students who were displaced to Texas by Hurricane Katrina did not pass Texas tests to proceed to the subsequent grade. Texas schools provided intensive summer school for those students but still faced large-scale retentions. Immediate, appropriate academic placements may help avoid some of these consequences. Intensive academic and mental health support is also critical (see Sections III.A and III.C for strategies and tools).

This section offers the following tools to assist in appropriate academic placements for students without records:

- 1. Tools for obtaining academic records**
- 2. Placing students without records**
- 3. Enrolling students with special needs**
- 4. Strategies to help preserve records in cases of disasters**

I. TOOLS FOR OBTAINING ACADEMIC RECORDS

A note on the privacy of academic records: FERPA, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, DOES allow transferring records between schools without parental consent when a child is changing schools.

ELECTRONIC DATABASES

“The State Department of Education was able to give us information on the majority of the children, through a statewide database that the school counselors could access. That database even had special education information. They were able to be placed and served right away, thanks to the state database.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

More and more states and school districts are putting academic records into electronic databases. The hurricanes of 2005 underscored the usefulness of such databases in transmitting academic records quickly, particularly when previous records had been destroyed. School counselors were provided access to databases directly or through CDs. Databases can include a wide array of academic information, including age, grade level, classes, grades, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and special needs, while still containing adequate safeguards to preserve student privacy. School districts and states should consider establishing such databases and including the most extensive academic information possible, particularly relating to special needs students.

ORDERING BIRTH CERTIFICATES

Most states have online forms to order copies of birth certificates. A simple web search using your state’s name and the term “birth certificate” should yield the information. For example:

- **Alabama:** <http://ph.state.al.us/Chs/VitalRecords/Birth/BIRTH.HTML>
- **California:** <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/chs/ovr/BirthOrderCert.htm>
- **Florida:** http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/birth_death.htm
- **Louisiana:** <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/page.asp?id=252&detail=6489>
- **Mississippi:** <http://www.msdh.state.ms.us/phs/forms/form522i.htm>
- **New York:** <http://www.dhfs.state.ny.us/VitalRecords/birth.htm>
- **Pennsylvania:** http://www.dsf.health.state.pa.us/health/CWP/view.asp?A=168&QUESTION_ID=202219
- **Texas:** http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/pdf/RP15_BVS_birthcertApp_English.pdf (English) and http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/pdf/RP16_BVS_birthcertApp_Spanish.pdf (Spanish).
- **Wisconsin:** <http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/VitalRecords/birth.htm>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

From the School Office to the Classroom. NCHE (March 2006). A handbook with basic information and strategies for confronting various enrollment barriers, including issues related to academic records, placement, and support. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/dis_hb/enrollment.pdf

Prompt and Proper Placement: Enrolling Students Without Records. In Appendix 10 and available at: <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/assessment.pdf>

2. PLACING STUDENTS WITHOUT RECORDS

“Once they were registered at school, the school did the schedules for those children. Every school had an enrollment team with every needed personnel on it—preK, special ed. preK, special ed., regular ed., etc. They started with the basic schedule, and made adjustments based on the information the family could provide.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

As demonstrated by schools across the country, it is very possible to place students without academic records in appropriate classes immediately. To do so requires implementing strategies for gathering information, conducting rapid assessments, and making good placement decisions. The NCHE brief, *Prompt and Proper Placement: Enrolling Students Without Records*, attached in Appendix 10, contains such strategies. The brief is also available at <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/assessment.pdf>.

3. ENROLLING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

SEAS (Special Education Automation System), a private, web-based data management system used in many school districts, allows immediate transfer of special education information between schools. SEAS was a vital tool following the hurricanes of 2005. A majority of the school districts affected by Hurricane Katrina used SEAS. Computer Automation, the maker of SEAS, was able to transfer IEP information directly to receiving school districts in cases in which the prior school district was not operational. Computer Automation worked with the Departments of Education in Louisiana and Mississippi to allow this information to be available upon request by the receiving district. For more information about this database, visit: <http://www.computerautomation.com/>

The following information based on *From the School Office to the Classroom*, summarizes the legal requirements and some basic strategies for enrolling and serving students with special needs experiencing homelessness:

ENROLLING AND SERVING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Students who have special education needs must be enrolled in school and provided the most appropriate services possible immediately. **For students who are not changing school districts**, their current IEPs remain in effect (or, if they are still in the process of being evaluated, the process must continue uninterrupted). Strategies for serving students who are changing school districts vary slightly depending on whether the students have a current IEP.

For students entering a new district with current IEPs, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires the enrolling school to provide appropriate services, comparable to those described in the IEP, immediately. The new district then must hold a meeting with the parents to adopt the previous IEP or create a new one.

To streamline special education services for displaced students at the Astrodome, Houston Independent School District conducted IEP meetings on-site as special needs students were enrolled. Students arrived at school the first day with a current Houston IEP, and services were put in place immediately.

If the previous school district was in the process of doing evaluations or developing an IEP but hadn't finished the process, the new district must continue with the process immediately. IDEA now says that standard evaluation time limits do not apply to students who change school districts while evaluations are pending, but only if the new district is 'making sufficient progress to ensure a prompt completion of evaluations' and 'the parent and the LEA agree to a specific time when the evaluation will be completed.' Therefore, enrolling districts must ensure that evaluations are completed promptly and set a deadline with the parents, or they must complete the evaluations within the time remaining from the original referral.

THE EVALUATION SHUFFLE

While evaluations are in process or before services are implemented, special needs students may be struggling in regular classrooms, unable to make any academic progress. To avoid this situation, schools must coordinate evaluations with prior schools and implement creative strategies to expedite evaluations and services. For example:

- Get from the previous school(s) all the evaluations, questionnaires, and other paperwork completed on the student.
- Talk to the school counselor, teachers, and evaluation team from the previous school(s) about the student's needs.
- Implement appropriate supportive services immediately. Services such as academic support, behavior management interventions, priority seating, mentors, and others can be extremely helpful and don't need to be labeled as special education.
- Collaborate with community medical and mental health providers, Medicaid service providers, social workers, and others to pursue necessary evaluations.
- Consult with your special education team to see if interim IEPs or other interim services can be provided.

For students who are changing districts and have not been evaluated, but whose academic level, behavior, or parents indicate that special education services may be needed, the enrolling school should work with the parent to begin the evaluation process immediately.

Accessing Special Education for Unaccompanied Youth

IDEA requires that an appropriate adult sign for special education evaluations and services for a student under 18 years old: a parent, foster parent, guardian, person legally responsible for the child, or person with whom the student is living and who is acting in the place of a parent (check with your special education team to see if this person must be related to the student). Since many unaccompanied youth do not have such an adult in their lives, IDEA now requires school districts to assign surrogate parents for unaccompanied youth within 30 days.

Surrogate parents must be trained in special education procedures and cannot be school district employees or anyone who might have a conflict of interest. For unaccompanied youth, however, appropriate staff of emergency shelters, transitional shelters, independent living programs, and street outreach programs can be temporary surrogates while someone who meets the legal criteria is found. These temporary surrogates should be appointed immediately so the evaluation process can begin.⁴

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Hurricane Katrina and Relocated Students With Special Needs: Recommendations for Receiving Schools. National Association of School Psychologists (2005). Comprehensive brief with practical strategies for providing services to students with special needs in the absence of an IEP. http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/katrina_specneeds.html

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004: Provisions for Children and Youth with Disabilities Who Experience Homelessness. NCHE. A brief outlining the most relevant changes to IDEA in 2004 for enrolling and serving children experiencing homelessness. <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/idea.pdf>

Prompt and Proper Placement: Enrolling Students Without Records. NCHE (2006). <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/assessment.pdf> Reprinted in Appendix 10.

Unlocking Potential! Project HOPE Virginia. Briefs with basic information on the rights of homeless children with special needs and strategies to provide them services. For families and shelters: <http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/family-complete.pdf>
For special education staff: <http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/personnel-complete.pdf>

4. STRATEGIES TO HELP PRESERVE RECORDS IN CASES OF DISASTERS

Appendix 11 contains a checklist to help evacuating schools preserve health and academic records in cases of evacuations and disasters, thus ensuring a smoother transition into new schools for evacuating students.

⁴ NCHE (2006). *From the school office to the classroom*, Retrieved August 11, 2006 from: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/dis_hb/enrollment.pdf

Self Assessment II. D

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in placing students without records and obtaining school records.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

D. Strategies are implemented for placing students in appropriate classes without academic records and for obtaining complete school records.

There is a system in place for aggressive pursuit of any or all records, including academic records, that may be available for homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place to collect information quickly about the students' needs for immediate supplemental services, including mental health and academic support.	1	2	3	4	5
District and school personnel have access to a variety of quick assessment strategies and tools in multiple languages that can be utilized to guide critical academic placements in areas such as reading, language, and math.	1	2	3	4	5
Strategies, policies, and procedures effectively address immediate enrollment and placement for special needs populations (i.e., teen parents, special education students, students with 504 and health plans, pre-kindergarten, ESOL, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place to execute expedited or transitional Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for special education students.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has established a pool of surrogate parents for special education students and unaccompanied youth.	1	2	3	4	5
Strategies and procedures are in place to preserve records in cases of disasters.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

27-35 Points

18-26 Points

<18 Points

This is a strength of the program.

The program is moderately successful in this area.

This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

E. AGGRESSIVE AND TIMELY STRATEGIES ENSURE FULL, PRODUCTIVE PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING TACTICS TO ADDRESS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.

“It’s one thing to accommodate students into your schools that are displaced, but it’s another thing to get them in school and actively engaged in learning again.”

School District Administrator

Beyond just getting children registered and placed in school, school districts must enact strategies to engage them actively in learning. Such strategies must address the immediate physical and mental health needs of students in homeless situations, including those displaced by disasters. Schools must also work to involve students in extracurricular activities and the social life of the school. These interventions help incorporate students and families into the school community and are essential for the well-being of the students and the schools. The McKinney-Vento Act requires that homeless students be enrolled immediately with the definition of enrollment including attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

“We’re educators, and we wanted to get them in school. But I think that we need to remove barriers to learning and teaching, and those emotional and physical and trauma issues are barriers.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

This section contains tools to assist schools in addressing immediate physical and emotional barriers to learning, including:

- 1. Obtaining health records and addressing physical health needs**
- 2. Welcoming students and families into the school community and addressing immediate mental health needs**
- 3. Preventing conflicts between new and pre-existing students and serving all homeless children and youth**
- 4. Ensuring access to participation in school athletics and extracurricular activities**
- 5. Contact list for students who have experienced a traumatic event**

I. OBTAINING HEALTH RECORDS AND ADDRESSING PHYSICAL HEALTH NEEDS

“And we had nurses who did triage on-site. We interviewed parents right there to ask about any health problems or issues, so if someone had asthma or needed a prescription, we got it taken care of.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that schools enroll homeless students immediately, even if they cannot produce documents that are typically required for enrollment. As such, schools must enroll immediately any homeless students who do not have immunization records or other medical records. Schools, in conjunction with the local liaison and the family, should then work to obtain those documents and/or necessary health services. Collaborating with the local health department can be a key to obtaining both records and services. The health department may be able to retrieve health records more quickly and easily than the schools. For example, after Hurricane Katrina, health departments in states that received displaced students worked with health departments in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi to obtain health records and transmit them to receiving schools.

Immunization Information Systems (IIS) can also be critical aids in obtaining immunization records. IIS's are confidential computerized information systems that attempt to collect vaccination data about all children within a geographic area. One of the national health objectives for 2010 is to increase to 95% the proportion of children under age six who participate in IIS.

Currently, IISs are being developed or are operational in all fifty states and the District of Columbia. States such as California and New York have a network of regional immunization registries. As of 2004, the following jurisdictions had an IIS with information on over three-quarters of children under age six: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, DC, Delaware, Idaho, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, New York City, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Philadelphia, Rhode Island, San Antonio, Tennessee, Washington, and Wisconsin.⁵

To find the website for your state's immunization program, see http://www.immregistries.org/profiles/state_proj.phtml

To find contact information for the manager of your state's IIS, visit: <http://www.immregistries.org/public.php/ImmRegs/regMain.php>

⁵ Department of Human Health and Service, Centers on Disease Control (2004). *Immunization registries annual report participation rates*. Retrieved August 11, 2006, from: http://www.cdc.gov/NIP/registry/irar-particip-rates/2004rp_child_particip_map_508.htm

STRATEGIES AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR OBTAINING HEALTH DOCUMENTS

- Call, fax, and/or e-mail previous schools, doctors, and health clinics to get immunization records.
- Collaborate with state and local public health agencies to access immunization databases, where available.
- If records are slow to arrive, try direct communication between school nurses or other health care providers, or direct communication between local liaisons. These strategies can sometimes produce records faster than standard procedures.
- If necessary, try contacting the State Coordinator for Homeless Education to help expedite the process.
- Since every state has mandatory immunizations for school enrollment, it is extremely likely that students who have been enrolled in school previously have received all necessary immunizations. The vast majority of homeless students have been enrolled in school before and have had required immunizations.
- When enrolling immigrant students, be aware that many foreign countries, including most Latin American and many Asian countries, immunize children at rates comparable to or higher than those in the United States (More information is available from the World Health Organization and UNICEF: <http://www.who.int/vaccines/GlobalSummary/Immunization/>)
- Every state provides for exemptions to immunization requirements for families with religious and/or philosophical objections. These exemptions are considered medically reasonable: Since the vast majority of students are immunized, the community is protected against a major outbreak of disease. (Scientists call this concept 'herd immunity.') Should an outbreak of illness occur, the same procedures used to protect unimmunized children can be used to protect students whose immunization records have not yet been obtained.
- Establish a school-based immunization clinic and/or collaborate with schools or health clinics that offer immunizations to streamline the process for those students who do need immunizations."
- Local liaisons should collaborate with the school district health advisory committee to learn, network, and educate others.⁶

⁶ NCHE. (2006). *From the school office to the classroom*. Retrieved August 11, 2006, from: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/dis_hb/enrollment.pdf

In September 2005, the Centers for Disease Control issued a memo recognizing that students previously enrolled in school most likely have received all needed immunizations. The memo states: 'States affected by Hurricane Katrina had immunization requirements for school and daycare, and it is likely that children enrolled prior to the disaster would be vaccinated appropriately. It is not necessary to repeat vaccinations for children displaced by the disaster, unless the provider has reason to believe the child was not in compliance with appropriate state requirements.'⁷

FERPA, HIPAA, and the privacy of immunization records

FERPA, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, allows transferring records between schools without parental consent when a child is changing schools.

*HIPAA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, regulates the disclosure of health information. According to HIPAA staff, HIPAA allows transferring immunization records between schools and other health providers without parental consent for transferring students. You can streamline the transfer of immunization records by contacting local health care providers to discuss HIPAA; providers can even provide you with consent forms for parents to sign upon enrolling in school, if such forms will facilitate the process.*⁸

ADDRESSING PHYSICAL HEALTH NEEDS

School nurses are an important resource for children and youth experiencing homelessness. For services that a school nurse cannot provide, local liaisons need to collaborate with community resources, such as: health clinics; dental clinics; local medical, dental, and nursing schools; private providers willing to volunteer time; optometrists and ophthalmologists willing to volunteer time and/or donate eyeglasses; civic groups able to donate medical supplies; and shelters and other homeless service providers. For collaboration tools and strategies, see Sections I.A and I.B.

For additional information about the role of school nurses, see: *School nurses: It's not just bandages any more!* Project HOPE Virginia (2004). Information brief for school nurses. http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/School_Nurses.pdf

⁷ Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control. (2005). *Interim immunization recommendations for evacuees of Hurricane Katrina*. Retrieved August 11, 2006, from: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/pdf/vaccrecdisplaced.pdf>

⁸ NCHE. (2006). *From the school office to the classroom* (p.11). Retrieved August 11, 2006, from: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/dis_hb/enrollment.pdf

2. WELCOMING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES INTO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND ADDRESSING IMMEDIATE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Welcoming children, youth, and families to school with warmth and enthusiasm is a critical first step in addressing immediate mental health needs. The following strategies can help schools start off on the right foot with new students and families.

“A memo went out from our superintendent telling schools to assign buddies to the new children, to give them an orientation to the building, to welcome our parents, to be kind and compassionate. And in the homeroom period, they were supposed to have meetings with the children to tell them new students were coming and that we needed to welcome them. Many principals met the school bus every morning at the Astrodome, to welcome and meet the kids. They were walking around saying, ‘Good morning, I’m the principal, we’re so glad to have you here.’”

Local Homeless Education Liaison



STRATEGIES TO WELCOME STUDENTS AND PARENTS TO SCHOOL

How can school staff help new students and parents feel welcome and become invested in our school?

- Start a 'New Students' club.
- Replicate beginning of the year rituals, procedures and events when new students enter, so they receive the same orientation to the culture of school as other students. For example, have counselors and/or administrators meet with parents and students when registering. Follow-up with a second meeting in the weeks following enrollment, to address any questions or concerns.

In St. John the Baptist Parish Public School District, LA, administrators and staff from all local schools set up orientation rooms at the site where displaced students were being enrolled. Once assigned to a school, students and their families went to their orientation room to meet the staff, ask questions, and identify 'friendly faces' to look for during their first day at school.

- Organize periodic school-wide activities to encourage the student body to welcome and accept new students.
- Give new students a faculty and peer mentor/buddy. Peer mentors or buddies not only help new students feel more comfortable in their new school, but also give pre-existing students a window into the circumstances that have brought their buddies to their school. Such connections can help avoid conflicts or turf issues between new arrivals and other students.
- Make sure new students have a chance to participate in sports and other extracurricular activities.
- If the student previously attended a school that is considered a rival or competitor of your school, meet with the student to address potential feelings of exclusion or aggression upfront.
- Give new students a small welcome gift that shows the school colors and/or team name, to invite them to share school spirit and pride.
- Invite the students to share a story, food, or activity from their background or their home town; use this as a teachable moment for the current students.

After receiving a large number of students from New Orleans in the weeks following Hurricane Katrina, a school district in Arkansas held a Mardi Gras party for the school community. New students were able to show off their culture and home town, while the whole school learned to appreciate the gifts the new arrivals had to offer.

AND FOR PARENTS...

- Organize non-threatening events to encourage communication between parents and the school (for example, potluck meals, ice cream socials, health nights where parents can consult with medical and mental health professionals).
- Create an orientation video for parents, service providers, and students. Have a comfortable place in the school for viewing the video, and consider providing copies to local shelters and service providers.
- Create a Parents' Place in the school – a room with videos, a telephone, and information on the local community, health care, babysitters, school activities, child rearing, and coping strategies. Provide staff to discuss concerns.

Families in homeless situations may have no knowledge about your local community. Schools may want to make available maps and printed information about local services, including public transportation, grocery stores, pharmacies, clothing stores, discount stores, public benefits, health care, employment offices, shelters, and housing agencies....

'We also had several lawyers volunteer to conduct classes for the parents on the paperwork involved with hurricanes, insurance, FEMA, services and benefits, etc. That was really a good thing to do, because lowering the stress level for the parents lowered the stress level for the kids.'

Homeless Education Liaison

How can classroom teachers help new students feel comfortable and involved?

PREPARE NOW...

- Keep extra copies of review materials and assignments for students who arrive without prior notice. Also keep some basic school supplies on hand in case the student is in need.
- Post a class schedule so students will know what is happening next.
- Prepare a short, simple written list of classroom rules and procedures.
- Keep small welcome gifts on hand (for example, school supplies or school clothes).
- Establish a home base (for example, a rug or a person) for a child to reconnect with something familiar if she feels overwhelmed.

AND WHEN THE STUDENT ARRIVES...

- Take time to talk to and welcome students individually. Take the time to play welcome games or similar inclusion activities, and get to know new students with a get-to-know-you questionnaire or journal assignment. When students feel they belong, they feel some ownership in their new room.
- Introduce new students to the class and team them with a buddy.
- Make sure the students have a chance to have a class job/role.
- Use a Polaroid or digital camera to take an individual picture on the child's first day and a picture of the child with the class.
- Start and maintain a portfolio of class work for the students to take when leaving the school.
- Send notes home highlighting students' good behavior and work, as well as sharing concerns.
- Periodic welcome parties and goodbye parties can help ease the transition for new students and those who have been in the school for some time.

'And a school in one of the northeastern states adopted our school and sent cameras and memory books for every one of our Katrina students. We knew that we wouldn't keep them permanently, so we wanted to give them something to help focus more on what they gained than on what they'd lost. So we went out and took pictures and created books for them.'

School counselor

How can we ease the transition for those left behind when students leave our school?

- Prepare a 'Goodbye Book.' Students may be given time to autograph the book and brainstorm with the departing student about special memories.
- Have classmates write letters to their departing peer.
- Maintain a relationship when the students leave by providing stamped, self-addressed envelopes and stationery.⁹

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools (OSDFS) is organizing emergency teams of physicians and medical personnel to provide immediate mental health services to local communities. The OSDFS has established a toll-free hotline for people in crisis. By calling 1-800-273-TALK, callers will be connected to trained professionals from a network of local counseling centers that are prepared to help those suffering from emotional trauma, such as anger, grief, hopelessness, shock,

⁹ NCHE. (2006). p.27-31.

and sleeplessness, as a result of the disaster. The hotline is operational 24 hours a day, every day.

What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families. Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA (2006). Guidebook with sample materials for incorporating new students and families into the school community.

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/WELMEET/welmeetcomplete.pdf>

Responding to Hurricane Katrina: Helping Students Relocate and Supporting Their Mental Health Needs. National Association of School Psychologists. Brief for schools on positively integrating displaced students into a new school.

http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/Katrina_relocate.pdf

Tips for Supporting Mobile Students. Project HOPE Virginia. A brief with strategies for welcoming new students into the school and dealing with school mobility.

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/mobility.pdf>

From the School Office to the Classroom. NCHE (March 2006). A handbook with basic information and strategies for confronting various enrollment barriers, including issues related to guardianship, immunizations, academic records, special education, mental health needs, academic placement and support, and enrolling large numbers of displaced students.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/dis_hb/enrollment.pdf

Enrollment. (McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Issue Brief Series). NCHE (2002). A brief explaining the McKinney-Vento Act requirements for immediate enrollment, including tips for welcoming new students into the school.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/enrollment.pdf>



3. PREVENTING CONFLICTS BETWEEN NEW AND PREVIOUSLY ATTENDING STUDENTS AND SERVING ALL HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

“We really forgot about our own homeless children. We were focusing so much on enrolling the (displaced) children that nobody in the district was identifying homeless children who normally live (here). And I think the children felt that. They felt that people were donating for (displaced) kids, but not for them. There were people who felt that these children and their families were getting more attention than they ever got in this school district. So I sent out a memo to all the schools reminding them to check addresses and identify all homeless children in the school.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

“And there has been a rift between the locals and the (displaced) people, because priority has been given to (displaced) people, even over people who have been on waiting lists here, some for four to five years.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

A sudden influx of new students displaced by a disaster can demand a disproportionate amount of a school district’s staff time and financial resources. Local liaisons who have received large numbers of displaced students have noted a tension between serving new students and serving those who had lived in the district for some time. Local liaisons have also noted resentment among homeless families and students who were living in the district prior to the arrival of those displaced by the storms. Unfortunately, some community members draw distinctions between children and youth who are homeless due to disasters and those who lost their housing for other reasons. Displaced students may seem to receive more services, more donations, and more attention than other students experiencing homelessness. These distinctions increase tensions and create difficult situations for schools.

Therefore, it is important that school districts provide equal service to **ALL** children and youth experiencing homelessness, regardless of the reason for the loss of housing. Following major disasters, it may help to send a memo to schools reminding them of this responsibility. Local liaisons should also encourage their community partners and donors to ensure equal treatment, interest, and effort in their services.

Some communities that received large numbers of displaced students after the hurricanes of 2005 also reported conflicts between new and local students. These “turf” issues sometimes resulted in physical confrontations. However, many school districts were able to prevent conflict by sensitizing their students with deliberate, planned activities.

“Our schools had dinners, picnics, welcoming backpacks (with help from community agencies) full of school supplies and extra books. The younger kids were especially supportive. We had almost no problems with turf issues.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

STRATEGIES TO PREVENT CONFLICTS BETWEEN NEW AND PREVIOUSLY ATTENDING STUDENTS.

The arrival of a large number of new students can be threatening to previously enrolled students in the district. Liaisons, district administrators, principals, school counselors, and teachers must be aware of these ‘turf’ issues and seek to preempt them and prevent serious conflicts. Classroom and school-wide activities are essential, both immediately and in the long-term, to help local students feel secure about their place in their school and to sensitize them to the issues facing new students.

School districts that have confronted this challenge recommend some of the following activities:

- Have honest and open conversations with the student body before the new students arrive, explaining the changes and challenges students can expect, suggesting coping strategies, and reinforcing their role as hosts and peers. These conversations should be facilitated by mental health staff and could take the form of schoolwide assemblies, classroom-based discussions, and/or small group meetings with a school counselor.
- Continue with open conversations at the school and classroom level after the new students arrive.
- Use the arts to help students understand the trauma their new peers have experienced; for example, through performing a play about a natural disaster, watching and discussing a film about disaster and dislocation, or doing art projects that reflect important events or cultural icons of the affected area.
- Organize ongoing support and conversation groups. Separate groups for new and pre-existing students may be appropriate for certain purposes, but mixed groups are also essential to promote shared insights and mutual understanding.
- Collaborate with relief agencies, who may have specially trained staff and resources to support the adjustment of both pre-existing and displaced students.
- Collaborate with community mental health resources and all departments within the school district that offer mental and/or emotional support services.

- Seek information about potential gang conflicts from relief agencies, school administrators, and law enforcement from the local and affected communities. Use this information to design interventions and security measures to prevent potential violence.
- Offer anger management and conflict resolution workshops to school staff and students.
- Provide adult mentors and a 'safe place' on campus for displaced students. Encourage students to make use of these support systems in times of stress and crisis.
- To the extent possible, provide mentors of the same ethnic, faith, or cultural background as enrolling students. This kind of cultural sensitivity can help neutralize feelings of insecurity and hostility and provide a more comfortable 'listening presence' for students.¹⁰

4. ENSURING PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS

School athletic associations generally have residency and attendance standards that regulate participation in school sports. Students experiencing homelessness, including those displaced by disasters, often do not meet those standards due to their mobility. It is important that school districts make exceptions to athletic policies to eliminate barriers to the participation of students experiencing homelessness.

"And we had the athletic department there at the Astrodome to hook them up with the coaches. So they might say, 'you're tall, you look like maybe you play basketball,' or 'you look strong, did you play football?' And we had a lot of kids who started right away. They waived a lot of the eligibility requirements."

Local Homeless Education Liaison



¹⁰ NCHE (2006). p.32.

Good Example: In Illinois, the State Coordinator for Homeless Education collaborated with various staff within the state education agency and the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) to develop a procedure for the participation of students experiencing homelessness. A school need only send the IHSA a participation request and the standard state enrollment form (see Section II.C.1) that documents the student's status as homeless, and the IHSA approves participation. The State Coordinator reports that the procedure has worked very well, and the support of the director of the IHSA has been a tremendous asset.

Good Example: The Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association has gone as far as to enact a formal policy on the participation of homeless students. The policy is attached in Appendix 12.



5. CONTACT LIST FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED A TRAUMATIC EVENT

Appendix 13 contains a blank contact list for students who have experienced disasters or other traumatic events. Local homeless education liaisons or school counselors can help students fill out the contact list with important phone numbers. The local liaison or counselor may want to help the student choose a safe place to keep the list and keep a copy in case the student misplaces it.

Self-Assessment II. E

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in ensuring full participation in all educational activities.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

E. Aggressive and timely strategies ensure full, productive participation in educational activities and include tactics to address physical and mental health needs.

There is a system in place to aggressively pursue any and all records, including health records, that may be available for homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place for paying any fees associated with school enrollment (lab, parking, sports fees, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
There are both school-wide and classroom-based systems and procedures in place to welcome new students to the school.	1	2	3	4	5
Immediate mental health services are available and accessible.					
The school district serves all children and youth experiencing homelessness, regardless of the reason, with equal respect, treatment, and services.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district uses its collaborative relationships to encourage other service providers to serve all children and youth experiencing homelessness equally.	1	2	3	4	5
There are both school-wide and classroom-based systems and procedures in place to minimize tension and conflict between new and local students.	1	2	3	4	5
Plans are in place to minimize student exposure to media coverage of the incident/disaster (especially for younger students). Media coverage may actually re-traumatize individuals by creating the perception that grief is ever-present.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place to accommodate student participation in sports and extracurricular activities at alternate times during the school year.	1	2	3	4	5
Records requirements do not prevent homeless children and youth from participating in educational, extracurricular, or sports activities.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

27-35 Points This is a strength of the program.
18-26 Points The program is moderately successful in this area.
<18 Points This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

F. STRATEGIES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ADDRESS ANTICIPATED TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS.

“Transportation worked well—I use a certification form that I fax to transportation to reroute, and set up transportation. We can get school of origin transportation in place very, very quickly.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison



Although providing transportation for students in homeless situations is critical to their academic success and to increased school stability for the entire district, it can be challenging. That challenge is intensified when school districts are confronted with large numbers of students displaced by disasters. In such cases, sudden shortages of buses, fuel, and bus drivers complicate the logistical challenges of coordinating transportation. School districts must prepare ahead of time to deal with such shortages.

“We are working towards resolving the issue of gasoline, so we’ll have a relationship with local vendors that we can get gasoline when we need it to run our buses, to move people around.”

School District Administrator

Local liaisons agree that the most important strategy to streamline transportation services is to establish a strong relationship with the school district transportation department, including involving transportation staff immediately in the enrollment and transportation of displaced students, implementing a reliable and flexible communication system, and nurturing a mutual understanding of each other’s systems and requirements. School districts also must have plans in place to deal with transportation challenges in times of disaster.

Appendix 14 contains two forms currently used in school districts. The first is completed upon enrollment at school sites and faxed immediately to the pupil transportation

department. The second explains to parents their responsibilities and the kinds of transportation offered for their children.

Additional forms and documents and many practical strategies for implementing transportation are available in the publication *Increasing School Stability for Students Experiencing Homelessness: Overcoming Challenges to Providing Transportation to the School of Origin*, available at http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/nche_transp_full.pdf. A brief outlining the legal requirements for transportation and some basic strategies is available at <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/transportation.pdf>.

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services passed a resolution in 2000 supporting the safe and efficient school transportation of homeless children and youth. Read the resolution at http://www.serve.org/nche/ibt/sc_transport.php

Self-Assessment II.F

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in meeting transportation needs.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

F. Strategies, policies, and procedures accommodate anticipated transportation barriers.

The district has developed alternative methods of transporting students to and from school.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has developed systems and procedures to put transportation services in place quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has established memoranda of understanding with nearby districts to address the need to transport students across district lines to their schools of origin.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has a consistent feasibility procedure in place that is used in all school placement decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
Transportation barriers are considered when deciding where to enroll large number of students.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

20-25 Points 15-19 Points <15 Points	This is a strength of the program. The program is moderately successful in this area. This area is weak. Needs program improvement.
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G. STRATEGIES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO EXPEDITE PLACEMENT IN SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS.

“The other thing that we did was set up an automatic certification system for free lunch, with no paperwork. We can get the meals by the same day, or at the latest by the next day.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

According to federal law, children and youth experiencing homelessness, including those displaced by disasters, are automatically eligible for free school meals. Upon identification as homeless by a local liaison or shelter director, the student is eligible; he or she does not need to provide income information or even complete an application. Once determined eligible, the student remains so for the rest of the school year. This streamlined procedure allows children and youth experiencing homelessness to receive free meals immediately.

In conjunction with their school district nutrition offices, local liaisons use various methods to provide free meals to students experiencing homelessness, including:

- Asking the data processing department to do a data match of the homeless and free meal fields of the district database to ensure that all students identified as homeless are receiving free meals
- Asking the data processing department to assist in developing a protocol for transmitting information on homelessness to the school nutrition office on a daily basis so free meals can be put in place automatically
- E-mailing the homeless student database to the school nutrition office
- E-mailing or faxing lists of homeless students to the school nutrition office
- Faxing individual applications for free meals, completed by parents, youth, or the local liaison, to the school nutrition office
- Incorporating a simple check box for “McKinney-Vento eligible” or “homeless” on the district’s standard free meal form
- Writing “McKinney-Vento eligible” or “homeless” on the district’s standard free meal form

Appendix 15 contains a sample of the type of form that can be used to streamline the process. Once the student’s homeless status is indicated on the form, no further documentation is needed and free meals start immediately.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued several memos to assist schools in providing immediate meals for homeless students. Those memos are available as follows:

Emergency Feeding of School Children in Areas Devastated by Hurricane Katrina, dated August 31, 2005. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Policy-Memos/2005-08-31.pdf>

Important Clarification of August 31, 2005 memo in communication dated September 6, 2005. http://www.serve.org/nche/katrina/usda_clarify.php

Guidance on Determining Categorical Eligibility for Free Lunches and Breakfasts for Youth Served under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, dated September 17, 2004. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_b.pdf

Categorical Eligibility for Free Lunches and Breakfasts for Migrant Children, dated August 16, 2004. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_b.pdf

Categorical Eligibility for Free Lunches and Breakfasts of Runaway, Homeless, and Migrant Youth: Reauthorization 2004 Implementation Memo SP 4, dated July 19, 2004. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_b.pdf

Self-Assessment II.G

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in expediting placement in school nutrition programs.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

G. Strategies, policies, and procedures are in place to expedite placement in school nutrition programs.

The district has developed an expedited alternative method for certifying large numbers of students for free meal services.	1	2	3	4	5
The district is aware of any state and/or federal procedures that may be utilized to certify all students as eligible for lunch services during the time of a community disaster.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has a system in place to re-determine free lunch eligibility at the beginning of the next school year for those students still eligible for services.	1	2	3	4	5
Free and reduced lunch rates at schools are monitored for implications of eligibility for other programs (Title I, after-school programs, etc.) and planning is adjusted to accommodate those needs.	1	2	3	4	5
The district is aware of any state and/or federal procedures that may be utilized to extend free lunch services to family members and host families.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has a system in place to ensure that every student identified as eligible for McKinney-Vento services is also eligible for free meals – and the system can accommodate a large influx of students.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has a plan in place to extend free meal services to after-school and summer program participants.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

27-35 Points

18-26 Points

<18 Points

This is a strength of the program.
The program is moderately successful in this area.
This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

H. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO MANAGE DATA TRACKING AND REPORTING OF STUDENT OUTCOMES EFFECTIVELY.

Effective data management is essential in homeless education programs. It can help with program improvement and evaluation and is necessary to meet state and federal reporting requirements. Good data can also translate into funding, through both formula and competitive grants and in cases of emergency, when state or federal governments may provide supplemental funds.

Effective data tracking and reporting requires organized systems to be in place prior to an emergency. School districts may track homeless students through separate databases, entries in the regular district database, or through color-coded paper files.

Data management also can be aided by data-sharing among agencies. Collaborating with disaster relief agencies, social services, youth-serving agencies, and others to share information can aid schools in their data management activities. For example, some school districts collaborate with their local Continuum of Care's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to share information. (See Section II.A.2 for more information on Continuum of Care programs.) Schools can view the services that other agencies are providing to see what unmet needs remain and input the services they provide into the HMIS system. Families receive more holistic services and are spared the need to recount the same information to several agencies. Joint release of information consent forms are required to share such information. See Section II.B for information-sharing strategies.

KEY DATA ELEMENTS BASED ON PAST REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND BEST PRACTICES

- age, grade level, and enrollment date
- homeless status
- specific residential situation, including hotel, shelter, doubled-up, unsheltered (car, camping, bus station, etc.)
- whether the student is an unaccompanied youth
- whether the student was displaced by a disaster, including the specific storm or event in which the student lost housing
- program improvement data, such as any barriers that impeded the student's immediate enrollment and academic success
- services provided
- whether the student took statewide assessments and his/her performance level

Local liaisons should work with enrollment staff to ensure that this information is obtained upon enrollment, perhaps through using an enrollment form such as the *Student Residency Questionnaire* from the Texas Homeless Education Office, available at http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/pdf/RP11_StuResidencyQues_RevFeb04.pdf

NCHE's *McKinney-Vento Data Standards and Indicators Guidebook* also provides tools to assist McKinney-Vento programs with the collection and reporting of outcome data. *The Guidebook* and 2006 Revisions can be downloaded at <http://www.serve.org/nche/products.php>

To receive supplemental funding after disasters, school districts may be called upon to prove that displaced students were, in fact, displaced by the disaster. Of course, students must be enrolled immediately without documentation. However, after enrollment, the local homeless education liaison may wish to coordinate with disaster relief agencies, school counselors, and registrars to collect and compile such proof. Such proof might include:

- Identification showing an address from an affected community
- A lease, mortgage bill, utility bill, insurance statement, or other official document showing an address from an affected community
- A piece of official mail from an affected community
- Proof of receiving benefits or other documents from relief agencies;
- School records from an affected area
- A letter or certificate of attendance from the previous school in an affected area.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Guide for Federally Required State Data Collection. NCHE (2005). Guide to reporting the data required by the U.S. Department of Education.
http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/data_coll_full.pdf

Sample tracking form to assist school districts in tracking and reporting the number of displaced students enrolled in the district. From the Missouri Department of Education.
<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/fedprog/discretionarygrants/homeless/hurricanekatrinanumbers.pdf>

Memo to assist school districts in entering information about and tracking students affected by Hurricane Katrina in the state database. From the Alabama Department of Education.
http://www.serve.org/nche/katrina/al_tracking.doc

Self-Assessment II.H

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in managing data.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

H. Policies and procedures are in place to manage data tracking and reporting of student outcomes effectively.

The district has adequate policies and procedures to identify large groups of homeless children and youth and track them by individual identifiers in student information systems.	1	2	3	4	5
Data management systems have generator back-up systems in place.	1	2	3	4	5
Data management systems have robust reporting capabilities that are available to multiple persons.	1	2	3	4	5
Data management systems include a wide variety of indicators, including, but not limited to, the ability to track individual students by all of the required state and federal data reporting elements.	1	2	3	4	5
The data management system has the ability to track individual barriers to enrollment, eligibility, program placement, and continued participation.	1	2	3	4	5
The data management system has the ability to track indicators that can be used in program evaluation and improvement.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has developed a system to record the required indicators for documenting loss during disasters for FEMA and other potential federal and state funding sources.	1	2	3	4	5
The local liaison and financial staff have a mechanism in place for documenting all expenses incurred as a result of increased enrollment of homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

30-40 Points

20-29 Points

<20 Points

This is a strength of the program.
The program is moderately successful in this area.
This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

I. THE DISTRICT UTILIZES THE MEDIA IN A POSITIVE WAY.

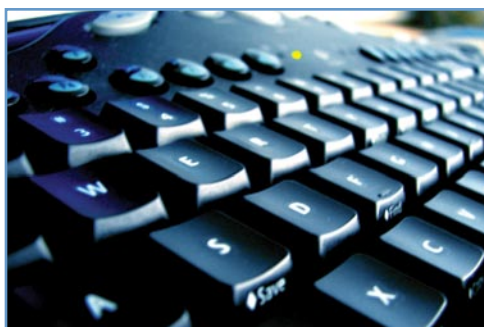
“The local radio stations ran an Undie Monday, with bins in front of the WalMart and other stores. We got thousands of pairs of underwear from that.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

“Our local cable company has done PSAs [public service announcements] for me and done fundraisers to set up a summer camp.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

The media can be an invaluable tool for McKinney-Vento programs before, during, and after a disaster. They can be utilized to request donations, seek community support, and convey important information to parents. As usual, it is important to establish positive relationships with the media prior to a disaster.



TIPS TO HELP SCHOOL DISTRICTS ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE MEDIA PLANS AND PROCEDURES

How can we manage the media?

- Establish positive relationships with local media.
- Select and train a media spokesperson for each building or district.
- Write a media policy that clarifies what the media will and will not be allowed to do; the policy should be a cooperative one that sets limits such as no roaming halls or filming grieving students.
- Avoid refusing to cooperate with the media, but be prepared to use your authority to ban them from campus if it becomes necessary. The excessive numbers of media personnel sent to Jonesboro, Arkansas, for instance, necessitated banning the media from school grounds.
- Recognize that you can utilize the media to dispense important information regarding community assistance.

- Emphasize preparatory actions taken by your district and the support being provided to staff and students.
- Grant reasonable interview requests.
- Clarify media procedures to all school staff.
- Designate a certain room to receive media representatives. The central office may be the best location.
- If necessary, have central office personnel manage media requests so that the building principal can attend to other duties.
- Provide a written statement supporting and clarifying verbal statements.
- Obtain parent permission prior to releasing any student photographs.
- Prior to releasing student's name to media, notify his/her family.¹¹

Before sharing information with the media, schools should make sure they are aware of their legal limitations regarding privacy and confidentiality. They should also be mindful of the dignity and mental health of students and families.

Appendix 16 contains a list of tips and strategies to help prepare school staff who are charged to speak with the press.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Public Information Release form. Page E-13 of Sample Forms for Disaster Planning. Arizona Department of Education, available at <http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/schoolsafety/safetyplans/response.asp> (Under “Guidelines, Checklists, and Sample Forms” near the bottom of the page)

Revisiting Your PR Policy. Iowa Association of School Boards. Tip sheet to assist schools in developing and revising an effective public relations policy.
<http://www.ia-sb.org/communityrelations/prpolicy.asp>

Talking About Disasters: Guide for Standard Messages. American Red Cross (2004). A handbook to assist those who provide disaster safety information to the general public. <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/disasterguide/>

Suggestions For Dealing With The Media. Bullet points for establishing a media procedure and dealing with the media during an emergency. http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/neat_media.html

¹¹ Note From “School Crisis Planning: Questions Answered”. By S. Poland, 1999, Spring, Communique. Copyright 1999 by National Association of School Psychologist. Reprinted with permission. Retrieved August 14, 2006, from: <http://www.teachersfirst.com/crisis/commun.htm>

A Media Training Guide for Affordable Housing Advocates. Campaign for Affordable Housing. General principles and tools that can also support schools' media outreach. http://www.cacities.org/resource_files/24396.Media_Training_Guide.pdf

Homeless Education Awareness Folder. NCHE. Sturdy, laminated folder that can be customized with local information to inform the media about issues central to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Order online at: http://www.serve.org/nche/online_order.php#hard_copy or call 800-308-2145.

Self-Assessment II.I

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in using media.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

I. The district utilizes the media in a positive way.

The district has a standard media plan and one for use during emergencies.	1	2	3	4	5
The local liaison utilizes all media resources to improve awareness about program eligibility and the rights of homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
The local liaison/school district has a system in place to update the local media continually on the impact of events on homeless children and youth and their families.	1	2	3	4	5
The local liaison utilizes the media as a communication tool to deliver information to homeless children and youth and their families.	1	2	3	4	5
The local liaison utilizes the media to help raise funds and request and direct donations.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

20-25 Points	This is a strength of the program.
15-19 Points	The program is moderately successful in this area.
<15 Points	This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

J. STRATEGIES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO DEAL WITH THE COORDINATION OF DONATIONS.

“We also asked our United Way to coordinate cash donations, because we didn’t want to take in cash. They were just amazing.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

“We have a Partnership Department in the district who handled our donations.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Donations of funds and goods are critical tools for homeless education programs, particularly in times of disasters. However, managing donations can be a challenge. To coordinate and manage donations, school districts may consider the following strategies:

- Use the media. Local radio and television stations can help mobilize the public and can convey messages about the specific items needed and the best ways to help. See Section II.I for strategies and tools.
- Ask for gift cards. Gift cards to local clothing and school supply stores in small denominations can streamline the donation process. They can be given directly to parents to purchase items for their children, or McKinney-Vento program staff can use them to purchase the specific items needed. They eliminate the need to store items, and they can be a good purchase if the program finds that it needs to spend a sum of money quickly at the end of the fiscal year.

“School districts are not used to coordinating donations. They are a blessing and a curse, because sorting and distributing can be nothing less than a nightmare, and we just don’t have space to store them.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

- Partner with a local nonprofit organization who can receive, organize, store, and disburse donations for you.
- Make agreements with other groups that have the capacity to accept donations. If the school district is offered donations that it can’t use, refer people there.
- Partner with a local nonprofit organization to help manage financial donations. McKinney-Vento programs have created such partnerships with homeless coalitions, the United Way, and other nonprofit organizations. The local liaison refers cash donations to the nonprofit organization, which then uses the donations to purchase clothes, coats, backpacks, school supplies, and other needed items and delivers them to the school as needed. In this way, the school district gets the

materials it needs without having to manage the funds, do the shopping, store the materials, or coordinate delivery.

- Set up a nonprofit extension of the McKinney-Vento program or a local fund account to receive and process cash donations. If the school district has a separate education foundation, use that organization to receive cash donations.
- Set up a system to track the source and estimated value of donations, and send thank you notes with tax receipts (donations to public schools are generally tax-deductible). If the school district is not willing or able to provide receipts, partner with a nonprofit organization who can.
- Ask for what the children and families most need, and don't be afraid to turn away donated goods. Receiving large quantities of goods that are unusable or unneeded only complicates the school district's efforts.

Good Example: Following Hurricane Katrina, the U.S. Department of Education set up a website where schools could submit requests of specific supplies and materials needed, and schools able to contribute could match their donations to those needs. See <http://hurricanehelpforschools.gov/index.html>.

- Invite donors to volunteer; this can help build and maintain their commitment to the schools and increase hands-on assistance.
- Establish a disaster volunteer program. Recruit and train community members in advance to assist in times of disaster. Have them register, provide them with necessary IDs, and inform them of any necessary background checks to be conducted.

Good Example: A *Sample Disaster Volunteer Program Notice* is available from the Arizona Department of Education, at page E-21 of “Sample Forms for Disaster Planning.” <http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/schoolsafety/safetyplans/response.asp> (Under “Guidelines, Checklists, and Sample Forms” near the bottom of the page)

- Prepare a brief volunteer handbook and orientation to the McKinney-Vento program and the school district.

Good Example: A volunteer training manual is available from the Region 13 Education Service Center. <http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/pdf/VolunteerManual.pdf>

- Prioritize the most important and appropriate tasks for volunteers. With appropriate training and considerations of confidentiality, volunteers can help in many ways, including: providing academic support and tutoring; serving as mentors; doing data entry or filing; referring families to appropriate community services; and providing direct services in their areas of expertise (lawyers, dentists, teachers, doctors, social workers, counselors, nurses, psychologists, etc.).

- Make sure the program has the resources to train and supervise volunteers appropriately.

MANAGING DONATIONS FROM THE NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER

The following additional ideas also may help in managing donations:

Preparing to Solicit Donated Materials, Funds and Personnel.

The most effective guidelines for soliciting donations are:

- Identify immediate needs and project future needs so solicitations will enable materials to arrive when they are best used.
- Determine exactly what is needed and the circumstances under which donations will be received; communicate this information clearly and concisely to the public.
- Educate the media, churches and civic groups as to the exact nature of materials, funds or skills needed.
- If necessary or helpful, identify an organization to manage receipt, warehousing, and distribution of material or professional service donations.

Contributions of Cash – Often The Best Donation

Feel confident in requesting monetary contributions if that is an identified need.

- Allows the LTR (Long Term Recovery) Group to purchase exactly what is most urgently needed
- Allows the supplies to be purchased in locations near the disaster site for timely delivery
- May stimulate the local economy with local purchases.¹²

¹² National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2004). Long-Term Recovery Manual (Appendix II Solicitation and Utilization of Donations for Long-Term Recovery). Retrieved August 14, 2006, from: <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Self-Assessment II. J

II. Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, Including Disaster Response

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in coordinating donations.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

J. Strategies, policies, and procedures are in place to deal with the coordination of donations.

The district appoints one or more person(s) specifically to deal with donations.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has a financial mechanism in place to accept and account for cash donations.	1	2	3	4	5
The program coordinates with other community-based organizations to connect individual students and families with resources in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has guidelines for fund-raising events at schools.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has guidelines for donation events at schools (collecting clothing, food, toilet articles, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
The local liaison has a way of gathering and communicating the needs of homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has guidelines for cash donations received at school board meetings from private individuals, companies, or corporations.	1	2	3	4	5
When appropriate, the local liaison has guidelines for disseminating assistance to individual families (purchase cards, gasoline cards, rental assistance checks, payments for medical bills, etc.). If the district decides not to disseminate funding, there is a contractual relationship with a community-based organization (i.e. United Way, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, faith-based organization, etc.) to assess family needs and disseminate funding.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has guidelines for accounting and tracking donations, sending thank you notes, and providing tax receipts.	1	2	3	4	5
Organizations involved with donations have confidentiality and tracking mechanisms in place to assure that a) intended beneficiaries of donations of funds or goods actually receive the donations, and b) there is no duplication of services.	1	2	3	4	5
The local liaison understands the role of community involvement and partnerships in generating additional resources (i.e., training, special events, support groups, academic program supplies, access to legal resources, insurance information, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

45-55 Points

35-44 Points

<35 Points

This is a strength of the program.

The program is moderately successful in this area.

This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

III. MENTAL HEALTH AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS, INCLUDING DISASTER RECOVERY

A. STRATEGIES ARE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM MENTAL HEALTH AND CASE MANAGEMENT NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND FAMILIES.

“I don’t think any of us realized at the time the amount of counseling and support that would have been needed by these people.”

School District Administrator

School staff at all levels agree that meeting mental health care and case management needs of both students and families is a significant and ongoing challenge following a major disaster. It is very difficult for students to learn and progress academically if their mental health needs, and those of their families, are not adequately addressed.

“Whereas we were really concerned with academic type things, those children were more concerned with the emotional type issues. They were really not able to focus on academics. They were focusing more on life issues-- how are my family members doing that are back in that area, what happened to certain people. and my home, my dogs.”

School District Administrator

School districts should develop comprehensive plans to meet mental health needs in disasters, including needs assessment, supplemental funding and resources, and curriculum for students of different ages, needs, and cultural backgrounds. They should collaborate with community mental health providers and faith-based groups for assistance in meeting these needs. It is imperative to develop robust collaborative relationships and plans prior to disasters.

This section includes several tools and resources to assist school districts in meeting mental health needs in the following areas:

- 1. Assessing Needs**
- 2. Planning to meet mental health needs**
- 3. Potential supplemental funding for mental health needs**
- 4. Hands-on resources for mental health counselors to assist in their work with displaced children, youth, and families. Teachers, counselors, local liaisons, administrators, and all personnel working with displaced children may benefit from the resources.**

I. ASSESSING NEEDS

In order to offer appropriate mental health support, providers must assess the needs of students and families. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed a two-page *Hurricane Assessment and Referral Tool for Children and Adolescents* to assist providers in determining a student's risk categories and mental health needs and to make appropriate mental health referrals. The tool can be adapted easily for use in a variety of disaster situations, including earthquakes, fires, and tornadoes, as well as in assessing the needs of children and youth who have experienced domestic violence, abuse, or other trauma. It is reprinted in Appendix 17 and available at http://www.nctsnet.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/intervention_manuals/referraltool.pdf

2. PLANNING TO MEET MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

School districts need to plan to meet mental health needs, particularly in the wake of a disaster. The district may need additional staff, counselors trained to work with students of different cultures and language backgrounds, additional transportation services, counselors experienced in crisis response, and other resources that may not be readily available. Crisis plans should anticipate these needs and allow school districts to respond quickly and professionally. Strong collaborations with mental health providers in the community are an important part of disaster planning and response. These collaborations must be in place prior to a disaster; to find local providers, visit <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases/>.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed a checklist for school personnel to evaluate and implement the mental health component of the school crisis and emergency plan. The checklist is reprinted in Appendix 18 and is available for download at:

http://www.nctsnet.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/edu_materials/Challenger%20Newsletter%20Checklist-final-sw_rvsd.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Planning for the Psychological Aftermath Of School Tragedy. Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools (Appendix F). Arizona Department of Education.

Guide for planning to meet mental health needs after a disaster.

<http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/schoolsafety/safetyplans/planning.pdf>

Mental Health Crisis Response Plans for Schools. Pennsylvania Department of Education (2004). A checklist of recommendations for mental health crisis response planning.

http://www.pde.state.pa.us/svcs_students/cwp/view.asp?Q=89512

Fundamentals of Disaster Planning and Response, a Web-based, interactive video presentation from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, including modules on disaster mental health.

<http://www.shs.net/samhsadr/contents.htm>

About Planning and Action for the Mental Health Needs of Students and School Staff in the Aftermath of a Natural Disaster. Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. A brief suggesting key issues to consider in planning for post-disaster mental health needs.

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/planningneeds.pdf>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed a sample letter to assist schools in developing partnerships with mental health providers. The letter is available at http://www.ncetsnet.org/ncets/nav.do?pid=ctr_aud_schl_3rs_readiness&Type=3rs&navPid=ctr_aud_schl_3rs_desc

See also Sections I.A and I.B of this toolbox for strategies and tools for creating collaborations with community organizations, including mental health providers.

3. POTENTIAL SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING RESOURCES

Existing financial resources may be insufficient to meet the increased demand following a major disaster. The following supplemental resources may be available to support school districts.

The Crisis Counseling Training and Assistance Program (CCP). CCP is a supplemental assistance program of FEMA, which funds mental health assistance and training activities in presidentially-declared disaster areas. Only a state or federally-recognized Indian tribe may apply for a crisis counseling grant.

Program overview: http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/ccp_pg01.asp

More information about the program:

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/progguide.asp>

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools offers Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Discretionary Grants for establishing or expanding school counseling programs in elementary or secondary schools. For more information: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/elseccounseling/index.html>

See also Section III.D for more resources and tools for funding.

4. HANDS-ON RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center (SAMHSA DTAC). DTAC is an interactive, on-call resource for mental health providers during the critical period when mobilization for response and recovery begins.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/dtac/default.asp>

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools (OSDFS) is organizing emergency teams of physicians and medical personnel to provide immediate mental health services to local communities. The OSDFS has established a toll-free hotline for people in crisis. By calling **1-800-273-TALK**, callers will be connected to trained professionals from a network of local counseling centers that are prepared to help those suffering from emotional trauma, such as anger, grief, hopelessness, shock, and sleeplessness, as a result of the disaster. The hotline is open 24 hours a day, every day.

The Three R's to Dealing with Trauma in Schools: Readiness, Response, and Recovery. Broadcast of the U.S. Department of Education Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, April 23, 2002. Viewable online at <http://www.walcoff.com/prevention/>

Helping Children Cope with Crisis: A workbook for African American families. Provides useful tips and activities for helping children cope with disasters.

http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/hccc/helping_children.htm

When the Hurricane Blew. A book written by Florida fourth-graders about their experiences with hurricanes. The book contains a story, tips for kids on preparing for and coping with a hurricane, and games. Available for purchase at <http://www.hurricanekid-network.org/peek.asp>

Resources from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):

The Role of Culture in Helping Children Recover from a Disaster.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/culture.asp>

Fundamentals of Disaster Planning and Response.

<http://www.shs.net/samhsadr/contents.htm>

When Talking Doesn't Help: Other Ways to Help Children Express Their Feelings Following a Disaster. <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/otherways.asp>

Disaster Counseling.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/KEN-01-0096/default.asp>

Hurricane and Other Disaster Relief Information.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/katrina/>

Anniversary Reactions to a Traumatic Event: The Recovery Process Continues.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/NMH02-0140/default.asp>

Resources from the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA:

Crisis Assistance and Prevention: Reducing Barriers to Learning.

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/crisis_tt/crisisindex.htm

Psychological First Aid: Responding to a Student in Crisis.

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/crisis_qt/crisis_psych_first_aid.pdf

Schools Helping Students Deal with Loss.

[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/loss\(hurricane\).pdf](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/loss(hurricane).pdf)

Trauma resources and links:

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/hurricane.htm>

Resources from the National Association of School Psychologists:

Crisis resources. <http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/crisismain.html>

Trauma resources and links. <http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/911memorial.html>

Culturally Competent Crisis Response: Information for School Psychologists and Crisis Teams. http://www.nasponline.org/culturalcompetence/cc_crisis.pdf

Natural Disasters. <http://www.nasponline.org/crisisresources/22-Lazarus.pdf>

Responding to Natural Disasters: Helping Children and Families. Information for School Crisis Teams. http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/naturaldisaster_teams_ho.pdf

Responding to Hurricane Katrina: Helping Children Cope.

http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/katrina_cope.pdf

Responding to Hurricane Katrina: Helping Students Relocate and Supporting Their Mental Health Needs. http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/Katrina_relocate.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Coping and Recovery After Katrina and Rita; Cultural Perspectives on Healing After a Disaster; and Hurricane Katrina Resource Guide. National Alliance on Mental Illness. Available by searching www.nami.org (requires free registration).

Emotional and Spiritual Care, An Introduction on Basic Concepts. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2004). <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/ESCCchapterB.pdf>

Caring for Kids After Trauma and Death: A Guide for Parents and Professionals. Institute for Trauma and Stress at The NYU Child Study Center.

http://www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/crisis_guide02.pdf

Resources to Help Cope with Natural and Other Disasters. American Academy of Pediatrics. <http://www.aap.org/new/disasterresources.htm>

Resources from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, including a *Psychological First Aid Package* and extensive tip sheets and briefs in English and Spanish, for teachers, caregivers, relief workers, and mental health care providers.

http://www.ncatsnet.org/ncats/nav.do?pid=typ_nd

Understanding the Impact of Katrina on Children and Adolescents. The ChildTrauma Academy. A brief outlining common effects of trauma on children and strategies to support children.

http://www.childtrauma.org/CTAMATERIALS/Educators_Handout_Katrina_05.pdf

Helping Children Cope: A Guide To Helping Children Cope with the Stress of the Oklahoma City Explosion. American Psychological Association. A brief to help parents recognize the warning signs of post-traumatic stress disorder and help their children cope with disasters. <http://www.apa.org/practice/kids.html>

Terrorist Attacks and Children. National Center for PTSD. A fact sheet describing common reactions and tips for helping children in various age groups from birth through age 18 cope with traumatic events.

http://www.ncptsd.org/facts/disasters/fs_children_disaster.html

Survivors of Natural Disasters and Mass Violence. National Center for PTSD. A fact sheet describing psychological problems related to natural disasters and strategies to address them. http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/facts/disasters/fs_survivors_disaster.html

Student Support Service Resources for School Districts Recovering from the 2005 Hurricanes. Office of Safe and Healthy Schools, Florida Department of Education and the Student Support Services Project, University of South Florida (2005). A list of and links to organizations that provide hands-on resources for mental health support.

<http://www.firn.edu/doe/hurricane/pdf/student-support-resources.pdf>

An assortment of articles related to crisis intervention, post traumatic stress, and critical incident stress management, from the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation. <http://www.icisf.org/articles/>

Long-Term Recovery Manual. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2004). Appendix IV, "Casework Management in Long-Term Recovery" contains guidelines, detailed suggested approaches, tips, and sample forms for long-term case management for individuals. <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Resources for preschoolers:

Helping Children Rebound: Strategies for Preschool Teachers After the 2005 Hurricanes. Teaching Strategies (2005).

http://www.teachingstrategies.com/content/pageDocs/Katrina_1005_final_web.pdf

Helping Young Children After a Disaster. National Association for the Education of Young Children. <http://www.naeyc.org/families/disaster.asp>

Coping and Trauma Strategies. Zero to Three. A list of resources and links to help providers work with infants and toddlers who have experienced disasters and other

Self-Assessment III. A

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in meeting short and long-term mental health and case management needs.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

A. Strategies are in place to address the short- and long-term mental health and case management needs of students and families.

The school district has a rigorous mental health crisis response plan in place.	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers have access to developmentally and culturally appropriate classroom activities to address the immediate concerns of a large number of homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
School counselors have access to developmentally and culturally appropriate crisis counseling tools.	1	2	3	4	5
School district personnel and parents have access to immediate information on mental health needs and resources both within the school and the community.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a system in place for utilizing additional professional resources for dealing with mental health issues – local, state, and national level resources.	1	2	3	4	5
Anniversaries of significant events are planned and celebrated in a positive way.	1	2	3	4	5
Students play a significant role in community service activities as part of the healing process.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district is able to access supplemental funding and resources for mental health support and case management following disasters.	1	2	3	4	5
Training in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), stress management, and reactions to trauma is part of the ongoing district training plan for all adults.	1	2	3	4	5
Schools are familiar with how to provide extended support services for families under stress.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

40-50 Points 30-39 Points <30 Points	This is a strength of the program. The program is moderately successful in this area. This area is weak. Needs program improvement.
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B. STRATEGIES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO DEAL WITH STAFF FATIGUE.

"I think next time I'd take better care of myself, get more rest myself."

Local Homeless Education Liaison

All staff working with children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness are at risk of fatigue and burnout. This risk is particularly acute in disaster situations. The initial impacts of a disaster can be emotionally overwhelming; the ongoing stress of the long-term response can be emotionally exhausting. Local liaisons and other caregivers should make time and space to care for themselves and seek support from supervisors and peers in their school district, local liaisons in other school districts, their state coordinator, and friends and family. If necessary or helpful, they should make time and space to speak with a counselor. The school district should support these self-care efforts.

The following information from the National Association of School Psychologists will help school district support staff be aware of fatigue and mental health issues.

CARE FOR CAREGIVERS IN CRISIS RESPONSE

THE CHALLENGE OF CAREGIVING

It almost goes without saying that parents, teachers, and other caregivers play a critical role in helping children cope with crises. The natural instinct is to put one's own needs aside and tend to children first. It is extremely important, however, for caregivers to monitor their own reactions and take care of their own needs. Failure to do so can result in burnout, which interferes with one's ability to provide crisis intervention assistance. This can be true in the aftermath of immediate crisis like a natural disaster or terrorist attack as well as during extended periods of stress and anxiety like the war in Iraq. Following are some suggestions that help caregivers maintain their own well-being even as they support the needs of children in their care.

ROLE OF THE CAREGIVER

Traditional crisis caregivers include emergency response professionals, mental health providers, medical professionals, victim assistance counselors, and faith leaders. They are trained to handle exposure to images of destruction and loss and to assist victims response and intervention. Educators who lack the requisite skills need to be careful not to go beyond their training because they run the risk of making a very difficult situation worse.

THE POTENTIAL FOR BURNOUT

At the early stages of crisis response, caregivers may have abounding energy and motivation. Their cognitive functioning, training, and resilience make them important assets to the children under their care. However, as a crisis intervention continues, caregivers may find themselves experiencing physical or psychological “burnout.” Images of violence, despair and hardship and/or continuous concern over possible danger can contribute to feeling professionally isolated and depressed, particularly if caregivers do not have the opportunity to process their reactions. Successes may be ambiguous or few and far between, and, in some cases lack of sleep and limited opportunities for healthy nourishment breakdown the capacity to cope effectively. Caregivers can begin to feel more like a victim than a helper. Additionally, caregivers who have their own history of prior psychological trauma, mental illness (including substance abuse), or who lack social and family resources will be more vulnerable to burnout.

SIGNS OF THE BURNOUT

Burnout develops gradually, but its warning signs are recognizable beforehand. These include:

COGNITIVE

- An inability to stop thinking about the crisis, crisis victims, and/or the crisis intervention.
- Loss of objectivity.
- An inability to make decisions, and/or express oneself either verbally or in writing.
- Personal identification with crisis victims and their families.

PHYSICAL

- Overwhelming/chronic fatigue and/or sleep disturbances.
- Gastrointestinal problems, headaches, and other aches and pains.
- Eating problems including eating too much or loss of one’s appetite.

AFFECTIVE

- Suicidal thoughts and/or severe depression.
- Irritability leading to anger or rage.
- Intense cynicism and/or pessimism.
- Excessive worry about crisis victims and their families.
- Being upset or jealous when others are doing crisis interventions.
- A compulsion to be involved in every crisis intervention.
- Significant agitation and restlessness after conducting a crisis intervention.

BEHAVIORAL

- Alcohol and substance abuse.
- Withdrawal from contact with co-workers, friends, and/or family.
- Impulsive behaviors.
- Maintaining an unnecessary degree of contact/follow-up with crisis victims and their families.
- An inability to complete/return to normal job responsibilities.
- Attempts to work independently of the crisis intervention team.

PREVENTING BURNOUT

Whether it is in the aftermath of a serious crisis or during an extended period of high stress, unrelenting demand for support may result in burnout for even the most seasoned crisis caregivers, particularly if they themselves are feeling vulnerable due to the circumstances. The risk may be even higher for teachers and other caregivers who are not trained crisis responders. Consequently all caregivers need to consider the following personal and professional suggestions to prevent burnout:

- Know your limitations and with what you feel reasonably comfortable or uncomfortable handling.
- Recognize that your reactions are normal and occur frequently among many well-trained crisis professionals.
- To the extent possible, maintain normal daily routines (especially physical exercise activities, meal-time, and bed-time routines). Connect with trusted friends or family who can help take the edge off of the moment.
- Give yourself permission to do things that you find pleasurable (e.g., going shopping or out to dinner with friends).
- Avoid using alcohol and drugs to cope with the effects of being a caregiver during times of crisis.
- Ask for support from family and friends in terms of reducing pressures or demands during the crisis response.
- Be sure to maintain healthy eating habits and drink plenty of water.
- Take periodic rest breaks at least every couple of hours.
- As much as possible, try to get some restful sleep, preferably without the use of sleep aids or alcohol.
- Take time at the end of each day to process or debrief the events of the day with other caregivers or colleagues.
- Be kind and gentle on yourself and others, as you have all shared exposure to a life-changing event. Everyone needs time to process the impact of these events into their lives.¹

¹ *Note.* From “Helping children cope with crisis: Care for caregivers,” by National Association of School Psychologists, Copyright, 2003 by Author. Reprinted with permission. Retrieved August 15, 2006, from: <http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/CaregiverTips.pdf>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Understanding Caregiver Vulnerability. Long-Term Recovery Manual. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster: Long-Term Recovery Manual (2004). A one-page brief on burnout. (p.57).

<http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Stress Prevention and Management Approaches for Rescue Workers in the Aftermath of Terrorist Acts. National Mental Health Information Center.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/stress.asp>

Tips for Managing and Preventing Stress: A Guide for Emergency and Disaster Response Workers. National Mental Health Information Center.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/KEN-01-0098/>

A Guide to Managing Stress in Crisis Response Professions. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. A pocket guide on stress management with strategies that can be incorporated into the daily routine of managers and workers.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA-4113/default.asp>

Fundamentals of Disaster Planning and Response. Web-based, interactive video presentation from SAMHSA, including a module on Managing Your Stress in Crisis Response Work.

<http://www.shs.net/samhsadr/contents.htm>

Self-Assessment III. B

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in addressing staff fatigue.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

B. Strategies, policies, and procedures are in place to deal with staff fatigue.

Multiple staff members are trained to address the needs of an increased number of children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison has the support of the highest level of leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
The human resources department has plans in place to deal with adults who have undergone significant periods of stress or traumatic events.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has a system in place for accommodating staff with mental health needs (e.g., modified work schedules, family medical leave policies, support groups, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison, school counselors, and school administrators are aware of the symptoms of burnout and prepared to support colleagues suffering from burnout.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a self-care system in place for the local liaison, school counselors, teachers, enrollment personnel, and others coming into continuous, direct contact with displaced children and families.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

23–30 Points

15–22 Points

<15 Points

This is a strength of the program.

The program is moderately successful in this area.

This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

C. STRATEGIES ARE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM ACADEMIC NEEDS OF DISPLACED STUDENTS, INCLUDING GRADUATING SENIORS.

“We just finished our state testing. And there was just a report in the newspaper, that the percentage of [displaced] kids who passed our tests is very, very low. So we’re having summer school, and they can go to summer school and take the test again. But I think we may find, it’s a possibility, that many of our children might be retained.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Students experiencing homelessness, including those displaced by disasters, often need academic support to help counteract the negative effects of mobility and trauma. Some of those needs can be addressed by tutoring programs and other supplemental services provided through McKinney-Vento programs. However, local liaisons should also make sure that homeless students are able to access the academic support services offered to other students in the district, including services through Title I, 21st Century Learning Centers, and other federal, state, and district programs.

When students are mobile between states, their academic needs may be even more urgent due to differing state curricula and standards. School districts should be prepared with flexible plans to address such mobility, academic challenges, and potential retentions.

This section contains tools and strategies to assist school districts in the following efforts:

- 1. Collaborating with Title I**
- 2. Ensuring that seniors can graduate**
- 3. Supporting highly mobile students**
- 4. Supporting young children**
- 5. Supporting students with special needs**

I. COLLABORATING WITH TITLE I

"We are using several different funding sources to provide extra tutors to come in during the day, in addition to after school tutoring services for students who are struggling. Those programs are open for any students, including displaced students. We use some Title I money, a Title VI grant, a Reading First grant, and a 21st Century Community Learning Center grant for the after-school component. We work really hard at making the funding work so we can provide the services the students need."

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Students experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services, including services through the mandatory reservation of Title I funds for homeless students. Collaborations with this program are essential for supporting the academic success of children experiencing homelessness, including those displaced by disasters.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Title I and Homelessness. NCHE (2006). A brief identifying the key provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act dealing with serving homeless children and youth under Title I, Part A, and offering strategies for implementation.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/titlei.pdf>

Collaboration Between Title I and Homeless Education Programs. NCHE. Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit, Chapter 5, (Table 7).

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/chapters.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education. (July, 2004). Education for Homeless children and Youth Program Non-Regulatory Guidance. Section M. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/guidance_jul2004.pdf

2. ENSURING THAT SENIORS CAN GRADUATE



Schools should make special efforts to ensure that high school seniors who are forced to move to another state due to a disaster or homelessness can graduate on schedule. For example, to ensure that seniors displaced by the hurricanes of 2005 could graduate, schools adopted procedures similar to the following:

- Counselors immediately placed seniors in the most appropriate classes, based on information provided by the student and parents.
- After receiving school records, counselors reviewed students' credits and academic standing.
- Counselors made extra efforts to ensure that seniors were placed in appropriate classes to allow them to earn the credits needed to graduate on time.
- Seniors who had missed school due to the evacuation were awarded partial credits and/or given the opportunity to make up work.
- States with large numbers of evacuees worked with states that received students to provide information about graduation criteria.
- Counselors determined if students met the graduation criteria in their home state and their new state.
- Students were given the choice to graduate from their home state or their new state, assuming they met graduation requirements.
- States with large numbers of evacuees, such as Louisiana and Mississippi, offered high school exit examinations in an online format. Receiving schools supervised students in taking these tests online.
- Students who wished to graduate from their new school were given the opportunity to earn any needed credits and take the high school exit exam.

"Some of the kids who are graduating are wearing a gown the color of their old school, because they requested that, and the schools are letting them do that."

Local Homeless Education Liaison

3. SUPPORTING HIGHLY MOBILE STUDENTS

The following resources can help schools provide appropriate supplemental instruction for highly mobile students:



Reading on the Go! Volume 1: Students Who Are Highly Mobile and Reading Instruction. NCHE. (2002). A publication on what works in reading instruction for students who are highly mobile.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/reading_on_the_go.pdf

Reading on the Go! Volume 2: A Handbook of Resources. NCHE. (2006). A publication that provides strategies in reading instruction for students who are highly mobile, based on actual programs in practice.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/products.php>

Links to Literacy: A Handbook for Short-Term Literacy Intervention. AmeriCorps for Community Engagement and Education Project and the Texas Homeless Education office (2004). This training manual assists schools and shelters in providing literacy intervention through the use of trained tutors based on research-based strategies and methods.

<http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/toolkits.html#linksliteracy>

Students on the Move: Reaching and Teaching Highly Mobile Children and Youth. NCHE. This handbook synthesizes research on the education of various subpopulations of students who tend to be highly mobile and explores common characteristics and significant differences. Subpopulations explored include migratory children and youth, children and youth experiencing homelessness, children of military families, and students experiencing mobility on a global scale.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/highly_mobile.pdf

4. SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN

The following resources can help schools provide appropriate supplemental instruction to young children:

Helping Young Children Grow & Learn: A Guide for Families & Shelter Providers. Project HOPE Virginia. A brief with strategies and ideas for supporting the development of young children experiencing homelessness.

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/ECSE-family.pdf>

Using the Best That We Know: Supporting Young Children Experiencing Homelessness. Project HOPE Virginia. A brief with strategies and ideas for supporting the development of young children experiencing homelessness.

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/ECSE-educ.pdf>

5. SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The following resources can help schools provide appropriate supplemental instruction to students with special needs:

Hurricane Katrina and Relocated Students With Special Needs: Recommendations for Receiving Schools. National Association of School Psychologists (2005). A comprehensive brief with practical strategies for providing services to students with special needs in the absence of an IEP.

http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/katrina_specneeds.html

New Schools for Students with Disabilities: Tips for Families Who Have Been Relocated. National Association of School Psychologists (2005). A comprehensive brief to assist parents in enrolling, advocating for, and supporting their children with special needs in a new school.

http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/katrina_relocate_families.pdf

The Council for Exceptional Children offers many publications, briefs, and strategies for supporting children with special needs. <http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Publications1>

Unlocking Potential! Project HOPE Virginia. Briefs with basic information on the rights of children with special needs experiencing homelessness and strategies to provide services. For families and service providers:

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/family-complete.pdf>

For special education personnel:

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/personnel-complete.pdf>

Self-Assessment III. C

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in meeting short- and long-term academic needs.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

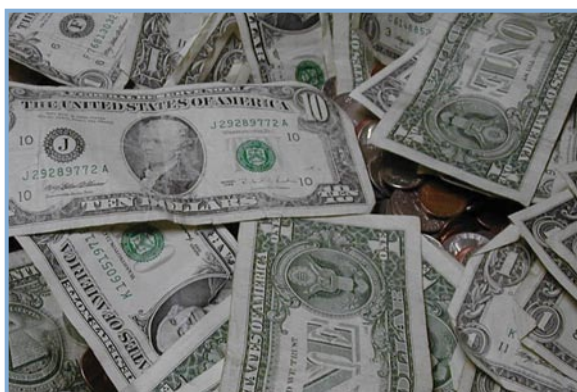
C. Strategies are in place to address the short and long-term academic needs of displaced students, including graduating seniors.

The school district Title I program sets aside the required reservation of Title I, Part A funds for homeless students and uses those funds in conjunction with the McKinney-Vento program to support the academic achievement of homeless students.	1	2	3	4	5
Displaced students are able to access regular academic support services and programs available in the district immediately.	1	2	3	4	5
Additional academic supports are available to help children and youth in homeless situations meet achievement standards.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a flexible plan to address mobility, academic challenges, and potential retentions resulting from disasters.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place for awarding academic credit for graduating seniors who do not have records.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place to ensure that displaced seniors can graduate on time.	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers have access to instructional resources for highly mobile students.	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers have access to instructional resources for highly mobile students with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
Preschool teachers have access to instructional resources for highly mobile young children.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

35-45 Points	This is a strength of the program.
25-34 Points	The program is moderately successful in this area.
<25 Points	This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

D. FUNDING: NEEDED SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL IN A VARIETY OF SETTINGS – USING A COMBINATION OF PUBLIC, PRIVATE, COMMUNITY, AND PERSONAL RESOURCES.



Providing appropriate services to children, youth, and families in homeless situations, including those displaced by disasters, requires funding. One important way to access services and funding is by building collaborative relationships. See Sections I.A and I.B for strategies for building and maintaining successful collaborations with service providers, businesses, community foundations, civic groups, and other community groups. A key collaborative partner in providing academic support and funding for other supplemental services is the Title I program, particularly Title I, Part A. See Section III.C.1 for resources related to collaborating with Title I.

Following major disasters, supplemental funding may be available from the federal government. It is important that McKinney-Vento programs and school districts maintain appropriate data to be able to claim this funding. See Section II.H for strategies and tips on data management.

The school district itself can also pursue additional resources from government and private sources. The following federal grants and resources may be available.

I. GRANTS AVAILABLE FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- *Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program*. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools offers Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program grants for establishing or expanding school counseling programs in Elementary or Secondary schools. For more information:
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/elseccounseling/index.html>
- *Project SERV (School Emergency Response to Violence)*. This program offers short-term and long-term assistance to local education agencies to recover from a violent or traumatic event in which the learning environment has been disrupted. Immediate services assistance covers up to 60 days from the date of the incident. Extended services assistance covers up to one year from the incident.
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvppserv/index.html>
- *Emergency Response and Crisis Management Plans Discretionary Grants*. Emergency Response and Crisis Management grants provide funds to local educational agencies to improve and strengthen their emergency response and crisis management plans.
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpemergencyresponse/index.html>
- *Grants for the Integration of Schools and Mental Health Systems*. These grants provide funds to increase student access to high-quality mental health care by developing innovative approaches that link school systems with the local mental health system.
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/mentalhealth/index.html>
- *Partnerships in Character Education Program*. This program provides federal financial assistance to assist eligible entities in designing and implementing character education programs that can be integrated into classroom instruction, to be consistent with state academic content standards, and to be carried out in conjunction with other educational reform efforts.
<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/2006-1/022306g.pdf>
- *Mentoring Grants*. These grants promote mentoring programs for children with greatest need by assisting them in receiving support and guidance from a mentor and in pursuing academic improvement.
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpmentoring/index.html>
- *21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLCs)*. The focus of this program, re-authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the No Child Left Behind Act, is to provide expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low performing schools. Tutorial services and academic enrichment activities are designed to help students meet local and state academic standards in subjects such as reading and math. In addition 21st CCLC programs provide youth development activities, drug

and violence prevention programs, technology education programs, art, music and recreation programs, counseling and character education to enhance the academic component of the program.

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>

- *Cultural Partnership for At-Risk Youth Program*. The program makes demonstration grants to eligible entities for the development of school-community partnership programs. These programs must be designed to improve the educational performance and future educational potential of at-risk children by providing comprehensive, coordinated educational and arts programs and services.

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/artsdp/index.html>

- *Safe Schools/Healthy Students Discretionary Grants*. The Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative is a discretionary grant program supported by the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice. It provides students, schools, and communities with federal funding to implement an enhanced, coordinated, comprehensive plan of activities, programs, and services that focus on promoting healthy childhood development and preventing violence and substance abuse.

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpsafeschools/index.html>

2. GRANTS FROM OTHER FEDERAL SOURCES

The Administration on Children & Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has an online database of all its grants.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/index.html>

Grants.gov is a searchable, online index to all federal government grants.

<http://www.grants.gov/>

3. FUNDING AVAILABLE FROM COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE SOURCES

Every community includes private and community-based resources that can support the efforts of the school district and the McKinney-Vento program:

Large corporations with local offices

SMALL LOCAL BUSINESSES

Local family foundations

Community foundations

Individual donors

National foundations

CORPORATE GIVING PROGRAMS

Local government

CIVIC GROUPS

Women's clubs

Faith-based charities

Section II. J on donations includes many strategies and tools that can assist McKinney-Vento programs in cultivating local donors. The following resources may also be important funding sources.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Community foundations are tax-exempt public charities serving thousands of people who share a common concern—improving the quality of life in their area. Individuals, families, businesses, and organizations create permanent charitable funds that help their region meet the challenges of changing times. The foundation invests and administers these funds. All community foundations are overseen by a volunteer board of leading citizens and are run by professionals with expertise in knowing their community's needs. Many McKinney-Vento programs have received funding from community foundations. To find local community foundations, visit <http://www.cof.org/Locator/>

OTHER NATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL FOUNDATIONS

There are hundreds of thousands of foundations in the United States and elsewhere that fund the types of services McKinney-Vento programs provide. These funders include family foundations, large private foundations, corporate foundations, corporate giving programs, and individual donors. Many programs supplement their public funds with such private grants.

Good Example: A McKinney-Vento program in Louisiana received \$90,000 from a foundation in the Czech Republic!

Researching grant opportunities can be time-consuming and daunting. To help McKinney-Vento programs with this task, the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) offers a free grant-announcement service to its members. Through a collaboration with GrantStation, NAEHCY members can opt to receive monthly e-mails announcing available grants. To join NAEHCY, visit <http://www.naehcy.org/membership.html>. To learn more about GrantStation, visit <http://www.grantstation.com/>

The Foundation Center is also an excellent source of funding information from a wide variety of corporate and private sources. Users of the Foundation Center's website can search the foundation database, ask questions of staff, participate in online tutorials on grant-writing and funding basics, and read weekly newsletters. The Center also offers a wide variety of workshops to help organizations research and secure private funding at its local offices in Atlanta, Cleveland, New York, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. and has established cooperative agreements with libraries across the country to offer Foundation Center publications and resources free of charge.

Basic registration for Foundation Center services is free and includes a weekly electronic "RFP Bulletin" that provides information on available grants. For more information on the Foundation Center, visit <http://www.foundationcenter.org/>

Self-Assessment III. D

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in obtaining and maximizing funding.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

D. Funding: Needed services are available and accessible to all in a variety of settings – using a combination of public, private, community, and personal resources.

There is evidence of streamlining among agencies to promote cost-effectiveness; that is, there are opportunities to conduct referrals between community agencies that will not require additional funding; there are collaborative efforts among agencies to provide specialized services such as dental, medical, or mental health services; there are consolidated eligibility criteria set up between agencies to eliminate duplicate paperwork, wasted resources, and duplicate services.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a consistent interaction among the education, health, and human services communities.	1	2	3	4	5
Contacts with the business community are strong.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district utilizes a variety of funding sources to provide services for homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
Some funding sources provide flexibility in eligibility and spending guidelines so that funding can be directed flexibly to individual circumstances and provided at convenient times and places.	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison has access to some emergency funds to supplement student needs.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a long-term plan in place to accommodate for extended times of need with an increased number of homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
The district participates in all community-based groups and efforts to secure additional funds to meet the needs of homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

30-40 Points

20-29 Points

<20 Points

This is a strength of the program.

The program is moderately successful in this area.

This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

E. STRATEGIES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THE MULTIPLE ISSUES OF LONG-TERM RECOVERY, INCLUDING HOUSING NEEDS.



“What scares me the most is: where are these people going to go when their vouchers run out?”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Long-term recovery from a disaster is an ongoing process that can take years. It requires input and effort from all sectors of the community and may include legislative and regulatory measures at the state and/or local level. Recovery issues include housing, long-term case management, physical and mental health care, employment, rebuilding, and planning for future disasters.

Many of these issues are beyond the immediate purview of the schools. Yet, they profoundly affect student academic achievement and emotional well-being. Many school districts have recognized this link and are involved in community responses to disasters and homelessness. Community collaborations, such as those described in Sections I.A and I.B are essential if schools are to help families access the variety of needed services. Disaster relief agencies and the local Continuum of Care are particularly important allies.

Good Example: Some local school boards have adopted resolutions recognizing the harmful effects of homelessness on education and supporting affordable housing. For an example of such a resolution from the Anchorage School Board, see http://www.asdk12.org/School_Board/archives/Arc2004-2005/Agendas/20041011/H01M057.pdf

This section provides information on general resources for families in homeless situations, including those displaced by disasters. It also offers information on Long-Term Recovery Committees.

I. GENERAL RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

“And some people don’t have that ability, they can’t get on the Internet and find out stuff, because they don’t know one end of a computer from the other. Some of them are not even capable of making telephone calls, and now that the FEMA office is closed here, there is no in-town ability to go and say, ‘what’s happening with my case?’”

Relief Agency Staff Member

Families experiencing homeless are often in need of intensive case management. An important first step in case management is identifying and assessing the client’s strengths. These may include family, friends, employment, skills, talents, coping and emotional skills, parental competency, etc. Some homeless parents may struggle to see their own strengths. By beginning the process with this discussion, the client and case manager can take advantage of strengths in planning for the future.

The sample case management form in Appendix 19 may be useful in assessing strengths and needs and developing a case plan.

The following additional resources can help children, youth, and families find the resources they need for long-term recovery:

- Information about FEMA programs and what benefits survivors should receive from an independent, non-governmental source. <http://www.femaanswers.org>
- Information on a wide variety of public and private services for displaced children, youth, and families from the Child Welfare Information Gateway. http://childwelfare.gov/systemwide/service_array/mental/katrina_resource.cfm
- Information about how to obtain benefits and services from the Administration for Children and Families/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start Services, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), displaced and foster children, refugee assistance program, and related State links. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/katrina/index.htm>

- Child care information and resources on hurricane recovery, disaster relief, and emergency preparedness. <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/emergency/index.cfm>
- Housing Agency and School District Collaborations to Serve Homeless and Highly Mobile Students. Best Practices in Homeless Education Brief Series. NCHE (2006) http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/housing_collab.pdf
- Online resources for helping those affected by the hurricanes of 2005. Includes: Emergency Guidelines for Helping Victims (including information on Social Security, Medicaid, SCHIP, Unemployment Insurance, Nutrition programs, and others); Giving & Getting Help; and Help with Healing. <http://www.connectforkids.org/node/3372?tn=hp/1b>

2. FORMING A LONG-TERM RECOVERY COMMITTEE

“What’s called EOC, the emergency operations center here in the city-- without a doubt we’ve built a closer relationship with them. I say closer because we’ve always had a good relationship with them, we’re asked to come to the meeting, so we have the opportunity to be a part and hear directly from the national officials. And also not only with them, with the local police department, fire department, Red Cross, and so I think we’ve built some very good working relationships.”

School District Administrator

To ensure that the school district is informed about and involved in long-term recovery, the local liaison must know what agencies are handling recovery efforts, how they can participate in the process, and how their students can access the services that exist. Most communities affected by disasters will establish a long-term recovery committee. These committees may be directed by FEMA, the Red Cross, the United Way, or other agencies. It is important that the school district, and preferably the local liaison, participate actively on the committee. See Section I.A for tips and strategies for getting a seat at the table. See Appendix 3 for a glossary of terms and acronyms commonly used in disaster planning, response, and recovery.

If the community has not established a long-term recovery committee, the school district can be a leader in forming such a group. There are resources below to assist communities in establishing committees. There are also general resources for families who have been impacted by disasters to help them find housing, employment, and other support, including a sample long-term case management form. Local and state governments and the other collaborative partners listed in the chart in Section I.A can also be important resources for families.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Organizing Protocols For Community Disaster Recovery Mechanisms. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. Guidelines, specific field activities, and a recovery process organogram, with a particular focus on the interactions of faith-based community organizations and recovery committees. <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/recovery.php>

Long-Term Recovery Manual. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2004). A manual containing sections on organizing long-term recovery, establishing and operating a long-term recovery group, volunteer management, emotional and spiritual care, case management, and the basics of recovery. Includes sample mission statements, a list of stakeholders, organizational structures, guidelines, and sample forms. <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Self-Assessment III. E

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district's implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in addressing the multiple issues of disaster recovery.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

E. Strategies, policies and procedures are in place to address the multiple issues of long-term recovery, including housing needs.

There is a provision for opportunities to debrief and glean lessons learned. This can lead to a sense of regaining control.	1	2	3	4	5
Intensive case management services are available in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
Plans are in place for outreach staff (counselors and mental health workers) to work with individual students and/or adults struggling with recovery issues.	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison and outreach staff are aware of community resources and able to refer families to appropriate services, including services available through federal and state government sources.	1	2	3	4	5
Every school has a list of community resources and contact information.	1	2	3	4	5
The district expresses a willingness to minimize requests for additional activities that may not be absolutely necessary during the recovery period.	1	2	3	4	5
A person(s) has been appointed to connect individuals with continued community resources and support ally and for as long as it takes. (This may be a period of 2-5 years.)	1	2	3	4	5
The school district uses existing materials that may assist with coping skills or is willing to institute a new curriculum across all grade levels.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a student and staff "wellness" campaign in place to promote positive behaviors.	1	2	3	4	5
Continuous training and awareness activities on the issues of homeless children and youth are a part of the ongoing district training plan for all adults, and training is tailored to meet the needs of specific audiences (bus drivers, data entry clerks, teachers, substitute teachers, non-instructional support staff, front office clerks, teachers, guidance, school administrators, district staff).	1	2	3	4	5

E. Strategies, policies and procedures are in place to address the multiple issues of long-term recovery, including housing needs.

If long-term support services are needed, the district has policies in place to make accommodations for space and additional staff, as needed.	1	2	3	4	5
Additional activities for homeless children and youth are planned during extended school times – after school, weekends, holidays, and summer.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district participates regularly in interagency councils/coalitions that provide a wide variety of services for children and their families, including housing.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district participates regularly in boards or with organizations related to family services and disaster relief (e.g., United Way, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, faith-based organizations, housing organizations, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers play a significant role in the response and recovery process for children that are in homeless and highly transitional living conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
Parents have a significant role in the response and recovery process for children that are in homeless and highly transitional living conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
The community has a significant role in the response and recovery process for children that are in homeless and highly transitional living conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

- 70-85 Points** This is a strength of the program.
60-69 Points The program is moderately successful in this area.
<60 Points This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

DISASTER PLANNING APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX 2

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS CHART

The following charts suggest a large variety of stakeholders that can be important in supporting the McKinney-Vento program and planning for disasters. The first is generally applicable; the second focuses on organizations active in disaster planning, response, and recovery.

It is unlikely that every stakeholder in the chart will be present in every community, and local homeless education liaisons will need to prioritize those groups that offer the most support based on the program's needs. The chart is merely meant to offer an extensive list of potential stakeholders.



COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS CHART

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
Chamber of Commerce and Business Leaders To find local contact info: check the phone book or Internet site of your town or visit: http://www.uschamber.com/chambers/default	Chambers of Commerce have as their mission the protection, promotion, and enhancement of businesses and business opportunities in their area. However, most also address quality of life issues in their community, and many support initiatives related to education, poverty, and homelessness.			
Child Welfare System and Family Courts General information about the system: http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov/topics/responding/index.cfm	Children who are wards of the state due to abuse or neglect may be in homeless situations. Social workers, guardians ad litem, and family court judges can be key partners for schools. Regional offices of the Child Welfare League of America can be found at: http://www.cwla.org/members/regionaloffices.aspx			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
City Government http://www.nlc.org/	Mayors and city council members direct the policy and daily operations of cities.			
Civic Organizations Check the phone book or Internet site of your town or local chamber of commerce for local contact information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Boys' and Girls' Clubs-Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts of America-Goodwill. Find local groups at http://www.goodwill.org/page/guest/about-Junior League. Find local groups at www.ajli.org/-Kiwanis. Find local groups at www.kiwanis.org/club-bloc/-Knights of Columbus. Find local groups at www.kofc.org/un/officers/findcouncil/index.cfm-Lions. Find local groups at www.lionsclubs.org/EN/content/resources_club.shtml-Rotary. Find local groups at www.rotary.org/support/clubs/index.html-Women's Clubs-YMCA / YWCA. Find local groups at www.ymca.net/ or http://www.ywca.org/site/pp.asp?c=djlSI6PIKpG&b=28478			
Colleges and Universities Check the phone book or Internet site of your state department of education or postsecondary education for local contact info	Colleges and universities can support the education of homeless children and youth by providing research and publications support, as well as volunteers and financial resources. For information about Civic Engagement Projects of the American Association of Colleges & Universities, see http://www.aacu.org/issues/civicengagement/index.cfm			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
County Government To find local contact info: http://www.naco.org/Template.cfm?Section=Find_a_County&Template=/cf-files/counties/usamap.cfm	In many parts of the country, county government remains a powerful and influential force. Boards of county supervisors or commissioners direct county governments.			
Domestic Violence Shelters and Coalitions http://www.ncadv.org/resources/StateCoalitionList_73.html	Since survivors of domestic violence often experience homelessness, agencies and organizations that serve them are important collaborators.			
Faith-Based Communities and Congregations Check the phone book or Internet site of your town for local contact info	In many places, the faith-based community provides the bulk of social services, including shelter, food, mental and physical health support, legal assistance, and other services.			
Family and Youth Services Agencies and Organizations To find local groups: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/youthdivision/programs/locate.htm	Youth shelters, independent living programs, drop-in centers, and street outreach programs work with unaccompanied youth and are important partners for schools. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act requires funded programs to collaborate with schools.			
Homeless Coalitions To find state or local coalitions: http://www.nationalhomeless.org/resources/state/index.html	State and local homeless coalitions generally work to prevent and end homelessness by advocating for the rights of the homeless population; coordinating available resources so as to maximize utilization and promote efficiency; and developing and supporting prevention initiatives. Members may include shelters, food banks, legal services, schools, community agencies, and other service providers.			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
Homeless Shelters Check the phone book or Internet site of your town for local contact info	Shelters for families, youth, and survivors of domestic violence provide hands-on services to large numbers of children, youth, and families.			
HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Programs To find contact info for the local CoC: http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/cont/coc/	The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) require communities to develop a "Continuum of Care" (CoC) system. The CoC is designed to coordinate a community-based process of identifying the needs of the local homeless population and building a system to address those needs. Members include all agencies and organizations providing services to homeless people in the community.			
Immigrant Services Organizations To find local groups: http://www.nnirr.org/immigration/immigration_map.html	Immigrants who lack stable employment or are employed as migrant workers may confront homelessness.			
Law Enforcement Check the phone book or Internet site of your town for local contact info	Local law enforcement can provide important support in assisting people displaced by disasters and unaccompanied youth (who may be involved with law enforcement if they have run away from home or are living on the street), in addition to other services.			
Legal Services Organizations To find local groups: http://www.ptla.org/ptlasite/links/services.htm	Legal services organizations often provide services to families and youth who are homeless and can provide an important perspective and assistance to collaborative efforts.			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
Mental Health Providers To find local providers: http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases/	Mental health providers are essential partners in meeting the mental health needs of homeless children, youth, and families. In the wake of disasters, when students and parents are suffering the mental health impacts of experiencing a traumatic event, such providers are particularly critical.			
PTA http://www.pta.org/	One of the missions of the PTA is to encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools. The Virginia PTA has adopted a resolution in favor of the McKinney-Vento Act. See http://www.wm.edu/hope/vaptaresolution.pdf			
Public Housing Agencies To find local contact info: http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/contacts/	The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers federal aid to local public housing agencies that manage housing for low-income residents. There are approximately 1.3 million households living in public housing units, managed by some 3,300 public housing agencies.			
Refugee Services Organizations To find local groups: http://www.refugees.org/article.aspx?id=1113 http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/coordina1.htm http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/volunteer.htm	Refugees who lack stable employment may confront homelessness. The Reception and Placement program (R&P), managed by the Department of State, provides essential services (housing, clothing, food, referrals to medical and social services) during the first 30 days in the United States. Resettlement agencies provide longer-term resettlement and integration programs, including transitional cash assistance, health benefits, and a wide variety of social services. These agencies are funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) in the Department of Health and Human Services.			
Social Welfare Service Agencies and Organizations Check the phone book or Internet site of your town for local contact info	Food banks, employment agencies, subsidized day care providers, health and dental clinics, mental health clinics, and other providers of social welfare services have direct contact with many families and youth experiencing homelessness.			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
School Board www.nsba.org	<p>The National School Boards Association has featured the McKinney-Vento Act in its national publications and at its annual conference. For example, see Q&A at http://www.nsba.org/site/doc_cosa.asp?TrackID=&SID=1&DID=33536&CID=164&VID=50 and April 22, 2004 audio conference, available through http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/31500/31483.pdf.</p> <p>Local school boards have adopted resolutions recognizing the harmful effects of homelessness on education and supporting affordable housing. For an example of such a resolution from the Anchorage School Board, see http://www.asdk12.org/School_Board/archives/Arc2004-2005/Agendas/20041011/H01M057.pdf.</p>			
Superintendent of Schools http://www.aasa.org/about/index.cfm http://www.ccsso.org/	<p>State and local superintendents are the chief executive officers of their school systems.</p>			
United Way of America http://national.unitedway.org/ To find your local chapter: http://national.unitedway.org/myuw/index.cfm	<p>The United Way works with schools, government agencies, businesses, organized labor, financial institutions, community development corporations, voluntary and neighborhood associations, the faith community, and others. The issues the United Way addresses are determined locally. National issues are: Early Childhood; 211 is the 3-digit phone number to give help and receive help; Assets for Family Success; Crisis Preparedness & Response; and Emergency Food & Shelter.</p>			

DISASTER RESPONSE AND RELIEF STAKEHOLDERS CHART

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
American Red Cross To find your local chapter: http://www.redcross.org/where/where.html	Works closely with local/state/federal emergency management staff in planning and preparedness for disaster response. Provides relief services to communities affected by disasters, including food, water, short-term shelter, and a database to help survivors find their family. The American Red Cross Liaison to Voluntary Agencies (LVA) communicates with other local agencies.			
Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) Disaster Response Services http://www.crwrc.org/relief/na/index.html	CRWRC Disaster Response Services (DRS) is a network of volunteers who help clear debris, assess needs, and rebuild homes after disasters strike. They work in all phases of disasters, including early assessment, rapid response, needs assessment, organizational capacity building, reconstruction, and community development consultation.			
Church of the Brethren Emergency Response/ Service Ministries http://www.brethren.org/gen-bd/ersm/index.htm	Church of the Brethren Disaster Response provides volunteers to clean up debris and to repair or rebuild homes for disaster survivors. Each Church of the Brethren district has an appointed disaster coordinator. Disaster Child Care (DCC) trains, certifies, and mobilizes volunteers to disaster sites in the United States to provide crisis intervention to young children of families suffering from natural or man-made disasters. Professional counselors are also available to inform and educate parents, teachers, community workers, and the general public about the effects of disasters on children.			
Church World Service (CWS) Emergency Response Program http://www.cwserp.org/	Assists/mentors local faith-based groups to organize a coordinated faith-based response to human needs that is integrated into the ongoing development of the community.			
Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) http://www.citizencorps.gov	The CERT program educates people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations.			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
State-by-state contact info at https://www.citizencorps.gov/citizenCorps/certsByState.do				
Coordinated Assistance Network (CAN) www.can.org To find CAN agencies in your area: http://www.can.org/agencies.htm	CAN is a network of seven charities that participate in community-led preparedness and response coalitions focusing on best practices to serve those in need. CAN partnered with FEMA to develop a web-based database to share information between agencies.			
County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Find state and local contact info at: http://www.fema.gov/about/contact/statedr.shtml	Many counties have EMAs for emergency planning and response in the county. The County EMA coordinates with the State EMA and FEMA, as well as with community organizations and agencies.			
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) http://www.fema.gov/	Coordinates resources in a federally declared disaster to assist the local and state authorities in responding to and recovering from the disaster. Programs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals and Households Program (housing assistance to people whose homes are damaged or destroyed in a disaster; assistance for medical, dental, funeral, and transportation costs). • Disaster Unemployment Assistance (weekly benefits to individuals who are unemployed and not eligible for regular unemployment insurance compensation). • Free legal counseling to low-income individuals (through an agreement with the American Bar Association). • Crisis Counseling Program (supplemental funds to state and local mental health agencies for short-term crisis counseling services). • Voluntary Agency Liaison (coordinates disaster relief activities of established and ad hoc voluntary organizations). 			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) http://www.ldr.org/ To find local group:!	Following major domestic disasters, LDR provides spiritual and emotional care, hardship grants, assistance with long-term recovery, and volunteer coordination.			
Mennonite Disaster Service http://www.mds.mennonite.net/ For a list of current projects: http://www.mds.mennonite.net/Projects	Mennonite Disaster Service is a channel through which various constituencies of the Anabaptist church respond to those affected by disasters in North America. The main focus is on clean up, repair, and rebuilding homes.			
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance http://www.pcusa.org/pda/	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance focuses on the long-term recovery of communities impacted by disaster and manages specialized volunteer teams to provide consultation, program design, and training.			
Safe and Drug-Free Schools District Council Committee Contact school district for local information http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osedfs/programs.html	The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools' mission is creating safe schools, responding to crises, preventing drug abuse and violence, ensuring the health and well being of students, and promoting development of good character and citizenship. Grants to school districts include discretionary grants for Safe Schools/Healthy Students, grants for Emergency Response and Crisis Management Plans, and the Drug-Violence Prevention formula grant.			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
The Salvation Army http://www.salvationarmy.org	The Salvation Army is an international Christian organization that promotes education, relieves poverty, and pursues other charitable works. Disaster relief is provided through the Emergency Services Program.			
Southern Baptist Disaster Relief http://www.namb.net/dr To find state offices: http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.238540/k.6E04/State_Contact_Numbers.htm	Southern Baptist Disaster Relief provides information for individuals, families, churches, associations, and state conventions to help prepare them to respond in the event of a disaster. It also provides meals, water, childcare, showers, laundry, and volunteer clean-up and rebuilding crews in areas affected by disasters.			
State Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Find state contact info at: http://www.emergencymanagement.org/states/	Develops state and county Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) for emergency response. Identifies and coordinates resources to assist in response and recovery.			
United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) http://new.gbmg-umc.org/umcor/work/emergencies/domestic/	UMCOR provides training on disaster preparation and response, mentors to provide on-site technical assistance, case management to help survivors navigate and achieve long-term recovery, relief supplies, and finances.			
Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) http://www.nvoad.org	Provides the venue for agencies to coordinate, collaborate, communicate, and cooperate on disaster planning, training, and response. This occurs at national (NVOAD), state (VOAD) and community (COAD) levels.			

APPENDIX 3

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS AND ACRONYMS IN DISASTER PLANNING, RESPONSE, AND RECOVERY

The following is reprinted from the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster: Long-Term Recovery Manual.¹

AFFECTED STRUCTURE: A structure that received damage but is usable for its intended purpose

APPLICANT (RELATING TO A MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY):

- For Public Assistance – any local or state government or eligible private nonprofit organization submitting a project application or request for direct federal assistance under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974. The governor’s authorized representative takes such action on behalf of the applicant.
- For Individual Assistance – an individual or family who submits an application or request for assistance under the Disaster Relief Act.

BASEMENT: Any area of a building that has its floor sub-grade (below ground) on all sides

BLIZZARD: Extensive snowfall of considerable density for more than 3 hours, winds of 32 to 44 miles per hour, and visibility of less than 1 mile.

CASEWORK OR CASE MANAGEMENT: The process of determining needs experienced by a disaster victim, identifying available resources (both personal and from assistance programs) to address the needs, discerning the unmet needs, and securing resources for those needs. The casework may be handled by a single agency that works in concert with other agencies through a committee process.

CIVIL RESOURCES: Resources that normally are not controlled by a government, for example:

- Human power
- Food and water
- Health resources
- Industrial production
- Housing and construction
- Telecommunications
- Energy
- Transportation

¹ National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. (2004, April). *Long-term recovery manual*. Retrieved August 28, 2006, from: <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Minerals
Materials
Supplies

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (COAD): A community-level version of the state VOAD. See “Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.”

COMMUNITY: A political entity that has the authority to adopt and enforce building codes and ordinances for the area under its jurisdiction. In most cases, the community is an incorporated city, township, or village or an unincorporated area of a county.

CONTENTS COVERAGE: Insurance to cover loss to personal property or business property. Contents must be located within an eligible building. Contents within an eligible building that is not fully enclosed must be secured to prevent flotation out of the building during flooding.

CONTIGUOUS: Connected in an unbroken sequence along a boundary. For National Flood Insurance Program, a row of townhouses would qualify. For agricultural declaration, adjoining counties would qualify.

COOPERATIVE DISASTER CHILD CARE PROGRAM: A volunteer program administered by the Church of the Brethren (COB) designated to meet the needs of children of victims of the impacted area in the American Red Cross service center and the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center.

COVERAGE (INSURANCE): The insurance purchased against specific losses provided under the terms of a policy of insurance. “Coverage” is frequently used interchangeably with the words “protection” and “insurance.”

CRISIS COUNSELING: The application of individual and group treatment procedures that are designed to improve the mental and emotional crisis and their subsequent short or long-term psychological and behavioral conditions resulting from a major disaster or its aftermath.

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT: The appraisal or determination of the effects on human, economic and natural resources resulting from human-caused or natural disasters.

DEDUCTIBLE: For any loss covered by insurance, a deductible may be set by the insurer and is the fixed dollar amount or percentage, which is borne by the insured prior to the insurer’s liability.

DESTROYED: A facility or structure that, pursuant to Public Law 93-288 as amended, received severe damage and is no longer technically or economically usable.

DISASTER MENTAL HEALTH: Mental health services that take into consideration the unique aspects of trauma by natural or human-caused disaster. Outreach is often necessary to deliver services to those who are in need. Communities affected by presidentially-declared disasters may receive immediate, short-term crisis counseling, as well as ongoing support for emotional recovery.

DISASTER WELFARE INFORMATION: A service operated by the American Red Cross in which, when given appropriate information, the Red Cross will make inquiries about a family situation and welfare.

DONATIONS: Voluntary offerings by the public, business, or organizations for the benefit of the disaster-affected area. Donations may be classified as “financial donations” or “in-kind donations.” “In-kind donations” are considered to include materials, professional services and volunteers.

DONATIONS MANAGEMENT: Management of donations is generally thought to involve logistics for receipt, storage and distribution or use of materials, services and volunteers. In addition, management of donations should include identification of needs (current and future), intentional solicitation of needed donations (including cash) and discernment regarding usefulness of unsolicited offers of materials, services, and volunteers.

DUPLICATION OF BENEFITS (DOB): Duplication of Benefits occurs when assistance is granted to a disaster victim for which other designated resources are available. Example 1: payment of home repair costs when personal insurance would have taken care of the cost. Example 2: payment of costs that a federal or state assistance program would have addressed. When public money is involved, DOB may be a legal issue. When voluntary agency money is involved, DOB will take already limited resources.

ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY (OR PARTICIPATING COMMUNITY): A community for which the Federal Insurance Administrator has authorized the sale of flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC): The protected site from which civil governmental officials (municipal, county, state or federal) exercise direction and control in an emergency. Voluntary agencies such as the American Red Cross and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster may also have liaisons present in the EOC.

FAMILY RECOVERY PLAN: A part of the case management process that identifies the family or individual needs, prioritizes needs and then “maps” the resources to address the needs, how the resources will be acquired and who will take the necessary steps to secure the resources. This may be a formal or informal process.

FEDERAL COORDINATING OFFICER (FCO): In a federally declared disaster, the person appointed by the director of FEMA to coordinate federal assistance in an emergency or major disaster.

FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE: Aid to disaster victims or local or state governments by federal agencies under provisions of the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 as amended.

FLASH FLOOD: A flood condition in which rainfall is of sufficient intensity and severity that water levels rise (and may fall) rapidly. Often occurs with little advance warning

FLOOD: A general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas from the following:

- Overflow of inland or tidal waters

- Unusual or rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters

- Mudslides and mudflows caused by accumulation of heavy rain on unstable slopes

HABITABLE RESIDENCE: A living unit that has sustained minor or no damage and is safe, sanitary, secure and habitable.

HAZARD MITIGATION: Any cost-effective measure that will reduce the potential for damage to a facility from a disaster event. Also called Reduction of Vulnerability. See Mitigation.

INCIDENT COMMAND/COORDINATION SYSTEM (ICS): A formal understanding of coordinating response to an event by delineating tasks/functions and the person(s) who have the authority/responsibility to carry out those tasks.

INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS PROGRAM (IHP): Under Presidentially declared disasters, the program that enables families and individuals to receive assistance for eligible disaster-related expenses such as essential home repairs.

INTERFAITH RESPONSE: Local congregations and worshipping communities working together for long-term recovery.

LONG-TERM RECOVERY: The extended period of time following a disaster in which affected persons and communities work to rebuild and regain a sense of normality.

LONG-TERM RECOVERY COMMITTEE: A committee of agency representatives who cooperate in addressing the needs of the community and individuals following a disaster. Usually involves a variety of community, government and faith-based organizations.

LONG-TERM RECOVERY ORGANIZATION: An organization, operating under the auspices of another agency or independently, that works to address the needs of the community and individuals following a disaster. May be entirely faith-based or may be a collaboration of faith-based and secular agencies.

MAJOR DAMAGE: A structure that has received substantial damage and will require considerable time to repair, but is technically and economically feasible to repair.

MINIMAL REPAIRS: The necessary repairs authorized to quickly repair or restore to a habitable condition that portion of the essential living area of an owner-occupied primary residence that was damaged as a result of the disaster.

MINOR DAMAGE: A structure that has received such damage that it is no longer usable for its basic purpose, but can be easily repaired and made usable in a short time.

MISSION: The task, together with its purpose, thereby clearly indicating the action to be taken and the reasoning for the action.

MISSION ASSIGNMENT: A work order or request for performance of work; directs completion by that agency of specified tasks and cites funding, other managerial controls, or guidance.

MITIGATION: Those activities designed to alleviate the effects of a major disaster or emergency or long-term activities to minimize the potentially adverse affects of future disaster in affected areas. Also called Reduction of Vulnerability. See Hazard Mitigation.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (NEMIS): An integrated database system providing local processing support for FEMA assistance programs and support activities.

NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (NVOAD): A partnership in disaster response and planning, NVOAD has 34 national member organizations, 52 state and territorial VOADs and a growing number of local VOADs and COADs. See the Appendix for current listing of member agencies. See also Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

ONE-HUNDRED YEAR (100-YEAR) FLOODPLAIN: The land area adjoining a river, stream, lake, or ocean that, based on past observations, statistically has a chance of being inundated only once in 100 years. Also referred to as a flood having a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. The 100-year flood is the regulatory base flood under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

PARTICIPATING COMMUNITY (OR ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY): A community for which the Federal Insurance Administrator has authorized the sale of flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program.

PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT: A damage assessment by a team of governmental (federal, state, local) inspectors viewing the disaster impact for purposes of projecting impact relative to various declaration requirements.

PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION: Any non-governmental agency or entity that currently has either –
An effective ruling letter from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, granting tax exemption under Section 501 (c), (d), or (e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or
Satisfactory evidence from the state that the non-revenue producing organization or entity is a nonprofit organized or doing business under state law.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (PA) (FEMA PROGRAM): Assistance program for local and state governments and certain private nonprofit organizations after a Presidential disaster declaration. Usually for replacement of infrastructure.

REDUCTION OF VULNERABILITY: See Hazard Mitigation or Mitigation

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA): Provides loans for disaster related damage at lower than market rate for:

- Home rebuilding or replacement
- Business rebuilding
- Personal property loss
- Economic injury disaster loss

STRUCTURE: For floodplain management purposes, a structure is a walled and roofed building, including a gas or liquid storage tank that is principally above ground. For insurance coverage purposes, a structure is a walled and roofed building other than a gas or liquid storage tank, that is principally above ground and is affixed to a permanent site, including a manufactured home on a permanent foundation. Includes buildings under construction, alteration, or repair, but does not include building materials or supplies intended for use in such unless such materials or supplies are within an enclosed building on the premises.

SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE: Damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before-damaged condition would equal or exceed 50% of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred.

TEMPORARY HOUSING: Housing accommodation provided on a temporary basis by the

federal government to eligible individuals or families made homeless by a major disaster or emergency.

UNINHABITABLE RESIDENCE: A living unit that has sustained sufficient damages and thus is judged unsafe, unsanitary and insecure.

VOLUNTEER: A person who, of his or her own free will assumes responsibility for the performance of a task for which he or she will receive no compensation.

VOLUNTEER (VOLUNTARY) ORGANIZATION: Any chartered or otherwise duly recognized local, state or national organization that provides needed services to communities or individuals in coping with a disaster.

VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (VOAD): A network that provides the venue for voluntary organizations with disaster response and recovery operations to collaborate, coordinate, cooperate and communicate. State VOADs work in non-disaster times to promote training and preparedness; they work in times of disaster to facilitate coordination of response and recovery efforts. VOADs are present at national, state and sub-state levels.

At the state level, the VOAD may include local member agencies that do not have a national program. The state VOAD often serves as advocate and liaison between member agencies and the state government agencies. Recognized state VOADs have a charter and agreement with the National VOAD. See National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

AB	American Baptist
AAA	Area Agency on Aging
ABM	American Baptist Men
ACS	Adventist Community Services
ARC	American Red Cross
ARRL	American Radio Relay League
CAP	Community Action Program or Civil Air Patrol
CBO	Community Based Organization
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CDCC	Cooperative Disaster Child Care
CDR	Christian Disaster Response
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
CMHC	Community Mental Health Center
COAD	Community Organizations Active in Disaster
COB	Church of the Brethren
CRWRC	Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
CSS	Catholic Social Services
CWS	Church World Service
DED	Department of Economic Development
DFO	Disaster Field Office
DH	Disaster Housing
DHS	Department of Human Services
DMH	Disaster Mental Health or Department of Mental Health
DNN	Disaster News Network
DOB	Duplication of Benefits or Date of Birth
DRC	Disaster Recovery Center
DUA	Disaster Unemployment Assistance
EA	Emergency Assistance
EFS	Emergency Food and Shelter
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EMR	Emergency Minor Repair
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
ESF	Emergency Support Functions

FB	Farm Bureau
FCIC	Federal Crop Insurance Corporation
FCO	Federal Coordinating Officer
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHA	Federal Housing Administration
FIA	Federal Insurance Administration
FmHA	Farmers Home Administration
FSA	Farm Services Agency
FRP	Federal Response Plan
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
HSUS	Humane Society of the United States
ICISF	International Critical Incident Stress Foundation
ICS	Incident Command System or Incident Coordination System
IHP	Individuals and Household Program (FEMA)
IRFF	International Relief Friendship Foundation
LDR	Lutheran Disaster Response
LSS	Lutheran Social Services
LTR	Long-Term Recovery
LTRC	Long-Term Recovery Committee
LTRO	Long-Term Recovery Organization
MDS	Mennonite Disaster Services
MH	Mobile Home
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NFO	National Farmers Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOVA	National Organization for Victims Assistance
NVOAD	National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
NWS	National Weather Service
PA	Public Assistance
PDA	Preliminary Damage Assessment or Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
PIO	Public Information Officer
SA	Salvation Army
SB	Southern Baptist
SBA	Small Business Administration

SEMA	State Emergency Management Agency
SCO	State Coordinating Officer
TH	Temporary Housing
UCC	United Church of Christ
UMCOR	United Methodist Committee On Relief
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VA	Veteran's Administration
VAL	Voluntary Agency Liaison
VISTA	Volunteers in Service to America
VITA	Volunteers in Technical Assistance
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster



APPENDIX 4

SAMPLE LETTER TO A COLLABORATIVE TASKFORCE INVITEE

Dear Greg,

We are writing to ask you to join us and other community groups to start a taskforce on disaster preparedness. You and your agency provide important services and expertise to this community, and your involvement in the taskforce would be invaluable.

Our organizations work to support families, youth, and adults who have lost their housing. The school district's Homeless Education Program provides mental and physical health support, meals, and after-school mentoring and tutoring to homeless students. The Salvation Army shelters 42 adults every night, in addition to providing meals and case management services. And the Jewish Community Center runs an employment and legal aid program that serves hundreds of youth and adults every month. Other programs invited to build this taskforce provide many other services, such as daycare, clothing, and transitional housing.

Yet, our programs cannot be prepared adequately to respond to a disaster or meet the needs of homeless individuals in our community unless we work together. We hope that a community taskforce can help our agencies and our clients meet their goals by leveraging our resources and influence and providing more seamless, holistic services for our clients. We can have a bigger impact together than alone.

We envision that, as a group, the taskforce will prioritize the needs of our community and establish goals for our collaboration together. We hope you will be able to attend an introductory meeting on Wednesday, October 14, at 7:00 p.m. to start the conversation. The mayor's office has offered us the use of their meeting room, and we will provide refreshments.

We are looking forward to seeing you on the 14th and beginning our work together!

Sincerely,

Superintendent
Rabbi
Salvation Army Director

APPENDIX 5

BEST PRACTICES IN HOMELESS EDUCATION

Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services Under the McKinney-Vento Act



The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines “homeless children and youths” as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.” However, because the circumstances of homelessness vary with each family’s or unaccompanied youth’s situation, determining the extent to which the family or youth fits the definition must occur on a case-by-case basis. Enrollment staff and/or the local homeless education liaison must gather and analyze information from the family or youth and make an appropriate determination of eligibility. Expedient determination of eligibility and immediate school enrollment are critical to the child’s educational continuity.

This tool is designed to assist school and school district staff in applying the definition to individual children and youth to determine eligibility for rights and services under the McKinney-Vento Act.

Step 1: Get the facts. What is the family’s or youth’s situation?

Who is homeless?
(McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001 – Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act – Sec 725)
The term “homeless children and youth”—

A. *means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and*

B. *includes —*

i. *children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;*

ii. *children and youths who 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...*

iii. *children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and*

iv. *migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).*

- Use a standard enrollment form that asks about the family’s or youth’s living situation to gather initial information. (See U. S. Department Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program Guidance, Appendix D, “Sample Student Residency Questionnaire” at http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/guidance_jul2004.pdf).
- If the form indicates that the student may be homeless, ask questions to get a better sense of the family’s or youth’s circumstances.
- Avoid using the word “homeless” as the stigma associated with the word may lead parents or youth to insist they are not homeless, even though their living situation would fit the McKinney-Vento definition. Tell them the purpose of the questions is to determine if they are eligible for extra services like transportation, clothing, school supplies, and/or tutoring.
- Do not contact persons or agencies outside the school system to obtain information about the student’s living situation; this would likely violate the family’s or youth’s privacy and dignity as well as the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). For example, do not contact landlords, public housing agencies, or law enforcement to verify living situations. For sample questions to assist with gathering information directly from parents, guardians, or youth regarding their living situation, see page 5.
- Respect the family’s or youth’s privacy by talking to them in a private space where other students and faculty members cannot overhear the conversation.
- Share information on the rights and services available under the McKinney-Vento Act for eligible children and youth, and ask the parent/guardian or youth to provide the information you need to make the determination of eligibility. Understand that families or

(continued on the next page)

youth may be hesitant to answer questions for various reasons that include a desire for privacy, concerns related to domestic violence, or fear of losing their children or housing; however, in most cases you will have enough information to make a determination.

Sample questions at the end of this document will assist you in obtaining information to make a determination of eligibility.

Step 2: Analyze the facts. Is the student eligible for McKinney-Vento services?

To be eligible for services, the student must meet the Act's definition of homeless. The McKinney-Vento Act defines "homeless children and youths" as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." Lacking any one of these three conditions would make a child eligible. In other words, if the residence is not fixed, regular, **and** adequate, it is considered a homeless situation.

The law then lists several situations as specific examples of homelessness. Migrant children who are living in one of the described situations are included as well. The list of examples included in the definition is not exclusive; rather, it is meant to address some of the more common situations of homelessness.

Again, determining whether a particular child or youth fits the definition of homeless is a case-by-case analysis. The easiest way to make a determination of homelessness is to: (A) see if the student's situation fits into one of the specific examples of homelessness listed in the law; and if not, (B) consider if the student is in another situation that would fit the definition of homelessness by not meeting the fixed, regular, and adequate standard.

IF THE RESIDENCE IS NOT **FIXED, REGULAR, AND ADEQUATE**,
IT IS CONSIDERED A HOMELESS SITUATION.

A. Does the child or youth's living situation fit into one of the specific examples of homelessness listed in the law?

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.

"Sharing the housing of other persons..." implies that the student is staying in another person's home. Some pertinent questions to help determine if this is the case would include:

- Does the student have any legal right to be in that home?
- Can the student be asked to leave at any time with no legal recourse?
- Is the living situation intended to be temporary or long-term?
- Did the student move into the home as an urgent measure to avoid being on the street or in another precarious situation?

"...due to loss of housing..." implies that the student has no personal housing available. Did the student or family lose their previous housing due to:

- An eviction or an inability to pay the rent or other bills?
- Destruction of or damage to the previous home?
- Abuse or neglect (such as in the case of a youth who leaves or is asked to leave the home)?
- Unhealthy conditions such as an inadequate physical environment, infestations, drug or alcohol abuse in the home, or domestic violence?
- The absence of a parent or guardian due to abandonment, the parent's or guardian's incarceration, or another reason?

“...*economic hardship* ...” includes cases where limited financial resources have forced families or youth to leave personal residences and share housing due to an inability to pay rent and other bills. The way that the shared housing came about and the intention of the residents are significant. For example:

- If economic hardship such as an accident or illness, loss of employment, loss of public benefits, or condition of poverty forces families to share housing temporarily, the children and youth are eligible for McKinney-Vento services.
- A long-term, cooperative living arrangement among families or friends that is fixed, regular, and adequate should not be considered a homeless situation, even if the parties are living together to save money.
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or camping ground due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.

The phrase “...*due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations*” can help determine whether these living situations should be considered homeless situations.

- Motels, hotels, and camping grounds will almost always be homeless situations, as they are rarely fixed, regular, and adequate; however, considering whether alternative adequate accommodations are available can help identify possible exceptions, such as a wealthy family living in a luxury hotel on a long-term basis when adequate alternatives are available to the family.
- In contrast, trailer parks often are fixed, regular, and adequate residences. Asking questions about the condition and size of the trailer, the number of people living there, the intended length of stay, and whether the family or youth has an adequate alternative will help determine if the student is eligible for McKinney-Vento services. (See the discussion of substandard housing below for more information.)
- Living in an emergency or transitional shelter.

Emergency or transitional shelters of all kinds, including youth shelters, domestic violence shelters, family shelters, transitional living programs, and supportive housing programs are homeless situations.

- Abandoned in a hospital.

A child or youth abandoned in the hospital is eligible for McKinney-Vento services.

- Awaiting foster care placement.

It is essential that state and local educational agencies collaborate with child welfare agencies, child welfare attorneys, and other community members to establish guidelines for determining if a student in the custody of child welfare is eligible for McKinney-Vento services. Such guidelines should consider the extent to which the student lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (see Step 2B below). For example, foster homes, shelters, evaluation centers, and group homes that are intended to be emergency, interim, or short-term are unlikely to be fixed, regular, and adequate.

Several states have refined the definition of “awaiting foster care placement” on a state level. For example, the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services, in consultation with the Tennessee Department of Education, has released a policy defining those students in state custody who are eligible for McKinney-Vento services to include students who are placed in emergency foster homes, emergency shelters, primary treatment centers, or other temporary, emergency placements. The policy is available at <http://www.serve.org/nche/forum/foster.php>.

Local liaisons should check with their State Education Agency to see if policies exist that clarify which stages of their state’s child welfare process are included in the McKinney-Vento definition of “homeless”.

- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

Examples of some places that meet these criteria include a health clinic, an office, a public restroom, or an unfinished basement or attic.

- Living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting.

These specific examples are largely self-explanatory. In evaluating whether housing is “substandard,” consider that substandard means “deviating from or falling short of a standard or norm” or “of a quality lower than that prescribed by law.”¹ Thus, determining if housing is substandard requires comparing the housing with community norms and the law, including a consideration of such factors as:

- Health and safety concerns
- Number of occupants per square foot
- Age of occupants
- State and local building codes



Local educational agencies may wish to collaborate with attorneys and other community members to establish guidelines incorporating state and local legal requirements and community standards.

B. If the child’s, family’s, or youth’s situation does not fit the examples provided in the definition, is the child or youth living in another type of situation that is not fixed, regular, and adequate?

If the student does not fit any of the specific situations in Step 2A, he or she may still be eligible for McKinney-Vento services if the living situation is not fixed, regular, and adequate. Consider and apply the following definitions to the information gathered from the family or youth.

- Fixed
 - “Securely placed or fastened.” “Not subject to change or fluctuation.”².
 - “A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.”³.
 - “Inhabitant: One who, although he may not be a citizen, dwells or resides in a place permanently or has a fixed residence therein, as distinguished from an occasional lodger or visitor.”⁴.
 - “Domicile: The place where a person has his true fixed permanent home and principal establishment, and to which place he has, whenever he is absent, the intention of returning, and from which he has no present intention of moving.”⁵.
- Regular
 - “Normal, standard.” “Constituted, conducted, or done in conformity with established or prescribed usages, rules, or discipline.” “Recurring, attending, or functioning at fixed or uniform intervals.”⁶.
 - “Consistent.”⁷.

(continued on the next page)

¹ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition.

² Ibid.

³ Arizona, Massachusetts, and Michigan McKinney-Vento State Plans, 2002.

⁴ Ballentine’s Law Dictionary, 3rd Edition.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition.

⁷ Ballentine’s Law Dictionary, 3rd Edition.

- “A regular residence is one which is used on a regular (i.e., nightly) basis.”⁸.
- “Habitual: By habit; constant; customary, accustomed, usual; common; ordinary; regular; familiar.”⁹.
- Adequate
 - “Sufficient for a specific requirement.” “Lawfully and reasonably sufficient.”¹⁰.
 - “Fully sufficient; equal to what is required; lawfully and reasonably sufficient.”¹¹.
 - “An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.”¹².

(Adapted from “Determining Homelessness by the Definition,” National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, <http://www.nlchp.org>.)

Step 3: Get additional input.

If you are still not sure if a student is eligible for McKinney-Vento services, consider the following resources:

- Contact your local homeless education liaison (if you are a school staff person).
- Contact your State Coordinator for Homeless Education.
- Post a question to the NCHE Homeless Education Listserv to solicit input from other homeless education practitioners. (Contact Beth Hartness at bhartnes@serve.org to learn how to join the listserv.)
- Call the NCHE Helpline at 800-308-2145.
- Contact other national homeless education partners (see below for contact information).

Sample Questions to Ask the Students or Parents for Information Gathering

The following questions are designed to elicit information that is relevant for the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless; that is, to determine the extent to which the children and their families or the youth are living in a fixed, regular, and adequate living situation.

Fixed (“A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.”¹³)

- Is this a permanent arrangement or just temporary?
- Are you looking for another place to live?
- Do you plan to move out soon?
- Why are you staying in your current place?
- Where were you living right before this place? Why did you leave?
- Where would you go if you couldn’t stay where you are?
- Are you staying with friends/relatives just for a little while?
- Did you and your friends/relatives decide to move in together and share a home and expenses for the long term? Or is this a temporary situation for you?
- Could your friends/relatives ask you to leave if they wanted to?
- Are you all sharing the home equally, or are you more like guests in the home?



⁸ Arizona, Massachusetts, and Michigan McKinney-Vento State Plans, 2002.

⁹ *Ballentine's Law Dictionary*, 3rd Edition.

¹⁰ *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Tenth Edition.

¹¹ *Ballentine's Law Dictionary*, 3rd Edition.

¹² Arizona, Massachusetts, and Michigan McKinney-Vento State Plans, 2002.

¹³ *Ibid.*

Regular (“A regular residence is one that is used on a regular [i.e., nightly] basis.”¹⁴)

- Do you stay in the same place every night?
- Do you have a key to the place where you are living?
- Do you move around a lot?
- How long have you been at that place? How long do you plan to stay?
- How long did you live in your last place?

Adequate (“An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.”¹⁵)

- How many people are living in the home? How many bedrooms/bathrooms does it have?
- Are you and your children sharing a room? How many people are staying in one room?
- Are you and your children sleeping in a bedroom, or a public area, like a dining room?
- Does the home have heat/electricity/running water?
- What condition is the home in? Does it keep out rain and wind? Is it safe? Is it warm and dry? Do the windows have glass panes?
- Can you come and go as you please?

If the child or youth is eligible, provide appropriate services.

Determining eligibility is only the first step. Children and youth who are eligible for services may have different needs. They may have physical needs for clothing, uniforms, school supplies, free meals, and health care. They may have mental health needs. They may have academic needs. They may need transportation. Or they may need nothing more than the ability to enroll in school immediately without documents.

In determining the appropriate services for a particular child, youth, or family, consider what barriers to education can be removed by applying the McKinney-Vento Act and what is in the best interest of each child or youth. Also consider all the programs in the school district that can support children experiencing homelessness, especially Title I, 21st Century Learning Center programs, Even Start, Head Start, special education and related services, Section 504 services, drop-out prevention programs, and Safe Schools/Healthy Schools grants.



National Partners in Homeless Education

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)
<http://www.naehcy.org>

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
<http://www.serve.org/nche>

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP)
<http://www.nlchp.org>

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

This brief was developed by:
National Center for Homeless Education
800-308-2145 (toll-free HelpLine)
<http://www.serve.org/nche>

Fall 2006

*NCHE is supported by the U.S. Department of Education
Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs.*

Every state is required to have a coordinator for the education of homeless children and youth, and every school district is required to have a liaison for homeless students. These individuals will assist you with the implementation of the



McKinney-Vento Act. To find out who your state coordinator is, visit the NCHE website at *<http://www.serve.org/nche>*.

For further information on the McKinney-Vento Act and resources for implementation, call the NCHE HelpLine at 800-308-2145 or e-mail *homeless@serve.org*.



Local Contact Information:

APPENDIX 6

SAMPLE ENROLLMENT FORMS

Appendix D: Sample Student Residency Questionnaire¹

Everyday Unified School District

*[This form was not developed nor is it endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education. It is not a required form. It was adapted for use as an example].

This questionnaire is intended to address the McKinney-Vento Act. Your answers will help the administrator determine residency documents necessary for enrollment of this student.

1. Presently, where is the student living? *Check one box.*

Section A	Section B
<input type="checkbox"/> in a shelter <input type="checkbox"/> with more than one family in a house or apartment <input type="checkbox"/> in a motel, car or campsite <input type="checkbox"/> with friends or family members (other than parent/guardian)	<input type="checkbox"/> Choices in Section A do not apply
<p>CONTINUE: If you checked a box in Section A, complete #2 and the remainder of this form.</p>	<p>STOP: If you checked this section, you do <u>not</u> need to complete the remainder of this form. Submit to school personnel.</p>

2. The student lives with:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 parent | <input type="radio"/> a relative, friend(s) or other adult(s) |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 parents | <input type="radio"/> alone with no adults |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 parent & another adult | <input type="radio"/> an adult that is not the parent or the legal guardian |

School: _____

Name of Student _____ Male ☐ Female ☐

Birth Date ____/____/____ Age: _____ Social Security# [if appropriate] _____
 Month / Day / Year

Name of Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) _____

Address _____ ZIP: _____ Phone/Pager: _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Date: _____

School Use Only - Campus Administrator's determination of Section A circumstances:

→ FAX to Attendance, Guidance and Counseling 777-777

If the parent has checked Section B above, completion of form is not required. For any choices in Section A, this form must be completed and faxed to Attendance, Guidance and Counseling Department immediately after completion. All campuses must keep original forms separately from the Student Permanent Record for audit purposes during the year.

Name and phone number of a School Contact Person who may know of the family's situation:

_____ Date faxed: _____

¹ United States Department of Education. (2004, July). *Education For Homeless Children And Youth Program, Title VII-B of The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Non-Regulatory Guidance*. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from the National Center for Homeless Education website: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/guidance_jul2004.pdf (page 37)

**EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM
MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT**
PLEASE PRINT

DISTRICT/SCHOOL _____ DATE _____

STUDENTS NAME _____ M ____ F ____
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Initial)STUDENTS DATE OF BIRTH _____ GRADE LEVEL _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME _____ UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH _____
(Last Name) (First Name) (M.I.)

ADDRESS _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER (____) _____

RACE/ETHNICITY ____ White ____ Black ____ Hispanic ____ Asian/Pacific Islander ____ Amer. Ind./Alaskan Nat. ____ MultiRacial/Ethnic

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**Complete only if it shows (1) your child's current living situation; or (2) your living situation if you are a youth not living with a parent or guardian. Check the appropriate box:**

- ☐ in a shelter ☐ with relatives or others due to lack of housing ☐ at a train or bus station, park, or in a car
☐ in a motel/hotel, camping ground, or other similar situation due to the lack of alternative, adequate housing
☐ in abandoned apartment/building ☐ temporarily housed in shelter awaiting DCFS permanent foster care placement
☐ other _____ ☐ Disaster victim? explain _____

Is there a current Order of Protection or No Contact order which concerns this student: Yes ☐ No ☐

Last school attended: _____

Eligible for any of these educational and school related activities and services?

- ☐ Special Education (IDEA) ☐ English Language Learners (ELL) ☐ Gifted and Talented ☐ Vocational Education
☐ Other _____

Possible Barriers to Education

- ☐ School Selection ☐ Transportation ☐ School Records ☐ Immunizations or other medical records
☐ Other issues/barriers _____

Proposed Services and Activities to be Provided by McKinney-Vento

- ☐ Tutoring or other instructional support ☐ Expedited evaluations ☐ Staff professional development/awareness
☐ Referrals for medical, dental, and other health services ☐ Transportation ☐ Early childhood programs
☐ Assistance with participation in school programs ☐ Before/after-school, mentoring, summer programs
☐ Obtaining or transferring records necessary for enrollment ☐ Parent education related to rights/resources
☐ Coordination between schools and agencies ☐ Counseling ☐ Addressing needs related to domestic violence
☐ Clothing to meet a school requirement ☐ School supplies ☐ Referral to other programs and services
☐ Emergency assistance related to school attendance ☐ Other _____

COMMENTS _____

² Illinois State Board of Education. (n.d.). *Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program Common Form* (Spanish and English). Retrieved December 20, 2006 from: <http://homelessed.net/schools/default.htm>

To the best of my knowledge, the information in this document is accurate:

Print Name & Title of Person completing form _____

ROE/LEA/Agency _____ Date _____

Signature _____

RIGHTS OF HOMELESS STUDENTS

The school district shall provide an educational environment that treats all students with dignity and respect. Every homeless student shall have equal access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are not homeless. This commitment to the educational rights of homeless children, youth, and youth not living with a parent or guardian, applies to all services, programs, and activities provided or made available.

A student is considered “homeless” if he or she is presently living:

- in a shelter * sharing housing with relatives or others due to lack of housing
- in a motel/hotel, camping ground, or similar situation due to lack of alternative, adequate housing
- at a train or bus station, park, or in a car * in an abandoned building
- temporarily housed while awaiting DCFS foster care placement

All Homeless Students Have Rights To:

- **Immediate school enrollment.** *A school must immediately enroll students even if they lack health, immunization or school records, proof of guardianship, or proof of residency.*

- **Enroll in:**

- *the school he/she attended when permanently housed (school of origin)
- *the school in which he/she was last enrolled (school of origin)
- *any school that non-homeless students living in the same attendance area in which the homeless child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

- **Remain** enrolled in his/her selected school for as long as he/she remains homeless or, if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year.

- **Priority** in certain preschool programs.

- **Participate** in a tutorial-instructional support program, school-related activities, and/or receive other support services.

- **Obtain** information regarding how to get fee waivers, free uniforms, and low-cost or free medical referrals.

- **Transportation services:** A homeless student attending his/her school of origin has a right to transportation to go to and from the school of origin as long as (s)he is homeless or, if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year.

Dispute Resolution: If you disagree with school officials about enrollment, transportation or fair treatment of a homeless child or youth, you may file a complaint with the school district. The school district must respond and attempt to resolve it quickly. The school district must refer you to free and low cost legal services to help you, if you wish. During the dispute, the student must be immediately enrolled in the school and provided transportation until the matter is resolved. Every Illinois Public School has a Homeless Education Program Liaison who will assist you in making enrollment and placement decisions, providing notice of any appeal process, and filling out dispute forms.

If you have questions about enrollment in school, or want more information about the rights of homeless students in Illinois Public Schools, call the appropriate Regional Homeless Education Liaison from the listing below or call the Illinois State Board of Education at (1-800) 215-6379.

Area 1	630/444-2974	Cook (outside of the City of Chicago), DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties;
Area 2	815/652-2054	Boone, Bureau, Carroll, De Kalb, Henry, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Rock Island, Stark, Stephenson, Whiteside, Winnebago and Woodford counties;
Area 3	309/837-4821	Adams, Brown, Cass, Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, Logan, Mason, McDonough, Menard, Mercer, Morgan, Peoria, Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Tazewell and Warren counties;
Area 4	815/937-2950	Champaign, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Iroquois, Kankakee, Livingston, Macon, McLean, Moultrie, Piatt, Shelby and Vermilion counties;
Area 5	618/283-1673	Bond, Calhoun, Christian, Clinton, Effingham, Fayette, Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison, Marion, Monroe, Montgomery, Randolph, St. Clair and Washington counties;
Area 6	618/998-9226	Alexander, Clay, Crawford, Edwards, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Lawrence, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Richland, Saline, Union, Wabash, Wayne, White and Williamson counties;
Area 7	773/553-2242	City of Chicago

Educational Services For Homeless/Transitional Students Confidential Referral Form ³

PARISH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR HOMELESS/TRANSITIONAL STUDENTS
CONFIDENTIAL REFERRAL FORM

Date _____ Not In School _____

Student _____ (M/F) Parent/Guardian _____ Race _____

School _____ Age _____ Grade _____ Sp Ed Y/N D.O.B. _____

S.S.# or I.D.# _____ Phone Number _____

Temporary Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

THIS FORM IS TO BE COMPLETED ON HOMELESS/TRANSITIONAL STUDENTS

Referring Person _____ Position _____

Reason for referral: Problems listed below often prevent homeless children and youth from attending school. Please check the areas of concern which apply to the student identified above.

- ☐ Student lacks a permanent residence
- ☐ Student is unable to pay school fees
- ☐ Immunizations are needed
- ☐ A birth certificate is needed
- ☐ Excessive absences are a problem
- ☐ Lacks academic records and/or documentation
- ☐ Academic problems indicate a need for tutoring
- ☐ School supplies are needed
- ☐ Transportation to school is a problem
- ☐ Student/family needs assistance accessing community resources
- ☐ Behavior indicates a need for mental health counseling
- ☐ School clothes are needed:
Sizes: Shirt _____ Pants _____ Shoes _____ Other _____
- ☐ Free lunch form has not been returned
- ☐ Health problems are indicated
- ☐ Guardianship is a problem

Check all that apply:

- lives with: other family* _____
substandard housing _____
mom _____ *dad* _____
other _____ *self* _____
highly mobile _____
resides in a shelter _____
doubled-up _____



COMMENTS: _____

Other children in home: (Use back if needed)

NOTE: Return this form to (NAME OF LIAISON), Homeless Liaison for (PARISH)
Parish Schools, at (ADDRESS), or send by FAX.

PHONE: (NUMBER) _____ FAX: (NUMBER) _____

Signature: _____
Principal/Counselor/Teacher Homeless Liaison's Signature*

***LIAISON'S SIGNATURE INDICATES STUDENT(S) MEET MCKINNEY-VENTO REQUIREMENTS**

³ Louisiana Department of Education. (n.d.). *Educational services for homeless/transitional students confidential referral form*. Retrieved August 25, 2006 From: <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/2529.pdf>

Caregiver's Authorization Form ⁴

Caregiver's Authorization Form

This form is intended to address the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110) requirement that homeless children are to have access to education and other services. The McKinney-Vento Act specifically states that barriers to enrollment must be removed. In some cases, a child or youth who is homeless may not be able to reside with his/her parent or guardian.

Instructions:

- To authorize enrollment in school of a minor, complete items 1 through 4 and sign the form.
- To authorize enrollment and school-related medical care, complete all items and sign the form.

The minor named below lives in my home, and I am 18 years of age or older.

1. Name of minor: _____
2. Minor's birthdate: _____
3. My name (adult giving authorization): _____
4. My home address: _____
5. Check one or both (for example, if one parent was advised and the other could not be located):
☐ I have advised the parent(s) or other person(s) having legal custody of the minor as to my intent to authorize medical care and have received no objection.
☐ I am unable to contact the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) at this time to notify them of my intended authorization.
6. My date of birth: _____
7. My state driver's license or identification card number: _____

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of this state that the foregoing information is true and correct.

Signature _____ Date _____

Adapted from materials produced by the California Department of Education. As with any legal document, the local educational agency's legal counsel should review the document.

⁴ NCHE. (2005) Caregiver's authorization form. *Local Homeless Education Liason Toolkit* (Appendix E). Retrieved August 25, 2006 from: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/app_e.pdf

Dispute Resolution Process School Sample Forms⁵

Appendix E: Dispute Resolution Process School Sample Form*

Everyday Independent School District

.*[This form was not developed nor is it endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education. It is not a required form. It was adapted for use as an example].

School Name: _____
School Address: _____ Phone: (777) _____ Fax: (777) _____
Student's Name: _____ I.D.#: _____ Grade: ____
Current Address: _____ Current Phone: _____
Parent/Guardian/Complaining Party's Name: _____

Relationship: ☐ Parent ☐ Guardian ☐ Unaccompanied Youth ☐ Other:

Current Address: _____ Current Phone: () _____

Please note: Information regarding student's address, phone number, and information protected by Everyday School Records Act and can only be released to parent/guardian, the student, or to a person specifically designated as a representative of the parent/guardian.

Lives in a Shelter ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of school that parent chooses child to be immediately enrolled in and /or transported to/from until dispute is resolved:

Is this the school of origin*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

**School of Origin means the school that the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled.*

If no, from which school was the student transferred? _____

Reason for the Complaint: _____

Signature of parent/guardian/complaining party:

Date:

Principal's Actions on the Complaint

Taken within ____ school day(s) after receiving notice of the complaint.

Date Homeless liaison was notified of the dispute:

Action taken by principal to resolve the dispute: ____

Was the dispute resolved? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Explanation:

⁵ U.S. Department of Education. (2004). *Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program Non-Regulatory Guidance*. Retrieved August 25, 2006, from http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/guidance_jul2004.pdf

Appendix F: Dispute Resolution Process School District Sample Form*

EVERYDAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*[This form was not developed nor is it endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education. It is not a required form. It was adapted for use as an example].

Student's Name: _____ I.D.#: _____

Grade: _____

School Name: _____

District Action On Complaint

Taken within ____ school days after receiving notice of the complaint.

Did the Education Liaison resolve this dispute? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If dispute was resolved: describe the actions taken by the Education Liaison to resolve the dispute to the satisfaction of parent/guardian:

If dispute was *not* resolved to the satisfaction of the parent/guardian: provide the date that a District Education Officer convened a meeting of the parties and briefly describe the outcome of this meeting:

The following organizations are willing to provide low-cost or free legal assistance to residents of Everyday*:

Everyday Coalition for the Homeless Main Street Everyday, USA (800) 555-5555)
Everyday Coalition is willing to provide to homeless children and parents free legal services regarding educational matters.

*By listing these organizations as sources of low-cost or free legal services, the Everyday Board of Education does not in so doing recommend or advocate the use of the services of the listed organizations, nor is the Board responsible for the quality of services provided by any of these listed organizations, should their services be used.

Action taken by Everyday School District to resolve the dispute (if necessary): _

Was the dispute resolved? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Date:

Explanation:

APPENDIX 7

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSING ENROLLMENT TIMING WITH DISPLACED PARENTS AND YOUTH

Questions for Parents Enrolling Their Child in School After a Major Disaster

- * Did your child witness any violent or traumatic events during or after the disaster?
- * Does he/she become very upset, sad, or angry when separated from you?
- * Would it be safer, healthier, or better for your child to spend the day in school rather than where you are staying right now?
- * Have you talked to your child about how he/she feels about returning to school? What did he/she say?
- * Has your child seen a counselor or therapist since the disaster?
- * Would you be willing to talk to a school counselor or social worker to help them better support your child?
- * Would you be able to accompany your child on a tour of the school and to meet his/her teacher(s)?
- * Would you be able to ride the school bus/walk with your child to and from school on the first day?
- * What was your child's previous school like? How many children went to the school? How many children were in your child's class(es)? Was your child's teacher(s) a man or a woman? We may be able to place your child in a similar school or classroom.
- * Does your child have any relatives or friends attending school in this school district? We may be able to place your child in the same school or class as those students.
- * Did your child participate in clubs, sports, or other activities? We would like your child to participate in those activities in our school, too.
- * What can we do to help your child feel comfortable in school?
- * Do you feel your child is ready to return to school?

Questions for Unaccompanied Youth Enrolling in School After a Major Disaster ★

- * Did you witness any violent or traumatic events during or after the disaster?
- * Would it be safer, healthier, or better for you to spend the day in school rather than where you are staying?
- * Have you seen a counselor or therapist since the disaster?
- * Would you be willing to talk to a school counselor or social worker to help them better support you?
- * How do you feel about returning to school?
- * What was your previous school like? How many students went to the school? How many students were in your classes? We may be able to place you in a similar school or classes.
- * Do you know any other students in this school district? We may be able to place you in the same school or class as those students.
- * Did you participate in clubs, sports, or other activities? We would like you to participate in those activities in our school, too.
- * What can we do to help you feel comfortable in school?
- * Do you feel you are ready to return to school?

★ Note: Since many of these questions may provoke strong emotions in the youth, it may be best for a trained school counselor or social worker to conduct the interview.

APPENDIX 8

School Selection: A Checklist for Decision Making¹

(adapted from the Texas Homeless Education Office)

School of Origin Considerations	Local Attendance Area School Considerations
<input type="checkbox"/> Continuity of instruction <i>Student is best served due to circumstances that look to his or her past.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Continuity of instruction <i>Student is best served due to circumstances that look to his or her future.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Age and grade placement of the student <i>Maintaining friends and contacts with peers is critical to the student's meaningful school experience and participation. The student has been in this environment for an extended period of time.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Age and grade placement of the student <i>Maintaining friends and contacts with peers in the school of origin is not particularly critical to the student's meaningful school experience and participation. The student has attended the school of origin for only a brief time.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic strength <i>The child's academic performance is weak, and the child would fall further behind if he/she transferred to another school.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic strength <i>The child's academic performance is strong and at grade level, and the child would likely recover academically from a school transfer.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Social and emotional state <i>The child is suffering from the effects of mobility, has developed strong ties to the current school, and does not want to leave.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Social and emotional state <i>The child seems to be coping adequately with mobility, does not feel strong ties to the current school, and does not mind transferring.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Distance of the commute and its impact on the student's education and/or special needs <i>The advantages of remaining in the school of origin outweigh any potential disadvantages presented by the length of the commute.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Distance of the commute and its impact on the student's education and/or special needs <i>A shorter commute may help the student's concentration, attitude, or readiness for school. The local attendance area school can meet all of the necessary educational and special needs of the student.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety of the student <i>The school of origin has advantages for the safety of the student.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal safety of the student <i>The local attendance area school has advantages for the safety of the student.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Student's need for special instruction <i>The student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504 or special education and related services, can be met better at the school of origin.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Student's need for special instruction <i>The student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504 or special education and related services, can be met better at the local attendance area school.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or other temporary location <i>The student's current living situation is outside of the school-of-origin attendance zone, but his/her living situation or location continues to be uncertain. The student will benefit from the continuity offered by remaining in the school of origin.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or other temporary location <i>The student's current living situation appears stable and unlikely to change suddenly; the student will benefit from the developing relationships with peers in school who live in his local community.</i>

¹ National Center for Homeless Education. (n.d.). *Guiding the discussion on school selection*. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/sch_sel_checklist.pdf

APPENDIX 9

ENROLLMENT CHECKLIST

ACTIVITY	COMPLETED
Enrollment completed, including warm welcome by enrollment staff	
Basic needs questionnaire completed (e.g. "Educational Services For Homeless/Transitional Students Confidential Referral Form" from LA DOE (2003). http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/2529.pdf	
Basic needs indicated on questionnaire have been met	
Free meals in place	
School tour completed, personal meeting with principal completed	
Needed academic assessments completed and immediate academic placement made	
Parents interviewed about potential special needs, and interim IEP in place if necessary	
Orientation to student handbook completed	
Parent meeting and orientation completed	
Involved in school-wide welcome activities	
Involved in classroom-based welcome activities	
Peer buddy assigned	
Adult mentor assigned	
Extracurricular activity options discussed and participation encouraged	
Barriers to extracurricular participation removed	
Any needed immunizations and physical exams completed	
Academic records obtained	
Crisis counseling available and access encouraged	

APPENDIX 10

PROMPT AND PROPER PLACEMENT: ENROLLING STUDENTS WITHOUT RECORDS¹

BEST PRACTICES IN HOMELESS EDUCATION

Prompt and Proper Placement: Enrolling Students without Records



The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized as Title X, Part C, of the No Child Left Behind Act, requires schools to enroll homeless students immediately, even if they do not have the documents normally required for enrollment such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, or others. Unfortunately for many homeless students on the move, incomplete records often result in classroom/curriculum placements that promote frustration and result in failure. This document offers teachers, school counselors, and other school personnel valuable tools and information to assist in making sound educational decisions for immediate placement of homeless children and youth in appropriate classroom settings.

The Importance of Quick Assessment

Accurate assessment of a student's current academic functioning levels can have a critical impact on school performance. Sound decisions about classroom placement can provide much-needed support and minimize potential disruptions to teachers and students. The 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes and the continuing housing instability of many displaced families have underscored the importance of the role of the school in offering stability and support to students whose lives are disrupted by homelessness. Given the large numbers of families displaced by recent disasters and the associated challenges faced by highly impacted school districts, it is important that the receiving schools develop a streamlined approach to initial student assessment. The goal of this approach would be to gather information needed to support the best possible placement decisions as expediently as possible for busy school personnel. It is important to remember that according to the McKinney-Vento Act, homeless students must be enrolled and participating fully in school activities while the assessment process is taking place.

Gathering Existing Information

Regardless of the cause of their homelessness, all homeless students benefit from continuity in their education. To maximize continuity and minimize disruption as much as possible, immediate enrollment and appropriate placement decisions require a quick analysis of available information about the student being enrolled. Quick analysis of student needs should start with whatever existing information can be acquired. The McKinney-Vento Act requires the receiving school to contact the

(continued on the next page)

Who is homeless?
(McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001 – Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act – Sec 725)
The term “homeless children and youth” —

- A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and
- B. includes —
 - i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
 - ii. children and youths who 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...
 - iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - iv. migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

¹ National Center for Homeless Education. *Prompt and proper placement: Enrolling students without records*. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from <http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/assessment.pdf>

previous school immediately for school records. In the case of disasters in which the previous school was destroyed or closed, receiving schools should contact the school district office or State Coordinator for Homeless Education to see what records may be available in electronic or other form. For those students whose records might be damaged, destroyed, or otherwise unavailable, it is incumbent upon the receiving schools to begin to build new student records immediately based on information gathered from parents, students, local district or state-level student databases, and any other reliable sources of student information.

Academic Placement and Support

While waiting for official records, if phone/e-mail contact information is available, it may be helpful to talk with previous teachers, school counselors, and others for informal assistance with placement decisions. Likewise, talking with physicians and/or nurses on behalf of those students who have prescribed medications or those whose Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) require classroom accommodations may also be advantageous. It is always in the school's best interest to get as much information as possible from the prior school through informal conversations as well as official transcripts and records. It is advisable to train front-line staff in strategies to gather all available information from students and parents including any academic records, report cards, tests, homework, immunization or other medical records, IEPs or special education referrals, evaluations, meeting notes, or any other school papers the parents or child may have. Receiving schools may also be able to access standardized testing or other achievement data from state or local database systems. Keep in mind that FERPA, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, does allow transferring records and informal conversations between schools without parental consent when a child is changing schools.

Gathering Information from Parents and Students

Parents and students themselves can provide important and useful information regarding student needs and appropriate classroom placement. Interviews with parents can be conducted informally with simple, descriptive questions to learn about the student's prior academic performance.



Sample questions for parents might include:

- Do you have any papers from the previous school such as notes from teachers, homework assignments, tests, progress reports, or any other papers?
- Have you worked with your child on any recent homework assignments? If so, what were the assignments about?
- What were your child's grades like? What does he/she find easy? Difficult?
- Did you ever go to a meeting at school with a lot of teachers, a doctor or someone from the school district office?
- Did you ever sign any papers that talked about goals for your child or special school services?

Sample questions for students might include:

- What was your school day like?
- Do you remember the names of any of your books or what the covers looked like?
- What were you learning in your math/history/science/language class?
- What were some of your recent homework assignments? Do you have any old homework assignments, tests, notes from teachers, or any other papers from school?
- What was the name of your math/history/science/language class?
- How many kids were in your class? How many teachers were in your class?
- Did you ever spend time alone or in a small group with a different teacher?
- Did you ever spend time alone or in a small group in a different classroom?
- What were your grades like?

Conversations such as these with parents and students can often yield helpful information to guide initial placement decisions.

Useful Tools for Quick Assessment

Although schools should continue to seek existing records from all available sources, there may be times when no student records will be available; in these instances, a quick, valid, and reliable assessment of student academic placement needs is critical. The following section provides a representative sampling of various tools that are available and in use by educators who need to make sound initial placement decisions based on a quick assessment process. Many of these instruments are likely to be in use in schools already by school psychologists, special education teachers, and classroom teachers as part of their routine screening and diagnostic processes. A preliminary discussion among members of the school's existing diagnostic team should take place to inform choices about which instruments are best used and by whom for the individual student (s) of concern. It is important to note that in some cases, choice of assessment instruments will be driven by the school's testing protocols and whether the use of some of the suggested tools might best be reserved for use in the established special education diagnostic process. Teachers and specialists should collaborate to generate the most valuable assessment results possible. To the extent that time allows, team decisions regarding the selection of assessment tools should be the goal.

The following list is a representative, not comprehensive, sampling of assessment tools. Inclusion in the list should not be viewed as a recommendation or endorsement by NCHE. Pricing and other information are subject to change and should be confirmed with the provider if purchases are anticipated.

Quick Assessment Tools

Quick assessment in core academic subjects can be accomplished with a variety of available instruments, including:

Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills – Revised (CIBS-R)

Assesses reading comprehension, decoding, and math; individually administered; untimed; select desired subtests; PreK -3 and higher; \$139 for screen and manual; \$32.95 for record books (10); diagnostic battery available in Spanish.

Available from Curriculum Associates, Inc., www.curricassoc.com

Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR)

Assesses phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; individually administered; 25-40 minutes; K-12; \$219 for classroom kit.

Available from Riverside Publishing, www.riverpub.com

Diagnostic Screening Tests – Reading (DSTR)

Assesses comprehension, decoding, and sight vocabulary; 5-10 minutes; grades 1-3 and higher; two forms are available for test-retest applications; \$50 for manual and 50 test forms.

Available from Slosson Educational Publications, www.slosson.com

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

Assesses the development of pre-reading and early reading skills; standardized, individually administered, one-minute fluency measures; K-3 and higher; part of larger DIBELS data system, allowing online data entry and automated reports (\$1 per student per year).

Measures available for free downloading, dibels.uoregon.edu

Gray Oral Reading Test – 4 (GORT-4)

Assesses comprehension, decoding, and fluency; 15-30 minutes; grades 2-3 and higher; two forms are available for test-retest applications; \$147 for manual, student book, and 50 record forms.

Available from PRO-ED, Inc., www.proedinc.com

Informal Reading Comprehension Placement Test

Assesses reading grade level of the student, vocabulary, and comprehension; individually administered; 30-45 minutes; K-3 and higher; \$59.95 for software package.

Available from Educational Activities, Inc., www.edact.com

Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Second Edition (KTEA-II)

Assesses reading comprehension and decoding, math, written language, and oral language; individually administered; 15-45 minutes (brief form); covers areas mandated by IDEA and Reading First; \$234.95 for administration manual and 50 individual record booklets

Available from American Guidance Service, Inc. (AGS), www.agsnet.com

(continued on the next page)

KeyMath – Revised

Assess student's understanding and application of important math concepts and skills; individually administered; 30-35 minutes; grades K-12; includes two forms for pre- and post-test applications.

Available from American Guidance Service, Inc. (AGS), www.agsnet.com

Spanish Reading Comprehension Test

Assesses reading comprehension; administered in group or individually; 30 minutes; grades 1-2 and higher; available in both English and Spanish; \$20 for manual and reproducible score sheets.

Available from Moreno Publishing Company, 619-461-0565

Standardized Reading Inventory (SRI)

Assesses reading comprehension and decoding skills; individually administered; 15-45 minutes; Pre-K–3 and higher; two forms are available for test-retest applications; includes instructions for miscue analysis; \$93 for manual, student booklet, and 50 record sheets.

Available from PRO-ED, www.proedinc.com

Test of Reading Comprehension – 3rd Edition (TORC-3)

Assesses reading comprehension, vocabulary, and syntax; includes subtest on reading directions of schoolwork; administered individually or in group; 30 minutes; grades 2-3 and higher; \$139 for manual, 10 student booklets, and 50 answer sheets.

Available from PRO-ED, Inc., www.proedinc.com

Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT-3)

Assesses reading, spelling, and math; administered in group or individually; 15-30 minutes; K-3 and higher; two forms are available for test-retest applications; \$110 for manual and 50 test forms.

Available from Wide Range, Inc., 800-221-9728.

Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery (WJ-R)

Assesses reading comprehension and decoding; math, science, social studies, humanities, and handwriting; individually administered, approximately 5 minutes per subtest; K-3 and higher; available in English and Spanish; \$677 for complete battery; \$267 for standard achievement battery.

Available from Riverside Publishing Company, www.riverpub.com

Computer-based Assessment Tools

Lexia Quick Reading Test

Computerized diagnostic reading program; assesses decoding and sight vocabulary; 5-8 minutes; grades K-12.

Available from Lexia, www.lexialearning.com

Diagnostic Online Reading Assessment (DORA) and Diagnostic Online Math Assessment (DOMA)

Online tools for individual students or entire classes; grades K-12; provides reports in teacher and parent/tutor versions.

Available from Let's Go Learn, Inc., www.letsgolearn.com

STAR Reading

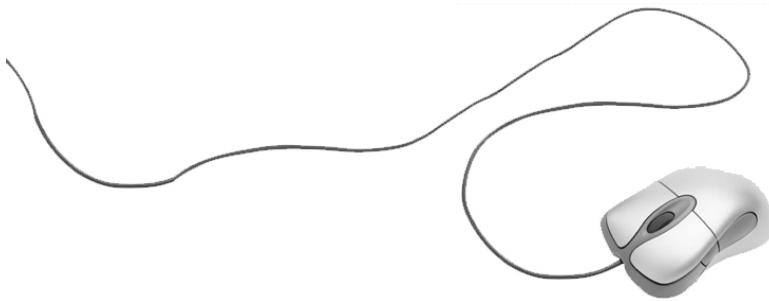
Computer-based assessment of vocabulary knowledge that correlates with reading comprehension; 10 minutes; grades 1-3 and higher. ; provides computer-generated reports; \$399 for single computer/\$1499 for school-wide site license.

Available from Renaissance Learning, www.renlearn.com

Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey

Appropriate for placement in ELP and ESL programs; assesses language proficiency; individually administered, 5 minutes per subtest; preK-3 and higher; available in English or Spanish; \$195 for manual, 25 test records, and scoring software.

Available from Riverside Publishing Company, www.riverpub.com



Final Considerations

Many textbook series have placement tests and chapter/unit pretests. These can often be used quickly and easily by classroom teachers to yield useful information to guide instructional placement decisions.

Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM), an alternative approach to academic assessment, is a method of choice among many special educators and holds promise for highly mobile students. CBM can be used to measure basic skills in reading, mathematics, spelling and written expression, and using materials from the school's curriculum. For further information regarding training for the use of this assessment approach, visit www.interventioncentral.org/html/docs/interventions/cbmwarehouse.shtml.

APPENDIX I I

RECORDS MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST ¹

DATE OF ACTIVATION: _____

REASON FOR ACTIVATION: _____

Procedures to be followed to preserve essential records in case the building is evacuated or is in danger.

Completed or N/A	By (initials)	Time	Item
			Command Post
			Health records prepared to accompany evacuating students
			Determination made that administrative records are in danger, and they can be moved to off-site storage without endangering personnel
			Records recovery team assembled
			Off-site storage location notified to be prepared to receive records (_____, ph #_____)
			Records Recovery Team Operations
			Records are to be evacuated identified
			Procured boxes to hold records
			Moved boxes to vehicles for transfer
			Electronic Records
			Identified electronic records to be saved
			Copied records onto disks
			Transported disks to off-site storage area

¹ Note. From "School emergency operations plan: Checklists," by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (n.d.). Reprinted with permission. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from: <http://www.pdenewsroom.state.pa.us/newsroom/lib/newsroom/SampleSchoolPlan-Checklists1.pdf>

APPENDIX 12

DELAWARE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION POLICIES FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS ¹

1008: DIAA Junior High/Middle School Interscholastic Athletics

2.2.1.1 A student who, pursuant to established school board policy or administrative procedure, remains in a school he/she has been attending after his/her legal residence changes to the attendance zone of a different school in the same school district, may exercise, prior to the first official student day of the subsequent academic year, a one-time election to remain at his/her current school and thereby not lose athletic eligibility. If a student chooses to remain at his/her current school and then transfers to the school in his/her new attendance zone on or after the first official student day of the subsequent academic year, he/she shall be ineligible for ninety (90) school days....

2.2.1.6 Notwithstanding 2.2.1, a student who is homeless as defined in the McKinney-Vento Act, 42 U.S.C. 11434a(2) shall be eligible to participate at the public school in which he/she is enrolled.”

1009: DIAA Senior High School Interscholastic Athletics

2.2.1 With the exception of boarding school students, a student must be living with his/her custodial parent(s), legal guardian(s), or relative caregiver in the attendance zone of the school which he/she attends, or be a student 18 years of age or older and living in the attendance zone of the school which he/she attends (see 2.2.1.7), in order to be eligible for inter-scholastic athletics in that school. In cases of joint custody, the custodial parent shall be the parent with actual physical placement as determined by court. In the case of shared custody the parents must commit to sending the student to a particular school for the year. Maintaining multiple residences in order to circumvent this requirement shall render the student ineligible....

2.2.1.8 Notwithstanding 2.2.1, a student who is homeless as defined in the McKinney-Vento Act, 42 U.S.C. 11434a(2) shall be eligible to participate at the public school in which he/she is enrolled.

2.4.2 If a student has previously participated in interscholastic athletics, he/she shall be ineligible for a period of ninety (90) school days commencing with the first day of official attendance in the receiving school unless one of the following exceptions applies:

¹ Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association. (2005). *2005-2006 Official handbook*. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from http://www.doe.k12.de.us/files/pdf/diaa_handbook200506.pdf

...2.4.2.6 The transfer is the result of the student being homeless as defined in the McKinney-Vento Act, 42 U.S.C. 11434a(2).

2.4.2.6.1 Notwithstanding the above, the student shall be ineligible under the ninety (90) school day ineligibility clause where the student's homeless status is created by the student or his/her family for the primary reason of:

2.4.2.6.1.1 Seeking a superior team; or

2.4.2.6.1.2 Seeking a team more compatible with the student's abilities; or

2.4.2.6.1.3 Dissatisfaction with the philosophy, policies, methods or actions of a coach or administrator pertaining to interscholastic athletics; or

2.4.2.6.1.4 Avoiding disciplinary action imposed by the school of origin related to or affecting interscholastic athletic participation.

APPENDIX I3

CONTACT LIST FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED A TRAUMATIC EVENT

Local Homeless Education Liaison

State Coordinator for Homeless Education

School Front Office

Local Red Cross

Local Health Clinic

Counselor or Outreach Worker

City/County Office(s)

Faith Community Contact(s)

Emergency Contact(s)

Place of residence (shelter, motel, other)

Other Useful Contacts

NCHE Toll-free HelpLine
1-800-308-2145

FEMA
1-800-621-FEMA (3362)

APPENDIX I4

SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION FORMS

San Antonio Transportation Brochure ¹



San Antonio Independent School District

1103 Austin Street • San Antonio, Texas 78208-1156

Telephone (210) 223-9792 • Fax (210) 271-7204

Transportation Department

Supplemental Transportation Request

Date of Request:	McKinney-Vento <input type="checkbox"/> Spec. Ed. <input type="checkbox"/>	LPS <input type="checkbox"/>
------------------	---	------------------------------

Student Information:

Student Name:	Grade:	SSN/ID:
Facility (if applicable)		
Facility Contact Person		
Address (location for pick-up)		Rm. / Apt. #
Parent/Guardian	Parent/Guardian Contact #	
2 nd Contact #	3 rd Contact #	

Destination School Information:

School Name	School District:
School Address	
Campus Contact Name / Phone	
Campus Bell Schedule	AM PM
Breakfast Time: (if SoO is in another LEA)	
Earliest Time a Student can be Dropped @ School with Supervision	
Special Accommodations	

Worker (please print) / Date

Authorized SAISD Staff

Date Faxed to Transportation

Request faxed to / date:

Alamo Heights <input type="checkbox"/>	Harlandale <input type="checkbox"/>	Northside <input type="checkbox"/>	South San Antonio <input type="checkbox"/>
East Central <input type="checkbox"/>	Judson <input type="checkbox"/>	San Antonio <input type="checkbox"/>	Southside <input type="checkbox"/>
Edgewood <input type="checkbox"/>	North East <input type="checkbox"/>	Schertz, Cibolo, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Universal City	Southwest <input type="checkbox"/>

Other: (identify) _____

¹ San Antonio Independent School District, Transitions Program. (n.d.). *Transportation*. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from the NCHE website: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/saisd_transportation.pdf

Spokane Transportation Agreement ²



Spokane Public Schools
excellence for everyone

HEART

All transportation requests are faxed downtown to Transportation where routes and mode of transportation will be determined. We will notify you with pick up and drop off times as well as mode when that information is available.

Your transportation will be one of the following:

School Bus

- * Student should be outside at least five minutes early waiting for the bus
- * Proper school bus behavior is expected.

Taxi

- * You **must call 353-7675** by 7:45am if your student is ill or not needing the taxi (the answering machine is on 24/7).
- * The student should be outside waiting for the cab five minutes early
- * If you have questions, call the HEART number: **353-7675** – NOT Spokane Cab
- * A Parent/Guardian must be home to meet the student when he/she is dropped off.
- * Too many infractions could result in the loss of taxi service.
- * Students must wear seat belts.

In Lieu Of

- * Can only be used when other methods of transportation are not available.
- * Checks are issued once each month – to be picked up at the HEART office; you will be called.
- * District 81 will measure mileage and check attendance -- you will receive no pay for days the student is tardy or absent.
- * Mileage, when approved, will begin on the day "in lieu of" form is signed – it will not be retroactive.

STA Pass/Tokens

- * Bus passes are left at the end of each month in the school office – the student will be notified.
- * Adult pass expectations are that the parent/guardian will accompany the student(s) to and from school.
- * Lost bus passes will NOT be replaced – the student will be placed on the "two token a day" program.
- * Loss of second buss pass will result in the "two token a day" program for the remainder of the school year.
- * Lack of attendance will result in the loss of bus pass.

I understand and agree with the information provided.

Parent/Guardian/Unaccompanied Youth Signature

Date

Children: _____

¹² Spokane Public Schools. (n.d.). *Spokane Public Schools transportation agreement*. Retrieved August 25, 2006, from the NCHE website: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/spokane_transp.pdf

² Spokane Public Schools. (n.d.). *Spokane Public Schools transportation agreement*. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from the NCHE website: http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/spokane_transp.pdf

APPENDIX 15

SAMPLE FREE MEAL APPLICATION FORM ¹

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

NOTICE OF FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEAL POLICY – USE ONE APPLICATION FOR ALL STUDENTS IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD - ONLY FOSTER CHILDREN USE ONE FORM FOR EACH CHILD

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The School Board of Broward County, serves nutritious meals every school day. All meals served meet nutrition standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Students may buy lunch for \$1.00 in Elementary School, \$1.35 in Middle and \$1.50 in High; and breakfast for \$.50 in Elementary and \$.60 for Middle/High School. Children may also get free or reduced price meals. Reduced price meals are \$.40 cents for lunch and \$.30 for breakfast. Charter schools' may differ from Broward County Schools' meal prices; please check with your child's charter school for meal prices. If a child has been determined by a doctor to be handicapped and the handicap prevents the child from eating the regular school meal, the school will make reasonable substitutions prescribed by a doctor.

To apply at any time during the year for free or reduced price meals for your children, complete the application and return it to the school. **Please answer all questions on this form. For assistance with an application for meal benefits, you may visit our website at www.broward.k12.fl.us/schoolfoodservice.** An application which does not contain total household income, the names of all household members, the total number of household members, the social security number of the household member signing this application or state that the household member does not have one, your Food Stamp or TANF case number, and the signature of an adult household member can not be processed. You will receive written notification within ten days of receipt of the application. If you do not agree with the district's decision, you may wish to discuss your application. If you wish to review the decision further, you have the right to a fair hearing. This can be done by calling the Food and Nutrition Office at (754) 321-0250, outside Broward County 1 (866) 754-2973 or by writing to the Director of Food and Nutrition Services, 7720 West Oakland Park Boulevard, Sunrise, Florida, 33351. Your child does not have to be a U.S. Citizen in order to qualify for free or reduced price meals.

In certain cases, foster children are also eligible for these benefits. If you have foster children living with you and wish to apply for such meals for them, indicate it on the application. Complete one application for each Foster Child. Foster children may be eligible for free or reduced price meals regardless of the income of the households with whom they reside. Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please complete an application. If your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. All other allowance must be included in your gross income.

The information you give on the application is confidential, it will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility for free or reduced price meals and may be checked by an assigned verification official at any time during the school year. You will receive a written notice if your application is selected for verification.

If you would like information about Medicaid or Healthy Kids Insurance Program please contact Rebecca Miele (954) 467-4885 or Liliana Marin (954) 467-8737 (para español). If you are Homeless or a Migrant, please call the School Board of Broward County Homeless Liaison at (754)321-2494 or Migrant Coordinator at (754)321-1414 to obtain information on receiving free meals.

The child's meal eligibility is good for the entire school year. If you are not eligible now and during the school year there is a decrease in your family income due to reasons such as unemployment, there is an increase in your family size or if you start to receive Food Stamps or TANF, please contact the Food and Nutrition Office for an application at (754) 321-0250. This change may make your child eligible for free or reduced price meals. List the household income amount that you normally receive, including regular overtime.

¹ Note. From *Free and reduced price meal policy*, by Broward County (FL) Public Schools. Reprinted with permission.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: This explains how we will use the information you give. Section 9 of the National School Lunch Act requires that, unless your child's food stamp or TANF case number is provided, you must include the social security number of the adult household member signing the application or indicate that the household member does not have a social security number. Provision of a social security number is not mandatory, but if a social security number is not given or an indication is not made that the signer does not have such a number, the application cannot be processed. The social security number may be used to identify the household member in carrying out efforts to verify the correctness of information stated on the application. These verification efforts may be carried out through program reviews, audits, and investigations and may include contacting employers to determine income, contacting a food stamp or welfare office to determine current certification of receipt of Food Stamps or TANF benefits, contacting the state employment security office to determine the amount of benefits received and checking the documentation produced by household members to prove the amount of income received. These efforts may result in a loss or reduction of benefits, administrative claims or legal actions if incorrect information is reported.

NON- DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. In accordance with Federal law and the U. S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited basis apply to all programs). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

INCOMPLETE, ILLEGIBLE OR INCORRECT APPLICATIONS WILL DELAY MEAL BENEFITSUNTIL YOUR APPLICATION IS PROCESSED, PLEASE PACK A LUNCH FOR YOUR CHILD OR GIVE THEM MONEY TO PURCHASE MEALS***

HOW TO FILL OUT THIS FORM:

PART 1 List the student number, full name and birth date for all students attending Broward County Schools.

PART 2 Enter the school code.

PART 3 Households receiving Food Stamps must write currently certified case number in the space provided. This is a ten-digit number starting with the number one. Number must be listed next to EACH student receiving the benefit. Sign the application.

PART 4 If the student is employed, list the student's GROSS monthly income. Do not list other household members' income here.

PART 5 If you are applying for a Foster Child, check the box. YOU MUST COMPLETE ONE APPLICATION PER HOUSEHOLD OR ONE FOR EACH FOSTER CHILD. In Part 4 enter the Personal Use Income for the student, if receiving none, enter "0".

PART 6 If applying for Homeless, Migrant or Runaway, please check the box. Please call the School Board of Broward County Homeless Liaison at (754) 321-2494 or Migrant Coordinator at (754) 321-1414 to obtain information on receiving free meals.

PART 7 Print the first and last name of all adults and children not listed in Part 1. The box must be checked if the individual has no income. Enter the Gross income BEFORE DEDUCTIONS in the appropriate column. You must check the box indicating how often the income is received; weekly, bi-weekly, twice a month or monthly. Do not total incomes across or down. Enter the total number of people listed in Parts 1 and 7. Do not list Foster Children with other members of the household. A Foster Child is a household of one. If you are in the Military Housing Allowance Initiative do not report this allowance. Include the name of deployed service member here.

PART 8 Enter the Social Security Number, Signature, address, telephone numbers and date. If you do not want information on the application used in determining the student's eligibility in other educational programs check the box. **OPTIONAL:** You do not have to provide this information. Check the box indicating the student's race/ethnic identity. **STUDENT NUMBER:** To correctly assign benefits, the student's number is used. This number is a 10-digit, unique State Identification Number assigned to your child as an enrollment identifier in the Broward County School System – it ensures that the benefits are assigned to the correct student. You can obtain the Student Number from the report card envelope or the school that your child attends. Please obtain this number before submitting the application.

INCOME THAT MUST BE REPORTED		FEDERAL INCOME GUIDELINES 2005-2006				TO AVOID A DELAY IN THE APPLICATION PROCESS																																								
<p>Income means money earned before deductions for income taxes, employee's social security taxes, insurance premiums, bonds and the like. Income includes but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monetary compensation for services including wages, salaries, commissions or fees - Net income from self-employed farmers and self-employed businessman - Social Security/ Veteran's payments/ Alimony or child support payments - Dividends or interest on savings or bonds/Income from estates or trusts - Net rental income/Net royalties/ Private pensions or annuities/ Foster Care benefits - Public assistance or welfare payments/ Unemployment Compensation - Portion of deployed service members' income made available to the household - Government civilian employees or military retirement pensions-not military housing allowance - Regular contributions from people not living in the house - Other cash income would include cash amounts received or withdrawn from any source, i.e. savings, investments, trust accounts and other sources which would be available to pay for the price of a child's meal. 		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>HOUSEHOLD SIZE</th> <th>YEARLY</th> <th>MONTHLY</th> <th>WEEKLY</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>\$17,705</td> <td>\$1,476</td> <td>\$341</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>23,736</td> <td>1,978</td> <td>457</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>29,767</td> <td>2,481</td> <td>573</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>35,798</td> <td>2,984</td> <td>689</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>41,829</td> <td>3,486</td> <td>805</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>47,860</td> <td>3,989</td> <td>921</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>53,891</td> <td>4,491</td> <td>1,037</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>59,922</td> <td>4,994</td> <td>1,153</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EACH ADDITIONAL MEMBER ADD</td> <td>+6,031</td> <td>+503</td> <td>+116</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				HOUSEHOLD SIZE	YEARLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY	1	\$17,705	\$1,476	\$341	2	23,736	1,978	457	3	29,767	2,481	573	4	35,798	2,984	689	5	41,829	3,486	805	6	47,860	3,989	921	7	53,891	4,491	1,037	8	59,922	4,994	1,153	EACH ADDITIONAL MEMBER ADD	+6,031	+503	+116	<p>PRINT CLEARLY WITH BLACK INK. DO NOT USE OTHER COLORS OR PENCIL.</p> <p>INCLUDE THE STUDENT NUMBER.</p> <p>CHECK ONLY ONE FREQUENCY BOX INDICATING HOW OFTEN YOU GET PAID.</p> <p>ENTER TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS LIVING IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD.</p> <p>SIGN THE APPLICATION.</p> <p>DO <u>NOT</u> WRITE ADULT S' INCOME IN PART 4.</p> <p>DO <u>NOT</u> USE WHITE OUT, FOLD, TEAR OR STAPLE THIS FORM.</p> <p>DO <u>NOT</u> ENTER "O", "NA", CROSS OUT SECTIONS OR DRAW LINES, IF YOU DO NOT HAVE INCOME TO DECLARE IN PART 7.</p>
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APPENDIX I 6

MEDIA RELATIONS TIP SHEET ¹

Ordinarily in a school emergency, all calls from the media should be referred to the... Office of Community Relations.

If you must talk with members of the media about an emergency or normal situation at your school, here are a few basic guidelines that will help you:

- Above all, plan what you want to say.
- Before you meet with reporters, write down the most important points you want to make.
- Limit your points to three.
- Keep your sentences short and your words clear.
- Practice.

Here are some key phrases that can help you organize your thoughts:

“The important facts are. . .”

“What I can tell you is . . .”

“What we have done to ensure the safety of our staff and students is . . .”

“We take this very seriously.”

If you don’t know the answer, say, “I will get the information and get back to you. What is your deadline?”

Be sure you know whose responsibility it is to answer the question:

“This matter is under police investigation.”

“This is a medical issue. Please contact the health department.”

“Only the school board can change school policy.”

As the principal of the school or the principal’s representative, you must set the interview parameters. You set the place and time.

If you want to have members of the press remain outside the school, you can meet them on the sidewalk. If, on the other hand, you want a more relaxed interview, invite the reporters into your office.

You set the timing. It is courteous to ask the reporter if he or she is on deadline and to respect that deadline. At the same time, you have responsibilities to the students in your building that must also be respected.

¹ Note. From *Crisis management workbook (Section 11)*, by Office of Security and Risk Management Services of Fairfax County Public Schools, VA. (n.d.). Adapted with permission. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from: <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/safety-security/planning/cmw.pdf>

You set the topics. In a television interview, always ask the reporter before the camera is rolling what questions he or she would like to ask. Tell him or her what you feel free to talk about and what you cannot comment on. Reporters want to tape a good interview or write a good story. They will most likely work with you. You can conclude an interview politely but firmly if you can't negotiate the subject matter.

Have confidence when you engage in an interview. Be polite. Be forthcoming with all the information that you can. Educate the reporter. Show the reporter how the story can help support the mission of the schools (e.g., send a message to the community that schools take threats of violence seriously or send a message to parents that they must talk with their children about the dangers of abusing over-the-counter medications).

Before you start an interview, be sure you can get out gracefully:

“Thank you very much for coming.”

“You can help us by . . .”

“When we have more information, we will . . .”

APPENDIX 17

DISASTER ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL TOOL FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS¹

Hurricane Assessment and Referral Tool for Children and Adolescents

PROVIDER'S NAME: _____ PROVIDER #: _____

SERVICE LOCATION ADDRESS: _____ ZIP: _____

Was the parent or caregiver present during the session? ☐ NO ☐ YES Name of Hurricane(s): _____

Child's Name: _____ Child's School: _____

LOCATION TYPE: (CHECK ONE)		
<input type="checkbox"/> (1) TRANSITIONAL HOUSING/SHELTER	<input type="checkbox"/> (2) SCHOOL	<input type="checkbox"/> (3) HOME
<input type="checkbox"/> (5) DISASTER RECOVERY CENTER	<input type="checkbox"/> (6) HEALTH PROVIDER	<input type="checkbox"/> (7) PLACE OF WORSHIP
<input type="checkbox"/> (9) OTHER _____	<input type="checkbox"/> (8) MENTAL HEALTH CENTER	
SERVICE TYPE: (CHECK ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Contact <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Counseling <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Services		DATE ASSESSMENT TOOL ADMINISTERED: ____ / ____ / ____
SESSION NUMBER: ____		
RISK CATEGORIES: (CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY)		
<input type="radio"/> (1) Seriously Injured <input type="radio"/> (2) Family member/friend seriously injured or killed; Who? _____ <input type="radio"/> (3) Witnessed injury/death <input type="radio"/> (4) Was separated from parent(s) or primary caretaker(s) <input type="radio"/> (4a) Currently separated from parents or primary caretaker(s) With whom is child living at present? _____ <input type="radio"/> (5) Home destroyed/badly damaged by hurricane/flooding (circle one) <input type="radio"/> (5a) Condition of home unknown <input type="radio"/> (6) Saw neighborhood destroyed or badly damaged <input type="radio"/> (6a) Saw other areas destroyed or badly damaged <input type="radio"/> (7) Pet: <u>separated from</u> , <u>lost</u> , <u>hurt</u> or <u>killed</u> (circle one) <input type="radio"/> (8) Belongings, clothes/toys destroyed by hurricane/flooding <input type="radio"/> (8a) Condition of belongings unknown <input type="radio"/> (9) Evacuated with <u>no time to prepare</u> / <u>time to prepare</u> (circle one) <input type="radio"/> (10) Trapped/difficulty evacuating <input type="radio"/> Isolated <input type="radio"/> New Orleans Superdome/Convention Center <input type="radio"/> In other crowded shelter <input type="radio"/> (11) Exposed to violence or looting specify: _____		
<input type="radio"/> (12) Displaced from home; Length of time: _____ <input type="radio"/> (12a) Number of shelter/displacement centers: _____ <input type="radio"/> (12b) Currently in shelter/displacement center; Length of time: _____ <input type="radio"/> (13) Moved to a new place because of hurricane/flooding <input type="radio"/> (13a) If moved, extended family in the area <input type="radio"/> (14) Transferred to new school because of hurricane/flooding <input type="radio"/> (14a) Length of time in new school _____ weeks <input type="radio"/> (14b) Currently out of school because of hurricane/flooding <input type="radio"/> (15) Helped in rescue/recovery efforts <input type="radio"/> (16) Family member served as rescue/recovery worker <input type="radio"/> (17) Parent unemployed <input type="radio"/> (17a) Before the hurricane <input type="radio"/> (17b) because of hurricane/flooding <input type="radio"/> (18) Previous hurricane/flood experience <input type="radio"/> (19) Previous experience with a counselor or doctor for emotional problems <input type="radio"/> (20) Taking medication for emotional or behavioral issues before the disaster. Is medication currently available? <input type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> (21) Past major loss or trauma; Briefly describe: _____ <input type="radio"/> (22) Substance abuse problem <u>now</u> or in the <u>past</u> (circle one); Currently being treated? <input type="radio"/> NO <input type="radio"/> YES <input type="radio"/> (23) Other: _____		
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: (CHECK ONLY ONE FOR EACH CATEGORY)		
AGE (in years): _____ SEX: <input type="radio"/> MALE <input type="radio"/> FEMALE CITY OF ORIGIN: _____ SCHOOL PREVIOUSLY ATTENDED: _____	ETHNICITY: <input type="checkbox"/> (1) WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> (5) MIDDLE EASTERN <input type="checkbox"/> (2) HISPANIC ORIGIN <input type="checkbox"/> (6) AMERICAN INDIAN/ <input type="checkbox"/> (3) BLACK ALASKAN NATIVE <input type="checkbox"/> (4) ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER <input type="checkbox"/> (7) UNKNOWN <input type="checkbox"/> (8) OTHER: _____	PREFERRED LANGUAGE: <input type="checkbox"/> (1) ENGLISH <input type="checkbox"/> (2) SPANISH <input type="checkbox"/> (3) OTHER: _____

¹ National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (2005, September). *Hurricane assessment and referral tool for children and adolescents*. Retrieved September 11, 2006 from: http://www.nctsn.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/intervention_manuals/referraltool.pdf

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:

These questions can be addressed to a child/youth or, for younger children, to the parent/caregiver of a child, who answers in terms of their concerns for the child.

SPECIFY PERSON COMPLETING ASSESSMENT: ☐ CHILD ☐ PARENT/GUARDIAN ☐ CHILD AND PARENT TOGETHER

INTRODUCTION:

I want to talk to you about your (your child's) feelings and thoughts about the hurricane/flooding and how much they are causing problems **now**. Think about your thoughts, feelings, and behavior **DURING THE LAST MONTH** (please remind child/parent of this **for each question**)

For each question choose **ONE** of the following responses and enter the NUMBER of the response in the box for that question.

ANSWER CHOICES: (0) NONE (1) LITTLE (2) SOME (3) MUCH (4) MOST

Item	ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	SCORE 0 - 4
1	Do you get upset, afraid or sad when something makes you think about the hurricane/flood/evacuation?	
2	Do you have bad dreams or nightmares about what happened?	
3	Do you have upsetting thoughts or pictures that come into your mind about what happened?	
4	Do you try not to think about or talk about what happened?	
5	Do you stay away from places, people or things that make you remember the hurricane/flood/evacuation?	
6	<i>Since the hurricane/flood/evacuation, especially in the past four weeks</i> , do you feel that nothing is fun for you any more or that you just aren't interested in anything?	
7	Do you have difficulty falling asleep at night or find that you wake up in the night because of what happened?	
8	Do you often feel jumpy or nervous?	
9	Do you find it harder to concentrate or pay attention to things than you usually do?	
10	<i>Since the hurricane/flood/evacuation, especially in the past four weeks</i> , do you worry about what is going to happen to you/your family/your friends?	
11	Do you often feel irritable or grouchy?	
12	Do you often feel sad, down or depressed?	
13	Have you been more or less interested in eating since what happened?	
14	<i>Since the hurricane/flood/evacuation, especially in the past four weeks</i> , have you had more aches and pains such as stomachaches or headaches?	
15	Do you have less energy than usual?	
16	If in school: Do you find it harder to get your schoolwork done?	
17	Do you worry about something else bad happening to you/ your family/your friends?	
18	<i>Since the hurricane/flood/evacuation, especially in the past four weeks</i> are you having a harder time getting along with your family or your friends?	
19	If in a new school: Are you having a hard time making new friends?	
20	Are you finding it harder to do or enjoy activities that you used to enjoy?	
21	How bothered are you by these questions?	
22	Have you used drugs or alcohol since the hurricane/evacuation/flood?	
Additional Questions for Parents (Required for parents of young children; recommended for parents of all children and adolescents)		
1	Has your child been more clingy or worried about separation?	
2	Has your child been more quiet and withdrawn?	
3	Has your child talked repeatedly about or asked questions about the hurricane/flooding/evacuation?	
4	<i>For parents of young children</i> , has your child's play been about the hurricane/flooding/evacuation?	
5	<i>For parents of young children</i> , have you noticed changes in your child's development (e.g., bedwetting, baby talk, need more help with self care)	
6	Is your child having more behavior problems?	
7	Do you have other concerns about your child since the hurricane/flooding? What are they? _____	

Count the number of entries in the last column of the above table that have a score of 3 or 4. **Items scored 3 or 4, total HERE:**

REFERRAL: If the total is 4 or more for scores of 3 or 4, discuss the possibility of a referral for mental health services.

Did you offer a referral for services?

☐ NO ☐ YES, based on the total score. ☐ YES, but not based on total score – SPECIFY REASON: _____

Did the child/parent accept the referral? ☐ NO ☐ YES

If the referral was accepted, did the child/parent choose a specific agency/provider to make contact with?

☐ NO ☐ YES, please INDICATE AGENCY NAME & PROVIDER:

AGENCY NAME: _____ PROVIDER: _____

APPENDIX 18

DISASTER MENTAL HEALTH PLAN CHECKLIST ¹

A CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO EVALUATE AND IMPLEMENT THE MENTAL HEALTH COMPONENT OF YOUR SCHOOL CRISIS AND EMERGENCY PLAN

The US Department of Education has published a model emergency-response and crisis-management plan for schools, which is now available at www.ed.gov/emergencyplan. Mental health issues are an important part of this plan. Based on lessons learned from schools directly affected by the tragedy and loss of September 11, 2001, the School Crisis and Intervention Unit of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed this checklist for your use to assess the mental health component of your school's Crisis and Emergency Preparedness Plan. We encourage you to use this checklist as a guide to determine how well your school is prepared to respond to the immediate and long-term psychological effects on students, their families, and staff after a crisis or disaster.

MITIGATION & PREVENTION

Identify and Assess the Risks

- ☐ Identify the most common kinds of crises and disasters that may impact your school
- ☐ Identify hazards or sites that may pose a threat to your school in the event of a disaster or terrorist act (e.g., factories, commercial transportation routes, conventional and nuclear power plants)

PREPARATION

Expect the Unexpected

- ☐ Develop a comprehensive crisis and emergency-response plan incorporating both immediate and long-term mental health responses to the negative consequences of potential hazards
- ☐ Establish relationships with local mental health professionals and agencies as well as the community-based organizations specializing in disaster and trauma
- ☐ Define the roles of your school staff, qualified community mental health providers, and other community partners for different types of crises and phases of response and recovery (e.g., disaster-relief organizations, faith-based organizations, victim-assistance/victim-advocacy organizations, emergency medical services, first responders, and public health)
- ☐ Conduct regular annual or bi-annual crisis team practice drills for crisis response during different times of the day (e.g., lunchtime, recess, different periods)
- ☐ Identify students and/or staff who may have special needs or may be psychologically vulnerable during crises (e.g., wheelchair bound, visually or hearing-impaired students or staff, students with pre-existing developmental, psychological, and emotional difficulties, students who have experienced other trauma or major loss)
- ☐ Develop crisis and emergency-response protocols, practices, and materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to reflect the diversity of your school family
- ☐ Create redundant or back-up systems for evacuation, family reunion, and communication with your staff and parents during the crisis and recovery periods
- ☐ Provide your new staff members and substitute staff with adequate background information and training regarding crisis response
- ☐ Review annually your school crisis and emergency-response plans, protocols, and practices with community partners, including your school's response and lessons learned from past crises
- ☐ Conduct staff development on selected topics (e.g., impact of violence and traumatic events on children, adults, and the school climate; early warning signs and risk behaviors associated with traumatic stress; psychological first aid; evidence-based interventions; immediate and long-term recovery; suicide prevention and threat assessment; and vicarious trauma/effects of cumulative stress)

¹ National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (n.d.). *A checklist for school personnel to evaluate and implement the mental health component of your school crisis and emergency plan*. Retrieved September 11, 2006 from: http://www.nctsn.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/edu_materials/Challenger%20Newsletter%20Checklist-final-sw_rvsd.pdf

RESPONSE

Are You Ready?

- ❑ Assess the level of student and staff exposure to violence and identify those most at risk for emotional distress or problems requiring support and assistance
- ❑ Activate resources for the immediate, concrete needs of the students, families, and staff
- ❑ Identify the auditory, visual, and/or other sensory cues that serve as traumatic reminders of the event and monitor the range of trauma-related behaviors among students and staff
- ❑ Implement a program of support and provide psychological educational materials to students, staff and parents to help with reactivity to reminders
- ❑ Develop media messages during a crisis to disseminate trauma-related information and ways that parents can support the recovery of their children
- ❑ Provide regular information updates and maintain open communication with teachers, other staff, and parents. Work with teachers to provide developmentally appropriate information to students. Monitor rumors and maintain timely, accurate information
- ❑ Develop a system to identify and follow psychologically vulnerable students and staff during the recovery period

RECOVERY

Addressing Long-Term Needs

- ❑ Identify students and staff who may need long-term mental health support or intervention and develop the school and community resources to provide these services
- ❑ Monitor the effects of cumulative stress on caregivers such as office staff, teachers, aides, and crisis team members
- ❑ Provide information on how to cope with cumulative stress and modify work roles/responsibilities or add volunteer or support staff as needed
- ❑ Make educational materials available to parents and staff on topics such as common symptoms and constructive ways to cope with stress
- ❑ Develop short-term modifications of school curriculum as students and staff are recovering
- ❑ Establish working relationship with Employee Assistance Programs
- ❑ Consider offering school-based mental health services provided by community, university, or public/non-profit mental health agencies after large-scale events and identify funding to support those services (e.g., Project SERV)
- ❑ Follow up with student referrals made to community agencies
- ❑ Note secondary adversities, such as subsequent losses and traumas, (e.g., parental loss of employment, separation, divorce, death, suicide or suicide attempt, loss of residence)
- ❑ Plan a response for the anniversary period several months in advance, including a needs assessment to identify students at continued risk



The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) and its nationwide network of partners is dedicated to raising the standard of care and improving access to services for traumatized children, their families, and communities throughout the United States. The NCTSN is supported by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

www.NCTSN.net

APPENDIX I9

SAMPLE CASE MANAGEMENT FORM ¹

Name of Case Manager _____

Name of Client _____

Various disaster-related needs and potential resources for addressing those needs have been identified through a process of needs assessment and client interviews.

All identified strengths of the client:

All identified needs of the client:

To resolve these needs, the following resources are available through funds or materials owned by the client or received for the purpose of recovery from the disaster:

Needs with no resources to address them are prioritized as follows:

¹ National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2004). *Long-term recovery manual (Appendix IV, Casework management in long-term recovery)*. Retrieved August 25, 2006 from: <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Prioritized needs (basic living needs) for which the case manager will offer assistance in resolving are:

Possible sources of assistance for addressing these needs:

The client accepts responsibility for the following action relative to this Recovery Plan:

The Case Manager accepts responsibility for the following action relative to this Recovery Plan:

Copies of this form should be provided to both the Case Manager and the Client.”

APPENDIX 20

QUICK-START DISASTER RESPONSE TOOL

In the event of a disaster, the following basic checklist can guide the immediate responses of local liaisons and school districts that are still in the process of establishing a robust McKinney-Vento program. This tool can also help new local liaisons quickly prioritize their efforts and implement the basics of a strong McKinney-Vento program. This tool references sections in the toolbox for further information, strategies, and resources.

1. Identify homeless children and youth within the school and community (II.C, II.B)

A. Have enrollment staff use residency information forms / McKinney-Vento enrollment forms for all enrolling students.

B. Disseminate outreach brochures and posters that describe student eligibility and provide local liaison contact information to all schools and community agencies.

2. Track students (II.H)

A. Communicate with the school district data processing department to add data elements to the district student information system, including student residency status and a disaster code.

3. Enroll students immediately (II.C, II. A)

A. Explain the basic legal requirements to enrollment and front office personnel.

B. Conduct expedited, basic information sessions for enrollment and front office personnel, including enrollment without school records, proof of address, birth certificate, immunization records, and proof of guardianship. Information sessions can take the following formats:

- i. Conference Calls
- ii. Group e-mails
- iii. Web-based trainings
- iv. Workshops/meetings

C. Work with the administration to enact emergency district policies and eventually to align all district policies with the McKinney-Vento Act.

4. Ensure proper academic placement (II.D)

5. Expedite transportation requests (II. F)

A. Identify the persons responsible for transportation in your district, explain the law to them, and request their assistance.

B. Provide information explaining the law.

C. Develop forms to facilitate and systematize the process.

6. Expedite food service requests (II. G)

A. Identify the persons responsible for processing school meal requests, explain the law to them, and request their assistance.

B. Develop forms to facilitate and systematize the process.

7. Assess and meet basic needs (III. A)

A. Have enrollment personnel and/or school counselors conduct basic needs assessments.

B. Use collaborative relationships with other school district departments and the community to meet basic needs.

8. Assess and meet mental health needs (III. A)

A. Ensure that school counselors and teachers are aware of the warning signs of post-traumatic stress disorder and related difficulties in children and youth.

B. Prepare a list of free or low-cost mental health service providers in the school district and community to disseminate to school personnel and families.

9. Connect with the community (I.A)

A. Prepare a short list of key community resources and keep it handy. Toolbox pages provide some ideas.

B. Contact those key resources and inform them of your role, basic McKinney-Vento rights, and what the school has to offer.

10. Set up a system for continuous monitoring and reporting (II.H)

A. Designate a staff member in each school for weekly updates (perhaps a school counselor or assistant principal). This person can inform the local liaison of unmet needs, challenges, and successful strategies.

B. Maintain the student information system with current information.

APPENDIX 2 I

STATE COORDINATORS' COMPANION

The McKinney-Vento Toolbox is designed to assist school district personnel in building a robust and rigorous McKinney-Vento program. However, State Coordinators for Homeless Education may find many of the tools useful, and all can be used for technical assistance and training.

The following specific points will assist State Coordinators in making the best use of this toolbox. State Coordinators should:

1. Assist school districts in completing the self-assessments, to ensure that they evaluate their McKinney-Vento programs objectively and critically. This type of an evaluation will permit districts to take advantage of the toolbox and improve their programs. If used correctly, the self-assessment could also be a useful tool for evaluating subgrant applications and for program evaluations and monitoring.
2. Link to sample state emergency response plans:
<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/dtac/default.asp>
3. Link to sample state-level dispute resolution procedures:
Delaware: <http://www.state.de.us/research/AdminCode/title14/900/901.shtml#TopOfPage>
Maryland: <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/13a/13a.05.09.07.htm>
4. Pursue collaborative relationships on the state level. In addition to the organizations listed in the chart in Appendix 2, State Coordinators may wish to pursue collaborative relationships with the organizations in the table below. State Coordinators should also make every effort to join the task forces of their State Emergency Management Agency and/or Emergency Operations Center.

STATE-LEVEL CONTACTS FOR COLLABORATION

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
State Board of Charter Schools National Charter School Clearinghouse: http://www.ncsc.info/	In many states, charter schools are an important alternative education venue. They may be unaware of their obligations under the McKinney-Vento Act.			
Child Welfare System and Family Courts	State child welfare contact info: http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl_dsp_website.cfm?rs_ID=16&rate_chno=AZ-0004E			
State Coalitions Against Domestic Violence	State domestic violence coalition contact information: http://www.ncadv.org/resources/StateCoalitionList_73.html			
Governor's Office National Governors' Association: http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga	As the chief executive of the state, the governor can be a powerful ally for McKinney-Vento programs. Many governors have special offices or task forces on issues such as children and families, youth, homelessness, and education.			
Department of Health	Health departments manage public health concerns throughout the state.			
Department of Health and Human Services	Health and human service agencies manage physical and mental health care and social services.			
Department of Housing and Community Affairs / Housing and Urban Development	Housing departments manage the supply and availability of affordable housing in the state, as well as services for people in homeless situations.			
State Legislature National Conference of State Legislatures: http://www.ncsl.org/	Members of the state legislature can champion laws to support the rights and needs of families and children experiencing homelessness, to facilitate implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act, and to increase funding for homeless services in the schools and the community.			

Organization	Role/Function	Local Contact Info	Contacted?	Follow-Up
State Mental Health Association To find contact info: http://www.nmha.org/affiliates/directory/index.cfm	Mental Health Associations (MHAs) bring together mental health consumers, parents, advocates, and service providers for collaboration and action. MHAs provide public education, information and referral, support groups, rehabilitation services, socialization, and housing services to those confronting mental health problems and their loved ones.			
Department of Mental Health http://www.nasmhpd.org/index.cfm	A state's mental health department coordinates its mental health services and programs to support people with mental retardation. This department may go by different names in different states.			
Department of Preparedness or Emergency Management	Departments of emergency management or preparedness lead the state's efforts in disaster planning, response, and recovery.			
State Refugee Coordinators	State contact information available at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/coordina1.htm			
Department of Transportation	The state's transportation department manages all the transportation resources of the state. Find links to each state's transportation agency at: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/webstate.htm			
Youth Services agencies and organizations	State and regional youth service agencies are important collaborative partners. Many states have established youth service task forces to coordinate youth services effectively and efficiently. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act requires funded programs to collaborate with schools. For Family and Youth Services Bureau Regional Office contacts: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/youthdivision/resources/regional-rhycontacts.htm			