**Services & Supports for Students Experiencing Homelessness:   
What does the law say?**

**Attendance/Enrollment**

* **Immediate Enrollment/Identification**
  + The terms “enroll” and “enrollment” include attending classes and participating fully in school activities. [42 U.S.C. § 11434a(1)]
  + SEAs must eliminate enrollment delays caused by requirements of immunization and other health records; residency requirements; lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documentation; guardianship issues; or uniform or dress code requirement. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(H)]
  + SEAs and LEAs must develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of children and youth experiencing homelessness in school, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(I)],
  + Schools must enroll children and youth experiencing homelessness immediately, and ensure they receive educational and related services for which they are eligible, even if they are unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, or have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C)(i)]
  + Enrolling schools must contact the school last attended by the student immediately to obtain relevant academic and other records. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C)(ii)]
  + If a child or youth experiencing homelessness needs to obtain immunization or other required health records, the enrolling school will immediately refer the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to the local liaison, who will assist in obtaining necessary immunizations or screenings, or immunization or other required health records. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C)(iii)]
* **School of Origin vs. Local Attendance Area School**
  + School of Origin - The local educational agency, according to the child's or youth's best interest, shall continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness; in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; and for the remainder of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year.

OR enroll the child in -

* + Local Attendance Area School - Any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(A)(ii)]

**Best Interest Determination**

* + SCHOOL STABILITY - In determining the best interest of the child or youth the local educational agency shall-
    - presume that keeping the child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth;
    - consider student-centered factors related to the child's or youth's best interest, including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless children and youth, giving priority to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth;
    - if, after conducting the best interest determination and the student-centered factors the local educational agency determines that it is not in the child's or youth's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth, provide the child's or youth's parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the reasons for its determination, in a manner and form understandable to such parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, including information regarding the right to appeal, and
    - in the case of an unaccompanied youth, ensure that the local educational agency liaison assists in placement or enrollment decisions under this subparagraph, gives priority to the views of such unaccompanied youth, and provides notice to such youth of the right to appeal. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(B)]
* **Transportation**
  + Transportation must be provided to and from the school of origin at the request of the parent or guardian, or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, at the request of the local liaison. [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)]

**Behavior,Emotional Well-Being & Engagement**

* **Full participation**
  + Children and youth experiencing homelessness who meet the relevant eligibility criteria must not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, on-line learning, and charter school programs [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(F)(iii)
  + Students experiencing homelessness are categorically eligible for services under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act even if they do not a school that receives Title IA funding. [20 U.S.C. § 6315(c)(2)(E)]
* **Referral for Mental Health services**
  + LEAs must coordinate with local social services agencies and other agencies or entities providing services to homeless children and youths and their families, including services and programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.
  + Homeless families, children, and youths receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services;
    - [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(5)(A)(i)], [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)]
* **Career & College Planning**
  + Local liaisons should work with school counselors and other specialized instructional support personnel to ensure that students experiencing homelessness are aware of the following supports:
    - * Help to prepare for college and improve their college readiness [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(K)]
    - Fee waivers for Advanced Placement (AP) exams, college entrance exams (ACT and/or SAT), and college applications
    - Verification of independent student status for unaccompanied youth on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
    - Various need- and merit-based scholarship opportunities
* **Career & Technical Ed**
  + LEA may use funds for the provision of expedited evaluations of the strengths and needs of homeless children and youths, including needs and eligibility for programs and services (such as educational programs for gifted and talented students, children with disabilities, and English learners, or similar State or local programs, programs in career and technical education, and school nutrition programs) [42 U.S.C. § 11433 (d)(2) ]

**Coursework Completion & Credit Accrual**

* **Supports for students with Unique Needs (SPED & EL)**
  + LEAs must provide educational services for which the child or youth meets the eligibility criteria, such as services provided under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) or similar State or local programs, educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for English learners. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(4)(b)]
  + For children and youths who are to be assisted both under this part, and under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, each local educational agency shall coordinate the provision of services under this part with the provision of programs for children with disabilities served by that local educational agency and other involved local educational agencies. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(5)(d)]
* **Removing Barriers**
  + Attendance
    - States and school districts are required to remove barriers to school attendance and promote school stability for students experiencing homelessness [42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq].
  + Fees
    - School districts must develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to the identification, school enrollment, and school retention of children and youth experiencing homelessness, including barriers due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(I)]
  + Full/partial credits
    - LEAs must implement policies to assist with accumulating credits toward graduation, such as chunking credits and implementing mastery-based learning. McKinney-Vento students must receive appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(F)(ii) ]
* **Foundational Skills/Academic Support**
  + Tutoring
    - Districts may use homeless funds for the provision for homeless children and youths to participate in before- and after-school, mentoring, and summer programs in which a teacher or other qualified individual provides tutoring, homework assistance, and supervision of educational activities

[42 U.S.C. § 11433(d)(1)]

* + Title I-A supports
    - Identified students are categorically eligible for support under **Title I, Part A**, including supports/services provided through the Title I, Part A homeless set-aside.

**Physical Health & Well-Being**

* **Free Lunch & Breakfast**
  + Students experiencing homelessness are categorically eligible for free school meals through a streamlined certification process under the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act [42 U.S.C. § 1758(b)(5)
* **Medical & Dental referrals**
  + LEAs must coordinate with local social services agencies and other agencies or entities providing services to homeless children and youths and their families, including services and programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(5)(A)(i)],
  + Homeless families, children, and youths receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services; [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)]
* **Housing Assistance**
  + If applicable, each district shall coordinate with State and local housing agencies responsible for developing the comprehensive housing affordability strategy to minimize educational disruption for children and youths who become homeless. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(5)(B)]
* **Collaboration/Community Partnerships**
  + District liaisons for homeless children and youths shall, as a part of their duties, coordinate and collaborate with State Coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths. [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(C)]