

# Transportation to Ensure Education Stability Students Experiencing Homelessness & In Out-of-Home Care

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## Learning Outcomes

- Understand McKinney-Vento requirements around transportation for students experiencing homelessness
- Understand requirements for transportation for students placed in out-of-home care
- Learn strategies to enhance transportation for these student populations



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## McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act



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## Transportation

- LEAs must provide transportation to and from the school of origin, including until the end of the year when the student obtains permanent housing. Local homeless liaisons are required to inform families of their right to transportation.
  - If the school of origin and current residence are in the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation to the school of origin.
  - If crossing LEA lines, both LEAs must determine how to divide the responsibility and share the cost, or they must share the cost equally.
- School of origin - the school where the child or youth was last enrolled and attending, or the school they attended when last permanently housed.



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## Sharing Transportation Costs

- Share the cost 50-50 unless another arrangement is made between LEAs.
- Reach out to the other LEA to have a conversation, before sending a bill.
- Discuss options each LEA has for transportation; one may be more cost effective for both LEAs.



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## Mode of Transportation

- The **mode of transportation is left to the discretion of the district**, however, the mode and the details of transportation cannot present a barrier to the child's attendance in school.
- Districts may consider other safe transportation options besides school busses, in keeping with state and local pupil transportation guidelines.
- Keep in mind there may be a stigma about showing up to school in an alternative mode of transportation - is it only the students experiencing homelessness who show up in a cab?



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## Comparable Transportation

LEAs must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.

- If a student is on a normal bus route, or within the LEA policy to take public transportation- those typical methods should be used.
- If a student is temporarily living somewhere that is in the LEA walk zone, that student should follow the walk zone policy.
- Exceptions do exist within offering comparable services, usually if there is an unsafe route to school or concerns for the child's safety.



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## Transportation for Preschool

Preschool is included in the definition of school of origin. If transportation is a barrier, the LEA(s) must provide it.

- This includes LEA administered public preschool programs (4K, Head Start, IDEA services, etc. through the LEA).
- Transportation to the school of origin must be provided even if a child who is enrolled in a public preschool in one LEA moves to another LEA that does not provide widely available or universal preschool.



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## Extracurricular Activities

- LEAs must eliminate barriers to, among other things, the enrollment of students experiencing homelessness (including transportation barriers). Enrollment includes attending classes and "participating fully in school activities".
- Full participation includes participation in extracurricular activities, and McKinney-Vento emphasizes that students must not face barriers to accessing extracurricular activities.
- If transportation is a barrier for a child or youth to participate in extracurricular activities, transportation must be provided.



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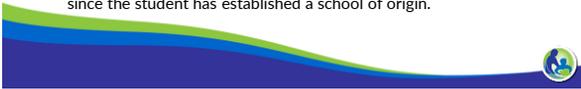
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## Transportation and Open Enrollment

- If a student experiencing homelessness open enrolls in a school that is neither a school of origin nor a school of residence, the student does not receive transportation under McKinney-Vento since they are attending a school they don't have rights to under the law.
  - The student must be identified and all other McKinney-Vento services must be provided
- If a student's nighttime residence changes after they are open enrolled and attending the school, transportation must be provided since the student has established a school of origin.



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## Funding Transportation

- State and local funds
- Community partnerships
  - Examples: Donations for bus tickets, community fundraising drive to help with transportation
- Title I, Part A homeless reservation funds
  - To cover excess cost



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## How Far Is Too Far to Travel to the School of Origin?

- LEAs must consider what is in the best interest of the student
- There is **NO** time or distance limit specified in McKinney-Vento
- Things to be considered:
  - Impact of commute on education
  - Age
  - Safety
  - Need for special instructional programs
  - Length of stay at the temporary location



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## Transportation Options

- Use school buses (including special education, magnet school, and other buses).
- Develop formal or informal agreements with school districts where children experiencing homelessness cross district lines.
- Use public transit where feasible.
- Use approved carpools, van or taxi services.
- Reimburse parents and youth for gas.
- Pursue interagency solutions.
- More specific shared transportation ideas: LEAs send buses one way, buses meet at LEA boundaries.
- Get creative with transportation options!



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## Educational Stability for Out-of-Home Care



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## Requirements under ESSA

- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ School of Origin
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Best Interest Determination
- ✓ Immediate Enrollment
- ✓ Transfer of Records

[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/OHE\\_ESSA\\_handout.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/OHE_ESSA_handout.pdf)



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## School of Origin

The *school of origin* is the school where the student was enrolled or most recently enrolled in at the time of placement.

If a change in schools is being considered, the local education agency (LEA) and child welfare agency (CWA) must collaborate to conduct a *Best Interest Determination* (BID). All factors must be considered and should be student-centered.



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## Collaborating to Ensure School Success

ESSA and state law require *at a minimum* that schools work collaboratively with the child welfare agency to:

- Develop clear written procedures for [transportation](#);
- Consider all factors when conducting a [best interest determination](#); and
- Request and transfer records immediately if a student is enrolling in a new school.



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## Transportation Requirements

Students living in Out-of-Home Care have rights to transportation under ESSA

ESSA requires that once a student is placed in out-of-home care:

- Transportation must be immediately provided, arranged, and funded to the school of origin for the duration of the student's placement;
- That transportation will be provided promptly and in a cost-effective manner;
- The responsibilities for additional costs are defined in the procedures jointly developed by the Child Welfare Agency and the LEA;
- That transportation rights continue during any dispute resolution process.



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## Collaborating to Ensure School Success



### Collaborating Effectively in Practice Means:

- Knowing who the points of contact at each agency are;
- Keeping the lines of communication open to share information; and
- Fully engaging in agreed upon processes to make well-informed decisions that support educational success for students.

State Points of Contact

[Local Points of Contact: LEA, County and Tribal CWAs](#)



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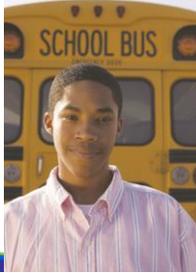
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## Potential Transportation Options

These transportation options are not exclusive and should be examined for the appropriateness of each student situation:

- Bus
  - utilizing an existing route
  - adapting an existing route
  - utilizing public busing system (if appropriate)
- Cab
- Reimbursing an appropriate partner:
  - bio parent or other family member
  - foster parent
  - transportation co-op, mentor, etc.
- Other child welfare support systems may be available



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## Special Education Incidental Benefit Accommodations

Accommodations for Students Experiencing Homelessness or in Out of Home Care

<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/spec-ed-transportation-overview.pdf>



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## Out-of-Home Care Educational Stability Resources

- **DPI Website**  
<https://dpi.wi.gov/foster-care>
- **Educational Stability for Students in Out-of-Home Care Desk Guide**  
[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/OMC\\_ESSA\\_handout.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/OMC_ESSA_handout.pdf)
- **Educational Services for Students Placed in Out-of-Home Care FAQ**  
<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/EducationalServicesFAQ.pdf>
- **Joint Transportation Guidance**  
<https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/Transportation%20Guidance%20C%20canned.pdf>
- **Model Transportation Procedures**  
[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/model\\_transportation\\_procedures.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/model_transportation_procedures.pdf)
- **Sample Student Transportation Plan**  
[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/sample\\_student\\_transportation\\_plan\\_2.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/foster-care/sample_student_transportation_plan_2.pdf)



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## McKinney-Vento Resources

- [National Center for Homeless Education \(NCHE\) Transportation Resources](#)
- [DPI Transportation Guidance](#)
- [DPI Example Forms](#)
- [DPI Pupil Transportation Homepage](#)
- [DPI Transportation Webinar](#)



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## Out-of-Home Care Educational Stability Contacts

Julie Majerus <a href="mailto:julie.majerus@dpi.wi.gov">julie.majerus@dpi.wi.gov</a> <a href="mailto:kyle.peaden@dpi.wi.gov">kyle.peaden@dpi.wi.gov</a> 608-267-1281 5404	Kyle Peaden  608-266-
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For LEA and Child Welfare points of Contact:



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# McKinney-Vento State Coordinators

**Kristine Nadolski**

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**Karen Rice**

[Karen.Rice@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:Karen.Rice@dpi.wi.gov)

[Homeless Liaison Directory](#)



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# Appleton Area School District

McKinney Vento Homeless & Foster Care Support  
Christi DeChamps, District School Social Worker

## SCHOOL DISTRICT & COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

AASD is the 6th largest school district in Wisconsin (total enrollment 15,000+) in a suburban community with a city population of 74,000

### School district programming includes:

- Birth-to-Five outreach, Early Childhood, Title 1 Preschool
- Community 4K (23 sites)
- 16 elementary schools (K-6th)
- 4 middle-schools (7-8th)
- 4 high schools (9-12th)
- 14 charter schools, 3 alternative school programs

### Data & statistics for Appleton community & school district:

- Per city of Appleton census data, 88% of households were at the same residence as the prior year
- State District Report Card data (2018-2019 school year) - 29.2% low socioeconomic status for the school district as a whole
- McKinney Vento school district data over past 5 schools years indicates a 2% homeless student population
- 2019-2020 identified McKinney Vento students = 301 students
- 2020-2021 (as of 2/22/21) identified McKinney Vento students = 285 students
- AASD transitioned to in-person school district-wide as of 2nd semester, Jan 19th, 2021
  - ◆ EC - 4th grade → 5 days per week in-person
  - ◆ 5th - 12th grade → hybrid cohorts (Mon/Tues or Thurs/Fri) - 2 days in-person, 3 days virtual
  - ◆ all grade levels have a full year virtual school option

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Due to having multiple schools at each grade level in AASD, a student's address of residence falls into a neighborhood school attendance zone.

Under McKinney Vento (MKV) homeless student support & ESSA foster care student support, students who move outside of their resident neighborhood school attendance area can remain enrolled in their school of origin and receive transportation support to do so. This includes students who move outside of school district boundaries.



### Newly enrolling students to AASD...

- If identified as homeless OR if they are a child placed in foster care at the time of enrollment to the school district
- The temporary address they are residing at when they enroll is used to determine the school they are enrolled at. This school is their resident neighborhood school and transportation support is determined as it is for same age peers.
  - This school also becomes their school of origin if they move to another temporary homeless situation, establish stable housing, or have a foster care placement change - they are offered continued enrollment at this school of origin and transportation support options.
  - Example: a family living in a hotel in Appleton enrolls their child in AASD, the hotel address is used to determine the school they enroll in & transportation support is determined by their neighborhood school. When they move out of the hotel, the student remains enrolled in their same school and is provided MKV transportation support.

### Existing students in AASD...

- If current AASD enrolled students become homeless OR are placed in foster care
- The school they have been attending is their school of origin - they are offered continued enrollment at this school of origin and transportation support options.
  - Example: a family with an AASD enrolled child is evicted and moves in with a relative in another area of town, the student remains enrolled in their same school and is provided MKV transportation support.

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