

Chapter 8 - Homeless

Section 1113 (c)(3)(A) of NCLB mandates that **a portion of the district's Title I allocation must be directed towards the support of homeless students' educational programming**. There is no funding guideline that mandates what percentage of the allocation is to be directed towards homeless education. However, it is the responsibility of the district to ensure that sufficient funds are set aside to support the educational needs of homeless students enrolled in the district.

1. What defines a homeless student?

Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are Homeless pupils include, but are not limited to:

- Children or youth sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (commonly referred to as being “doubled up”), and
- Pupils who are otherwise not residing in a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Awaiting foster care placement.
- Children and youth 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.
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
- The term *unaccompanied youth* includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This would include:
 - runaways living in runaway shelters, abandoned buildings, cars, on the streets, or in other inadequate housing;
 - children and youth denied housing by their families (sometimes referred to as “throwaway children and youth”); and
 - school-age unwed mothers living in homes for unwed mothers because they have no other housing available.
- In determining whether or not a child or youth is homeless, consider the *relative permanence of the living arrangements*. Determinations of homelessness should be made on a case-by-case basis.

2. How might Title I funds be used?

Title I homeless funds must be used to provide supplementary support for homeless youth, easing the burden of homelessness that often interferes with classroom learning, such as:

- Items of clothing, particularly if necessary to meet a school’s dress or uniform requirement
- Clothing and shoes necessary to participate in physical education classes
- Student fees that are necessary to participate in the general education program
- Personal school supplies such as backpacks and notebooks
- Food
- Birth certificates necessary to enroll in school
- Immunizations, medical and dental services, eyeglasses and hearing aids
- Counseling services to address anxiety related to homelessness that is impeding learning
- Outreach services to students living in shelters, motels, and other temporary residences
- Extended learning time (before and after school, Saturday classes, summer school) to compensate for lack of quiet time for homework in shelters or other overcrowded living conditions
- Tutoring services, especially in shelters or other locations where homeless students live
- Parental involvement specifically oriented to reaching out to parents of homeless students
- Fees for AP and IB testing
- Fees for SAT/ACT testing and GED testing for school-age students
- On December 16, 2014, the President signed into law the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (H.R. 83), the omnibus funding bill for FY2015. The Act, which governs the usage of FY2015 funds, and carryover funds from fiscal years 2013 and 2014, reauthorizes the authority for Title I, Part A funds to be used *to pay for the salary of the local homeless education liaison and school-of-origin transportation for homeless children and youth* that was first authorized under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014.

3. What are inappropriate uses of Title I funds for homeless students?

- Physicals for sports participation;
- Clothing for family members;
- Rent/motel/hotel (any housing expenses);
- Prom dresses/tuxedos;
- Yearbook fees.

4. What are the laws for homeless students?

- a. McKinney-Vento (McKinney-Vento Act, 42 U.S.C. 11431) ensures that a homeless pupil must be immediately enrolled in any of the following:
 - the school in which he or she was enrolled when permanently housed (also known as the “school of origin”)
 - the school in which he or she was last enrolled; or
 - any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the homeless pupil is living are eligible to attend.
- b. School districts can best assist homeless families by:
 - Insuring that school forms, brochures, web sites, handbooks, and instructional materials about homelessness and residency rights, reflect accurate information and are easily accessible.

- Training all staff, board members, and administrators responsible for school enrollment on Illinois and federal residency and homeless laws.
 - Insuring that the homeless liaison is involved any time a child's residency is questioned, *before* a residency hearing has occurred or the child is disenrolled.
 - Collaborating with the Area Lead Homeless Liaison or Regional Homeless Liaison to insure that school district personnel are well informed on Homeless education and that parents of homeless students are provided with assistance.
5. Additional information regarding educational laws, provisions and programming for homeless students and families including the ISBE Homeless Policy and other resources on Homeless Education is available online at <http://www.isbe.net/homeless/default.htm>.