

# **American Rescue Plan -- Homeless Children and Youth**

## **ARP-HCY Part II**

ISBE will release allocations of American Rescue Plan (ARP) -- Homeless Children and Youth (HCY) Part II funds in fall 2021. Allocations are determined by a formula set forth by the U.S. Department of Education based equally on the proportional share of an allocation a Local Education Agency (LEA) receives under Title I-A for 2020-21 and the LEA's proportional share of the number of homeless children and youth identified by each LEA relative to all LEAs in the state, using the greater of the certified number of homeless children and youth in either the 2018-19 or 2019-20 school year in each LEA.

In order to receive an ARP-HCY Part II subgrant on its own, a district must have an allocation of at least \$5,000. Districts with an allocation of less than \$5,000 are strongly encouraged to apply as a consortium with one or more districts to raise the combined allocation amount to \$5,000 or more. Districts with an allocation less than \$5,000 may choose to return the funds to ISBE instead of joining a consortium to receive ARP-HCY Part II funds. In such instances, the district's allocation will be reallocated to other districts.

## **How can schools and districts use ARP funds for students experiencing homelessness?**

ARP-HCY grant funds may only be used for the 16 activities authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11433(d)). Grant funds must be used in such a manner as to provide services to all identified children and youth experiencing homelessness. Funds support efforts to identify homeless children and youth and provide them with comprehensive, wrap-around services that address needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and allow them to attend school and participate fully in all school activities.

Suggestions for LEAs on using ARP-HCY grant funds to support students experiencing homelessness include:

- Increase outreach and identification.
- Enhance communication options with students and families.
- Increase counseling and social work services.
- Facilitate the enrollment and retention of students experiencing homelessness.
- Hire "systems navigators" to help families and youth access education.
- Provide academic coaching, in-person enrichment opportunities, and access to summer learning.
- Offer early childhood education services for young children experiencing homelessness.

- Make systems and processes more McKinney-Vento friendly.
- Help meet rising mental health needs.
- Provide more and better transportation options.
- Provide homeless children and youth with wrap-around services to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The suggestions are among others found in [How to Use American Rescue Plan Act K-12 Education Funds to Identify and Support Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#), SchoolHouse Connection.

Overall, costs must be “reasonable and necessary” and align with the purpose of, and other requirements in, the Education for Homeless Children and Youth statute. LEAs also should consider the extraordinary impact of the pandemic on students experiencing homelessness when making decisions about how to use funds.

## **Allowable activities under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C 11433(d))**

An LEA may use funds awarded under this section for activities that carry out the purpose of this subtitle, including the following:

- 1) The provision of tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched educational services that are linked to the achievement of the same challenging state academic standards as the state establishes for other children and youths.
- 2) 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, services provided under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 or similar state or local programs, programs in career and technical education, and school nutrition programs).
- 3) Professional development and other activities for educators and specialized instructional support personnel that are designed to heighten the understanding and sensitivity of such personnel to the needs of homeless children and youths, the rights of such children and youths under this subtitle, and the specific educational needs of runaway and homeless youths.
- 4) The provision of referral services to homeless children and youths for medical, dental, mental, and other health services.
- 5) The provision of assistance where necessary to defray the excess cost of transportation for students under Section 20 U.S.C. Section 722(g)(4)(A) that is not otherwise provided through federal, state, or local funding to enable students to attend the school selected under Section 20 U.S.C. 722(g)(3).
- 6) The provision of developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs not otherwise provided through federal, state, or local funding for preschool-aged homeless children.
- 7) The provision of services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain homeless children and youths, particularly homeless children and youths who are not enrolled in school, in public school programs and services that are available to non-homeless children and youths.

- 8) The provision for homeless children and youths of 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.
- 9) If necessary, the payment of fees and other costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records necessary to enroll homeless children and youths in school, including birth certificates, immunization or other required health records, academic records, guardianship records, and evaluations for special programs or services.
- 10) The provision of education and training to the parents and guardians of homeless children and youths about the rights of, and resources available to, such children and youths, and other activities designed to increase the meaningful involvement of parents and guardians of homeless children and youths in the education of such children and youths.
- 11) The development of coordination between schools and agencies providing services to homeless children and youths, as described in 20 U.S.C. Section 722(g)(5).
- 12) The provision of specialized instructional support services, including violence prevention counseling, and referrals for such services.
- 13) Activities to address the particular needs of homeless children and youths that may arise from domestic violence and parental mental health or substance abuse problems.
- 14) The adaptation of space and purchase of supplies for any non-school facilities made available under subsection (a)(2) to provide services under this subsection.
- 15) The provision of school supplies, including those supplies to be distributed at shelters or temporary housing facilities, or other appropriate locations.
- 16) The provision of other extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youths to attend school and participate fully in school activities.