

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT



AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009 MCKINNEY-VENTO EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH GRANT No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 – Title X, Part C

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

2009-2010 Projects

Deadline: Received by July 16, 2009

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**McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth
Request for Proposals (RFP)
July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010**

Deadline: July 16, 2009

PURPOSE

According to H.R. 1, Public Law 107-110, as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) - 2001, Title X, Part C - Homeless Education, Subtitle B of Title VII - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act 2002: Education for Homeless Children and Youth (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.), Sections 721-726, the purpose is to ensure the educational rights and protections for all children and youth experiencing homelessness and ensure equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, provided to other children and youth.

The ARRA provides \$70 million in fiscal year (FY) 2009 funds under the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, which is authorized under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq. (McKinney-Vento Act). The McKinney-Vento ARRA funds are a one-time source of funds that supplement the McKinney-Vento funds made available under the regular FY 2009 appropriation. These additional resources will assist States and local educational agencies (LEAs) in addressing the educational and related needs of some of the most vulnerable members of our society – homeless children and youth – during a time of economic crisis in the United States.

WHO ARE THE HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH?

An individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.

Federal Descriptors for the Homeless Children and Youth Population:

- 1) Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- 4) Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended) who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

LEAs that have identified, documented (according to the federal descriptors), and are serving (according to the McKinney-Vento Act) homeless children and youth located within Arkansas, will be eligible to apply on a competitive basis for grant funds according to the need for

assistance and the quality of the proposed plan to provide educational opportunities for such students.

The determination of need for assistance will be considered by the demonstration of:

- number of homeless children and youths enrolled in preschool, elementary, and secondary schools within the area served by the LEA;
- extent to which the proposed use of funds will facilitate the enrollment, retention, and educational success of homeless children and youth;
- extent to which the application reflects coordination with other local and state agencies that serve homeless children and youth;
- description of how the grantee will meet the LEA requirements under Section 722(g)(3);
- extent to which the applicant exhibits in the application and in current practice a commitment to education for all homeless children and youth;

The determination of the quality of applications will be considered by the demonstration of:

- assessment of the educational and related needs of homeless children and youths under Section 723(b)(1) and likelihood of meeting such needs;
- identification of types, intensity, and coordination of the services to be provided;
- active involvement of parents or guardians of homeless children and youths in the education of their children;
- extent to which homeless children and youths will be integrated within the regular education program;
- quality of the applicant's evaluation plan for the program;
- extent to which services provided will be coordinated with other services available to homeless children and youths and their families;
- extent to which the LEA will provide case management or related services to unaccompanied youths; and
- any other measures indicative of a high-quality program.

REQUIRED PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Any LEA serving a school that homeless children or youth to be assisted under the Homeless Education, Subtitle B of Title VII, shall follow the guidelines in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act [Section 722(g)(3)] to implement a coordinated system and adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youth and their families according to their best interest shall:

- continue the child's or youth's education in the "school of origin"
 - for the duration of homelessness,
 - for the remainder of the academic year in which the family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year, and/or
 - for the remainder of the academic year if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year;
- enroll the child or youth in any public school that non-homeless students living in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend;
- determine the best interest of the child or youth, to the extent feasible, keep child or youth in the school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of the parent/guardian;

- provide a written explanation in the family’s native language and in a form understandable to the parent/guardian, including the right to appeal under the enrollment disputes provision, if the LEA sends student to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by parent or guardian;
- provide an unaccompanied youth the assistance of the LEA homeless liaison in placement/enrollment decisions, consider the youth’s wishes, and provide written explanation in the youth’s native language and in a form understandable to the youth of the right to appeal under the enrollment disputes provisions;
- ensure the choice regarding placement must be made regardless of whether the child/youth resides with the homeless parent or has been temporarily placed elsewhere;
- immediately enroll child/youth in school, even if the child or youth lacks record normally required for enrollment, i.e., previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation;
- immediately contact the last school attended to obtain relevant academic and other records;
- immediately refer parent/guardian or youth to the LEA homeless liaison to provide assistance in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization/medical records, and/or other records and documentation;
- maintain records ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, so that the records are available in a timely fashion when a student enters a new school or school district and in a manner consistent with Section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act;
- in the case a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the child/youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute and parent/guardian shall be provided with a written explanation in the family’s native language and in a form understandable of the school’s decision on the dispute,
 - including the right to appeal and parent/guardian/youth shall be referred to the LEA homeless liaison, who will carry out the state’s grievance procedure as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute, and
 - an unaccompanied youth with the assistance of the LEA homeless liaison shall be immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute;
- provide comparable services to those received by other students in the school selected – including transportation services, educational programs for which child/youth meets the eligible criteria, such those under Title I or similar state or local programs, programs for children with disabilities, programs for students with limited English proficiency, vocational or technical programs, gifted and talented programs, and school nutrition programs;
- ensure that homeless children and youth have access to the education and other services needed to ensure the opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held through
 - coordination of the provision of services with local social service agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to homeless children and youth and their families, and
 - raising the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness;
- ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison, to and from the school of origin, including

- if the homeless student continues to live in the area served by the LEA in which the school of origin is located, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation,
- if the homeless student moves to an area served by another LEA in which the student is living must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin...if the LEAs cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally [Section 722(g)(1)(J)(iii)];
- ensure information on each homeless child and youth is entered immediately in the “Student Information System (SIS)” which will be reported in “Cycles 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7”; and
- designate an appropriate staff person, who may also be a coordinator for other Federal programs, as a LEA liaison for homeless children and youth to perform duties as described in 6(A) of Section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii) and shall report in “Cycle 1” of the “Student Information System (SIS)”.

AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES

The LEA may use awarded funds for activities that carry out the purpose of the McKinney-Vento Act [Section 723(d)], including the following:

- 1) tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched educational services linked to the achievement of the same challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards the State establishes for other students;
- 2) expedite evaluation of the strengths and needs of such students, including needs and eligibility for programs and services (i.e., educational programs for gifted and talented, children with disabilities, limited English proficiency, services under Title I or similar State or local programs, vocational and technical, and school nutrition);
- 3) professional development and other activities for educators and pupil services personnel;
- 4) referral services for medical, dental, mental, and other health services;
- 5) assistance to defray the excess cost of transportation not otherwise provided through federal, State, or local funding;
- 6) developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs, not otherwise provided through Federal, State, or local funding, for preschool-aged homeless children;
- 7) services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, in public school programs and services provided to non-homeless children and youths;
- 8) 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) as necessary, payment of fees and other costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records necessary to enroll in school, including birth certificates, immunization or medical records, academic records, guardianship records, and evaluations for special programs or services;
- 10) education and training the parents of homeless children and youths about the rights and resources available;
- 11) development of coordination between schools and agencies providing services;
- 12) pupil 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;

- 14) adaptation of space and purchase of supplies for any nonschool facilities made available, under Section 723(a)(2)(A), to provide services;
- 15) school supplies, including those supplies to be distributed at shelters or temporary housing facilities, or other appropriate locations; and
- 16) extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youth to attend school.

Additional requirements of the LEA applicants, serving a school that the homeless children and youths are eligible to attend, receiving these federal funds to use these grants in accordance to the McKinney-Vento Act [Section 722(e)(3)(C)] shall:

- provide contact information for the LEA Homeless Liaison and the State Coordinator concerning homeless children and youth and their families, information on the problems homeless students face in accessing school, the identification of special needs, progress made in addressing those problems and needs, the success of the programs, and any other requested information and/or data;
- provide written notice in the family’s native language and in a form understandable to parent or guardian (or youth) and signed at time of enrollment and at least twice annually while enrolled in such school of the child’s general rights – choice of school, not to attend a separate school designated for homeless, provision of comparable services, and not to be stigmatized by school personnel;
- provide assistance to the parent or guardian (youth, in the case of an unaccompanied youth) in order to exercise the right to attend and continue the education of homeless children and youth at either their “school of origin,” and/or any public school non-homeless students living in the attendance area in which they are actually residing and eligible to attend; and
- coordinate with the LEA selected by parent or guardian (or youth) to provide, or arrange for, transportation to the homeless child’s school of origin when that school is within the LEA. When the school of origin is in a different LEA from the LEA where the homeless child is living, requires both LEAs to agree on a method for sharing transportation responsibility and costs as well as other necessary services.

Duties of the LEA Homeless Liaison [Section 722(g)(1)(J)(ii)] shall ensure that:

- o homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- o homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the LEA;
- o homeless families, children, and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and pre-school programs administered by the LEA, and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services;
- o parents or guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children, and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- o public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated where children and youth receive services under the Act (i.e. schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens);
- o enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the Enrollment Disputes [Sec. 722(g)(3)(E)];

- o parent/guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including to the school of origin, and is assisted to accessing transportation services;
- o assist unaccompanied youth in placement/enrollment decisions, including considering the youth's wishes in those decisions, and providing notice to the youth of the right to appeal such decisions under the enrollment disputes provisions [Sec. 722(g)(3)(B)(iii)];
- o ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement [Sec. 722(g)(3)(E)(iv)];
- o assist children and youth who do not have immunizations, or immunization or medical records, to obtain necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records [Sec. 722(g)(3)(C)(iii)];
- o coordinate with state coordinators and LEA to inform school personnel, service providers, and advocates who work with homeless families of the duties of the LEA homeless liaison; and
- o collaborate and coordinate with state coordinators, community, and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youth [Sec. 722(g)(6)(C)].

Frequently identified barriers and challenges to the “school enrollment and attendance” of homeless children and youth:

- lack of transportation to or from temporary residence;
- lack of immunization and medical records;
- lack of school records;
- state guardianship/residency requirements not uniformly interpreted by school; and
- lack of birth certificate.

Youth, ages 12 and older, face additional barriers to school enrollment, i.e.:

- attendance policies;
- secondary school credit accrual; and
- legal guardianship requirements.

Frequently identified barriers and challenges to “school success” of homeless children and youth:

- frequent mobility;
- lack of staff awareness and sensitivity;
- inability to complete school assignments;
- lack of psychological services;
- poor health and inadequate medical care; and
- physical needs, i.e., food, clothing, health care.

EVALUATION AND REPORTING - REQUIRED DATA

On an annual basis the grantee will report programmatic and fiscal growth and needs to the local Board of Education in order to increase the understanding and awareness of children and youth

experiencing homelessness. The presentation should include the challenge in obtaining, sustaining, and collaborating the local support.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Programs shall maintain documentation and data for all children and youth experiencing homelessness. Reports shall be submitted as required on forms and/or databases to be provided by the Office of Education for Homeless Children and Youth of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) and be willing to participate in the dissemination of activities. Data shall be made available to the ADE, US Department of Education (USDOE), and other agencies upon the request of the State Homeless Coordinator.

Periodical collection of data and information concerning homeless children and youth:

- number and location;
- education and related services received;
- progress made in addressing the identified problems and needs;
- extent to which the needs are being met;
- identification of special needs;
- information on the problems faced in accessing school;
- progress made in addressing and meeting the Standards and Indicators of Quality;
- success of the program, coordination with other entities and agencies; and
- progress made in addressing McKinney-Vento Act.

Data will be collected through reports generated from:

- student portfolios maintained on each homeless child and youth;
- the Arkansas Department of Education Student Information System (SIS) – Cycles 2,3,5,6,7;
- the McKinney-Vento Standards and Indicators of Quality as identified in the approved application – quarterly reports;
- the LEA’s Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (ACSIP) – providing the homeless intervention actions and strategies are included in the school district’s school improvements in the areas of math, literacy, etc.;
- Service Point Web-Based Information Management System;
- Arkansas Benchmarks Exams;
- NRT Exams; and
- in any other format required by the state and/or federal offices.

McKinney-Vento Standards and Indicators of Quality

Standard 1: Within one full day of an attempt to enroll in school, children and youth experiencing homelessness will be in attendance.

Indicator 1.1: 100% of children and youth experiencing homelessness will be immediately enrolled and will be identified through the enrollment process form. Upon enrollment, the process of obtaining student records including immunization or medical, academic, birth certificates, guardianship, residency, evaluations for special services or

programs, and other documentation will be assisted by the LEA Homeless Liaison and other school personnel.

Standard 2: Pre-K to 12th grade level children and youth experiencing homelessness will have stability in school.

Indicator 2.1: Attendance rates will be at or above the relevant district average.

Indicator 2.2: Students will remain in the school of origin for the period of homelessness or, if permanently housed, for the remainder of the school year; unless parents or unaccompanied youth requested transfer to another school.

Standard 3: Children and youth experiencing homelessness will receive specialized services when eligible.

Indicator 3.1: Preschool children experiencing homelessness will participate in public preschool (i.e., Head Start, Even Start, State Pre-K, Special Education, meals, Gifted, ESL, and Title I pre-school programs).

Indicator 3.2: Children and youth experiencing homelessness will receive Special Education and related services when eligible.

Indicator 3.3: Children and youth experiencing homelessness will receive appropriate services, based on assessment of individual needs, through some combination of resources, including but not restricted to Title I, McKinney, or other funds.

Standard 4: Parents or persons acting as parents of children and youth experiencing homelessness will participate meaningfully in their children's education.

Indicator 4.1: Parents or persons acting as parents will have a face-to-face conference with the teacher, guidance counselor, or social worker within 30 days of enrollment.

Indicator 4.2: Parents or persons acting as parents will be provided with individual student records informing them of their child's specific academic needs and achievement on academic assessments aligned with state academic achievement standards.

Indicator 4.3: Parents or persons acting as parents will report monitoring or facilitating homework assignments.

Indicator 4.4: Parents or persons acting as parents will share reading time with their children (i.e., parent reads to child or listens to child read).

Indicator 4.5: Parents who want parent skills training will attend available programs.

Indicator 4.6: Parents or guardians will demonstrate awareness of McKinney-Vento rights.

Indicator 4.7: Unaccompanied youth will demonstrate awareness of McKinney-Vento rights.

Standard 5: Children and youth in grades 3-12 who are experiencing homelessness will meet their states' academic standards.

Indicator 5.1: Performance on standards-based assessments in reading and math will be within or above the proficient range or will show a one-for-one gain.

Indicator 5.2: Rates of promotion to the next grade level will be at or above the district average.

Indicator 5.3: Rates of high school graduation or equivalent will be at or above the district average.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Each McKinney-Vento Homeless Project shall meet the NCLB definition of "highly qualified" for staff – coordinator, director, homeless liaison, paraprofessional, tutor, and other staff – whose salaries are paid in whole or in part with McKinney-Vento funds according to the guidelines in Section 1119 of the new Title I, Part A.

Highly Qualified Requirements:

- have achieved an associate's, bachelor's, or graduate degree;
- while satisfying the criteria, persons hired prior to January 8, 2006, shall have a secondary school diploma or a grade equivalent degree (GED); and
- if applicable, must meet qualifications established by the State

The paraprofessional -

- completed 2 years of study at an institution of higher education; or
- obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
- received passing scores on the ParaPro Assessment.

Provide documentation verifying the required staff qualification credentials of LEA program staff providing services for homeless children and youth whose salaries are paid in whole or in part with McKinney-Vento funds.

PROJECT PERIOD

The funding cycle for this award is July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. The project shall follow the regular school year calendar, for FY 2009-2010, adopted by the local school board. The project shall include a summer program (FY 2010), beginning at the end of the regular school year through at least June 30th or according to the LEA summer school schedule. The summer program will be integrated and coordinated with summer programs offered and provided for

other children and youth allowing homeless children and youth provisions of academic tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enrichment activities incorporated in the community, and parenting components/support services. The integration and partnership with currently existing community summer programs which could include but not exclude...such as School of the 21st Century; 21CCLC; extended summer school activities; community arts and theater educational programs; Boys and Girls Club; Boy and Girl Scouts; summer camps; library/literacy clubs; recreational programs; etc.

BUDGET

The McKinney-Vento Homeless funds will be awarded to LEAs through competitive grants based on the demonstration of need for assistance and the quality of proposed plan to provide educational opportunities for homeless children and youth as presented in the application.

Grants awards will be a minimum of \$30,000 and a maximum of \$65,000. The final amount awarded to each district will be based on the number of homeless pupils identified to receive services and the services to be offered.

The submitted budget for the requested McKinney-Vento Homeless funds shall reflect the use of the LEA's reserved Title I Set-Aside Funds for the identified homeless children and youth which are necessary to provide services comparable to those provided to children in Title I, Part A funded schools.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The local homeless project will be monitored during the project period for compliance with the approved project application in the following areas:

- 1) Progress of meeting the purposes of the authorizing statutes of H.R. 1, Public Law 107-110, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- 2) The quality and extent of services and programs provided for the eligible participants.
- 3) Reviewing the documentation of activities: identification, recruitment, and enrollment of students, educational and support services as defined in the Standards and Indicators of Quality, ACSIP, and fiscal management.

The funded 2008-2009 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Programs are required to send the McKinney-Vento Liaison to attend and participate in the following workshops in order to gain strategies, resources, networking, ideas, effective programs designed to assist and provide support for homeless preschool and school-age children and youth:

- Data Trainings on Service Point Web-Based Information Management System (required)
- 21st Annual National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) Conference on November 14-17, 2009 in Denver, CO. (required)
- Regional Spring 2009 Training for McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaisons (required) dates and locations to be announced
- McKinney-Vento Liaisons are required to attend meetings as scheduled by the ADE (dates and locations to be announced)

- Annual Statewide Parental Involvement Conference (encouraged)

SELECTION

A review panel consisting of at least three members will review each application. The review panel will include a variety of members with expertise in homeless families representing programs and services such as the Title 1; Special Education, Early Childhood; Health Department; Language for Minority Students; Homeless Providers; and Shelter Providers.

The review panel reserves the rights to request revisions, make additional contacts for clarification, and/or conduct an assessment visit to the site of the proposed program in order to determine final awards of grantees.

APPLICATION CONTENT

(100 total points)

- **Cover Sheet and all forms provided in RFP (required):**
 - Application Information Cover Page
 - Project Information Sheet
 - McKinney-Vento Assurances
 - Assurance Policies of the Local Educational Agency
 - Table of Contents
 - Program Abstract
 - Program Narrative
- **Attachments of the following (required):**
 - LEA Policy & Practices addressing barriers of homeless students
 - Copy of the Needs Assessment (for homeless children & youth) and the results of the findings
 - LEA Program Staff Information
 - Documentation Verifying the Education and Training Credentials of the Staff
 - McKinney-Vento Standards and Indicators of Quality
 - Homeless Student Report of the School District ACSIP Action Plan
 - Itemized Budget Form
 - Budget Justification Summary

Meeting the purposes of the authorizing statute

(30 points)

The proposal will describe in detail how the project is currently and will accomplish meeting the statutes of Public Law 107-110, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Extent of need for the project

(25 points)

The proposal will demonstrate the determination of need for assistance, justify the need for the program, and explain the commitment to coordinate services to meet the needs.

Project Design

(30 points)

The proposal will describe a clear relationship between the need(s) identified, Standards and Indicators of Quality, ACSIP, activities, and evaluation strategies. [Use forms provided in RFP.]

Reasonableness of budget and Justification

(15 points)

The proposal will present and justify the reasonableness of the budgeted items as they relate to the proposed activities. [Use forms provided in RFP.]

APPLICATION AND DEADLINE

The original with signatures in blue ink and four copies of the application must be received in the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), at the address below, by 4:30 p.m. on July 16, 2009. Applications that are incomplete, faxed, or received after July 16, 2009, will not be reviewed. The ADE is not responsible for late delivery from any delivery service. Staple the application rather than using other forms of binding. The application, instructions, and resources are available on the ADE web at: <http://www.arkansased.org>

For further information, contact:

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