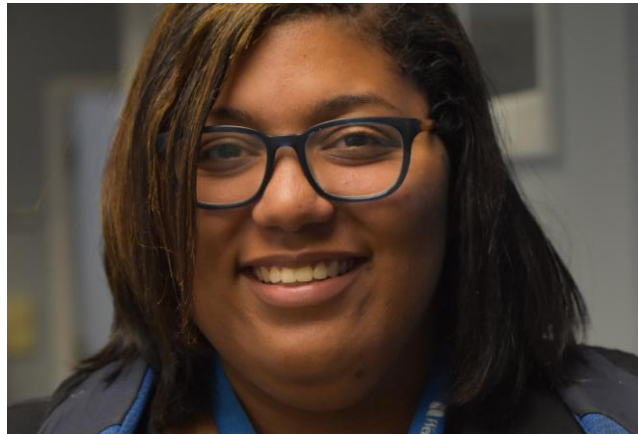


Parent Perspectives on Creative Uses of New Funding from the American Rescue Plan Act

NAEHYC 2021



INTRODUCTIONS

- Taishi Newman
- Maxica Williams
- Kellia Phillips
- April Harris
- Pat Franklin

Background

The American Rescue Plan Act is adding 122.7 billion dollars to existing education relief funding and 800 million dollars in dedicated funding to homeless education.



Dedicated money for homeless students should
be used to support identifying and
reengaging students experiencing homelessness
in school!

Flexible Funds

Maxica Williams

Schools should create a pool of flexible funds to assist STLS families with needs that may prevent them from accessing and engaging in school.



Questions

- What is the benefit of creating a system of flexible funds for families experiencing homelessness?
- What are some ways schools can create a system of flexible funds for families experiencing homelessness?



Example:

The City of Chicago and Chicago Public Schools announced the creation of the Chicago Families Forward Fund. It will provide a \$500 microgrant to CPS students experiencing housing insecurity to assist with needs that families and students are facing.



Engaging Parents

Kellia Phillips

School should create ways to engage parents more, such as forming a parent engagement committee to provide consistent feedback to schools. Funding should be used to provide stipends to parents to encourage participation and engagement.



Questions:

- Why is it so important to engage parents experiencing homelessness?
- What are some ways that schools can engage families experiencing homelessness?



Example:

At the beginning of the pandemic a group of parents with lived experience of homelessness and students in Chicago Public Schools formed the CPS Focus Group.



Communication

Pat Franklin

Schools should invest in a creative, robust and holistic communication strategy about the rights of McKinney-Vento eligible students and the importance of identifying students experiencing homelessness.



- Communication strategies should include letters, emails, phone calls, town halls, social media posts and making sure school websites have accurate and understandable information about the rights of McKinney –Vento program.
- Further, there should be a public mass marketing campaign that includes targeted advertisements in places families frequent such as grocery stores, public transportation and community services.
- Press conferences and radio advertisements should also be utilized. Information should let families know they may be eligible for the STLS Program and how they can get more information about STLS.

Questions:

- Why is communication with parents so important?
- What are some ways school can communicate better with families experiencing homelessness?



Example:

We partnered with Chicago Public Schools to do Facebook Lives to discuss the rights of students experiencing homelessness, community resources.

We target some at McKinney-Vento liaisons and some at families.



Transportation

Taishi Newman

CPS should use funding to expand transportation support so students and families have transportation to needed services as they are reengaging with school.



Questions:

- Why is transportation so important for families experiencing homelessness?
- How can schools make sure transportation is easy to access for families experiencing homelessness?



Community Partnership

April Harris

Schools should use funding to partner with community service providers to provide robust supports for families. As part of the partnership, resource hubs could be created where families experiencing homelessness can get information specific to neighborhoods.



Questions:

- Why is it important for schools to have connection with community partners?
- What are some strategies for schools to partner with various community organizations?



Example:

Chicago Public Schools is working with Facing Forward to provide housing navigators to support doubled up families.

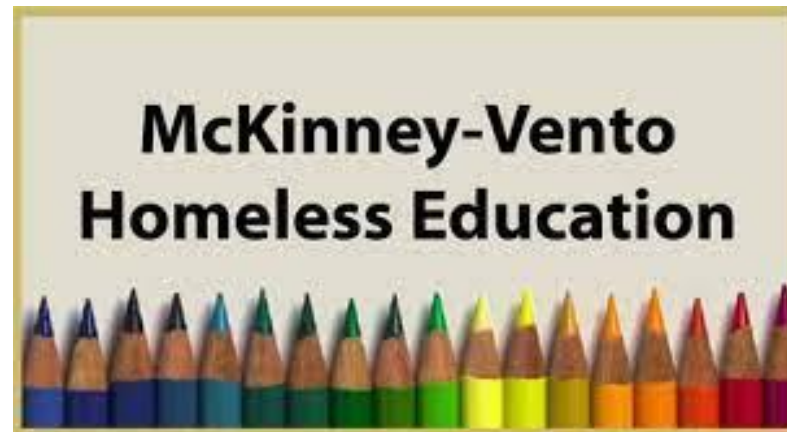


Hiring Staff

April Harris

Schools and school districts should use funding to hire staff to assist with identifying and supporting all homeless students including:

- staff to assist unaccompanied homeless youth with identification, reengagement in school, credit recovery and financial aid assistance for college,
- staff to assist with identification of homeless Pre-K students,
- staff to run and publicize a hotline with full capacity to answer questions and support homeless students,
- increasing the number of full time positions at CPS schools to assist STLS students with identification, attendance and success in school,
- community outreach workers to assist with reengaging students experiencing homelessness in school.



Questions:

- Why is hiring more supportive staff for families experiencing homelessness so important?
- What are ways schools can use this funding to hire more support staff?



Thank You!

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