**TONY THURMOND**
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

# Homelessness in the Classroom

APRIL 2021

# Welcome…

- Thank you for being a part of this presentation.

- This PowerPoint presentation is available on the California Department of Education's web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/cy/documents/homelessinclassroom.pptx

# Housekeeping

Today's PowerPoint presentation sent via email this morning, if you did not receive it please send an email with your request to: HomelessED@cde.ca.gov

**Into the Chat please enter:**

Name, Job title and school, district, county office of education, or other agency.

We will pause for questions through out the presentation, please make sure to enter them in chat.

# Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act (1)

- Originally passed in 1987
- Reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which took effect on October 1, 2016
- 42 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section 11431 et seq.
- Sections 721 and 722 of the McKinney-Vento Act

# Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act (2)

- Works hand-in-hand with Title I, Part A and other federal education programs
- Provides stability, access, and support for academic success for homeless children and youth, including preschool-aged children

# Homeless Definition (1)

- Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
    - Please note that the term awaiting foster care placement was eliminated on December 10, 2016

# Homeless Definition (2)

- Fixed, regular, and adequate are defined as:
  - A **fixed** residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.
  - A **regular** residence is one that is used on a normal, standard, and consistent basis.
  - An **adequate** residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

# Homeless Definition (3)

- Examples of homelessness include children and youth living in:
  - Shared housing due to economic hardship
  - Motels or hotels
  - Public or private places not designed for sleeping

# Homeless Definition (4)

- Trailer parks or campgrounds
- Cars, parks, and abandoned  buildings
- Shelters
- Emergency or transitional shelters

# Homeless Definition (5)

- Additional examples of homelessness include children and youth who are:
  - Migratory children who qualify as homeless
  - Abandoned in hospitals
  - Unaccompanied homeless youth

# Homeless Definition (6)

- To determine if a homeless child or youth lives in substandard living conditions consider:
  - Health and safety concerns
  - Number of occupants per square foot
  - Age of occupants
  - State and local building codes

# Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Definition

- Unaccompanied homeless youth is defined as a child or youth who meets the McKinney-Vento definition and is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
- There is no age limit for an unaccompanied homeless youth.

# Homelessness Effects (1)

- Emotional–Anxiety, low self-esteem, anger, depression, embarrassment
- Social–Poor interaction with others, self-isolates, disruptive, inappropriate
- Physical–Hunger, stress, developmental delays, hyperactivity, tired, poor hygiene

# Homelessness Effects (2)

- Homeless children and youth
  - Are more susceptible to domestic, physical, and sexual violence
  - Typically have greater health problems
  - Are twice as likely to repeat a grade compared to non-homeless students

# Homelessness Effects (3)

- Homeless children and youth, also have:
  - History of attending many schools
  - Gaps in skill development
  - Inadequate or inappropriate clothing for the weather
  - Lack of preparation for class
  - Erratic attendance and tardiness

# Mobility (1)

- Homeless students can lose four to six months of academic progress with one school move during a year.
- Mobility also hurts non-mobile students; a study found average test scores for non-mobile students were significantly lower in high schools with high student mobility rates.

# Mobility (2)

- Students who change high schools even once during high school are less than half as likely as stable students to graduate, even accounting for other factors.

# Additional Consequences (1)

- Homeless students and their families typically, experience:
  - Poor nutrition
  - Inadequate health care
  - Higher exposure to violence and emotional stress
  - Increased incidents of health impairments

# Additional Consequences (2)

- With constant moving, children and youth experiencing homelessness leave behind a familiar space, their possessions, and people
- Children and youth experiencing homelessness leave projects half finished, cling to possessions, are restless, may exhibit aggressive behavior, or feel a loss of control so they fight for control at school

# QUESTIONS ?

# Attendance Strategies (1)

- Ask the student about his/her interests and needs
- Address those interests and needs with their school program and extra-curricular activities
- Provide them with alarm clocks, walking partners, etc.

# Attendance Strategies (2)

- Help them to find a quiet and supportive place to work and study, such as:
  - Coordinate with Child Welfare and Attendance staff
  - Develop “success plans” with goals, steps, services, and accountability

# Attendance Strategies (3)

- Assign a mentor (youth or adult) to provide guidance, encouragement, and assistance
- Intervene early when they are missing a lot of school
- Ensure that transportation is not a barrier

# Attendance Strategies (4)

- Provide them with community resources such as:
  - Clothes closets
  - Food banks
  - Health clinics
  - Laundry services
  - Shower facilities

# Behavior Strategies (1)

- Create a calm and quiet management style
- Provide quiet reminders of appropriate behavior
- Create a supportive environment with classroom rules developed together
- Solve behavior problems as a class which creates a climate of trust

# Behavior Strategies (2)

- Manage the classroom effectively by reducing disruptions, if possible
- Provide students with the opportunity to take time out for themselves when they are frustrated, mad, or sad
- Have an understanding of homelessness

# Academic Strategies (1)

- Assess and plan for students needs and learning styles
- Plan lessons in such a way that content and skills can be mastered in a short period of time
- Maintain high expectations through assignments and lessons
- Expose students to rigorous curriculum

# Academic Strategies (2)

- Offer a variety of instructional techniques, such as:
  - Direct instruction
  - Simulated instruction
  - Integrated instruction
- Integrate technology, whenever possible
- Offer hands-on activities

# Academic Strategies (3)

- Use higher-level questioning strategies
- Refer to tutoring, after-school intervention activities, etc.
- Coordinate with the homeless liaison in the district and even the county
- Reach out to homeless families on a continuous basis

# Academic Strategies (4)

- Contact the previous school to help with placement decisions
- Follow up on special education referrals and/or services
- Help the student identify work samples and assemble a portfolio
- Share a set of text books with the local shelter

# Classroom Intervention Strategies (1)

- Teach students alternative ways to express frustration
- Give the students something that belongs only to them
- Don’t take away their possession
- Assist other students in being sensitive to stereotypes of homeless people

# Classroom Intervention Strategies (2)

- Support students' efforts to manage or negotiate their own conflict or problem solving
- Break tasks down into small segments that can be completed in a short period of time
- Make sure that the homeless student is enrolled in free and reduced meal program

# Classroom Intervention Strategies (3)

- Integrate new students into the classroom quickly with a set of assessment tools that can be quickly administered
- Assign students a “buddy” to help them learn their way around school
- Give the student a clipboard, and other school supplies, to take home

# Classroom Intervention Strategies (4)

- Provide structure in the classroom by keeping a consistent schedule and clear rules
- Ensure that students have access to a full range of educational services (Title I, English learners, gifted and talented activities, tutoring, etc.)
- Offer encouragement and understanding

# Classroom Intervention Strategies (5)

- Be persistent in maintaining positive social interaction and support
- Don’t penalize students for arriving late to school
- Keep some nutritional snacks for those students who might come to school late and missed breakfast

# QUESTIONS ?

# Welcome

# San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE)

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# Strategies and Trauma (1)

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2014*

# Strategies and Trauma (2)

## Trauma Informed

- **Acknowledge** the prevalence of trauma;
- **Recognize** its effects on students;
- **Implement** trauma-sensitive practices and policies to address it; and,
- **Avoid** practices at school that can retraumatize students.

## Resilience-Informed

- Implore a paradigm shift from conventional thinking, *"What happened to you?"*
- To **resiliency-informed thinking**,
- *"What are your strengths?"* and
- *"What is right with you?"* (strength-based)

# Strategies and Trauma (3)

The impacts of trauma on students experiencing homelessness is recognized by the federal government:

- Homelessness is inherently traumatic and frequently violent.
- LEAs should **train staff** on the traumatic effects of homelessness and specific strategies to provide trauma-informed care. Federal Guidance p. 34
- LEAs should ensure school personnel **consider issues related to homelessness prior to taking disciplinary action**. Federal Guidance p. 33

# Strategies and Trauma – Perceptions (1)

- We all should be responsible for identifying and adjusting our own misperceptions about these students.
    - Examine your own responses when you hear “homeless”
- High Mobility is often viewed as an obstacle to student and teacher success.
    - Require continual adjustments…missed or make up assignments

# Strategies and Trauma – Perceptions (2)

- Expectation that student will be difficult
- Excessive time spent reviewing material instead of instruction as planned.

- The way teachers perceive this student population impacts how they interact – even whether they want to interact – with these students.
  - Teachers can help each other develop more accurate perspectives

# Strategies and Trauma – Priorities

Priorities for Students Impacted by Trauma:

- Predictability
- Flexibility
- Empowerment

# Strategies and Trauma – Needs

What Students Need Most:

- Sense of Safety
- Connections
- Hope

# Strategies and Trauma – Final

**Trust**

- Be Genuine
- Show Up

**Help Students Regulate and Reason**

- Mirror
- Validate
- Empathize

# QUESTIONS ?

# Parent Outreach Strategies

- Make parents/guardians feel valued as partners in their child's education
- Allow parents/guardians extra time to pay for trips or special events
- Help parents/guardians become familiar with services available
- Provide an informal support system to address issues or concerns

# Resources

- CDE Homeless Education web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/. Find out who your district and county Liaison is, how to support students using Title I, Part A funds, understand what the homeless liaison can do to support you, etc.
- National Center for Homeless Education website at https://nche.ed.gov/, which is the technical assistance center for the U.S. Department of Education.

# Contact Information

Homeless Education Program

Integrated Student Support and Programs Office

California Department of Education

Toll-free Number 1-866-856-8214

Email: HomelessED@cde.ca.gov

# Certificate of Completion

## Homelessness in the Classroom

"I have fully reviewed the contents of this training and agree to implement the provisions of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act."

_____ _____

Participant Name Participant Signature

_____

Date of Completion

Please print out this slide of the PowerPoint, complete, and retain a copy for your records.