

# Attendance & Engagement System of Support & Professional Communities

# Talk Tuesdays

Developed by the CSDE in collaboration with  
Attendance Works & SERC

**1/23/2024**



# Today's Agenda

## **Welcome**

Christine Kuehlewind, Stephen Proffitt, Ann Marie Cordisco, and Elisa Laudati, State Education Resource Center (SERC)

## **What's New at CSDE and Partners**

Kari Sullivan Custer, Attendance & Engagement Consultant, CSDE

Jay Brown, Bureau of Special Education Consultant (Academic Office), CSDE

## **Improving Attendance by Addressing Homelessness and Housing Instability**

Louis Tallarita, LMSW, Education Consultant, CSDE

Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness

Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

## **Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings**

Christine Kuehlewind, SERC



# Welcome

## December 18, 2023

- [Suggestions and Resources](#) for Professional Development and Evaluation Committees (PDECs) and [FAQs](#)
- [Department of Children and Families \(DCF\) Mandated Trainings](#)
- [AccelerateCT Camp Summit](#)

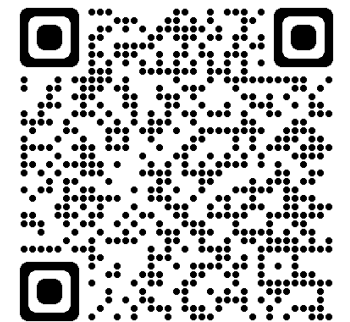
## December 21, 2023

- CSDE Launches K-2 Science Model Curricula to complete K-8 Science Model Curricula, [Quick Start Guide and FAQs](#).

## January 8, 2024

- [Virtual LEAP 101 Trainings \(Join us: 1/29/2024\)](#)
- [CSDE launches Grades K-5 Computer Science Model Curricula](#)

[Superintendent's Digest](#)





# Welcome

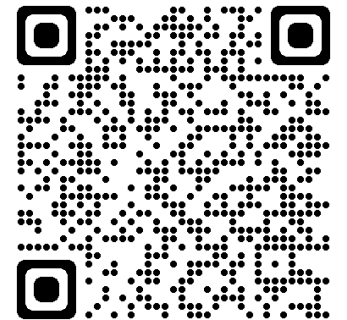
## January 11, 2024

- [Guidance on Civil Rights Protections and Supports for Transgender or Gender-Diverse Students](#)
- [Student Participation in Alternate Assessment](#)
- [Internet Safety Training – On behalf of the US Attorney’s Office, District of Connecticut and the Department of Children and Families - January 25, 2024](#)

## January 22, 2024

- [CT Education Forum on Literacy: A State & National Conversation](#)
- [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief \(ESSER\) Liquidation Extension](#)
- [Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Support Webinar | Thursday, February 8, 2024, 2-3:30 PM \(EST\)](#)

[Superintendent's Digest](#)





# High School Affinity Groups

## Student Voice & Belonging

January 25th

9:30-11:30am

SERC Office in Waterbury (175 Union Street)

40 Participants Maximum

(prior registrants do not need to register again)

2-hour session will include: specific resources aligned to the Bright Spots: Improving High School Student Attendance in Connecticut Report, student voice panel with students on their experiences, perceived sense of belonging and connectedness in high school.

<https://eventactions.com/eareg.aspx?e a=Rsvp&invite=09528shakn9kb1gz6a7hz95p12p6bhxyzb64zytp5p0wym1f1274>

**More Info Contact:**

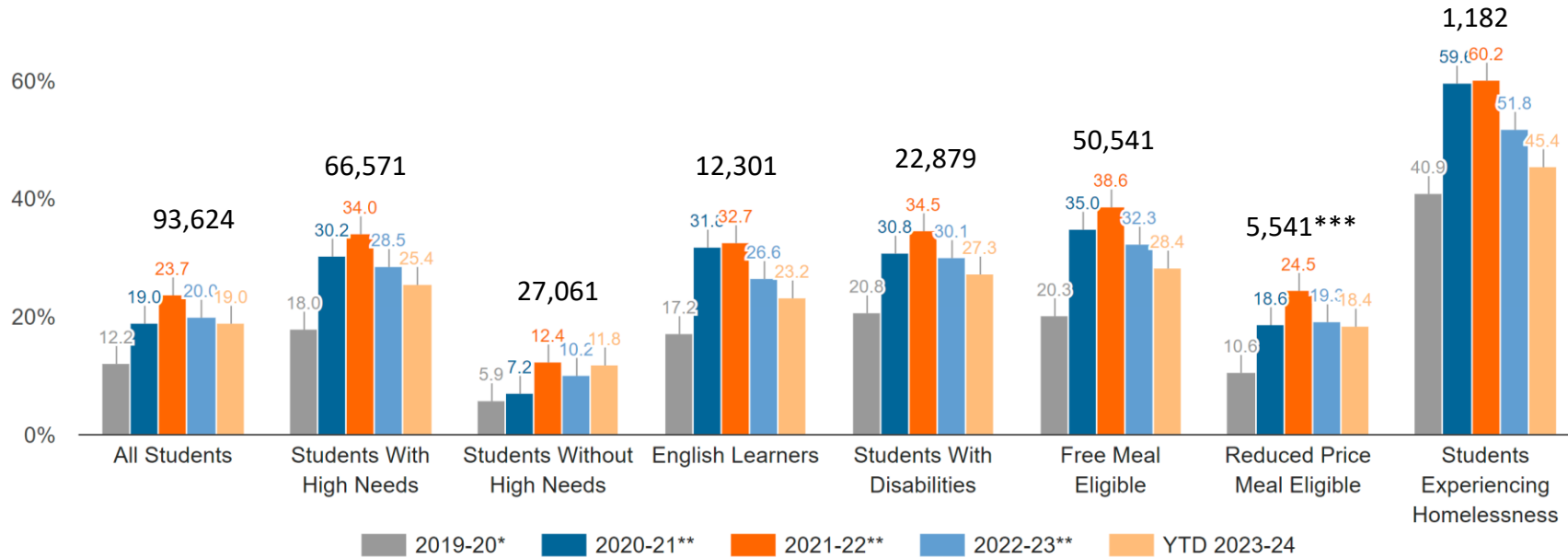
Registration: Holli Ryan [ryan@ctserc.org](mailto:ryan@ctserc.org)

Content: Ann Marie Cordisco [Cordisco@ctserc.org](mailto:Cordisco@ctserc.org)

# Year-to-Date Chronic Absence Rates November 2023



Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of November 2023 compared to 2022-23, 2021-22, 2020-2021, and 2019-20)



StudentGroup	ChronAbs	Number
All other races	0.1522	7,587
Black or African American	0.2354	14,339
Hispanic/Latino of any race	0.2553	39,069
White	0.1427	32,636

\*Calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. \*\*Calculations include both in-person and remote days.

\*\*\*Not eligible for free meals: 37,501

<https://edsight.ct.gov/relatedreports/Supporting%20Student%20Participation%20in%202020-21.html>

# White House Improving Student Achievement Agenda for 2024



- [Biden-Harris Administration Announces Improving Student Achievement Agenda for 2024 \(youtube.com\)](#)
- Event recording: hite House Fact Sheet: [FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Announces Improving Student Achievement Agenda in 2024 | The White House](#)



# LEAP 101 Trainings



**2024 Virtual LEAP 101 Trainings**

Learn the LEAP Approach to relational home visits

<b>Wednesday, January 17</b> 1:00pm - 3:00pm	<b>Monday, January 29</b> 3:00pm - 5:00pm
<b>REGISTER</b>	<b>REGISTER</b>

**Questions?**  
Contact Francisco Baires: fbaires@crec.org

**Building Relationships for Student Success!**



LEAP (Learner Engagement & Attendance Program) is Connecticut's research-based, relational home visit model proven to increase student attendance and family engagement.

[www.ct.gov/leap](http://www.ct.gov/leap)



# Attendance Awareness Toolkits (no-cost - first come, first serve)



**Pick up Your Attendance Awareness Toolkit**

*School is better with YOU!*

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is pleased to announce that as part of the ongoing Better With You Attendance Awareness Campaign, designed to promote attendance, CSDE has purchased "attendance awareness toolkits" for Connecticut school districts.

### What's Included

These toolkit materials will be available free of charge for districts at all six Regional Educational Service Centers. These toolkits include banners, stickers, and push-n' pop stress balls branded with attendance awareness messaging aligned with the campaign.

Toolkits will be distributed on a **first-come, first-served basis**. Please register to pick up items for your district below.

### Opportunity for Additional Toolkit Items

EdAdvance will be launching a pop-up website with a wide variety of items promoting positive attendance messaging. On the pop-up website, districts will be able to purchase items of their choosing. The website will be live for three weeks, from January 29 - February 9, at [Barkershops.com/BetterWithYou](http://Barkershops.com/BetterWithYou).

**Register for Pick up**  
Tinyurl.com/Toolkit-Pickup-Registration



### Pick up Dates

<p><b>EdAdvance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wednesday, 1/24   10:00 am to 2:00 pm</li> <li>355 Goshen Road Litchfield, CT 06759</li> </ul> <p><b>EASTCONN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thursday, 1/25   10:00 am to 2:00 pm</li> <li>376 Hartford Turnpike Hampton, CT 06247</li> </ul> <p><b>ACES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friday, 1/26   10:00 am to 2:00 pm</li> <li>205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 (TLC Building)</li> </ul>	<p><b>CREC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday, 1/29   10:00 am to 2:00 pm</li> <li>111 Charter Oak Avenue Hartford, CT 06106</li> </ul> <p><b>LEARN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tuesday, 1/30   10:00 am to 2:00 pm</li> <li>44 Hatchetts Hill Road Old Lyme, CT 06371</li> </ul> <p><b>CES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wednesday, 1/31   10:00 am to 2:00 pm</li> <li>40 Lindeman Drive Trumbull, CT 06611</li> </ul>
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**EdAdvance** Educate • Collaborate • Innovate

**Questions?** Contact Caroline Calhoun at: [calhoun@edadvance.org](mailto:calhoun@edadvance.org)  
The Connecticut State Department of Education is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.

## Pick up Dates

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  - Wednesday, 1/24 | 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
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<http://tinyurl.com/Toolkit-Pickup-Registration>



**Questions?**  
Contact Caroline Calhoun at  
[Calhoun@edadvance.org](mailto:Calhoun@edadvance.org).



# Attendance Awareness Product Website

Website Live From: January 29 - February 9



School is better with YOU!

SCAN HERE TO VISIT WEBSITE



## Better With You Attendance Awareness Campaign Merchandise Available!

EdAdvance, in collaboration with BARKER SPECIALTY, is launching a pop-up website featuring an extensive range of products designed to promote positive attendance messaging. Don't miss this opportunity to purchase **Better With You** merchandise for your school and district!



Retractable Banner in English/Spanish



Door Hangers in English/Spanish



4x6 Magnet



Golf Umbrella



Drawstring Backpack



25 oz. Stainless Steel Water Bottle



Trucker Hat

More Offerings Available Online!



# School is Better with YOU!

## Attendance Awareness Campaign

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/betterwithyou>

### ATTENDANCE: SCHOOL IS BETTER WITH YOU

- Increase awareness of the importance of school attendance and engagement in order to improve school attendance.
- Conducted research: digital surveys + SME interviews
- Strategy: Create overall messaging umbrella; tactics to connect with parents/grandparents/caregivers, high school students, as well as school staff and community organizations; multi-lingual
- Portal: [CT.gov/betterwithyou](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/betterwithyou) (coming soon!)
- Media Campaign: September - December 2023
  - FB, IG, LinkedIn, TikTok
  - Digital radio, TV, OOH
  - Display banners, Local and in-language newspapers
  - Spanish Language Media



[www.ct.gov/betterwithyou](http://www.ct.gov/betterwithyou)

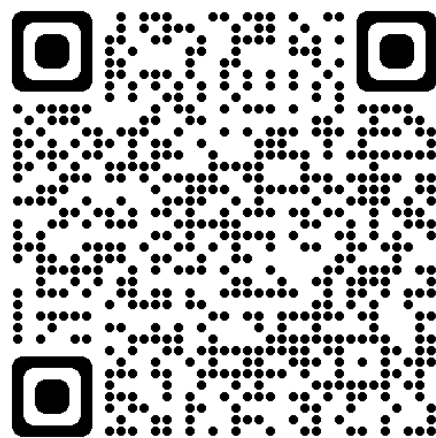


**New Video Coming Soon!**











# Don't Miss a Talk Tuesday!



<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Chronic-Absence/Talk-Tuesdays>



## Talk Tuesday Sessions 2023-24

- [Family Engagement- Supporting Multilingual and Immigrant Families](#)  Nitza Diaz, SERC Consultant, and Lourdes Delgado- Faith and Education Coalition, National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, (Retired Principal Bridgeport PS), December 12, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)
- [Executive Functioning, Mental Health, and Attendance](#)  Christine Kuehlewind and Elisa Laudati, SERC, November 28, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)
- [Building School Love: Tap the Power of School-based Mentoring](#)  Najla Staggers, The Governor's Prevention Partnership, November 14, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)
- [Hartford Public Schools ACE Team](#)  Irene Rietze and Abby Olinger Quint, October 31, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)
- [BRIGHT SPOTS: Improving High School Student Attendance in Connecticut](#)  Helen Duffy, Senior Fellow, Attendance Works, and Matthew Ryan, Principal, East Hartford High School [Download Report](#)  October 17, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)
- [School is Better with You! Attendance Awareness Campaign](#)  Caroline Calhoun, EdAdvance, and Nicole Lenti, O'Donnell Company, October 3, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)
- [Understanding and Interpreting Monthly Attendance Data](#)  for 2023-24, Briana Hennessey, Associate Education Consultant, CSDE Performance Office, September 19, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)

## Summer Series 2023 - "Back to Basics"

- [School Climate: Impact on Attendance](#)  Amanda Pickett, MSW, Education Consultant, CSDE, Office of Student Supports, August 8, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)
- [Attendance & Engagement 101](#)  Caroline Calhoun, EdAdvance, Professional Learning and Attendance Specialist & LEAP Coordinator, July 18, 2023, [Watch recording!](#)



## Featured Speaker

# Improving Attendance by Addressing Homelessness and Housing Instability

**Louis Tallarita, LMSW**

Education Consultant, CSDE

Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness  
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education



CONNECTICUT STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# **Improving Attendance by Addressing Homelessness and Housing Instability**

# Chronic Absenteeism and Students Experiencing Homelessness

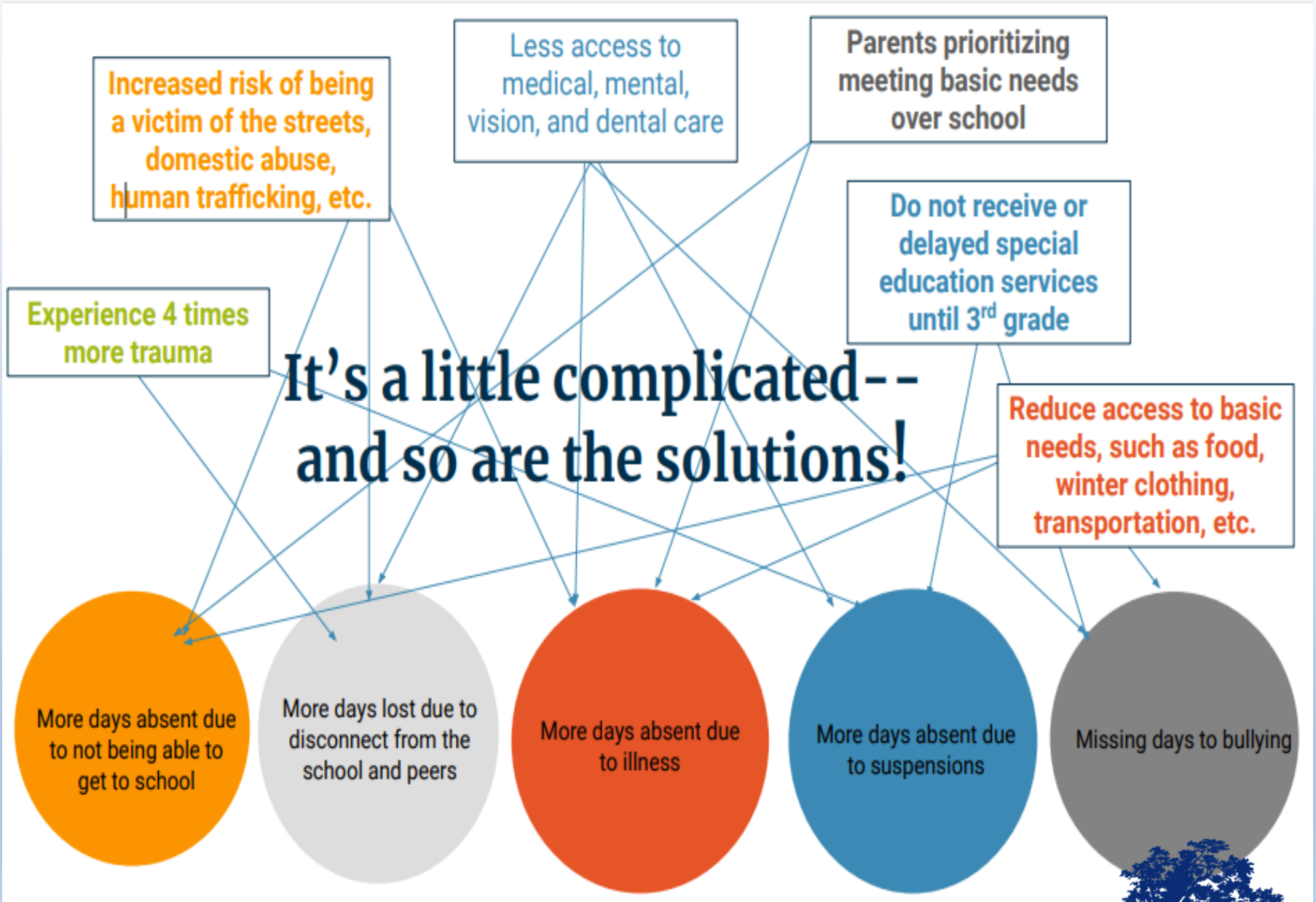
Research shows economically disadvantaged students more likely to be chronically absent than overall student population - but studies also indicate students experiencing homelessness are chronically absent at rates even higher than their housed, low-income peers.



# Reasons for HCY Absentee Rates

- Conditional shelter and temporary placements.
- Distance to school, and lack of transportation.
- Child and family health issues:
  - Chronic illnesses, such as child asthma.
  - Adult health conditions, mental health, and substance abuse.
- Special needs challenges.
- Complex family dynamics.
- Lacking clothing, supplies, other basic needs
- Prioritized employment and lack of child care.





# What Districts Can Do?

Align and embed protocols to ensure all homeless children and youth (HCY) are in school.

- [McKinney-Vento \(MV\) Homeless Assistance Act](#) requires districts remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, stability, and success of HCY.

# Basics of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (PreK-12)

- Primary federal legislation related to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness
  - Reauthorized in 2015 as part of ESSA.
  - Requires all state and local educational agencies to designate state coordinators and [local homeless education liaison](#)
- ❖ [Connecticut LEA Homeless Liaison Catalog](#)

# Rights and Protections for Students Experiencing Homelessness

- “**School selection**” including:
  - staying in the last school they attended, aka “school of origin” and receiving **transportation** to that school
  - **Immediate enrollment** into a new school without proof of residency, immunizations, school records, or other documents normally needed for enrollment, regardless of application or enrollment deadlines, during any period of homelessness
- Enroll & attend class in school of their choice, even if eligibility or school placement is **disputed**.
- **Free school meals** and access to other special programs and services, comparable to all other students.



# Who is “homeless”

An individual who **lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including children and youth who are:

- Sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate housing.
- Living in emergency or transitional housing.
- Living in a public or private space not designed for humans to live.
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.



# Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

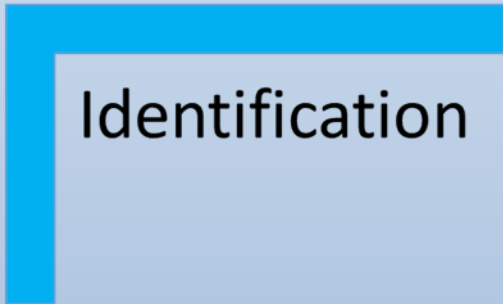
- Includes a “homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.”
- Schools must assist UHY with enrollment, school selection, & dispute resolution
- Have same right to immediate enrollment & educational programs/services as other students.



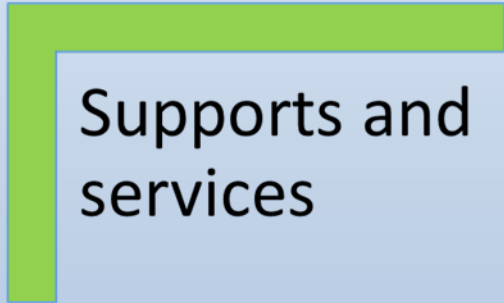


# Early Identification

Structures and systems must be in place to intervene early if a student is not attending school on a regular basis.



Identification



Supports and  
services



Student  
Success

# System-wide Strategies for Improving HCY attendance

- Identification and Awareness

# Identification and Awareness

- Avoid using the word "homeless."
- Provide awareness activities to ALL staff.
- Post outreach materials in ALL schools and throughout community.
- Employ housing questions in enrollment, intake and withdrawal forms.
- Educate students, parents, and community partners.





Connecticut State Department of Education

**No matter what.  
School is for Everyone.**

CT schools are here for all students—  
even those dealing with **unstable  
housing or homelessness.**

➤ Learn more at

**CT.gov/NoMatterWhat**



- ❖ Get Help
- ❖ Get Answers
- ❖ Spread the Word



# System-wide Strategies for Improving HCY attendance

- Identification and Awareness
- **Connecting McKinney-Vento Liaison**

# Connecting McKinney-Vento Liaison

- Include M-V liaisons into District and School Attendance Review Teams.
- Examine overlapping [responsibilities](#).
- Ensure capacity, time and knowledge to effectively carry out MV duties.
- Designate school building-level McKinney-Vento contacts.



# System-wide Strategies for Improving HCY attendance

- Identification and Awareness
- Connecting McKinney-Vento Liaison
- **Build Capacity Among School Staff**

# Build Capacity Among School Staff

- Ensure Federal law compliance to provide professional development and training re: HCY and M-V.
- Develop cross-training and meeting events with both attendance and MV liaisons.
- Provide PD to all staff; teachers, secretaries, counselors, bus drivers, and principals.
- Reinforce LEA awareness and outreach.



# System-wide Strategies for Improving HCY attendance

- Identification and Awareness
- Connecting McKinney-Vento Liaison
- Build Capacity Among School Staff
- Examine and Monitor HCY Data

# Examine HCY Data

- Examine data to determine if HCY are being identified (grades/schools/district).
- Review local PSIS data (present/past) on students identified and determine data clean and accurate.
- Question no or low reports of students homeless and/or unaccompanied.
- Examine lower than average comparison rates among data other data
  - free/reduced students to identified homeless.
  - community data on poverty among families, trends in foreclosures, evictions, and the availability of affordable housing.

# Monitor Attendance Data

- Implement early warning and other attendance-monitoring systems coordinated with McKinney-Vento Act and homeless education personnel.
- Watch attendance among all identified HCY and intervene quickly to address challenges or disruptions.
- Disaggregate data to determine trends and identify needs in order to select strategies that address barrier or concerns.

# System-wide Strategies for Improving HCY attendance

- Identification and Awareness
- Connecting McKinney-Vento Liaison
- Build Capacity Among School Staff
- Examine and Monitor HCY Data
- **Connect HCY to Services**

# Connect HCY to Services

- Connect directly to school nurses, school social workers, school counselors and other school professionals.
- Provide services and education programs comparable to those received by other students and for which they meet eligibility criteria:
  - Title I, part A.
  - IDEA accommodations and supports.
  - Dual language supports
  - Vocational or technical programs.
  - Gifted and talented programs.
  - Tutoring, remediation and homework assistance.
  - Food and school nutrition programs (qualified free).
  - School uniform, supplies and equipment.





# Address Transportation

- Ensure HCY transportation needs are addressed without delay.
- Develop transportation guidelines/procedures with district transportation administrators to ensure immediate transportation to/from school.
- Consider both short-term (immediate) options, while long-term options are arranged.
- Work with regional partners to assemble multi-district agreements and set regional policies and practices.



# Important: Transfer Records Timely

- Both federal and State law require the prompt transfer of records between previous and enrolling schools.
- Even though enrollment cannot be denied due to the lack of records, prompt transfer of records safeguards student is placed in appropriate learning environment.
- Reduces threat of academic failure and ensures services needed to support educational stability and success.




# Collaboration is KEY

Working and planning together to address challenges, barriers and solutions.

- Among all district programs and departments.
- Community collaboration with housing and homeless service providers.
- Engage families in full, equal and equitable partnerships.
- Inter-district partnerships.



# Know Where to Go ... Housing

-  front door into the State of Connecticut's Coordinated Access Networks (CANS); intake/access to emergency housing, rental assistance, affordable housing, and assistance for homeowners.
- Public Housing Agencies – consult with local housing authorities that administer Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing programs.
- [CTHousingSearch.org](http://CTHousingSearch.org) – Free service to find market-rate to affordable rentals, accessible units, housing for special populations.
- Eviction Prevention Moving Assistance Program – [UniteCT](http://UniteCT.org) Resource Call Center (1-844-864-8328).





Questions?



# Targeted Resources

- [\*Improving School Attendance for Homeless Children\*](#)
- [\*In School Every Day: Addressing Chronic Absenteeism Among Students Experiencing Homelessness\*](#)
- [\*Missing School, Missing a Home\*](#)
- [\*Supporting the Attendance of Students Experiencing Homelessness\*](#)
- [\*Five Questions with Sue Lenahan: Addressing Chronic Absenteeism\*](#)



# Other HCY Resources

- [CSDE Homeless Education Webpage](#)
- [National Center for Homeless Education](#)
- [SchoolHouse Connection](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth](#)







# Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings

## Talk Tuesdays for the 2023-24 School Year

### 2024

- February 6
- February 20
- March 5
- March 19
- April 2
- April 30
- May 14
- May 28

**Register for Talk Tuesdays**





# Keep in Touch!

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**Ann Marie Cordisco, SERC**

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860-632-1485, ext. 399