

STATE PLAN
Composite Notes
for the McKinney-Vento EHCY Program

State Name: California



U.S. Department of Education
September 2017

Background

Peer reviewers will apply their professional judgment and experiences when responding to the questions in response to the criteria below. Consistent with section 1111(a)(4)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, peer reviewers will conduct an objective review of State plans in their totality and out of respect for State and local judgments, with the goal of supporting State- and local-led innovation and providing objective feedback on the technical, educational, and overall quality of a State plan, including the validity and reliability of each element of the plan. Reviewer responses to the questions inform the written determination of the Secretary regarding the State plan.

Role of the Peer Reviewers

- Each peer reviewer will independently review a consolidated State plan in accordance to the criteria for Title VII, Subtitle B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act's Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (EHCY). Each reviewer will record their responses to the questions, will note where changes may be necessary for an SEA to fully address statutory and regulatory requirements, and may also present suggestions for improving the plan or to highlight best practices. Each peer will create individual recommendations to guide the remote review. These are submitted to the Department but will not be shared with the State.
- A panel of peer reviewers will meet remotely to discuss each SEA's plan. The panel of peer reviewers will generate one set of peer review notes that reflects their collective review and evaluation of the SEA's State plan, but the panel is not required to reach consensus. The notes should reflect all reviewer perspectives on each item.

After the peer review is completed, each SEA will receive the final peer review notes that include the peer reviewers' responses to the questions and any recommendations to improve the SEA's State plan in the sections that the peers reviewed. The peer review notes serve two purposes: 1) they constitute the official record of the peer review panel's responses to questions regarding how an SEA's State plan addresses the statutory and regulatory requirements; and 2) they provide technical assistance to the SEA on how to improve its plan. The peer review notes also serve as recommendations to the Secretary to determine what, if any, additional information to request from the SEA. Taking into consideration the peer reviewers' recommendations, the Department will provide feedback to each SEA that outlines the areas the SEA must address, if any, prior to the Secretary's approving its State plan. If a plan cannot be approved, the Department will offer the State an opportunity to revise and resubmit its plan and have a hearing, consistent with ESEA section 8451.

Consistent with ESEA section 1111(a)(5), the Department will make publicly available all peer review guidance, training, and final peer panel notes. The names of peer reviewers will be made publicly available at the completion of the review of all State Plans, though the peer reviewers for any individual State will not be made available.

How to Use This Document

The reviewer criteria is intended to 1) support States as they develop their consolidated State plans, and 2) inform peer review teams as they evaluate each State plan. This document outlines required elements in order for an SEA to fully address the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. If an SEA has provided insufficient information for peer reviewers to determine whether any question is fully addressed, peer

reviewers should indicate that the SEA has not fully addressed that requirement and identify what additional information or clarification may be needed.

Instructions

Each peer reviewer should include individual review notes in the space provided below each State plan requirement. For each State plan requirement, a peer reviewer will provide:

- Peer Analysis: Describe the peer reviewer's justification for why an SEA did or did not meet the requirements;
- Strengths: Summarize strengths of the SEA's response to the State plan requirement;
- Limitations: Summarize the limitations of an SEA's response to the State plan requirement, including issues, lack of clarity, and possible technical assistance suggestions;
- Assessment: Determine if the SEA met the State plan requirement (indicated by Yes/No); and
 - If the peer reviewer indicates 'no' above, the peer must describe the specific information or clarification that a State must provide in order to meet the requirement.

The peer reviewer notes should address all of the required elements of each State plan requirement in this document, but do not need to address each element individually (*i.e.*, the peer notes should holistically look at I.5 the Strategies to Address Other Problems, incorporating each of the five identified items in this element but do not need to individually respond to each item).

SECTION I: EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM, MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT, TITLE VII, SUBTITLE B

I.1: Student Identification (722(g)(1)(B) of the McKinney-Vento Act)

- **Does the SEA describe the procedures it will use to identify homeless children and youth in the State and to assess their needs?**

	<i>Peer Response</i>
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The reviewers observed that the SEA’s plan described appropriate identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness. It outlined several specific strategies for identification and included evidence that the State plans to improve upon the existing procedures. The SEA shares identification information with LEAs, and LEAs ensure that students who meet the identification definition are entered as such in CALPADS.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewers identified strengths in the plan’s technical assistance given to LEAs for identification of homeless students, including training modules for several types of staff who may serve as identification sources, and providing targeted identification strategies based on State-level data analysis for districts not currently identifying any homeless children or youth. The State outlined several data collection sources including CALPADS and homeless student counts, and incorporating homeless children and youth as part of the accountability system. The common intake form was noted as well, as it will allow LEAs to assess student needs at the LEA level. Another identified strength was liaison participation in local Point-in-Time counts. Additionally, the SEA will regularly assess needs with stakeholder feedback and monitoring, and facilitate best practices by supporting LEAs in conducting data analysis, implementation of case study models, and collaborating and coordinating relevant services.
<i>Limitations</i>	The reviewers noted that while training modules have been created and disseminated, it is unclear the extent to which these resources are utilized or the SEA’s procedural expectation surrounding the use of these modules, despite a later section mentioning that this is tracked through CARS. Also, the plan would benefit from further explanation of State-level activities, including the specifics of the SEA’s needs assessment process.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (3) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information</i>	

<i>or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	
---	--

I.2: Dispute Resolution (722(g)(1)(C) of the McKinney-Vento Act)

- **Does the SEA describe procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth?**

	<i>Peer Response</i>
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The reviewers observed that the SEA described plans to ensure that the disputes get resolved quickly, and provided a timeline. Peer reviewers found the State’s narrative for this requirement meeting the criteria for prompt resolution, and provided a path for parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewers identified strengths in the clarity of the State’s dispute resolution process, demonstration of a prompt timeline, and provisions to ensure that parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth have the right to appeal. The process is available online, and the State will make revisions to include timelines, roles and other factors to ensure prompt resolution.
<i>Limitations</i>	The reviewers noted that the dispute process would be strengthened by the addition of the statutory language included in the reauthorization of ESSA and an explanation of how the process is disseminated to persons who need to obtain this information without internet access.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (3) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	

I.3: Support for School Personnel (722(g)(1)(D) of the McKinney-Vento Act)

- **Does the SEA describe programs for school personnel (including the LEA liaisons for homeless children and youth, principals and other school leaders, attendance officers, teachers, enrollment personnel, and specialized instructional support personnel) to heighten the awareness of such school personnel of the specific needs of homeless children and youth, including such children and youth who are runaway and homeless youths?**

<i>Peer Response</i>	
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The reviewers observed that the SEA has a plan in place to support and heighten awareness of school personnel at various levels, and defines how it will work with all stakeholders regarding issues that homeless students may experience.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewers identified strengths in the SEA’s plan to develop training modules, with stakeholder input, for various levels of educational and support staff throughout the State. The plan described collaboration across various departments and agencies, and included working with health care providers, outside agencies, preschool staff, and registrars. It also described tracking procedures for professional development for liaisons through CARS. These, in addition to the monitoring process of this implementation, were found to support this requirement.
<i>Limitations</i>	The reviewers noted limitations such as the plan not specifically stating how or when these interactions will take place or what organizations it plans to work with. Examples of outside agencies or health care providers would help ensure that LEAs understand the type of connections the SEA intends. Also, the attendance officer (or appropriate title) is not noted within the plan.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (3) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	

I.4: Access to Services (722(g)(1)(F) of the McKinney-Vento Act)

- **Does the SEA describe procedures that ensure that homeless children have access to public preschool programs, administered by the SEA or LEA, as provided to other children?**

	<i>Peer Response</i>
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The reviewers observed that the SEA plan described support for preschool-aged children experiencing homelessness, including describing the other organizations it will be working with and how it will help support those groups to ensure that homeless students have access to preschool and transportation. The State has an emphasis on outreach, supports, and technical assistance, but there is little information on the outcomes of these procedures.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewers identified strengths in the procedures surrounding the awareness and professional learning of homeless children’s access to preschool, and the advisory committee which provides input on curriculum and the supports necessary for success. Another strength identified in the plan was the strong collaboration with early childhood partners. The plan outlined the expected collaborations and coordination between various entities to ensure access to preschool and states that it will ensure that the Education and Implementation and Policy webpage is updated to reflect such collaborations.
<i>Limitations</i>	The reviewers noted a limitation where the State has a robust explanation of the professional development and awareness activities surrounding access to preschool, but does not include a description of the State’s analysis of data collected through CARS or how it analyzes the outcomes of their existing procedures.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (3) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	

- **Does the SEA describe procedures that ensure that homeless youth and youth separated from public schools are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services, including by identifying and removing barriers that prevent youth described in this clause from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school, in accordance with State, local, and school policies?**

	<i>Peer Response</i>
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The reviewers observed that the SEA provided a plan to support this requirement, and they plan to provide additional supports to ensure access. There are specific procedures in place to allow homeless students to have equal access to appropriate secondary education and support, and the plan specifically addresses the needs of homeless youth and youth separated from public schools. However, more description of outcome data would strengthen this section.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewers saw as strengths that the plan provided specific examples of supports in place for youth who are separated from school and described collaboration with organizations to assist a youth's transition back into school. The State Coordinator works with the Title I-D Neglected and Delinquent youth coordinator to ensure services for students in need, and State statute allows flexibility in graduation paths, timelines, and credit accrual. The SEA considers student needs in various ways including a crisis line, resources for housing, and health and wellness.
<i>Limitations</i>	It was noted that a detailed description of outcome data was not provided.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (3) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	

- **Does the SEA describe procedures that ensure that homeless children and youth who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs, if such programs are available at the State and local levels?**

	<i>Peer Response</i>
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The peer reviewers observed that the plan stated that California law is in line with McKinney-Vento, and the Homeless Education Resource is used as a tool to communicate with liaisons. However, peer reviewers also observed that while the description outlined coordination and some professional learning activities, it was unclear how these activities work to remove barriers for homeless children and youth.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewers identified strengths in the plan such as where the SEA uses materials provided by the national technical assistance provider, and the plan mentioned specific documents that are in line with McKinney-Vento and serve as valuable tools to ensure accurate information is being disseminated. They also intend to include these requirements in future training modules. It was noted that the SEA also addresses the need for different approaches for charter schools, expanded learning, special education, adult education, and career and college transitions, and that the State has strong ongoing collaborations within CDE to assist with the removal of barriers.
<i>Limitations</i>	The reviewers noted as limitations that the SEA did not include specific collaborations that are expected to continue in this plan. While the plan described several coordination activities at the State level, it was unclear how this translates to the removal of barriers for homeless children and youth.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (1) Reviewer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (2) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	The peer reviewers indicated that the State could strengthen the plan by including details about their partnerships, specific procedures developed, and how these would help remove the barriers. A description of model policies developed for LEAs, how this is monitored by the State, or how the State tracks professional learning related to these criteria would all be helpful in understanding the implementation of its procedures.

I.5: Strategies to Address Other Problems (722(g)(1)(H) of the McKinney-Vento Act)

- **Does the SEA provide strategies to address other problems with respect to the education of homeless children and youth, including problems resulting from enrollment delays that are caused by—(i) requirements of immunization and other required health records; (ii) residency requirements; (iii) lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documentation; (iv) guardianship issues; or (v) uniform or dress code requirements?**

	<i>Peer Response</i>
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The reviewers observed that the SEA will create modules describing each of the various scenarios mentioned to address the needs of homeless students. The State also included strategies to address problems related to enrollment delays. However, there were some areas not addressed in the description, and overall it was unclear to reviewers how those mentioned remove enrollment delays.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewers identified strengths in the plan including that State statute, coordination of funds, training modules, online resources for LEAs, and future professional learning are all strategies outlined in removing barriers. The plan also included the proper training on Title I-A homeless set-aside allowable expenses and mentions working with LEA-level registrars, attendance clerks, and school counselors to assist with identification of students in homeless situations.
<i>Limitations</i>	The reviewers noted a limitation that other than 2017, a specific timeline is not established for new training modules. There is reference to free access to birth certificates through the Department of Motor Vehicles for those born in California, but does not say how this might be addressed for students from other States or countries.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (3) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	

I.6: Policies to Remove Barriers (722(g)(1)(I) of the McKinney-Vento Act)

- **Does the SEA demonstrate that the SEA and LEAs in the State have developed, and shall review and revise, policies to remove barriers to the identification of homeless children and youth, and the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth in schools in the State, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences?**

	<i>Peer Response</i>
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The peer reviewers observed that the SEA met the requirements of this section with evidence of training, forms developed by the State to remove barriers, and State statute. Also, it was observed that the LEA defines its expectations through the CARS Homeless Education Implementation and Policy page.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewer identified strengths in the plan where the SEA provided technical assistance, including to LEAs without procedures currently in place, and requires that LEAs submit their approved board policies and administrative regulations regarding homelessness for EHCY grant funding. It will also use training modules to address the removal of barriers. The CDE Compliance Monitoring form provided a link, including a description of the procedures provided and how the State meets these criteria.
<i>Limitations</i>	The reviewers noted a limitation where more detail was needed, as the majority of the evidence came from the provided link. Another limitation was that although referenced, each of the required items are not specifically outlined in the written plan.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (3) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	

I.7: Assistance from Counselors (722(g)(1)(K))

- **Does the SEA include how youths described in section 725(2) will receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths and prepare and improve the readiness of such youths for college?**

	<i>Peer Response</i>
<i>Peer Analysis</i>	The peer reviewers observed that the SEA has a plan for postsecondary requirements. However, the plan did not address counselors in the K-12 system. The SEA will create an overview of the requirements of counseling and showcase successful strategies for advising youths.
<i>Strengths</i>	The reviewers identified strengths in the plan including ties to postsecondary education. California State statute now designates a homeless/foster care liaison at postsecondary institutions, and there is evidence of awareness at the postsecondary level. In addition, data collected through CARS also demonstrates that counselors have been trained.
<i>Limitations</i>	The reviewers noted that the plan will be developed during the 2017-2018 year, but it is not currently in place and does not address the requirements of K-12 education. While the plan stated that CARS data is collected to ensure counselors are trained, it was unclear how many counselors are trained, the content of that training, and how this translates into youths receiving assistance.
<i>Did the SEA meet all requirements?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (1) Reviewer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (2) Reviewers
<i>If no, describe the specific information or clarification that an SEA must provide to fully meet this requirement</i>	Peer reviewers indicated that the State could strengthen the plan by fully addressing the counselor requirement, including more information regarding how counselors will assist homeless youth and prepare and improve their college readiness. This may include fee waiver procedures, more specifics on training, and how the State assures counselor assistance or conducts data analysis.