

**Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 U.S. Department of Education
Office of Safe and Healthy Students' Monitoring Report on
Virginia Department of Education's
Title VII-B Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program**

Scope of Review:

During June 5-7, 2018, a review team from the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students (OSHS) monitored the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE's) administration of the Title VII-B Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program authorized by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento) and the reservation for homeless children under section 1113(c)(3)(A) of Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA).

Previous Monitoring:

ED reviewed VDOE's EHCY program during the week of June 9-12, 2008. The report is available at

<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/monitoring/map/va.html>

Current Review:

This review was a pilot to test new document review and interview protocols with expanded indicators involving new data analysis of homeless student performance at the local educational agency (LEA) and school level, including of homeless students served by the Title I set-aside and enrolled in Title I schools. New ED instruments for this pilot review included an LEA data dashboard of key measures converted to percentages of homeless students identified, served, or attaining outcomes such as grade level proficiency; shaded maps of the percentages of homeless students by LEA for these key measures; and an achievement gap analysis between homeless and all students and other economically disadvantaged students by school. Furthermore, new data submitted to ED on chronic absenteeism counts and adjusted cohort graduation rates for homeless students were analyzed and discussed with local liaisons and the State Coordinator for school year (SY) 2016-17.

In addition, in its review of the EHCY program, ED examined VDOE's:

- procedures and guidance for the identification, enrollment, and retention of homeless students;
- self-assessment instrument and supporting documentation;
- technical assistance provided to LEAs with and without subgrants;
- EHCY section of the consolidated State Plan; and
- LEA applications for subgrants and interviews with local liaisons from Spotsylvania County and Portsmouth City school districts, as well as from Fredericksburg City and York County school districts, both non-subgrantee school districts.

ED staff also interviewed the EHCY State Coordinator to confirm information obtained at the local site and discuss administration of the program, including the pilot analysis mentioned above of LEA and school level data submitted by the State to ED.

Based on the review, ED staff made the following observations, commendations of emerging practices, and recommendations:

Emerging Practices:

OSHS considers emerging practices to be operational activities or initiatives that contribute to successful outcomes or enhance agency performance capabilities. Emerging practices are those that have been successfully implemented and demonstrate the potential for replication by other agencies.

Typically, emerging practices have not been evaluated as rigorously as "promising," "effective," "evidence-based," or "best" practices but still offer ideas that work in specific situations. As a result of its monitoring activities, OSHS identified the following emerging practice in Virginia:

- VDOE State Coordinator participated in a training with the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Judges in May 2018, which is convened through a Federal Court Improvement Project grant awarded by the U.S. Department of HHS to the Office of the Executive Secretary, Supreme Court of Virginia. The grant program focuses on improving the ability of the court system to manage and resolve cases of child abuse, neglect and foster care. The specific training focused on the intersections and parallel issues for children and youth in foster care or experiencing homelessness, including chronic absenteeism and truancy that impact on-time graduation rates, and on which SEAs and LEAs must now report for students who were either homeless or in foster care in high school as required by the Every Student Succeeds Act, Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii).
- VDOE State Coordinator serves on the Advisory Committee to the CASA/CJA (Court Appointed Special Advocate/Children’s Justice Act) programs for the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and is chairing the committee in 2018. Section 107 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), authorizes grants for states to develop, establish, and operate programs designed to improve the child protection system. Section 107(c) on State Tasks Forces requires them to include “individuals experienced in working with homeless children and youths (as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a))

Indicator 1.2: The SEA assesses the data quality and annual performance of homeless students in LEAs with and without subgrants.

Recommendation 1.2.1

Observation: While the Office of the State Coordinator conducts comprehensive annual planning in all areas of the program with many action steps, it recognized that it does not use its annual State and LEA level data submitted to ED to set measurable goals to

improve statewide homeless student program performance and outcomes. The State Coordinator expressed interest in conducting a comprehensive statewide needs assessment and program improvement plan with multiple measures and multi-year goals, which was a larger project than what could be undertaken this year.

Recommendation: ED recommends that the SEA and the Office of the State Coordinator create work plans with baseline measure(s) and annual goal(s), in particular using LEA level data on one of the following: homeless student graduation rates (4-year on-time and 5-year extended rates), chronic absenteeism, or achievement gaps with economically disadvantaged students in reading/language arts and mathematics.

**Table 2. Summary of Monitoring Results for the Title VII-B
Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program**

Indicator Number	Description	Status	Page
Indicator 1.1	The SEA conducts monitoring of LEAs with and without subgrants, sufficient to ensure compliance with McKinney-Vento program requirements.	Met Requirements	N/A
Indicator 1.2	The SEA assesses the data quality and annual performance of homeless students in LEAs with and without subgrants.	Met Requirements Recommendation	2-3
Indicator 2.1	The SEA implements procedures to address the identification, enrollment and retention of homeless students through coordinating and collaborating with other program offices and State agencies.	Met Requirements	N/A
Indicator 2.2	The SEA provides, or provides for, professional development and technical assistance to LEAs to ensure appropriate implementation of the statute.	Met Requirements	N/A
Indicator 3.1	The SEA ensures that LEA subgrant plans for services to eligible homeless students meet all requirements.	Met Requirements	N/A
Indicator 3.2	The SEA complies with the statutory and other regulatory requirements governing the reservation of funds for State-level coordination activities.	Met Requirements	N/A
Indicator 3.3	The SEA ensures that the LEA complies with providing comparable Title I, Part A services to homeless students attending non-Title I and Title I schools.	Met Requirements	N/A