

**Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Safe and Healthy Students' Monitoring Report on  
the West Virginia Department of Education's  
Title VII-B Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program**

**Scope of Review:**

During April 19-21, 2016, 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 West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE'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 Act).

**Previous Monitoring:**

ED reviewed WVDE's EHCY program during the week of June 1-5, 2009. The report is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/monitoring/index.html>

**Current Review:**

In its review of the EHCY program, ED examined WVDE's:

- Procedures and guidance for the identification, enrollment, and retention of homeless students;
- Technical assistance provided to LEAs with and without subgrants;
- McKinney-Vento State Plan; and
- LEA applications for subgrants and local evaluations of projects in Cabell and Monongalia county school districts, as well as the local liaisons and staff from Marshall and Wayne county schools, both non-subgrantee school districts.

ED staff also interviewed the McKinney-Vento State Coordinator to confirm information obtained at the local sites and discuss administration of the program. Based on their review, ED has the following observations, recommendations, and commendation:

**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, ED identified the following emerging practice:

- WVDE actively participates in State and regional interagency coordination to reduce and end family and youth homelessness. West Virginia convened an Interagency Council on Homelessness, which issued a report in December 2015

entitled *Opening Doors in West Virginia*. The report outlines a plan to prevent and end homelessness in West Virginia by 2020. As a result of these efforts, there has been improved local coordination between education, human service and housing agencies assisting families, children and youth experiencing homelessness.

**Indicator 1.1: The SEA conducts monitoring and evaluation of LEAs with and without subgrants, sufficient to ensure compliance with McKinney-Vento program requirements.**

**Recommendation 1.1.1**

Observation: WVDE staff do not yet systematically utilize their annual State and LEA level data to improve overall homeless student program performance and outcomes. Neither of the two reviewed subgrant projects reference baseline measures or annual milestones toward attaining stated goals over three years.

Recommendation: ED recommends that WVDE provide technical assistance to all LEAs to implement more formal and systematic review of long-term goals (measurable to the maximum extent appropriate) that includes baseline performance measures and annual milestones.

One approach that WVDE should consider is to request that LEAs conduct an annual program evaluation that accounts for any change in performance of the previous two year's EHCY program performance data at the LEA and school levels. Longitudinal tracking of performance provides program level information on whether improvements are moving outcomes in the desired direction.

**Indicator 3.1: The SEA ensures that LEA subgrant plans for services to eligible homeless students meet all requirements.**

**Recommendation 3.1.1**

Observation: WVDE did not use a panel or committee of multiple reviewers to rate the subgrant applications, nor did it use a scoring rubric for the latest grant competition.

Recommendation: ED recommends that WVDE use review panels to rate subgrant applications in all award cycles. The subgrant rating rubric provided to ED following the monitoring interviews for the previous subgrant competition could be adapted to address priorities in the next competition.

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

<b>Indicator Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Page</b>
Indicator 1.1	The SEA conducts monitoring and evaluation of LEAs with and without subgrants, sufficient to ensure compliance with McKinney-Vento program requirements.	Met Requirements 1 Recommendation	2
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, 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 1 Recommendation	2
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 has a system for ensuring the prompt resolution of disputes.	Met Requirements	N/A