

**McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program District Self-Assessment Tool**  
**February, 2011**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**1. Is this required for districts that don't have a McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Grant?**

**Yes**, all public school districts are required to select a McKinney-Vento (M-V) Homeless Liaison to identify and coordinate services for homeless children and youth. As a state, Michigan is required to document that all public school districts (LEAs, PSAs and ISDs) are in compliance with this law (Title X of the No Child Left Behind law of 2001). The Self Assessment tool allows Michigan to document compliance with this law, as well as to provide technical assistance to districts needing improvement to be compliant.

**2. Are PSAs and ISDs considered "districts?" Are PSAs and ISDs required to complete this?**

**Yes.** PSAs and ISDs are considered "districts" in Michigan. The District Self-Assessment tool is intended to inform and remind superintendents and McKinney-Vento Liaisons of the requirements for serving homeless students and to assist in the development of policies, procedures and practices related to district homeless education programs. Those ISDs that do not enroll students or operate student programs are still required to comply with this law.

**3. What about districts who have NO homeless students?**

Districts that have not had the occasion to identify and/or serve homeless children and youth to date must still complete the Self Assessment. A district cannot be out of compliance if it has no documentation due to never providing such service, but a Homeless Education Program must be in place. When responding to items that have not occurred in one's district, please write an explanation in the Comments section, and send documentation of the procedures and practices in place for implementation when a homeless student is identified.

Every district must have documentation of the policies, procedures and practices that would come into play upon enrollment or identification of a homeless child/youth in the district. In Michigan, as in so many other states, the numbers of such students are increasing at a staggering pace. Every district must be prepared to serve such students in order to be compliant with this law.

On the MDE Homeless Education Program web page ([www.michigan.gov/homeless](http://www.michigan.gov/homeless)) you can find a Homeless Liaison Toolkit, containing information on applicable laws, guidance, recommended steps to develop such a program, and forms used across Michigan for homeless student intake, needs assessment, transportation, and collaboration of services. Every district M-V Liaison should make use of this Toolkit as a desk reference for performing such duties.

**4. What is the role of the McKinney-Vento Liaison? How can a Superintendent/Principal be expected to serve in this role with all their other responsibilities?**

- The vast majority of Superintendents (and typically, Principals, as well) are far too busy to be able to coordinate or provide the services required to homeless students. The MDE Homeless Education Consultant recommends that districts strongly consider appointing someone other than the Supt./Principal to serve in this role. Some Liaisons are school secretaries, counselors, student service staff, social workers, teachers, etc. In addition, when LEAs join a Homeless Grant Consortium, the Grant Coordinator can assist in performing some of these functions to meet compliance.
- The USED considers zero counts as a risk factor for future audits. They have instructed that districts who consistently report "zero/0" homeless students very likely need to improve their identification and community collaboration to get a more accurate count.

District M-V Self-Assessment Tool

FAQ

Page Two

- The federal coordinator of homeless education at the US Department of Education (USED) has instructed all of the state homeless coordinators that school districts should anticipate their homeless student count to be approximately 10% of their free/reduced lunch count.
- All districts (particularly smaller districts) are encouraged to join a consortium with other adjacent districts, or an ISD, to enhance the ability of all participating districts to serve homeless students. Funded McKinney-Vento Grantees can hire a grant coordinator with these funds to coordinate and provide the services. The new McKinney-Vento Grant Cycle will be announced in February, 2011, with Grant Applicant Training scheduled soon after. (Watch our website for the announcement.)
- The Self Assessment for districts who are grantees or participate in a McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Grant contains additional sections for fiscal responsibilities, as well as additional Liaison duties and accountability and data reporting responsibilities.

- For further questions or information on applying for a McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grant, please contact:

Pam Kies-Lowe, Homeless Education Consultant

517-241-1162 or [kies-lowep@michigan.gov](mailto:kies-lowep@michigan.gov)