



**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN –
EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

PENNSYLVANIA

i. For **ARP Homeless I**:

- 1. How the SEA has used or will use up to 25 percent of funds awarded under ARP Homeless I for State-level activities to provide training, technical assistance, capacity-building and engagement at the State and LEA levels, including support to LEAs to increase access to summer programming in 2021. This must include how the SEA has supported LEAs to plan for and provide wrap-around services, in collaboration with State and local agencies for immediate needs this spring 2021, and how it will support LEAs for school year 2021-2022. This should include the extent to which the SEA has or plans to build capacity in LEAs that have not received an EHCY subgrant in the past in order to ensure that these LEAs are well-prepared to utilize the funds provided in ARP Homeless II;**

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has provided and will continue to provide technical assistance, resources, professional development, and supports to the LEAs to ensure that the children and youth experiencing homelessness in their schools have access to the programming offered during the school year, including access to services by other state agencies that can assist them and their families. The SEA has designated a specific individual to focus on assisting LEAs (both current subgrantees and new subgrantees) in appropriately utilizing ARP-HCY I and II funding and facilitate collaboration with local and state agencies to provide wrap around services. PDE, through its Office of the State Coordinator, has offered and will continue to offer trainings on McKinney-Vento law, the authorized activities for using federal funds, and collaboration with non-profits and other organizations. The PDE Office of the State Coordinator has begun plans to build capacity in LEAs that have not received an EHCY subgrant in the past by organizing trainings, meetings, on-going partnership discussions, and mentorship with regional coordinators who are experienced with McKinney-Vento facilitation and programming. Regional coordinators and their teams receive annual EHCY funding and are the recipients of ARP-HCY I funding.

Under state law, federal COVID-19 relief funding must be legislatively appropriated before an agency can award subgrants. As such, the PDE Office of the State

Coordinator released ARP-HCY I and II funding to McKinney-Vento regional offices and other LEAs in August 2021, at which time the 2021-22 state budget appropriations procedures were concluded. Since Pennsylvania has historically utilized a regional approach for the McKinney-Vento program, those regional offices utilized programs and funding already prepared and planned in their statements of work to continue to assist students who could benefit from ARP-HCY I and II funding.

2. How the SEA has used or will use their funds for State-level activities to provide support to LEAs to increase access to summer programming and plan for and provide wraparound services for summer 2021, in collaboration with State and local agencies and other community-based organizations; and

PDE used its funds for state-level activities such as technical support and assistance, clarification of the use of funds, understanding of McKinney-Vento law, and training on best practices. PDE's Office of State Coordinator also facilitate connections between the LEAs and organizations around the Commonwealth that provide tutoring, counseling, transportation, and other non-instructional services to increase the attendance of children and youth experiencing homelessness in summer programming. LEAs continually worked on their summer programming and solidified plans for students beginning in the spring of 2021. The Office of the State Coordinator also offered a series of hybrid summer camps that offer academic and social enrichment through virtual and in-person attendance in each of the eight regions of the state. These summer camps provided enrichment opportunities for students in STEM, the arts, environment education and outdoor learning, 21st Century skills, and more. PDE will sponsor and facilitate the offering of these programs, but they will be primarily delivered by the partners/LEAs.

2. How the SEA has used or will use at least 75 percent of funds awarded under ARP Homeless I for distribution to LEAs in accordance with all requirements of EHCY. This must include the extent to which the SEA has or will use funds to supplement existing EHCY subgrants to allow for more rapid fund distribution to address the needs of students experiencing homelessness, and the extent to which the SEA analyzed and reviewed where there are significant concentrations of students and families experiencing homelessness across the State (including in LEAs that are not existing EHCY subgrantees), and how it has or will ensure that supports from ARP Homeless I can urgently reach them.

PDE is distributing 75 percent of the funds awarded under ARP-HCY I to the existing Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) subgrantees who have worked with communities across the Commonwealth for several years. These regional coordinators have established ties amongst LEAs and

communities they serve. Regional coordinators have also continually developed new partnerships with non-profits and organizations that serve our most underserved populations across the Commonwealth. Due to the regional coordinators' long-standing relationships in the communities that they serve, ARP-HCY I funding can quickly reach designated populations in the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania employs a regional model for its Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program. This means that McKinney-Vento Act funds are distributed to ECYEH regional offices, which then provide services, supports, products, and funding as needed to any LEA in that region to support the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Effectively, this means that all Pennsylvania LEAs have access to McKinney-Vento Act funds even though they are not subgrantees themselves. This approach allows all children and youth in the commonwealth who may experience homelessness to be served.

As part of Pennsylvania's annual comprehensive statewide evaluation process, PDE's contracted state evaluator, the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, collects child/youth identification and service delivery data on an ongoing basis from all LEAs and regions. Also, at least once per year, the evaluator receives identification data from shelters (including domestic violence shelters), regional Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) for shelter networks, early childhood education providers, and other state, regional, and local data sources to identify all eligible children and youth experiencing homelessness. These various data sources are cross-referenced to eliminate duplicate children (children who are reported by multiple entities) and arrive at a single, unique count of eligible children and youth. Each year, greater than 95 percent of LEAs report at least one eligible child or youth experiencing homelessness, and all or nearly all counties are reflected in these counts as well. Counts of children and youth experiencing homelessness are then reported in the following ways: overall for the state; 'where attributed' unique counts by region, county, and entity/LEA; and 'where identified' counts by region, county, and entity/LEA. These counts allow the state and regions to identify those LEAs, counties, and regions with the highest concentrations of eligible children and youth experiencing homelessness. These counts documents are posted publicly on PDE's website.

On an ongoing basis and for the purposes of planning for HCY, the state team uses these count documents in conjunction with annual evaluation findings to identify regions or groups that need additional support, training, or programs, or where broad, statewide support, training, or programs may be needed. Generally, the largest concentrations of homeless children and youth are in PA's largest cities – Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Reading, Lancaster, and Allentown are the five largest LEAs in terms of child/youth counts.

ii. For **ARP Homeless II**:

1. How the SEA will use up to 25 percent of funds awarded under ARP Homeless II for State-level activities to provide training, technical assistance, capacity-building, and engagement at the State and LEA levels, including support to LEAs to plan for and provide wrap-around services, in collaboration with State and local agencies, for school year 2021-2022; and

Using funds awarded under ARP-HCY II for state-level activities, PDE is contracting with two entities to provide a host of services to LEAs receiving ARP-HCY II funds, as well as to review data, to conduct evaluation, and to monitor LEAs for proper use of funds and program implementation. These services began on July 1, 2021. and will be provided through September 30, 2024.

Services will provide LEAs receiving ARP-HCY II funding with a variety of professional development, training, capacity-building, and engagement opportunities to maximize program effectiveness. Technical assistance will also be provided to LEAs receiving funds through check-ins or visits conducted via an online survey, virtually, or in-person depending on the needs of the LEA receiving funds. Needs will be identified by administering an implementation survey with LEAs receiving funds in conjunction with further review of ARP-HCY II application rubrics, comments, and other feedback collected during the ARP-HCY II application process.

PDE launched training and support for LEAs allocated ARP-HCY II funding during the annual statewide conference, "[Paving the Way to Educational Success](#)," held virtually October 5-7, 2021. Many state and national presenters were featured to align content with ARP-HCY goals and objectives.

LEAs allocated ARP-HCY II funds received a unique invitation to register and were encouraged to attend. The virtual conference took place during the ARP-HCY II application window, providing attendees the opportunity to learn, to ask questions, and to strategize in preparation for submission of their ARP-HCY II application. Over 700 individuals attended the 2021 virtual conference.

Action-oriented ARP-HCY aligned sessions featured during the conference included:

- Using American Rescue Plan Act Funds to Support Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Across Pennsylvania;
- Reaching Students with Evidence-Based Comprehensive Afterschool Programs and Summer Enrichment Programs;
- Connecting the Dots: Moving Towards Recovery, Reengagement, and Accelerating Learning;
- Reengaging Students, Building Belonging, Well-being, and Connectedness in Educational Environments;
- McKinney-Vento 101;

- Rethinking Supports for Youth: Building Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations to Help Underserved Youth Thrive;
- Enhancing Resilience Through a Trauma-Skilled Social and Emotional Learning Model of Support; and
- Reframing Family Engagement: Self-Reflection for Stronger Relationships.

For LEAs receiving ARP-HCY II funding, PDE is providing training and support beginning with a two-part virtual orientation on November 2 and November 3. The two-part orientation will provide LEAs with important information needed to administer their ARP-HCYII funds to best support children and youth experiencing homelessness in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as describe forthcoming professional development, training, and other supports that will be provided for the duration of funding. In partnership with contracted entities, PDE is reserving state-level funds to provide LEAs with a variety of training, capacity building, and engagement opportunities for staff and their school communities. Some of the ongoing professional development and trainings that LEAs will have access to are:

- A new podcast series on McKinney-Vento Law, community collaborations, lived experiences and the needs of underserved and marginalized students experiencing homelessness, and other topics;
- Monthly opportunities for LEA staff, students experiencing homelessness, and their families to explore restorative practices and self-care in response to vicarious trauma during session led by recognized and trusted experts;
- Access to the state’s annual conference on students experiencing homelessness including uniquely aligned sessions for LEAs receiving ARP-HCY II funds.
- Regular webinars learning circles to foster collaboration, idea sharing, and networking, and other professional development opportunities related to quality out-of-school-time (OST) topics, student engagement, re-acclimation to school environment and social norms, social and emotional support, mental health, racial equity, and other topics highlighting wrap-around services to best assist students experiencing homelessness;
- Opportunity to participate in a Trauma-Skilled Specialist (TSS) Certification program facilitated by the National Dropout Prevention Center; and
- An online hub for information and resources designed for ARP -HCY II including publications, flyers, information briefs, and other materials to assist LEAs in the implementation of their funds, to raise awareness about ARP-HCY Homeless initiatives and activities, and to further support the needs of students experiencing homelessness.

State-level funds also are reserved to provide technical assistance in the following areas:
Capacity building;

- Community engagement;
- Program implementation and challenges; and
- Data, evaluation, and monitoring.

In addition, PDE has reserved state-level funds to develop a statewide application (app) for smartphones. The app's primary user will be youth experiencing homelessness and will provide resources by geographic location related to education, food banks, clothing, shelter and other resources. Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and public transportation advertising will be used to create awareness for the app, communicated in multiple languages. In creating the app, Pennsylvania aims to increase the identification of students experiencing homelessness in Pennsylvania and to create a means to establish ongoing communication with this population, fostering the development of an online community.

- 2. How the SEA will use at least 75 percent of funds awarded under ARP Homeless II for distribution to LEAs in accordance with the final requirements. This must include a description of how the SEA will distribute funds in accordance with the required formula to address the needs of students experiencing homelessness and the extent to which the SEA has encouraged or will encourage the creation of consortia for those LEAs that may not meet the required minimum formula amount.**
 - a. how many receiving Title I and number of students/percentage LEA's**
 - b. LEA's who are eligible will receive an application -- with pre-formatted questions/narrative**

PDE allocated \$18,424,109 to LEAs. Pennsylvania reserved 25% of its ARP-HCY II allocation for state activities and allocated 75% to LEA distribution. To determine individual LEA allocations, PA followed this process:

1. We identified the list of open, public LEAs available by download from the state's database: [EDNA](#).
2. We matched each LEA to its respective 2018-19 and 2019-20 homeless counts (unique, attributed) from PA's ECYEH state evaluation records. We also matched each LEA to their 2020-21 Title I allocations (most recent available online) based on the spreadsheet available from [this PDE webpage](#).
3. At the LEA level, we determined which year (18-19 or 19-20) homeless count was the higher count (max). Based on all LEAs' higher count, we determined a total student count for the calculation. This total is HIGHER than both 18-19 and 19-20 because we are taking the greater of an LEA's counts, regardless of year. This total is a Composite Total just for this calculation.
4. Based on the greater of the two homeless counts, we determined the percentage (or proportion) of homeless children and youth in that LEA compared to the Composite Total. For example, if the Composite Total was 100, and an LEA had a highest count of 10, their percentage was 10%.
5. We applied a similar approach to Title I allocations. Based on PA's total Title I allocation referenced above, we determined each LEA's percentage (or proportion) of that total.
6. We divided PA's ARP-HCY II allocation of \$18,424,109.00 in half.

7. We applied the student max percentage to the 50% ARP-HCY II allocation. We then did the same with the Title I allocation percentage. This yielded a Student Count (Max) Allocation and a Title I ARP allocation.
8. We added the two allocations together to determine a total LEA allocation.
9. We then identified which allocations were under \$5,000.
10. The following LEAs were excluded from the formula:
 - LEAs that 1) reported ZERO children and youth in BOTH 18-19 and 19-20 AND 2) ALSO had \$0 Title I allocations, as these would effectively be eligible for NO ALLOCATION. (5 LEAs) These appear to be mostly new charter schools.
 - LEAs that reported homeless children and youth in either of the 2 years but are no longer listed as an open school in EDNA. This appears to apply to charter schools that no longer exist.

Pennsylvania determined that its regional model (8 regions) can serve as de facto consortia and that creating new consortia simply for the purposes of HCY funding was duplicative and unnecessary. The ECYEH regions have the background knowledge and capacity to serve as stewards of the consortia funds for the LEAs in their region/consortia. Also, this ensures efficiency as the ECYEH regions will be able to monitor LEA needs and apply not only ARP-HCY II consortia funds but also ARP-HCY I and regular ECYEH resources as most appropriate. Effectively, this allows all LEAs in Pennsylvania and all eligible children and youth in the commonwealth to benefit from ARP-HCY funding regardless of their school or district.

PA will give the following LEA groups the option of participating in one of the eight consortia. LEAs will be primarily assigned based on their home ECYEH region unless a different assignment makes more sense (i.e. an LEA in Region 2 would be most likely assigned to the Region 2 consortium).

The LEAs in these groups will be notified of the opportunity to join a consortium and provided instructions for how they can access resources moving forward. It will be up to each consortia-member LEA to decide for themselves the extent to which they participate in, access, or request the resources of their consortium. However, the 8 ECYEH regional offices will be directed to periodically reach out to their consortia LEAs to offer support and remind the LEAs of the consortia funds and resources. Based on federal guidance PA will not restrict individual consortia LEAs to their allocation amounts. Instead, the consortia will support any consortia LEA's request for funds to support allowable expenses, even if the requested amount exceeds that LEA's individual allocation based on the prescribed formula.

For both ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II:

- 1. How the SEA will ensure that ARP-HCY supplements the support and services provided with ARP ESSER funds and does not replace the use of ARP ESSER funds to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness;**

PDE is ensuring that ARP-HCY I and II funds supplement the supports and services provided to children and youth experiencing homelessness with ARP ESSER funds and does not replace the use of those funds. To ensure the proper use of the ARP-HCY I and II funds, PDE has built into the grant process safeguards by requiring subgrantees to complete and sign a certification statement, which is an assurance that expenditures are appropriate and in accordance with the federal award and approved project budgets. The certification statement must be signed by an official who is authorized to legally bind the subgrantee. PDE has created forms that LEAs will be required to complete that specify their use and indicate that no supplanting is taking place.

- 2. The extent to which the SEA will use its State-level activities funds to award subgrants or contracts to community-based organizations that are well-positioned to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness in historically underserved populations such as rural children and youth, Tribal children and youth, students of color, children and youth with disabilities, English learners, LGBTQ+ youth, and pregnant, parenting, or caregiving students experiencing homelessness, and connect them to educationally-related support and wraparound services; and**

PDE uses a tiered approach to ensure all LEAs in the state have access to training and resources related to students and families experiencing homelessness. The SEA works with its eight regional offices that each cover multiple counties; subgrants and contracts will be awarded to community-based and non-profit organizations that have demonstrated a history of providing services to rural children and youth, students of color, children and youth with disabilities, English learners, LGBTQ+ youth, and pregnant, parenting, or caregiving students experiencing homelessness. Applicants will be required to describe their identification process for youth experiencing homelessness and identify how underserved populations will be served and potential community-based programs with which they will partner.

- 3. How the SEA will encourage LEAs to award contracts to community-based organizations to help identify and support historically underserved populations experiencing homelessness.**

LEAs submitting applications will need to identify how they will connect with diverse community partners that serve marginalized young people and families, as well as with shelters, food banks, and job training sites as these partnerships will be an essential step towards supporting historically underserved populations experiencing homelessness. Technical assistance providers will be available to assist with community mapping and

assisting LEAs in establishing partnerships. PDE will also provide training and technical assistance around Foster Care, Migrant Education, Pregnant and Parenting Teens, and other vulnerable population groups by reaching out to other programs' technical assistance providers. Their expertise and experience can benefit LEAs as they request assistance and guidance related to this project.