1. Objectives
   a. Attendees will:
      i. Understand the importance of higher education for students experiencing homelessness
      ii. Learn about the FAFSA process and procedures
      iii. Learn best practices for supporting transitions to adulthood for students experiencing homelessness
      iv. Learn resources to support transitions to adulthood for students experiencing homelessness

2. Welcome and Introductions
   a. Guest Speakers
      i. Jillian Sitjar, Director of Higher Education Partnerships, SchoolHouse Connection
         1. jillian@schoolhouseconnection.org
      ii. Carlos Bing, Director of College Access Programs, Ohio Department of Higher Education
         1. Cbing@highered.ohio.gov

3. Role of High School Counselors
   a. Pulled from the McKinney-Vento Act:
      i. School counselors must advise students experiencing homelessness and help them prepare and improve their readiness for college.
      ii. Local liaisons and school counselors should ensure that all homeless high school students receive information and individualized counseling regarding college readiness, college selection, the application process, financial aid, and the availability of on-campus supports.
   b. School Counselors Can Support Students Experiencing Homelessness by:
      i. Collaborating with the local homeless education liaison, including through joint training
      ii. Supporting students with credit recovery options
      iii. Providing students with waivers for college entrance exams and applications fees
iv. Helping students access documentation that may be needed to apply for college
v. Providing information on sources of financial aid
vi. Exposing students to local postsecondary institutions
vii. Helping students select a postsecondary institution that is a good fit
viii. Providing a warm handoff to postsecondary campus-based supports
ix. Helping parents/caregivers know what to expect from the postsecondary environment and feel equipped to support the educational goals of their children

4. Need for Higher Education & FAFSA
   a. Why it Matters for Homeless Youth:
      i. Some form of postsecondary education is necessary for jobs that pay enough to lift out of poverty and afford housing - 80% of “good jobs” are held by workers with at least some postsecondary education
      ii. Higher education appears to be a protective factor against youth homelessness. A 2019 study shows four year college enrollment to be nearly four times higher for young adults without experiences of homelessness in the prior month
      iii. New data links financial aid and upward mobility. In WA, all students who came from families with household incomes below $63K saw their economic status rise within three years of earning a degree and entering the labor force
   b. Financial Aid Makes a Difference:
      i. High schools seniors that complete the FAFSA are 63 percent more likely to enroll in higher education. The higher the amount of financial aid they receive, the higher the likelihood they will successfully transfer or graduate.
         1. Students receiving > $7,500: 49% transferred or graduated
         2. Students receiving $1,000-2,500: 17% transferred or graduated
   c. Who is Considered Homeless on the FAFSA?
      i. Unaccompanied homeless youth or unaccompanied youth who are self-supporting and at risk of homelessness are independent students.
      ii. Independent students do not need to include parental information on the FAFSA.

5. FAFSA Simplification Updates
   a. The FAFSA Simplification Act: Major Policy Wins
      i. Significant improvements for homeless and foster youth were included in the FAFSA Simplification Act
      ii. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) is implementing the FAFSA Simplification Act in phases through 2024-2025
      iii. ED released guidance on November 4, 2022, and April 14, 2023, declaring the homeless/foster provisions are in effect now for enrollment in the upcoming 2023-2024 award year
   b. Big Key Changes
i. Homeless and foster youth care status does not need to be redetermined.
ii. Determinations must be made as quickly as practicable.
iii. More programs and officials can provide determinations (school district liaisons or their designee, directors/designees of an emergency or transitional shelter (does not need to be HUD/RHYA funded), TRIO/GEAR UP director, financial aid administrators).

6. Transition from High School/FAFSA Best Practices
   a. Transition Best Practices
      i. Start talking about college earlier than senior year
      ii. ACT/SAT fee waivers
      iii. McKinney-Vento College tour
      iv. FAFSA mentors/graduation coaches
      v. Homeless higher education liaisons
      vi. Connect with other higher education professionals (financial aid, homeless higher education liaisons, support programs)
      vii. Summer bridge programs (Florida State Unconquered Scholar Program)
      viii. Mentorship programs
      ix. ARP-HCY money
      x. College starter kits (laptop, luggage, school supplies, hygiene items, bedding, etc)
      xi. Warm hand-off (The 3 Big E’s)
   b. FAFSA Best Practices
      i. Stay up-to-date with new FAFSA changes!
      ii. Once the FAFSA is available, use this email template to fill out.
      iii. Provide unaccompanied homeless youth with determination letters ASAP
      iv. Use this sample form letter
      v. FAFSA mentors
      vi. Financial aid nights/partner with local colleges
      vii. School counselor FAFSA toolkit
      viii. Remind students that the FAFSA needs to be filled out every year
      ix. Encourage students to familiarize themselves with the financial aid office
      x. Partner with financial aid
      xi. Trainings
      xii. FAFSA Challenge
      xiii. Scholarships and emergency aid

7. Which Institutions Accept Federal Aid?
   a. Public universities
   b. Public regional campuses
   c. Community colleges
   d. Private, not-for-profit programs
   e. Private, for-profit programs
   f. Ohio Technical Center

8. Resources
   a. NCAN
      i. Free trainings available on FAFSA
   b. Ohio Department of Education FAFSA Hub
i. Provides information on FAFSA completion for students, parents, and counselors
   ii. Toolkits, checklists, and Ohio campus deadlines
   c. FAFSA Completion by High School and Public District
      i. Allows you to see who has completed a FAFSA in your district
   d. Ohio FAFSA Data Service
      i. Allows you to see who has completed a FAFSA by name
   e. Ohio REACH
      i. Scholarships, emergency fund assistance, additional resources
      ii. Post-secondary designation
         1. Designated person on campus that students experiencing homelessness can go to get support
         2. 28 institutions in Ohio have earned this designation

9. Next Steps
   a. Reminders
      i. Visit the COHHIO Course to HOME webpage here
      ii. Request technical assistance by emailing homelesseducation@cohhio.org
      iii. Join our mailing list here
   b. Next Session
      i. November 15th at 1 PM