

February 2024 ➤

SPRING NEWSLETTER



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Course to HOME.

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE SUBGRANT:

APPLICATIONS OPEN MARCH 4 - MARCH 29

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce is excited to announce the launch of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Subgrant to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness. The McKinney-Vento subgrant includes 16 allowable uses including:

- The excess cost of transportation for students experiencing homelessness;
- Paying a staff member a stipend to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of required district homeless education liaison; and
- School supplies to support the academic and literacy needs of students experiencing homelessness.

The McKinney-Vento subgrant is a competitive process made available on a three-year cycle (fiscal years 2025-2027). All community schools and traditional public school districts are eligible to apply for McKinney-Vento subgrants. The application will be short, consisting of four questions, with the goal of reducing barriers for schools and districts to continue the meaningful work they started with American Rescue Plan Homeless funds.

Applications open March 4 in the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) portal and the deadline to submit is March 29.

The Department recorded Bidder's Conferences for interested applicants. More details on the Bidders Conferences and registration can be found on the Department's McKinney-Vento Educating Homeless Children and Youth Subgrant webpage or review the Request for Applications. Interested applicants with further questions or concerns may contact Ashley Heuser at HomelessEducation@education.ohio.gov.

APPROACHING AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN DEADLINES

Time is running out for districts and community schools who are American Rescue Plan (ARP) Homeless I & II grantees to spend their funds. Grantees should expedite the spend down of these funds to support the immediate needs of students experiencing homelessness. There are many allowable uses of ARP funds that districts and community schools can consider, including:

- The purchase of school supplies
- The purchase of hygiene supplies
- Hotel/Motel or other emergency housing stays
- Professional development for school and district personnel;
- and more!

American Rescue Plan Homeless Funds and Deadlines

SCHOOLHOUSE CONNECTION SCHOLARSHIP

In a move to support students earlier in their educational journey, SchoolHouse Connection is now opening their scholarship applications for students beginning their post-secondary education in 2025. Applications are open until June 1st, 2024.

SchoolHouse Connection Scholars receive:

- a \$2,500 scholarship award;
- One-on-one support from SchoolHouse Connection staff;
- Three all-expenses-paid trips;
- Support from SchoolHouse Connection Scholars; and
- Opportunities to engage in state and federal advocacy

Scholarship Application and Timeline



ADDRESSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE:

The National Education Technology Plan

In January, the U.S. Department of Education released the National Education Technology Plan (NETP): A Call to Action for Closing the Digital Access, Design and Use Divides. First released in 1994, NETP has been updated multiple times since its original release, most recently in 2016. The 2024 NETP examines the digital disparities that exist between students from historically marginalized backgrounds and their peers. These disparities not only show up in the use and design of ed tech, but access to it as well. The report notes that teachers from well-resourced schools typically have more time and training to design lessons that involve creative, non-formulaic uses of ed tech. Divides in access to technologies remain a big problem, with students at wealthier schools and from more affluent families

tending to have better internet connectivity and more reliable access to devices and digital learning materials. The report also offers ways that these digital divides can be mitigated, drawing on listening sessions with more than a thousand educators, students, parents, state and district leaders and advocacy organizations. The report's guidance includes encouraging districts to incorporate practices of "universal design for learning," an approach based on developing tools that serve all learners regardless of their learning preferences, abilities and backgrounds. It stresses that educators be flexible in terms of how they present content and engage students, and includes support for students with disabilities and those who are learning English. Districts should examine their current uses of tech and consider implementing strategies for closing the digital divide.

More News from the Field

Housing, Opportunities, Meaningful Engagement



HUD Data Shows Increases in Family and Youth Homelessness

In December, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released the [2023 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Part I \(AHAR\)](#). The report depicts an annual snapshot of the number of individuals in shelters, temporary housing, and in unsheltered settings. The report found more than 650,000 people were experiencing homelessness on a single night in January 2023, a 12% increase from 2022. [For families with children and unaccompanied youth, these increases were even greater](#) at 16% and 15% increases from the previous year, respectively.

Ohio Schools Seeing Growing Number of English Learners

Over the past two decades, the [number of English learners in Ohio schools has doubled](#) to more than 60,000 students. Immigrants tend to cluster around areas where other people speak the same language and share the same culture, and as a result, English learner populations are growing across the state. In Licking Heights, the Nepali population is skyrocketing, and in Parma, a suburb of Cleveland, it's Ukrainian refugees. These families face many challenges, from transportation to finding a job, that [increase their risk of homelessness](#). In response to this increase in English learners, [schools across the state are adapting to better support these families](#).

Big Changes Coming to the SAT: What Students Should Know

[Starting in March, the SAT will be digital](#). The traditional paper-and-pencil format is no longer available, with rare exceptions for students with visual impairments, reading disabilities, or other documented challenges. This new format accompanies other changes to the test-takers experience, such as the exam adapting questions in the second half of the exam based on the student's performance in the first half. These changes have also resulted in the digital SAT being roughly an hour shorter than its last iteration. While some educators are optimistic about these changes, other have concerns about digital disparities.

District

Spotlight

MUSKINGUM/OHIO VALLEY ESC



In Muskingum Valley and its surrounding region, there is a strong need for drivers education programs. While some programs do exist, many have extended wait lists, are too far away, or too expensive for some students to afford. In response, the Muskingum Valley ESC set out to address this need by collaborating with the Ohio Valley ESC to create the Muskingum Ohio Valley ESC Driving School. This is an affordable program housed within partnering high schools and includes both instructional and behind the wheel training with certified instructors. To increase the equity of the program and expand its reach, the Muskingum Ohio Valley ESC Driving School partnered with Job and Family Services, who have committed to paying the full fee for income eligible students to complete the program. As a result, teens who might have faced financial and geographic barriers in obtaining their driver's license are able to do so affordably and locally. Having a driver's license expands opportunities for teens to join the workforce, further their education, or access support services. This program has, in turn, removed time and financial burdens for families and benefited local employers by creating a more prepared workforce.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MATERIALS

Want to hear more about Muskingum Valley ESC and other local districts? [Watch the recording from our McKinney-Vento Community of Practice](#) to hear from several local liaisons about their programs, strategies, and success stories.

Know a district or ESC whose work needs the spotlight?
[Tell Us About It !](#)

Featured Resources

Tips to Help Students Navigate the FAFSA Delay

Due to delays in the 2024-2025 FAFSA, colleges and universities will not receive FAFSA applicant data until March. As a result, students are not likely to receive financial aid offers until early to mid-April. SchoolHouse Connection has put together [a list of tips to help students navigate this delay.](#)



Interactive Tool: TRIO's Story Map Now Available

Federal TRIO Programs are outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. This [new tool hosted by the National Center for Education Statistics](#) shows the location of all TRIO program project sites and the highlights of each program.

Save the Date for the 2024 Housing Ohio Conference

Save the date for the 2024 Housing Ohio Conference in Columbus on May 7th-9th for networking and professional development opportunities. This year's conference will be in-person and features a Youth Housing Summit on Thursday, May 9th. [Learn more here!](#)

Bilingual Publication on Avoiding Foreclosure

Consumer Action has recently published a [reader-friendly guide that explains the mortgage default and foreclosure process](#); outlines struggling homeowners' options; offers sources of foreclosure prevention programs and expert help; and provides tips for avoiding foreclosure. This resource is available in both English and Spanish.

New Resource: CoC-LEA-RHY Program Crosswalk

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) has created [a resource to facilitate partnerships among Continuums of Care, Runaway and Homeless Youth grantees, and school districts](#) serving students and families experiencing homelessness in the same community.



Crisis Services & Prevention Report

The National Runaway Safeline (NRS) has recently published the [2022 Crisis Services & Prevention Report](#), analyzing reported data from crisis contacts in 2022. The findings provide critical information about the needs of youth who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.



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