

PLUS Report Overview/Abstract DRAFT

Ruby Kosewicz-Strickland, Master of City Planning 2025

(tentative) Client: Professor Karen Trapenberg Frick

BACKGROUND

Within the field of planning, focus on interventions that improve transportation to schools and center equitable access for children and youth are lacking, (Bierbaum, 2024) contributing directly to tardiness and chronic absenteeism for students experiencing homelessness. A lack of consistent transportation can impede students' ability to engage in academic and extracurricular endeavors, severing them from opportunities to stabilize their social circles and generate joy through expressive activities and sport. Transportation is guaranteed to students experiencing homelessness under the McKinney-Vento act, both to their School of Origin (SOO) and to associated extracurricular activities, such that LEAs must "provide services to homeless students comparable to those services offered to other students." (CDE, 2021) However, the implementation of McKinney-Vento guaranteed rights can be stifled due to staffing shortages and lack of access to funding, leaving students forced into a state of educational hypermobility – which can result in the loss of 4-6 months of academic progress per move. (CDE, 2021) In fact, students who move schools once are less than 50% as likely to graduate as those who remain in the same school for the duration of high school, (CDE, 2021) a fact with great relevance to the SEH population given that students experiencing homelessness are more than three times as likely to move schools each year than their housing-secure peers. (LPI, 2021) As such, it is critical that interventions be made to secure free and reliable transportation for students experiencing homelessness.

PLUS RESEARCH PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This project will research and document existing best practices in transportation access for youth and students experiencing homelessness. The analysis will document geographic distribution, funding, eligibility requirements, and stakeholder groups involved in the orchestration and implementation of practice, with the specific objectives of:

- Highlighting areas of convergence between transportation planning, education, and housing security for K-12 students.
- Identifying opportunities for further research, programming, and funding applications to support transportation needs of students experiencing homelessness.

LANDSCAPE CONSIDERATIONS

The landscape analysis will explore and document:

- Location, operating organization, program title, funding source, eligibility criteria, and current status

The analysis will focus on best practices across the United States, both publicly and privately funded and operated.

TIMELINE

- **July 2024:** Literature review, secure partner, collect initial data in spreadsheet format
- **July-August 2024:** Data analysis, development and deliverable of a story map and poster.

SOURCES

Ariel Bierbaum: Testimony on Transportation (2024)

Dion Burns, Daniel Espinoza, Naomi Ondrasek, and Man Yang: [California's Students Experiencing Homelessness: Conditions, Outcomes, and Policy Considerations](#) (2021)

Mindi Parsons, Karmina Barrales, Leanne Wheeler, and Heidi Brahms: [Transportation and Homeless Education](#) (2021)