

**TEHCY**



# Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youths (TEHCY)

## Discipline Toolkit



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# Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youths (TEHCY) Discipline Toolkit



## Purpose

The TEHCY Discipline Toolkit provides a comprehensive overview of how to support and respond to students experiencing homelessness related to discipline. This includes a comprehensive approach to student behavior, including addressing the root-causes of behavior and providing appropriate interventions, supports, and key-actions for students when problematic behaviors occur. There are both federal and state law requirements that must be followed.

This toolkit presents clear and specific descriptions of the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act as they pertain to discipline, and includes practices, procedures, and tools that local education agencies (LEAs) will be able to use to strengthen services and supports to students experiencing homelessness, also known as McKinney-Vento eligible students. This toolkit serves as both an orientation manual and a ready reference resource for new and experienced LEA leaders.

It is paramount that students experiencing homelessness have equitable access to all available supports and resources to meet the same challenging state academic standards established for all students and all discipline related requirements are understood, implemented and followed.



For the purpose of this toolkit, the term McKinney-Vento and homeless are used inter-changeably. When a student meets the definition of 'homeless', as defined by McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the student is considered homeless for school purposes. To remove the negative stigma that accompany the word homeless, the term McKinney-Vento is often used in its place.



## Background

### What is the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act?

The [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#) is a federal law that requires LEAs to identify and remove barriers for children and youths experiencing homelessness and ensure that students in these living situations receive equitable access to all available supports and resources to meet the same challenging state academic standards established for all students. All LEAs are federally required to provide the services listed in the McKinney-Vento Act. These services include appointing a local McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison to perform duties listed in statute, identifying students experiencing homelessness, and providing school of origin transportation upon request. The Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youths (TEHCY) Program provides direction and leadership on the implementation of state and federal guidance regarding program services for McKinney-Vento eligible students.

### Why does Discipline and McKinney-Vento Matter?

Students experiencing homelessness face many educational barriers due to the challenges of not having a fixed, regular and adequate place to live. In many cases, schools become the place where students are afforded stability, safety, and support. However, chronic absenteeism, truancy, and behaviors that lead to disciplinary challenges are common occurrences for students experiencing homelessness.

Data suggests that students experiencing homelessness are more likely than their housed peers to experience both in-school and out-of-school suspensions and have higher rates of overall disciplinary consequences. In Texas, students experiencing homelessness are five times more likely to be sent to a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP), 2.5 times more likely of being placed in out-of-school suspension (OSS), and twice as likely of being referred to in-school suspension (ISS) than their housed peers.

Moreover, students living in homeless settings experience additional and compounded challenges related to truancy and discipline, due to being homeless. To that end, both Federal and State laws exist to improve practices, provide whole child support, and consider the adverse effects of punitive discipline practices. Specifically, Federal law requires LEAs to ensure equitable access; remove barriers through revising policies; ensure students are not separated based on their homeless status; and have access to education and services to meet the same challenging academic standards, as all other students. Similarly, Texas Education Code (TEC) laws and Commissioner Rules exist to ensure positive school discipline practices, including truancy prevention for students experiencing homelessness.

For a list of both Federal and State laws that pertain to discipline, truancy, and related matters see the chart below:

#### **Federal Laws - Education for Homeless Children and Youths):**

1. Children and youths experiencing homelessness must have “equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths”.
2. State and local educational agencies must review and undertake steps to revise any requirements in laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the identification of, or the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of, homeless children and youths.
3. Homelessness is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.
4. Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held. Additional requirements are detailed in the McKinney-Vento Act ([42 United States Code \(USC\), §11431](#)).

#### **Texas Laws and Policy– Education for Homeless Children and Youths:**

1. Local education agencies must put into place truancy prevention measures and considerations concerning truancy for students experiencing homelessness ([TEC §25.0915](#); [19 Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\) §129.1043](#)).
2. Local education agencies must consider student status of homelessness for students’ discipline decisions and placements ([TEC §37.001](#)).
3. Local education agencies must review and undertake steps to revise policies that include a consideration of homeless status and the barrier of out of school suspension for students experiencing homelessness ([TEC §37.005](#)).





### Can you identify the following for your LEA?

- Potential barriers within your local policies and procedures that may hinder the attendance, or success in school, of homeless children and youths in regard to your current discipline policies and procedures.
- Ways in which those identified barriers can be mitigated and strengthened with positive school discipline practices.
- Systems to provide wrap around supports to address the unique needs of students experiencing homelessness.

### Key Facts about Homelessness and Discipline

- Students experiencing homelessness have historically received harsher and more punitive disciplinary consequences than their housed peers for similar behavioral challenges.
- Students experiencing homelessness are uniquely vulnerable to out of school suspension and experience additional and compounded challenges related to truancy and discipline due to being homeless.
- Experiencing greater economic hardship and housing instability is correlated to higher rates of disciplinary action.
- Trauma from experiencing homelessness persists long after stable housing has been secured.
- Students experiencing homelessness may suffer consequences from being disciplinarily removed that affect many areas of their lives, including access to food, mental health, and academic services and supports.
- Schools must consider whether the behavior is connected to the student's temporary housing situation and the barriers that disciplinary removal would present to the student's ability to access appropriate education.
- Students experiencing homelessness often experience instability, uncertainty, and may have violence at 'home' that school discipline actions can exacerbate.
- Harsh disciplinary action for young children often results in more harm than good.
- Harsh disciplinary actions can reinforce the challenging behavior rather than discouraging it, creating a pathway for future behavioral issues in school.
- Wrap-around services and supports must be provided to students experiencing homelessness. These supports and interventions, should be used as a first step in addressing the student's unique needs, and whenever possible, used prior to and/or in conjunction with disciplinary and truancy action (if necessary).
- There is a lack of awareness about homelessness and its implications on mental health, which creates a barrier for students who have experienced homelessness to access the supports that they need.

Readers are guided to the “Key Principles to Understanding McKinney-Vento Eligibility” section on the following page, which provides a deeper dive on McKinney-Vento eligibility, including the settings a student may live in to be considered homeless, and the educational challenges students experiencing homelessness may face.



## Key Principles to Understanding McKinney-Vento Eligibility

This section provides readers with understanding of the definition of homelessness and circumstances that students live in to qualify for McKinney-Vento eligibility. Additionally, this section provides an overview of some of the educational challenges homeless children and youths face impacting both academic and behavioral success.

### McKinney-Vento Eligibility Who is covered by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act?

Children and youths who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence, including those who:

- Are sharing the housing of other persons (doubled up) due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.
- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Are migratory children living in the above circumstances.
- Unaccompanied youth include a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.



[42 USC, §11434\(a\)](#)

**Children and youths experiencing homelessness face many educational barriers due to the disruption and trauma of not having a fixed, regular, and adequate place to live.**

**Educational Challenges** can include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, water, shelter, etc.)
- Increased risk of illness, depression, stress, trauma, and exposure to violence
- Gaps in academic and functional abilities (e.g., below grade level achievement, failure to meet state standards, regression, difficulty establishing relationships and trust with adults and peers, etc.)
- Frequent transitions between temporary living locations
- Lack of stable transportation
- Frequent changing of schools
- Difficulties with enrollment due to lack of records (e.g., unaccompanied youth without parent or guardian present)
- Failure to be identified or misidentified.

**In many cases, schools often become the one place where children and youths experiencing homelessness are afforded stability, safety, and support.**





## Authority

### Legal Guidance for McKinney-Vento Eligible Students

There are both federal and state law requirements for McKinney-Vento eligible students. The chart below specifically summarizes these federal and state requirements and expectations for all LEAs in serving students experiencing homelessness related to truancy, behavior, discipline, and related matters.

Federal Law	Summative Description
42 USC, <a href="#">§11432(g)(1)(i)</a>	Each school district shall review and revise policies to remove barriers to the identification of homeless children and youths, and the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youths in schools in the State, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences.

Texas Law and Policy	Summative Description
<a href="#">TEC §25.0915</a> Truancy Prevention Measures	<p>Must impose one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A behavior improvement plan on the student; or</li> <li>• School-based community service; or</li> <li>• Refer student to services aimed at addressing the student's truancy (e.g., counseling, mediation, mentoring, a teen court program, community-based services, or other in-school or out-of-school services).</li> </ul>
<a href="#">19 TAC §129.1043</a> Commissioner's Rules Concerning Truancy	A school district must offer additional counseling to a student and may not refer the student to truancy court under Section 25.0951 or any other provision if the school determines that the student's truancy is the result of (1) pregnancy; (2) being in the state foster program; (3) <b>homelessness</b> ; or (4) being the principal income earner for the student's family.
<a href="#">TEC §37.001</a> Student Code of Conduct	<p>Disciplinary decisions must take into consideration 'a student's status as a student who is homeless' as a factor in each decision, regardless of whether the action is a mandatory or discretionary action. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• suspension,</li> <li>• removal to Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP),</li> <li>• expulsion, or</li> <li>• placement in Juvenile Justice Alternative Education (JJAEP) program.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">TEC §37.005</a> Suspension	<p>LEAs cannot place a homeless student in out of school suspension (OSS) unless the student engages in conduct described by Subsections <a href="#">TEC §37.005(c)(1)-(3)</a> while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campus behavior coordinator may coordinate with LEA's McKinney-Vento Liaison to discuss alternatives to OSS for a student who is homeless (TEC §37.005(d)).</li> </ul> <p>During the period of the student's suspension (i.e., in school suspension (ISS) or OSS), an alternative means of receiving all course work must be provided in the classes in the foundation curriculum under <a href="#">§28.002(a)(1)</a> that the student misses due to the suspension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District must provide at least one option for receiving the course work that does not require the use of the Internet (<a href="#">TEC §37.005(e)</a>).</li> </ul> <p>TEC 37.005(b) limits the disciplinary actions of ISS and OSS to a 3-day maximum length of term.</p>



## PEIMS Coding (Related to Discipline)

The Texas Student Data System (TSDS) [Public Education Information Management System \(PEIMS\)](#) encompasses all data requested and received by TEA about public education, including student demographic and academic performance, personnel, financial, and organizational information. The submission of PEIMS data is required of all school districts. There are four TSDS PEIMS data submissions required each school year following a schedule established by the Texas Education Data Standards (TEDS).

LEAs are required to report the homeless status of students by living situation in PEIMS. A student is identified at any-point in the school year and this indicator remains for the year and must be re-assessed annually. This information lives in TSDS PEIMS [C189](#) (Homeless Status Descriptors) and [C192](#) (Unaccompanied Youth Descriptors).

Similarly, LEAs are required to report disciplinary information in TSDS PEIMS [C164](#) (Discipline Descriptors) for all students who are subjected to a removal due to a discipline action. These actions are recorded at the time of discipline and may or may not coincide with when a student is identified as homeless. These descriptors are maintained annually and do not carry over from year-to-year.

The PEIMS [Discipline Reports](#) provide an overview of data for students in discipline settings and are available at the state, region, district or campus level. Discipline data for PEIMS is reported at the end of each school year, in which the data becomes a part of the PEIMS Summer Submission. Every discipline action that results in the removal of a student from any part of their regular academic program is categorized in one of the following general categories:

- In-School Suspension (ISS)
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- Expulsion
- Juvenile Justic Alternative Education Program (JJAEP)
- Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)

### Texas Data and Exclusionary Discipline Practices for Students Experiencing Homelessness

At the time of the development of this Discipline Toolkit, the available PEIMS disciplinary data are based on the PEIMS Summer Submission (Collection 3) for 2022-2023 school year. Data suggests that students experiencing homelessness are subjected to punitive discipline measures (e.g., ISS, OSS, DAEP) much more often than their housed peers. In Texas, students experiencing homelessness are:

**2.5x**

More likely to be suspended from school (OSS), despite not having a stable home to which to return.

**2x**

As likely to be referred to In-School Suspension (ISS).

**5x**

More likely to be referred to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP).

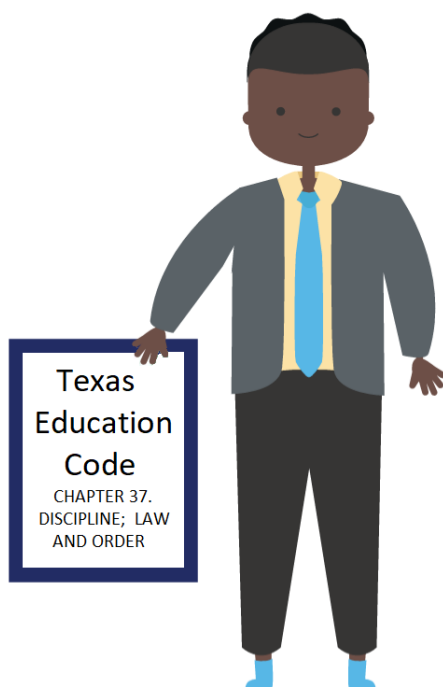


Youths experiencing homelessness are most commonly referred to these three (3) types of exclusionary discipline: ISS, OSS, and DAEP for violating student codes of conduct, which are the lowest level of disciplinary violation. Additionally, Black/African American students were found to represent a significantly larger segment of homeless students subject to disciplinary removals (36.79%) than in the non-homeless population (25.51%).

## Submitting PEIMS and McKinney-Vento Eligible Students

LEAs must submit accurate, useful, and timely PEIMS data to the agency ([TEC §48.008](#); [19 TAC §61.1025](#)). As mentioned previously, it's important to note that it is only permissible to send homeless students to OSS under certain circumstances, as students who are experiencing homelessness may only be assigned to OSS if they engage in the conduct described by [TEC §37.005\(c\)\(1\)-\(3\)](#). PEIMS data for OSS is required under [TEC §37.020](#).

1. conduct that contains the elements of an offense related to weapons under Section 46.02 or 46.05, Penal Code;
2. conduct that contains the elements of a violent offense under Section 22.01, 22.011, 22.02, or 22.021, Penal Code; or
3. selling, giving, or delivering to another person or possessing, using, or being under the influence of any amount of:
  - a. marihuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.;
  - b. a dangerous drug, as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code; or
  - c. an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code.



The allowable reasons for assigning OSS to students experiencing homelessness are depicted further in the table below by the TSDS PEIMS Descriptors. Therefore, students who are experiencing homelessness and are assigned to OSS are expected to be reported in PEIMS with a Discipline Descriptors (C164) of '05' (*Out-Of-School Suspension*) or '25' (*Partial Day Out-Of-School Suspension*) and one of the following Behavior Descriptors ([C165](#)):

TSDS PEIMS Descriptors: Allowable Reasons for Assigning OSS to Students Experiencing Homelessness:

Behavior Descriptors	Definition
05	Possessed, Sold, Used, Or Was Under the Influence of An Alcoholic Beverage
11	Brought a Firearm to School or Unlawful Carrying of a Handgun
12	Unlawful Carrying of a Location-Restricted Knife
14	Conduct Containing the Elements of an Offense Relating to Prohibited Weapons
27	Assault Against a School District Employee or Volunteer
28	Assault Against Someone other than School District Employee or Volunteer
29	Aggravated Assault Against a School District Employee or Volunteer
30	Aggravated Assault Against Someone other than a school district employee or volunteer
31	Sexual Assault/Aggravated Sexual Assault Against a School District Employee or Volunteer
32	Sexual Assault/Aggravated Sexual Assault Against Someone other than a school district employee or volunteer
36	Felony Controlled Substance Violation
62	Possessed, Sold, Gave, Used, Delivered, Or Was Under the Influence of Marihuana or Tetrahydrocannabinol
64	Possessed, Sold, Gave, Used, Delivered, Or Was Under the Influence of Other Controlled Substance

*Note: Homeless students should not be placed on out-of-school suspension (OSS) for reasons other than for those outlined in [TEC §37.005\(c\)\(1\)-\(3\)](#). Behavior codes '21' (Violation of Student Code of Conduct Not Included Under TEC §37.002(b), 37.006, or 37.007) and '41' (Fighting/Mutual Combat – Excludes all offenses under Penal Code §22.01), which are commonly reported behavior codes, **are not allowable reasons** to assign a homeless student to OSS.*



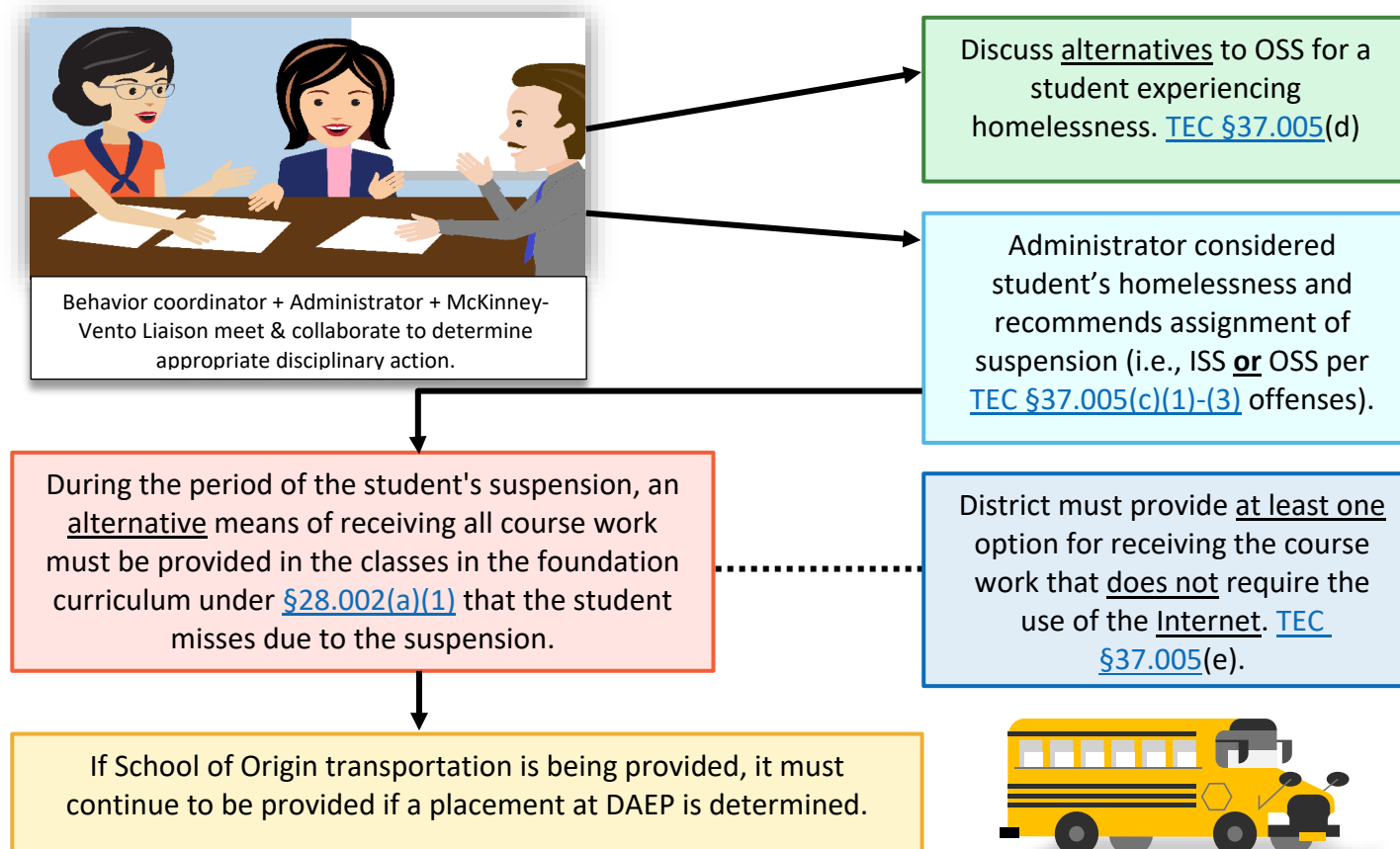
## Discipline Meeting for Decision-Making

School district personnel are encouraged to conduct a coordinated meeting amongst the LEA administrator, McKinney-Vento Liaison, and campus behavior coordinator (and/or additional appropriate personnel) when considering discipline related decision-making for students experiencing homelessness. The school district personnel who are meeting can use the diagram below and tools within this toolkit to ensure that students experiencing homelessness have their homeless status considered in all discipline and truancy related decision-making and ultimately receive positive educational outcomes without disruptions to schooling.

The McKinney-Vento Act does not grant exemption from standard local discipline policies. All students, including those students experiencing homelessness, must abide by the same Student Code of Conduct as their non-homeless peers. However, when behaviors may be directly related to a student's homelessness (e.g., tardiness, absenteeism, missing schoolwork, in-adequate uniform/clothing, trauma response/reaction, defiant, non-verbal, emotionally withdrawn, etc.), state law does have specific prohibitions and considerations for children and youths who are experiencing homelessness.

Disciplinary decisions must take into consideration 'a student's status as a student who is homeless' as a factor in each decision, regardless of whether the action is a mandatory **or** discretionary action. This includes suspension, removal to Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), expulsion, or placement in Juvenile Justice Alternative Education (JJAEP) program ([TEC §37.001](#)). The following must be noted:

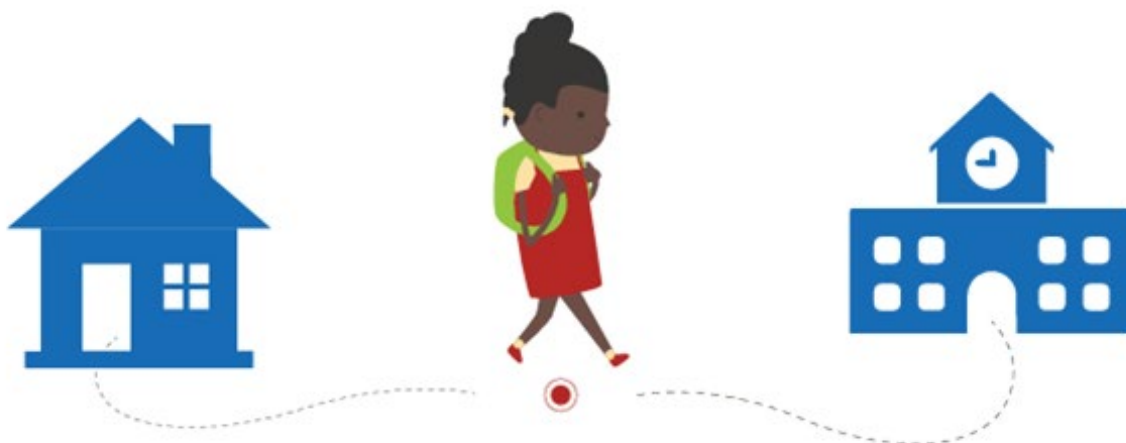
- LEAs are prohibited from placing a homeless student in out of school suspension (OSS) **unless** the student engages in conduct described by Subsections [TEC §37.005\(c\)\(1\)-\(3\)](#) while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property [[TEC §37.005\(d\)](#)].
- TEC 37.005(b) limits the disciplinary actions of ISS and OSS to a 3-day maximum length of term.





## Behavior Coordinator and Homeless Liaison Working Together: Purpose of Collaboration and a Coordinated Team Meeting to Support Discipline Decision-Making for Students Experiencing Homelessness

- To ensure effective disciplinary decision-making for students experiencing homelessness, it is encouraged that all disciplinary decisions be conducted through a collaborative team approach and not be made by a single individual, whenever possible.
- According to [TEC §37.0012](#), ‘a person at each campus must be designated to serve as the campus behavior coordinator’. The primary responsibility of the behavior coordinator is to maintain student discipline and behavior management.
- Additionally, one of the key duties of a McKinney-Vento liaison is to ensure that students experiencing homelessness, and their families, have access to educational services for which they are eligible. Chronic absenteeism, truancy, and behaviors that lead to disciplinary challenges are common occurrences and barriers to educational access for students experiencing homelessness.
- Key personnel for these discipline meetings should include campus administrator, McKinney-Vento liaison, and/or behavior coordinator at minimum. Whenever possible, including additional staff who work closely with the student experiencing homelessness (e.g., instructional staff, counselor, etc.) can help to provide additional context and considerations to the collaborative team toward a whole child approach.
- In light of this, the role of the behavior coordinator and McKinney-Vento liaison during the discipline meeting is crucial to identifying and removing barriers for children and youths experiencing homelessness as they relate to disciplinary actions.
- An Exclusionary Discipline Rubric and accompanying Team Meeting Worksheet is provided further in this toolkit (pages 21-26 and Appendix A) to assist the collaborative team during discipline meeting discussions.





## Transportation Considerations

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires school districts to adopt policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided to and from the school of origin at the request of the parent, guardian, and/or unaccompanied youth. LEAs must provide comparable services for students experiencing homelessness in consideration of discipline determinations (e.g., special education transportation). It is important that school leaders address transportation needs for homeless students when discipline and truancy matters occur. The following is a list of key-laws and important factors to consider when addressing discipline and truancy circumstances.

- The child's or youth's transportation to and from the school of origin must be provided by the LEA, when the child or youth continues to live in the area served by the LEA in which the school of origin is located. In these instances, school of origin, transportation must continue to be provided if a placement at DAEP is determined.
- In circumstances when, school of origin transportation is being provided by two school districts, it must continue to be provided if a placement at DAEP is determined. School districts should develop a system, so the student experiencing homelessness is not considered absent or have truancy notifications, when there are transportation set-up delays.
- Each school district shall remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youths in schools, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to absences [§11432\(g\)\(1\)\(i\)](#).
- With school of origin transportation, it is important to consider that, when changing campuses, transportation can have routing delays that impact timelines and create absences that could lengthen disciplinary placements.
  - For example, when a student is assigned a 30-day placement at the LEA's DAEP facility, and transportation requires 3-5 days to route to DAEP and an additional 3-5 days to reroute after the student has served his or her 30-day placement, the cumulative days "removed" from their regular educational setting could be 36 or more days.
- Loss of instructional time has detrimental effects for all students, but for students who are experiencing homelessness, the loss of instructional time further exacerbates the already widened achievement gap they face due to factors related to their homeless status.





## Best Practices for Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness

In this section, readers will be provided with best practices and considerations for working with behaviors and/or disciplinary related challenges for a student experiencing homelessness.

### Understanding Trauma and Homelessness – Implications for School Discipline Responses

Exclusionary discipline (e.g., in-school or out of school suspension) is defined by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) as “the formal or informal removal, whether on a short-term or long-term basis, of a student from a class, school, or other educational program or activity for violating a school rule or code of conduct.” Exclusionary discipline supports the use of zero tolerance and punitive disciplinary practices and assumes that the negative consequences, or punishment, will lead the student to change their behavior.

*“Challenging behavior is most likely to occur when the demands placed on a student exceed his or her capacity to respond adaptively (appropriately). Therefore, the usual explanations for misbehavior don’t make much sense.”*

*-Dr. Ross Greene*

According to the [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#), “child traumatic stress occurs when children and adolescents are exposed to traumatic events and traumatic situations, and when this exposure overwhelms their ability to cope with what they have experienced.” Although the experiences and responses to trauma and loss differ among students, it is important that educational stakeholders become aware of the impact that trauma may have on learning, student behavior, student responses to adults, and interactions with peers. Trauma can shape not only the individual’s behaviors but also the way they view the world. The early experiences of young children have a tremendous influence on their developing brains, and trauma can create toxic stress with lifelong, costly impacts. Toxic stress response can occur when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity—such as physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence, and/or the accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate adult support.

### Disciplinary Considerations for Students Experiencing Homelessness

In making disciplinary considerations for students experiencing homelessness, educational leaders need to be cognizant of how homelessness can be accompanied by trauma and stress factors due to the student living in transitional living situations. The complexity of homelessness is rife with factors for students that make going to school successfully a daily challenge. Students experiencing homelessness face many challenges, including trauma, disruptive behaviors, chronic absenteeism, and are subjected to prolonged lack of basic needs like food, water, and clothing. Additionally, students experiencing homelessness may also frequently transition between temporary living locations and changing schools.

In light of this, disruptive or defiant behaviors, such as fight-flight-freeze responses, can be a result of situationally developed trauma for a student experiencing homelessness. Prolonged lack of basic needs (e.g., food, water, clothing, etc.), frequent transitions between temporary living locations and changing of schools and widened gaps in academic and functional abilities (e.g., below grade level achievement, difficulty establishing relationships and trust with adults and peers, etc.) can contribute to the development of toxic stress.

## Emotional, Behavioral, and Cognitive Symptoms of Stress

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years), and are linked to health issues, as well as mental, emotional, and behavioral challenges in school. Some examples of ACEs include emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse, emotional and/or physical neglect, household substance abuse, household mental illness, instability due to parental separation, divorce, and/or having an incarcerated family member, and homelessness. Toxic stress from ACEs can change brain development and affect how the body responds to stress.

Trauma can manifest in the classroom and schools in many ways. When subjective behaviors (e.g., defiance, disruption, disrespect, etc.) are not clearly defined, adult responses to these behaviors could lead to disproportionate discipline rooted in punitive approaches. The table provides a few examples:

Emotional (Affective)	Behavioral (Physical)	Cognitive
Depression	Restlessness	Reliving past trauma
Fear	Withdrawal	Decreased Attention/Concentration
Anger	Tremor/Shaking	Intrusive thoughts
Denial	Headache	Hypervigilance
Irritability	Change in Sleeping Patterns	Uncertainty

Source: *The Human Impact of Natural Disasters*, Mark Norman (2003)

Educational leaders should be aware of how trauma can impact the behavior of students experiencing homelessness [Source: [Trauma-Informed Care Toolkit](#)]. Moreover, LEAs should consider that students experiencing homelessness, due to the challenges they face, are more likely to be referred to in-school suspension, suspended from school, and/or referred to DAEP. For a deeper dive into Trauma, readers are guided to Appendix B: Understanding Trauma and ACEs located on page 36 of this toolkit.

### Educational Leaders Need to Consider a New Perspective on Maladaptive Behaviors

Maladaptive behaviors are actions, or outward behavioral outputs, that individuals exhibit when they have difficulties in adjusting to situations. These behaviors often stem from underlying trauma and mental health conditions and is a way that individuals manage their stress or anxiety. Adults need to be cognizant that observed behaviors could have underlying issues, or root causes, that need to be considered, especially for students experiencing homelessness.

- **Observed Behaviors:** Class avoidance, outbursts, disengaged, clowning around, disruptive, etc.
- **Possible Root Cause:** Overstimulation, hunger, stigmatization/embarrassment, struggles with learning disabilities, untreated/undiagnosed mental health condition and/or substance use, stress, etc.
- **Consideration:** View discipline through the lens of behavioral science
  - Extend beyond the need to fix a problem/behavior on the surface.
  - Dive deeper into understanding the root cause of the exhibited behavior or disciplinary issue.
  - Provide opportunities for the student to learn and build on skills needed to overcome.



## Positive School Discipline and Alternatives to Punitive Approaches

Positive school discipline is a teaching-based approach that aims to prevent and reduce disruptive behavior by creating a safe and supportive learning environment. Traditional punitive discipline includes exclusionary practices (e.g., ISS, OSS, etc.) and is associated with negative student outcomes (e.g., higher dropout rates, depressed graduation rates, and lower academic performances). On the other hand, positive school discipline takes a trauma-informed approach to strengthening the ability of educators and students to lessen and inhibit disruptive and inappropriate conduct.

For students experiencing homelessness, positive school discipline ensures that their homeless status is considered in all discipline and truancy related decision-making and ultimately receive positive educational outcomes without disruptions to schooling. Positive school discipline is characterized by:



Opportunity to help teach social and emotional skills so students experiencing homelessness can learn to resolve disagreements in socially acceptable ways.

Use of encouraging words and actions rather than punishment to help students experiencing homelessness to develop self-control and make positive choices.



A restorative approach to support students experiencing homelessness in forming positive relationships and focus on repairing harm by engaging all stakeholders in inclusive processes, which has been found to increase attendance and decrease severe behavior incidents.

## Restorative Practices

Marilyn Armour, Ph.D., defines restorative discipline as a relational approach to building school climate and addressing student behavior. The approach fosters belonging over exclusion, social engagement over control, and meaningful accountability over punishment. Restorative Practice (RP) is a way of thinking and being based on a foundation of caring, collaborative, and respectful relationships that cultivates community and supports well-being and achievement.

Punitive punishments push children and youths—disproportionately those experiencing homelessness—out of their classroom and school community, which leads to increased dropout rates and decreased graduation rates. In contrast, RP builds and strengthens healthy relationships and community and fosters the conditions that promote a positive sense of self, spirit and belonging. It provides a framework to prevent, respond to, and repair harm through a continuum of practice. When implemented, RP promotes an equitable and positive school culture. It offers schools an alternative to traditional, punitive disciplinary approaches that center on punishment for misbehavior and breaking rules.

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*“Students who feel connected to school – to teachers, to other students, and to the school itself – do better academically.”*

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[Source: [Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy](#), 2009].

Learning involves the development of knowledge, skills, and characteristics that lead to personal success, economic productivity, and active and engaged citizenship. Growing evidence has demonstrated that “students cannot achieve academically if they don’t feel safe or welcomed at school, if their mental health is at risk and if they don’t have the tools or motivation to adopt a healthy, active lifestyle outside of school.” [Source: [Ontario’s Well-Being Strategy for Education](#)]

Restorative Practice promotes a positive school climate by fostering learning environments that are safe, inclusive, and accepting, while also creating the conditions whereby everyone can feel seen, heard, valued and respected, and where diversity is celebrated. For students experiencing homelessness, restorative practices can have positive impact for both their academic and functional (e.g., overall well-being, behavior, social skills, etc.) successes:

1. Strengthened relationships and improved student connectedness with adults and school, which contributes to:
  - a. Enhanced school climate.
  - b. Deeper communication.
  - c. Fewer conflicts, violence, and misbehavior.
  - d. Improved environment for learning.
2. When misbehavior occurs, RP offers:
  - a. A more effective form of discipline.
  - b. True accountability for all parties involved.
  - c. Valuable opportunity for student learning and growth.
  - d. Preservation and repairing of relationships, rather than deterioration of relationships.
3. Benefits for schools:
  - a. Strengthens the culture of respect, discipline, and cohesion with the school community.
  - b. Improves staff confidence in handling a wide variation of disciplinary challenges.
  - c. Empowers students to take responsibility for their behaviors and actions to promote self-discipline and accountability to other learners and staff in the school community.

By addressing the underlying root causes of a student's conduct, as opposed to solely imposing a punishment, a positive school discipline approach yields a more effective impact on the whole child.

## Guiding Principles from US Department of Education

The US Department of Education (USDE) provides guidance for school districts to create safe, inclusive, supportive, and fair school climates for students and school staff. Harsh, or unfair exclusionary discipline practices, and frequent disparities in the use of exclusionary discipline practices for disproportionate student populations (e.g., students experiencing homelessness, children of color, children with disabilities, etc.) can contribute to students feeling unwelcome, unsafe, and unsupported. Five guiding principles are noted in the table below and offer actions schools and school districts can take to create inclusive, safe, supportive, and fair learning environments.



### USDE's Guiding Principles: To Address Disciplinary Challenges of Disciplinary Practices

- Foster a sense of belonging through a positive, safe, welcoming, and inclusive school environment.
- Support the social, emotional, physical, and mental health needs of all students through evidence-based strategies.
- Adequately support high-quality teaching and learning by increasing educator capacity.
- Recruit and retain a diverse educator workforce.
- Ensure the fair administration of student discipline policies in ways that treat students with dignity and respect (including through systemwide policy and staff development and monitoring strategies).



Below, readers can find a summary of key best practices that were discussed in this section of the toolkit. These key considerations can improve the school district and build capacity in school staff as they work to support students experiencing homelessness as they related to disciplinary approaches.

### Key Considerations for Disciplinary Approaches for Students Experiencing Homelessness

- **Adopt a trauma-informed perspective and put on a behavioral science lens.** Students experiencing homelessness are impacted by instability, uncertainty and often violence.
- **Make school a safe zone for students.** Create a space that is predictable, where students can make mistakes and be held accountable, but feel secure.
- **Track the discipline rates at schools for all students and for students experiencing homelessness specifically.** Share the data with schools and ask schools with high and/or disproportionate discipline rates to create an action plan to address them.
- **Be sure the McKinney-Vento district homeless liaison or school-based liaisons are consulted on discipline of students experiencing homelessness and have the capacity to be involved.** When the McKinney-Vento liaison is viewed through a case manager role, district administrators can shift their focus to seeing a robust MV program as a solution to many areas (e.g., classroom management, discipline, graduation).
- **Engage students in establishing the rules and consequences,** thereby preventing the discipline system from appearing imposed or arbitrary.
- **Train and engage school administrators, resource officers, counselors, and teachers in implementing school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports.** Raise awareness about the trauma and effects of homelessness.
- **Engage the broader community** (e.g., substance abuse services, police officers, juvenile courts, and juvenile probation) to assist all students with staying in school and resolving their issues.
- **Be aware of potential triggers.**
- If community service is part of a restorative justice approach, **be aware that barriers** like lack of transportation, shelter hours, or the need to work may make it impossible for students experiencing homelessness to complete community service after school. Make community service a learning and community-building exercise.



## Tools and Strategies to Support Disciplinary Decision-Making

This section provides an overview to assist McKinney-Vento Liaisons, Behavior Coordinators, and LEA administrators during the discipline team meeting when addressing disciplinary challenges with students experiencing homelessness. It is important to note that all disciplinary decisions should be conducted through a collaborative team approach and should not be made by a single individual, whenever possible. The following tools and strategies are designed to support school leaders in their decision-making process with key-factors and related questions for reflection, to determine the appropriate response and next steps, based on the student's behavior and individual circumstances.

The purpose of the provided Exclusionary Discipline Rubric and accompanying Team Meeting Worksheet is to offer campus and district leaders a thoughtful and comprehensive approach that targets the whole-child while taking into consideration the unique educational and functional needs of a student experiencing homelessness. Additionally, these tools and strategies provide an added layer of protection for both the student experiencing homelessness and the campus by giving the collaborative team, that is engaged in the discipline meeting, the time and opportunity to thoroughly review the incident and behaviors while considering all mitigating factors as they relate to the student's homeless status.

### Exclusionary Discipline: Code of Conduct Factors to Consider (See rubric on page 22)

Before deciding whether to place a student in DAEP, there must be consideration of mitigating factors regardless of whether the action is mandatory or discretionary.

Factors to consider include:

- ☐ Was it self-defense? ([TEC §37.001](#))
- ☐ Was there intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct? ([TEC §37.001](#))
- ☐ What is the student's disciplinary history? ([TEC §37.001](#))
- ☐ How does the student's age developmentally impact their understanding of inappropriate behavior?
- ☐ Is there a disability that substantially impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student's conduct? ([TEC §37.001](#))
- ☐ Is student's status identified as a student who is homeless? ([TEC §37.001](#))
- ☐ Has the student been afforded the opportunity for behavioral interventions to be implemented?
- ☐ What is the safety and/or risk factors of inappropriate behavior?

The rubric below is designed to elicit conversations around mitigating factors that may impact the student's behavioral outputs. Each of the 8 areas of consideration will contain statements to reflect upon as they relate to the student's behavior, and will have a corresponding value (i.e., 1, 2, 3) to help drive those conversations.

Please note:

- The rubric is designed as a tool to help guide decisions around behavior and discipline. There is no direct cutoff of total points for determining disciplinary consequences.
- This tool is only one resource, and the final determination should be made by an intervention team, be holistic, and include all available formal and informal data.
- For guiding reference, the larger the sum for all 8 of the consideration areas (e.g., 21-24), the more opportunities there are for alternative or additional efforts the campus can take in lieu of suspension.
- A worksheet accompanies the rubric to foster conversation and brainstorming for each area of consideration.

## How to utilize the Exclusionary Rubric and Accompanying Team Worksheets?

The following section provides readers with instructions on how to use the tools and strategies to ensure a thoughtful and comprehensive approach that targets the whole-child while taking into consideration the unique educational and functional needs of a student experiencing homelessness. A completed exemplar is also provided in the Appendix section of this toolkit (titled “Appendix A: Exemplar of Completed Exclusionary Rubric and Worksheet” on pages 29-35).

### Instructions

1. Reach out and schedule a discipline meeting with key personnel (reference ‘Discipline Meeting for Decision-Making’ section in this toolkit located on pages 11-13).
2. Have an accessible copy (e.g., electronic or hard copy) of the Exclusionary Discipline Rubric and Team Worksheet ready for the scheduled collaborative team meeting. It is appropriate for each member to have individual copies to document their notes and evidence, but these areas should be comprehensively reviewed and discussed collectively as a team approach.
3. Gather and/or have available all informal and formal data related to the student, including:
  - a. History of homeless status (e.g., when the student was identified, historical trend of student’s mobility, living situations, and additional documentation of any challenges the student or their family faces).
  - b. History of any behavioral difficulties or challenges (e.g., previous behavior incidents, classroom data, documentation of behavior supports/interventions, participation in wraparound services and supports, etc.)
  - c. Documentation of attendance or truancy concerns – this data can provide additional factors such as chronic absenteeism and truancy that can develop into behavior challenges and disciplinary infractions.
  - d. Section 504 or Individualized Education Program (IEP) plans and any additional supplemental documents (e.g., Behavior Intervention Plan, evaluation reports, disability reports, etc.), as appropriate.
4. Considering the current behavior/disciplinary incident that occurred, the team will take each of the 8 areas of consideration (i.e., self-defense, intent, disciplinary history, age, disability, homeless status, interventions, safety) one at a time.
5. For each of the 8 areas:
  - a. The team will consider and document any (a) supporting data or information, (b) action considered/tried, (c) action needed or next steps, and (d) any additional notes that the team deems relevant for that area. The more documentation, the more informed the decision can be.
  - b. Then, the team will use the rubric to locate that area of consideration that was discussed and come to consensus for the scoring (i.e., 1, 2, 3). Use the data the team reported to drive the decision for that area. Circle the corresponding box for the score the team determined to be appropriate.
  - c. Write the score in the ‘Score Selected: \_\_\_’ next to the title of the area of consideration that was discussed.
6. Repeat the steps from #5 above for the remainder of the 8 areas of consideration.
7. The team can choose to total up the score for all 8 areas of consideration. Please reference the gray box located on the previous page (20) for a reminder when the team determines the total sum of scoring rubric.
8. The “Action Needed or Next Steps” row for each of the 8 areas of consideration are important data that can support alternatives or supplementary supports that could be considered in lieu of punitive consequences.
9. This informal tool (i.e., rubric and worksheets) can be included as documentation for any investigation or disciplinary hearings that may occur.

## Exclusionary Discipline – Rubric

Factors to Consider (TEC §37.001)	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3
<b>Self-defense</b>	The behavior was <b>not</b> a <b>direct</b> result of self-defense.	N/A	The behavior is a <b>direct</b> result of <b>reasonable</b> self-defense.
<b>Intent</b>	The behavior was clearly <b>purposeful</b> and <b>planned</b> . The student demonstrated <b>intent</b> to harm.	The behavior was determined to be <b>impulsive</b> and <b>not</b> planned to harm.	<b>No intent</b> to harm determined.
<b>Discipline History</b>	Demonstrated <b>similar</b> inappropriate behavior over a 1–3-month period. The <b>pattern</b> of behavior is <b>highly disruptive</b> to the learning environment.	Demonstrated <b>similar</b> inappropriate behavior over 1-2 months. The <b>pattern</b> is <b>moderately</b> disruptive to the learning environment.	<b>First time offense</b> . There is <b>no</b> established pattern for the inappropriate behavior.
<b>Student's Age</b>	The student <b>clearly understands</b> the impact of the inappropriate behavior.	The student <b>somewhat understands</b> the impact of the inappropriate behavior.	<b>Developmentally</b> , the student does <b>not/is not</b> able to understand the impact of the inappropriate behavior.
<b>Disability</b> <i>*Must collaborate with 504/SPED personnel if there's a disability*</i>	There is no identified disability. Considering the impact of the student's disability, the student <b>clearly understands</b> the impact of the inappropriate behavior.	Considering the impact of the student's disability, the student <b>somewhat understands</b> the impact of the inappropriate behavior.	Considering the impact of the student's disability, the student does <b>not/is not</b> able to understand the impact of the inappropriate behavior.
<b>Student Status</b> <i>*(e.g., CPS involvement, highly mobile, protective order, etc.) *</i>	The behavior is <b>not directly</b> linked to possible trauma associated with homeless status.	The behavior is <b>not directly</b> linked to possible trauma associated with homeless status but is <b>somewhat associated</b> .	The behavior is <b>clearly linked</b> to possible trauma associated with homeless status.
<b>Behavioral Interventions</b>	The <b>Campus</b> intervention team formed to discuss (a) student's disruptive behavior, and (b) interventions to implement and document for <b>at least 3 weeks</b> .	The <b>classroom teacher</b> implemented and documented behavioral interventions <b>for 3 - 5 weeks</b> .	Interventions have <b>not</b> been applied or have been implemented for <b>less than 3 weeks</b> . The behavior is not connected to current reason for referral.
<b>Safety and/or Risk Factors</b>	The behavior poses <b>imminent</b> and <b>continued</b> danger and harm to self, others, and/or property on campus.	The behavior poses a <b>limited</b> danger and harm to self, others, and/or property on campus (currently or in the future).	The behavior poses <b>no/not continued</b> safety risk to self, others, and/or property on campus.



## Exclusionary Discipline – Team Meeting Worksheet

<b>Self-Defense</b>	<b>Score Selected: _____</b>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>	
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	

<b>Intent</b>	<b>Score Selected: _____</b>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>	
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	

Discipline History	Score Selected: _____
Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score	
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	

Student's Age	Score Selected: _____
Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score	
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>	
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	

Disability	Score Selected: _____
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b> <i>*Must collaborate with 504/SPED personnel if there's a disability*</i>	Sources to review: 504/IEP plans, including BSP/BIP and evaluation reports (FIEs, disability reports)
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>  <i>If the student has a disability, then follow the procedures of the MDR process.</i>	
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	

Student's Status	Score Selected: _____
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	



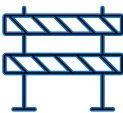


Behavioral Interventions	Score Selected: _____
Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score	
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	
Action Needed or Next Steps:	
Additional Notes:	

Safety or Risk Factors	Score Selected: _____
Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score	
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	
Action Needed or Next Steps:	
Additional Notes:	



## Key Actions and Next Steps for School Leaders

The following section provides readers with key actions to consider as the next steps when reflecting on behavioral and disciplinary challenges for students experiencing homelessness. LEA leaders are encouraged to use this list to assemble appropriate leadership and ensure integration in the LEA's annual planning processes. A description is provided to further provide readers with context and information to support the implementation of these key action steps.

Key Actions	Description
 <p><b>Consider homelessness in disciplinary policies and discuss alternative methods to address misbehavior.</b></p>	<p>School districts must ensure that all administrators, support staff, and teaching staff are knowledgeable in the federal and state legal requirements as they relate to homeless students.</p> <p>The collaboration team (e.g., at minimum, the behavior coordinator, administrator, and McKinney-Vento Liaison), use the Decision-Making Tree and Exclusionary Discipline Rubrics in this Toolkit to determine appropriate disciplinary action, including alternatives to suspensions or interventions.</p>
<p><b>Raise awareness in schools about supports available.</b></p>  <p><b>Incorporate training on school discipline, trauma, and homelessness.</b></p>	<p>Additional training and resources may be needed (e.g., RtI, MTSS, PBIS) to address behavioral challenges without the use of suspensions or expulsions. These areas integrate with social-emotional and mental health supports to reduce student suspension and expulsion and improve academic and behavioral outcomes for students.</p> <p>A lack of awareness about homelessness and its impact on a student's mental health is a barrier to ensuring students who have experienced homelessness are connected to appropriate support. Providing training to educators, administrators and all school staff promotes the development of a positive school culture and climate that embraces the mental health, wellness, and academic needs of a child in order to provide a holistic approach to education.</p>
 <p><b>Ensure schools and districts do not have policies that create barriers to full school engagement for students experiencing homelessness.</b></p>	<p>Challenges caused by homelessness may prevent students from being able to submit assignments when they are due or to meet policies that exist around attendance.</p> <p>Policies that result in suspensions may add to the disproportionate numbers identified.</p> <p>Improvements in these areas would not only help homeless students succeed but would also prevent classroom tensions and stress that may lead to behavioral issues. Note: <a href="#">42 USC, §11431</a></p>
 <p><b>Leverage grant funding to train specific individuals.</b></p>	<p>Given the complexity of trauma for students experiencing homelessness, it is critical to have trained individuals onsite to help address high-conflict interactions and improve specific challenges, including de-escalation strategies in schools.</p> <p>These individuals can assist school staff in behavior management and social-emotional development, regularly check suspension data in schools, and follow up if data are concerning.</p>
 <p><b>Track and Analyze Data</b></p>	<p>Track discipline rates at schools for all students and for students experiencing homelessness specifically.</p> <p>Share the data with schools and ask schools with high and/or disproportionate discipline rates to create an action plan to address them.</p>

## WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOMELESSNESS AND EDUCATION AT THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY?

1. Visit TEA's [Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youths \(TEHCY\)](#) webpage for more information.
2. Subscribe to TEA's [TEHCY listserv](#) to receive any updates on information, resources, and tools related to education and students experiencing homelessness.
3. Email [HomelessEducation@tea.texas.gov](mailto:HomelessEducation@tea.texas.gov) if you have any questions or need support in addressing the education of students experiencing homelessness.
4. Contact your TEHCY ESC M-V Liaison through the TEA established TEHCY Regional Technical Assistance Support Network to support implementation of McKinney-Vento. Visit the [Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youths \(TEHCY\)](#) web portal to find your TEHCY ESC M-V Liaison.

Thank you for considering this toolkit and for making a difference in the lives of students experiencing homelessness in Texas.





## Appendix A: Exemplar of Completed Exclusionary Rubric and Worksheet

A fictional student scenario using the rubric and worksheet is provided here to offer readers with an exemplar to support understanding of how to use these tools and strategies. Please note that this is just one example, and each student situation should be individualized and subjected to a thorough and thoughtful examination of the factors related to the student's homeless status, the incident, and any mitigating factors around the situation.

### Student Information:

- Jane is a 9<sup>th</sup> grade student who is McKinney-Vento eligible.
- She has a history of tardiness to her class after lunch and absences for not catching the bus on time in the morning due to trying to help her siblings get ready for school.
- Jane has been identified as a student with an Other Health Impairment for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). She receives Special Education supports and services.
- Jane was prescribed medication from a pediatrician 6 years ago, but the family cannot afford the medication at this time.

### Behavior Incident:

- Jane often waits towards the end of lunch period to get her lunch due to issues with other students making fun of her, secretly throwing food bits into her hair, knocking down her school items, etc.
- On one particular Thursday, one of the students who frequently bothers her intentionally puts out her leg and trips Jane after Jane got her lunch tray. This student continues to kick Jane's tray away and as Jane got up, the student pushes Jane repeatedly.
- After a few pushes, Jane was fed up and pushed this student away. As a result, the student fell backwards and hit her head on the cafeteria table and fell to the floor.
- The Assistant Principal on lunch duty heard the commotion and ran over to see Jane in shock hovering over the other student. The administrator then directs Jane to the office where she would ultimately be considered for OSS for "Behavior Code '28' Assault Against Someone other than School District Employee or Volunteer".

The campus administrator, behavior coordinator, and McKinney-Vento liaison scheduled a meeting to ensure OSS is an appropriate consequence for Jane, while taking into consideration factors related to her homeless status and other mitigating factors.

- The rubric and worksheet were completed collaboratively as a team. Additionally, the team requested Jane's special education case manager to be a part of the discussion to ensure circumstances related to her disability were considered.
- Meanwhile, Jane continued to receive her academic instruction and work through her general education, and she receives special education services and supports while the review was in progress.



Factors to Consider (TEC §37.001)	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3
<b>Self-defense</b>	The behavior was <b>not</b> a <b>direct</b> result of self-defense.	N/A	The behavior is a <b>direct</b> result of <b>reasonable</b> self-defense.
<b>Intent</b>	The behavior was clearly <b>purposeful</b> and <b>planned</b> . The student demonstrated <b>intent</b> to harm.	The behavior was determined to be <b>impulsive</b> and <b>not</b> planned to harm.	<b>No intent</b> to harm determined.
<b>Discipline History</b>	Demonstrated <b>similar</b> inappropriate behavior over a 1–3-month period. The <b>pattern</b> of behavior is <b>highly disruptive</b> to the learning environment.	Demonstrated <b>similar</b> inappropriate behavior over 1-2 months. The <b>pattern</b> is <b>moderately</b> disruptive to the learning environment.	<b>First time offense</b> . There is <b>no</b> established pattern for the inappropriate behavior.
<b>Student's Age</b>	The student <b>clearly understands</b> the impact of the inappropriate behavior.	The student <b>somewhat understands</b> the impact of the inappropriate behavior.	<b>Developmentally</b> , the student does <b>not/is not</b> able to understand the impact of the inappropriate behavior.
<b>Disability</b> <i>*Must collaborate with 504/SPED personnel if there's a disability*</i>	There is no identified disability. Considering the impact of the student's disability, the student <b>clearly understands</b> the impact of the inappropriate behavior.	Considering the impact of the student's disability, the student <b>somewhat understands</b> the impact of the inappropriate behavior.	Considering the impact of the student's disability, the student does <b>not/is not</b> able to understand the impact of the inappropriate behavior.
<b>Student Status</b> <i>*(e.g., CPS involvement, highly mobile, protective order, etc.)*</i>	The behavior is <b>not directly</b> linked to possible trauma associated with homeless status.	The behavior is <b>not directly</b> linked to possible trauma associated with homeless status but is <b>somewhat associated</b> .	The behavior is <b>clearly linked</b> to possible trauma associated with homeless status.
<b>Behavioral Interventions</b>	The <b>Campus</b> intervention team formed to discuss (a) student's disruptive behavior, and (b) interventions to implement and document for <b>at least 3 weeks</b> .	The <b>classroom teacher</b> implemented and documented behavioral interventions for <b>3 - 5 weeks</b> .	Interventions have <b>not</b> been applied or have been implemented for <b>less than 3 weeks</b> . The behavior is not connected to current reason for referral.
<b>Safety and/or Risk Factors</b>	The behavior poses <b>imminent</b> and <b>continued</b> danger and harm to self, others, and/or property on campus.	The behavior poses a <b>limited</b> danger and harm to self, others, and/or property on campus (currently or in the future).	The behavior poses <b>no/not continued</b> safety risk to self, others, and/or property on campus.

Self-Defense	Score Selected: <u>  3  </u>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	Conducted investigation that included witness statements from 5 students and 2 paraprofessionals that witnessed the incident. Consistent reports across all statements – Jane tried to ignore the other student, other student persisted, Jane was reacting to the other student’s persistent actions towards her. Teachers/staff report she keeps to herself and never draws attention to herself in any way. No prior serious behavior infractions.
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>	Jane attempted to ignore the situation and other student. Jane avoids coming into lunch early or on time to avoid attention to herself. Jane consistently tries to avoid people and situations that may be negative. Jane chooses “planned ignoring” of people and situations consistently. Her art teacher has noticed that she “bottles up” her emotions and has mentioned this to the counselor but nothing has been done since.
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	Discuss possible change of lunch block so Jane can build more positive association to lunch and peers in that lunch block? Assign staff close proximity to her during lunch to help monitor.  Possible considerations: Connecting her with wraparound supports, include her in weekly general education counseling group for social skills (etc.), integrate restorative circles, does she/family need additional support for living situation?
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	Assigning staff for proximity may cause unintended negative consequences to Jane due to the added attention.  Jane has an IEP – possible ARD/IEP meeting to discuss if additional accommodations or supports are warranted. Jane is identified as a student experiencing homelessness – connect with MV liaison for additional support.

Intent	Score Selected: <u>  2  </u>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	Conducted investigation as stated in the ‘self-defense’ section. According to reports and witness statements, Jane did not appear to want to cause harm but to have the actions towards her to stop. Jane is diagnosed with ADHD. Her SPED files (i.e., IEP and FIE) indicate there is presence of “impulsivity” when in stressful situations.
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>	Jane avoids attention and stressful situations to adapt to her difficulties related to the ADHD since she does not take medication to manage it. She “plan ignores” people and situations.  Jane has had a history of minor classroom disruptions, but no altercations with peers. Jane has an ARD/IEP meeting annually to discuss her academic and functional performances – no behavioral concerns that warranted a behavior intervention plan was needed during these annual discussions.
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	Jane has an IEP – possible ARD/IEP meeting to discuss if additional accommodations or supports are warranted. Jane is identified as a student experiencing homelessness – connect with MV liaison for additional support. This is the first-time she has had an altercation with peers but discussing with the IEP team, including a school psychologist, could help to determine possible support systems.
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	Impulsive behavior is a symptom of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and is characterized by acting without thinking first. Stress-impaired executive function diminishes working memory and impulse control, as well as mental flexibility and coping skills.

Discipline History	Score Selected: <u>  2  </u>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	Jane does not have any serious behavior infractions; however, she has had 3 minor classroom behavior reports in the last 2 months – 2 for missing major project deadlines and 1 for disrupting class when teacher explained project assignment that involved interviewing their father, so she exhibited uncontrollable emotional reactions and threw her items on floor and left the classroom. This is the first-time she has had an altercation with peers.
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	Teacher called the AP to come get her and she spent time in the counselor's office. School tried to call her mother but couldn't get a hold of her. Counselor attempted to talk to her, but she would not open up. A SPED paraprofessional later worked with her and was able to connect with her – talked through the situation with her and eventually completed an alternative assignment.
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	Jane has an IEP – possible ARD/IEP meeting to discuss if additional accommodations or supports are warranted. Jane is identified as a student experiencing homelessness – connect with MV liaison for additional support. Possible considerations: Connecting her with wraparound supports, include her in weekly general education counseling group for social skills (etc.), does she/family need additional support for living situation?
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	Jane missed major assignments because her mother worked night shifts and was never available to care for her younger siblings when they came back from school. So, after school, she would take care of them and bathe, feed, and make sure they got their homework done. Jane's dad is also incarcerated for domestic violence (interviewing him for the project would be difficult and traumatic).

Student's Age	Score Selected: <u>  1  </u>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	Jane is 16 years old. Her Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) reports her cognitive functioning is intact and comparable to her same age peers. This indicates that she is developmentally able to understand the impact of the inappropriate behavior. According to witnesses, after the student fell back, Jane was "in shock" – registering a level of remorse for her reaction to the other student's actions towards her.
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>	Re-evaluation of her FIE?
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	Her FIE is current and she is not due for a re-evaluation. Upon reviewing previous FIEs, her results are consistent – no concerns warranted for requesting a new evaluation report in light of the new behavior incident (first serious infraction – no pattern)
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	She is taking on a lot of responsibility as a 16-year-old while her mother works late shifts and having to care for her siblings while in an unstable living situation. Are there any additional supports or services to consider or look into?



Disability	Score Selected: <u>  1  </u>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b> <i>*Must collaborate with 504/SPED personnel if there's a disability*</i>	<p>Reviewed her FIE: Other health impairment due to ADHD</p> <p>Documented impulsivity but only during stressful situations. Exhibited behaviors from her evaluation and IEP does not impede her learning or the learning of others so the ARD/IEP committee determined that a behavior intervention plan (BIP) was not needed.</p> <p>SPED evaluation team reviewed IEP/FIE in light of this behavior.</p> <p><i>Sources to review: 504/IEP plans, including BSP/BIP and evaluation reports (FIEs, disability reports)</i></p>
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	<p>Jane has behavior accommodations in place and are successful with these accommodations – frequent breaks, allowing extra time, chunking of assignments, checklists for assignment tasks, support from her SPED teacher/paraprofessional.</p>
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>  <i>If the student has a disability, then follow the procedures of the MDR process.</i>	<p>For MDR process: An MDR is not warranted at this time, Jane does not have a pattern of suspensions, and the OSS would only result in a 3-day (max) removal.</p>
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	<p>Jane has built a good relationship with the SPED paraprofessional and tends to be more open to sharing. Find ways for this paraprofessional to incorporate coping skill strategies, etc. into her interactions with Jane. Connecting her with wraparound supports, include her in weekly general education counseling group for social skills (etc.), does she/family need additional support for living situation?</p>

Student's Status	Score Selected: <u>  3  </u>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	<p>Jane is identified in PEIMS as a student who is McKinney Vento eligible with Code 4. Jane is a survivor of domestic violence – her dad is incarcerated due to this. The other student's action (kicking, pushing, etc.) is linked to possible trauma that led to her family fleeing and in the current living situation.</p>
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	<p>McKinney Vento liaison tried connecting resources and supports to the family to assist with food, transportation to school, etc.</p>
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	<p>McKinney Vento liaison and counselor to continue to support family with resources.</p>
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	<p>C189 Homeless Status Code 04 - Student lives in motel or hotel at any time during current school year; Students who stay at a motel or hotel are considered homeless if they reside there because they have lost their housing, lack an alternative accommodation, and do not have a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence."</p>

Behavioral Interventions	Score Selected: <u>  1  </u>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	Jane has an IEP with behavior accommodations that are in place and successfully working. The behaviors linked to ADHD have been identified through an FIE, discussed annually at the IEP meetings, and have been implemented for over 3 years.
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	<p>Frequent breaks, allowing extra time, chunking of assignments, checklists for assignment tasks, support from the SPED teacher/paraprofessional all offer the support to be successful in school with her academics and functioning.</p> <p>BIP was discussed at each annual IEP meeting. Her behaviors do not impede her learning or the learning of others, so the ARD/IEP committee determined that a BIP was not needed.</p>
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	Jane has an IEP – possible ARD/IEP meeting to discuss if additional accommodations or supports are warranted. Jane is identified as a student experiencing homelessness – connect with MV liaison for additional support.
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	Possible considerations: Connecting her with wraparound supports, include her in weekly general education counseling group for social skills (etc.), does she/family need additional support for living situation?

Safety or Risk Factors	Score Selected: <u>  3  </u>
<b>Supporting Data or Information for Selected Score</b>	Conducted investigation. According to reports and witness statements, Jane did not appear to want to cause harm but to have the actions towards her to stop. Jane is diagnosed with ADHD. Her SPED files indicate there is presence of “impulsivity” when in stressful situations. The behavior does not pose a continued safety risk.
<b>Action Considered/Tried:</b>  <i>What supports are already in place?</i>	Jane avoids attention and stressful situations to adapt to her difficulties related to the ADHD since she does not take medication to manage it. She “plan ignores” people and situations. Jane has an ARD/IEP meeting annually to discuss her academic and functional performances – no behavioral concerns that warrant a behavior intervention plan was needed during these annual discussions.
<b>Action Needed or Next Steps:</b>	Jane has an IEP – possible ARD/IEP meeting to discuss if additional accommodations or supports are warranted. Jane is identified as a student experiencing homelessness – connect with MV liaison for additional support. This is a first-time she has had an altercation with a peer but discussing with the IEP team, including a school psychologist, could help to determine possible support systems.
<b>Additional Notes:</b>	Possible considerations: Connecting her with wraparound supports, include her in weekly general education counseling group for social skills (etc.), does she/family need additional support for living situation?

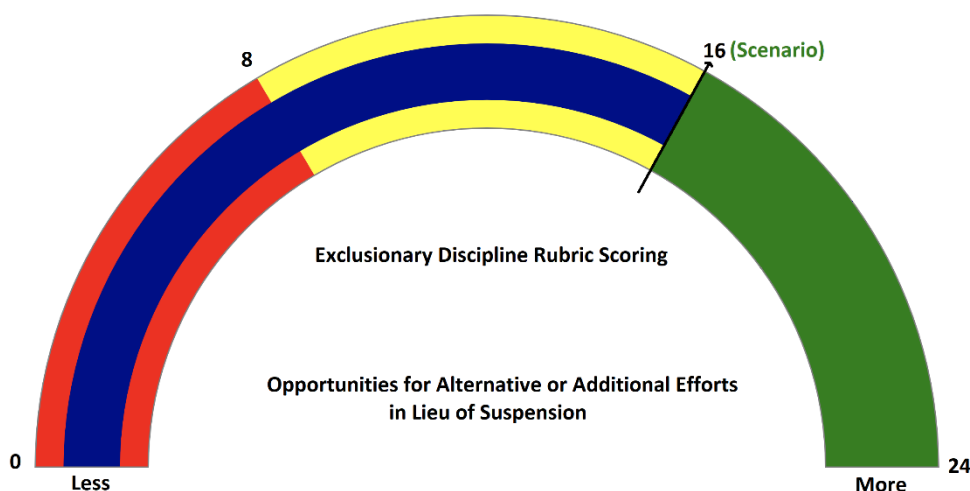
## Scenario Interpretation: A Summary of Key Takeaways and Actions for LEA Leaders

Reminder: The rubric is designed to elicit conversations around mitigating factors that may impact the student's behavioral outputs.

- The rubric is a tool to help guide decisions around behavior and discipline. There is no direct cutoff of total points for determining disciplinary consequences.
- This tool is only one resource, and the final determination should be made by an intervention team, be holistic, and include all available formal and informal data.
- For guiding reference, the larger the sum for all 8 of the consideration areas (e.g., 21-24), the more opportunities there are for alternative or additional efforts the campus can take in lieu of suspension.

The provided fictional student scenario offers educational leaders the opportunity to understand the value of using the exclusionary discipline rubric and accompanying worksheet when considering discipline matters for students experiencing homelessness. Based on the descriptions provided for each of the 8 areas of consideration (i.e., self-defense, intent, disciplinary history, age, disability, homeless status, interventions, safety), readers can glean several “action needed or next steps” for the case of Jane.

The total sum of the 8 areas of consideration was 16. This number represents that majority of the scores were in the 2 or 3 categories. Cumulatively, the campus has some opportunities for addressing the behavioral incident with alternatives or additional efforts in lieu of suspension. This is not to say that the campus cannot suspend the student per local policies. However, when behaviors are directly related to a student's homelessness, considerations must be made to guarantee schools do not miss vital opportunities to support students' needs and put students on the path toward success.



For Jane's case, here are some key actions pulled from the collaborative team's worksheet presented in Appendix A.

- Schedule an ARD/IEP meeting to discuss current supports and services and whether additional accommodations or supports are warranted.
- Connect with the McKinney-Vento liaison and school counselor to work on finding additional community resources (e.g., food, shelter, free clinics, etc.) that are available, connecting her with wraparound supports, and include her in weekly general education counseling groups for emotional management, social skills, etc.
- Utilize the strong relationship she has developed with the SPED paraprofessional to integrate coping skills strategies and who can serve as an adult mentor. Build in restorative practices and work towards restorative circles.
- Given Jane's scenario, what additional opportunities or key actions have you identified or considered?



## Appendix B: Understanding Trauma and ACEs

### Understanding Trauma

According to the [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#), “child traumatic stress occurs when children and adolescents are exposed to traumatic events and traumatic situations, and when this exposure overwhelms their ability to cope with what they have experienced.” Although the experiences and responses to trauma and loss differ among students, it is important that educational stakeholders become aware of the impact that trauma may have on learning, student behavior, student responses to adults, and interactions with peers.

Students experiencing homelessness have likely experienced complex trauma and stress due to experiencing multiple losses, movement from home to home, and having little consistency in their lives. Trauma can shape not only behaviors but also the way individuals view the world. The early experiences of young children have a tremendous influence on their developing brains, and trauma can create toxic stress with lifelong, costly impacts. Toxic stress response can occur when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity—such as physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence, and/or the accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate adult support.

**TIPS:** Implementing trauma-informed practices in the classroom and raising the level of awareness about the impact of adverse life experiences on a student’s learning process, classroom behaviors, and cognitive development will help educators and other advocates respond more sensitively and adaptively to a student’s needs.

### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that occur during a person’s childhood. ACEs can have a significant impact on a person’s physical, emotional, and mental health throughout their life. There are also known predictive factors of ACEs for children that can be single, acute events or sustained over time (e.g., the death of a parent/guardian, or the detrimental effect of community violence and poverty, among others). ACEs are linked to health issues, as well as mental, emotional, and behavioral challenges in school. Some examples of ACEs include emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional neglect, physical neglect, race-based trauma, domestic abuse, household substance abuse, household mental illness, parental separation or divorce, or an incarcerated family member.

## Law Related to Trauma-Informed Practices

- [TEC §38.036](#) requires LEAs to adopt and implement policy requiring the integration of trauma-informed practices in each school environment, including increasing staff and family awareness of trauma-informed care, implementation of trauma-informed practices and care by district and campus staff, and available counseling options for students affected by trauma or grief.
- [TEC §38.351](#) requires LEAs to train school staff on grief-informed and trauma-informed practices.

## Trauma Informed School Communities

- Schools have an important role to play in creating a climate that addresses the integrated social, emotional, and academic needs of students who have experienced trauma.
- Administrators, teachers, and school staff can help reduce the effects of trauma and grief on children by recognizing trauma responses, accommodating and responding to students within the classroom, and referring students to mental health professionals when necessary.
- A trauma-informed school environment provides opportunities for students to have their needs met.
- Trauma-informed approaches help students:
  - Feel connected to the teacher, their peers, and the curriculum being taught.
  - Believe that success is attainable with reasonable effort.
  - Feel respected by being heard.
  - Feel a level of trust and safety in their school community.
  - Develop a sense of responsibility, especially in helping other students.
  - Look forward to moments of gratitude, joy, and laughter every day.
  - Believe that lesson content is relevant, and purpose driven.

By creating a school environment where children feel safe and connected, schools can cultivate important protective factors that promote resiliency and help realize the potential of all students.

TEA has a number of resources and tools available to support schools in implementing trauma-informed approaches. The resources are listed on the [TEA Grief Informed and Trauma Informed Practices](#) webpage. Increasingly, Texas LEAs are partnering with local mental health organizations to create systems of care for students with mental health challenges. These community-wide partnerships are important to ensure that students experiencing homelessness receive wraparound support while at school.

## Trauma-informed practices an LEA can implement for students experiencing homelessness

1. Ensure that staff members attend trauma-informed professional development that includes strategies for creating a trauma-informed classroom and the neuroscience behind trauma.
2. Provide comprehensive mental health services with trauma-informed strategies in the school setting.
3. Use all available data—both academic and non-academic—as well as a trauma-informed lens and relationship-building to prevent dropout and guide meaningful interventions for students experiencing homelessness.
4. Ensure use of a strengths-based model that promotes protective factors, mitigates against risk factors, and encourages resiliency to help students thrive in school.

Neuroscience teaches that the early experiences of young children have a tremendous influence on their developing brains, and that trauma can create toxic stress with lifelong, costly impacts. However, studies also show that providing supportive, responsive relationships as early in life as possible can prevent or reverse the damaging and costly impact of trauma that can contribute to negative life outcomes. [Source: [Center on the Developing Child](#)]



## Student Discipline: Special Considerations for Students Experiencing Homelessness

National and state-level data shows that students experiencing homelessness are disproportionately suspended, expelled, and placed in separate disciplinary schools or programs in relation to their peers, and experience higher rates of exclusionary discipline than all other students in Texas schools.

A safe, supportive school climate and discipline practices are associated with high academic achievement, improved grades, strong student attendance, and improved graduation rates. Safe and supportive learning environments facilitate high levels of student engagement and self-discipline. Becoming trauma-informed requires a shift in the educational paradigm of classroom management, discipline practices, and local policies.

As there is no definitive model to support the behavioral health needs of all students, TEA provides LEAs with [guidance and training](#) for best-practice strategies in educational research such as:

- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports-Interconnected System Framework (PBIS-ISF)
- Building comprehensive school mental health (SMH) teams
- Trauma and grief-informed training
- Mental health signs and symptoms training and suicide prevention/intervention/postvention training
- Restorative Discipline Practices

### Positive Behavior Program

(a) Each school district and open-enrollment charter school may develop and implement a program, in consultation with campus behavior coordinators employed by the district or school and representatives of a regional education service center, that provides a disciplinary alternative for a student enrolled in a grade level below grade three who engages in conduct described by [TEC §37.005\(a\)](#) and is not subject to [TEC§37.005\(c\)](#). The program must:

- (1) be age-appropriate and research-based;
- (2) provide models for positive behavior;
- (3) promote a positive school environment;
- (4) provide alternative disciplinary courses of action that do not rely on the use of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or placement in a disciplinary alternative education program to manage student behavior; and
- (5) provide behavior management strategies, including:
  - (A) positive behavioral intervention and support;
  - (B) trauma-informed practices;
  - (C) social and emotional learning;
  - (D) a referral for services, as necessary; and
  - (E) restorative practices.

## National Guidance

The U.S. Departments of Justice and Education (ED) issued joint guidance urging LEAs to create safe and supportive school climates and use exclusionary discipline only as a last resort. [Source: [School Climate and Student Discipline](#)]

Schools are encouraged to:

- Provide “meaningful instruction” if a student is removed from class.
- Reduce the number of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests by providing targeted supports and interventions with a proven track record of success; and
- Provide students with enhanced/increased access to mental health professionals.

These practices align with current educational research on student-centered approaches and personalized learning strategies for structuring the school experience for all students to become ready for college, a career, or the military.

In contrast, exclusionary practices – where students are removed from their classroom without meaningful instruction and interventions to address their needs – deny students instructional time and may lead to poor outcomes such as truancy, decreased social development, dropping out of school, involvement in the juvenile justice system, and delayed employment.

## Trauma-informed disciplinary practices an LEA can implement

1. Participate in professional development on restorative circles, integrated school mental health, and trauma-informed disciplinary interventions that advance positive educational outcomes for students experiencing homelessness.
2. Implement an integrated approach that connects behavioral and mental health services with academic instruction and learning, including discipline or classroom management plans. Support plans should include Restorative Practices.
3. Explore collaborative agreements with local mental health agencies to provide prevention, intervention, and behavioral health support services that address student discipline and well-being at school.
4. Develop local agreements with community organizations to address risk factors including mental health, physical health, truancy, attendance, and social service needs.
5. Collaborate between caregivers, advocates, educators, and mental health professionals as a student support team or Care Team to share information needed to develop personalized, multi-tiered behavior support plans and practices that address root causes of disruptive behavior for students experiencing homelessness.
6. Implement a schoolwide positive behavior approach that teaches appropriate behavior and ensures student safety in a supportive learning environment.
7. Ensure that the student has a positive relationship with at least one caring adult in the educational setting.

**TIP:** The McKinney-Vento liaison must serve as the connector when a disciplinary infraction takes place. This includes connecting with the mental health specialist, campus administrator, professional school counselor, teacher(s), caregiver, case manager, and others, to ensure open communication and supports are in place both on campus and in the home.

## Supporting the Mental Health Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness

Hope and resiliency are key factors that support students' social and emotional wellbeing. Building hope and developing resiliency in students requires school staff to understand the signs and symptoms of mental health concerns, understand trauma-informed practices, and develop healthy relationships with students experiencing homelessness.

[Recent Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) data](#) show that high school students experiencing homelessness were more likely to have feelings of sadness and hopelessness, and to resort to self-harm and attempted suicide more often than their peers who do not experience homelessness. In fact, students experiencing homelessness were three times more likely to attempt suicide compared to stably housed youth. Factors contributing to the mental and behavioral health of children and youths experiencing homelessness include the history of complex trauma, frequently changing situations and transitions, broken family relationships, inconsistent and inadequate access to mental health services, and the over-prescription of psychotropic medications.

Feelings of grief and loss may manifest in fear, loneliness, withdrawal, anger, an inability to self-regulate behaviors, and a lack of trust in adults. These responses, while normal for students who have experienced toxic stress and trauma, may be confusing to adults who have not been trained in working with students with a history of trauma and mental health challenges.

### LAW Related to Mental Health

- [TEC §38.036](#) and [TEC §38.351](#) are also policies related to the mental health, suicide intervention/prevention/postvention, and trauma and grief-informed requirements of school districts in the areas of training, education, procedure, and policy development.
- [TEC §21.054](#) includes continuing education requirements for a classroom teacher regarding how grief and trauma affect student learning and behavior and how evidence-based, grief-informed, and trauma-informed strategies support academic success of students affected by grief and trauma.





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**Mike Morath**

Commissioner of Education

### SPECIAL APPRECIATION FOR AGENCY LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT

**Jennifer Alexander**

Deputy Commissioner, Office of Special Populations and Student Supports

**Justin Porter**

Associate Commissioner & Chief Program Officer, Special Populations Programs, Reporting, and Student Supports

**Kristin McGuire**

Deputy Associate Commissioner of Special Populations Policy, Integration, and Technical Assistance

**Kelly Kravitz**

Director of Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs, Office of Special Populations and Student Supports

### DEVELOPMENT TEAM AND CONTENT CONTRIBUTORS

**Tammy Gendke**

Mental Health Program Coordinator, Student Supports Division

**Kelly Goodman**

Manager of Communications and Outreach, Office of Special Populations and Monitoring

**Dr. Gaye Lang**

Statewide Director of Restorative Practices, Student Supports Division

**Dr. Ann H. Lê**

Program Specialist, Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs

**David Mapps**

Technical Assistance Manager, Special Education Technical Assistance

**Jeremy McCaig**

Statewide Performance Special Populations Data Analyst, Special Populations Strategic Supports and Reporting

**Montgomery Meitler**

Deputy General Counsel for Public Information & Confidentiality Officer

**Stephanie Reis**

Compliance Analyst, Self-Reported Data Unit, Compliance and Investigations

**Mary Scott**

Student Discipline Specialist, Student Supports Division

**Dr. Desiree Viramontes**

McKinney-Vento State Coordinator, Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs

**Julie Wayman**

Mental/Behavioral Health Director, Student Supports Division

**Brittany Wright**

Director, Self-Reported Data Unit, Compliance and Investigations



## Research Based Resources

- Building Capacity for Restorative Discipline in Texas: An Evaluation of The Texas Schools Restorative Discipline Project ([2018 Report](#))
- Center on Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS): [Mental Health/Social-Emotional-Behavioral Well-Being](#)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network: [Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators](#)
- National Education Association: [Restorative Practices](#)
- National Education Association: [Trauma-Informed Schools](#)
- National Education Association: [Whole Student Education](#)
- National Center for Homeless Education: [Supporting the Education of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- National Center for Homeless Education: [Transporting Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments: [Discipline Compendium](#)
- National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments: [Trauma-Sensitive Schools Implementation Guide](#)
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: [The School Discipline Consensus Report](#)
- Office of Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance Center Collaborative: [Creating and Sustaining Discipline Policies that Support Students' Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Academic Well-being and Success](#)
- PEIMS Discipline Data: [Behaviors and Definitions](#)
- PEIMS Discipline Data: [Chart for Determining Mandatory and Discretionary DAEP Placements and Expulsions](#)
- PEIMS Discipline Data: [TSDS Web-Enabled Data Standards](#)
- PEIMS Discipline Data: [Questions and Answers](#)
- Restorative Practices Made Simple: [Video Series](#)
- Restorative Practices Families as Partners: [Video Series](#)
- Restorative Practices Seeing Circles: [Video Series](#)
- School House Connection: [Positive School Discipline Practices for Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- Supreme Court of Texas Children's Commission: [Trauma Informed Texas](#)
- Texas Education Agency: [Grief Informed & Trauma Informed Practices](#)
- Texas Education Agency: [Guidance Regarding Disciplinary Actions for Students Experiencing Homelessness](#) (TAA)
- Texas Education Agency: [Response to Intervention](#)
- Texas Education Agency: [Restorative Discipline Practices in Texas](#)
- Texas Education Agency: [TEA Student Discipline Webpage](#)
- Texas Education Agency: [TEHCY Discipline One-Pager](#)
- Texas Education Agency: [Texas Behavior Support Initiative \(TBSI\)](#)
- Texas Education Agency: [Texas School Mental Health](#)
- Texas Education Agency: [Texas School Mental Health Resources Database](#)
- Texas Gateway for Online Resources by TEA: [Restorative Discipline Practices in Texas](#)
- Texas Law Help: [Educating Homeless Youth](#)
- U.S. Department of Education: [School Climate and Discipline Laws and Guidance](#)
- U.S. Department of Education: [Texas Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations](#)
- U.S. Department of Education: [Guiding Principles for Creating Safe, Inclusive, Supportive, and Fair School Climates](#)



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