

HOMELESS EDUCATION SERVICES



san diego county office of
EDUCATION
FUTURE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES™



2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR IMPACT

Through their Homeless Education Services Program (HES), the San Diego County Office of Education's (SDCOE) Student Services and Programs Division provides support and resources to the 42 school districts in the county, Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS), and county-wide charter schools to implement the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Each district or school designates a local liaison who serves as the primary contact to interface with the SDCOE HES. SDCOE HES provides technical assistance (TA) and training to the homeless liaisons and other staff who are involved in working with children and youth experiencing homelessness. **This brief summarizes the impacts of SDCOE's work to support homeless education services in schools across San Diego County during the 2023-24 school year.**

504 Technical assistance (TA) contacts provided

District and charter school staff received the largest portion of TA consultations from SDCOE HES (60%). Other recipients included agency staff, families, students, and early education representatives.

The four topics most frequently asked about during TA contacts were:

37% **Resources**, including, housing and shelter, community collaboration, academic support, and training new liaisons.

20% **Eligibility**, including identification, reviewing McKinney-Vento and Homeless Education Services resources, and the Housing Questionnaire.

17% **Enrollment**, including maintaining enrollment in school of origin.

17% **Transportation**, including bus passes.

20 Trainings and webinars provided

During the 2023-24 school year, SDCOE provided the following professional development and trainings for district homeless liaisons and school staff:

Training	# of Trainings	# of Attendees
McKinney-Vento 101	5	266
Trauma, Hope, and Engagement	3	82
Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness	2	72
Identification of McKinney-Vento Students	1	62
Regional Meetings	6	58
Beyond the Mandates	1	51
Special Populations in Career and Technical Education	1	37
Homelessness and Higher Education	1	30

Total attendees: **658**

"[SDCOE HES] is always prompt to respond and provide feedback and guidance when I am stuck in a difficult situation."

-Homeless Liaison



Project Rest

Project Rest, which launched in Spring 2022 and concluded in June 2024, was a collaboration involving SDCOE, San Diego Youth Services, local school districts, and charter schools. Project REST aimed to provide temporary motel stays to eligible students and their families who were experiencing homelessness. Families were offered stays ranging from one to 15 nights, allowing them a brief period of respite and stability. By ensuring students had a stable place to stay, the project helped maintain school attendance and continuity in education. During their stay, school staff and project staff worked together to connect families with other community housing organizations, potentially offering longer-term solutions beyond temporary shelter. While nearly all youth and families needed resources for housing navigation, Project Rest also helped them secure other critical resources, including food, diapers, clothing, hygiene products, employment, and transportation.

In two years of Project Rest implementation:

55 districts and charters received assistance

2,143 temporary motel stay reservations were made for students and their families experiencing homelessness

\$687,627 spent in total on motel stays

California Homeless Education FAFSA/CADAA Challenge

John Burton Advocates for Youth, California Department of Education, and California Community College Chancellor's Office facilitate a collaborative effort to support students experiencing homelessness who were in their senior year in completing their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Applications (CADAA) applications in California to apply to receive aid to pursue college, university or vocational school.

The goal of the challenge program was to increase the number of homeless youth completing their FAFSA/CADAA applications. SDCOE assisted school districts by providing technical assistance, promotional materials, and resources.

The program resulted in an increase the number of districts participating each school year from:

4 to **13**
in 2022-23 in 2023-24

All districts reporting data were issued pre-paid cards for students who completed their FAFSA/CADAA applications for the purchase of school supplies and as an incentive to encourage completion of these forms.

Stuff the Bus

Each year, the SDCOE HES program partners with the San Diego County Credit Union (SDCCU®) to collect thousands of dollars in online donations to purchase much-needed pencils, pens, binders, crayons, backpacks, and more during the SDCCU Stuff the Bus campaign. The campaign, which runs through July, also partners with Jersey Mike's and local iHeartMedia radio stations for special appearances and live interviews.

Last year, **Stuff the Bus**:

raised **\$103,102** and provided **9,147** backpacks and **220,290** supplies
to **34** school districts and **31** charter schools countywide for their students experiencing homelessness.

"[SDCOE HES] is highly responsive, provides appropriate guidance, and is just really wonderful about making sure that we have the information we need in order to better support [students experiencing homelessness]."
- LEA Homeless Liaison