



# Students Experiencing Homelessness: Reporting and Guidance

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- Provide brief context about student homelessness.
- Summarize student rights and district responsibilities.
- Describe reporting processes for students experiencing homelessness.

# McKinney-Vento Act overview

- Originally passed in 1987.
- Amended in 2015 by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Establishes the definition of homeless used by public schools.
- Addresses barriers faced by homeless students, including:
  - School enrollment.
  - Regular attendance and transportation.
  - Educational stability.
  - School success.
  - Connection to services.
- Focuses on homeless students prekindergarten through high school, with provisions applying to higher education.

# Definition of homelessness

- Children or youth who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence, including:
  - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
  - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
  - Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
  - Living in places not meant for habitation (e.g., vehicles).
- Fixed, Regular, and Adequate
  - Fixed: Stationary, permanent, not subject to change.
  - Regular: Used on a predictable, routine, consistent basis; Consider the relative permanence of the living arrangement.
  - Adequate: Lawful and reasonably sufficient for meeting physical and psychological needs typically met in a home environment.

**Can the student go to the SAME PLACE (fixed) EVERY NIGHT (regular) to sleep in a SAFE and SUFFICIENT SPACE (adequate)?**

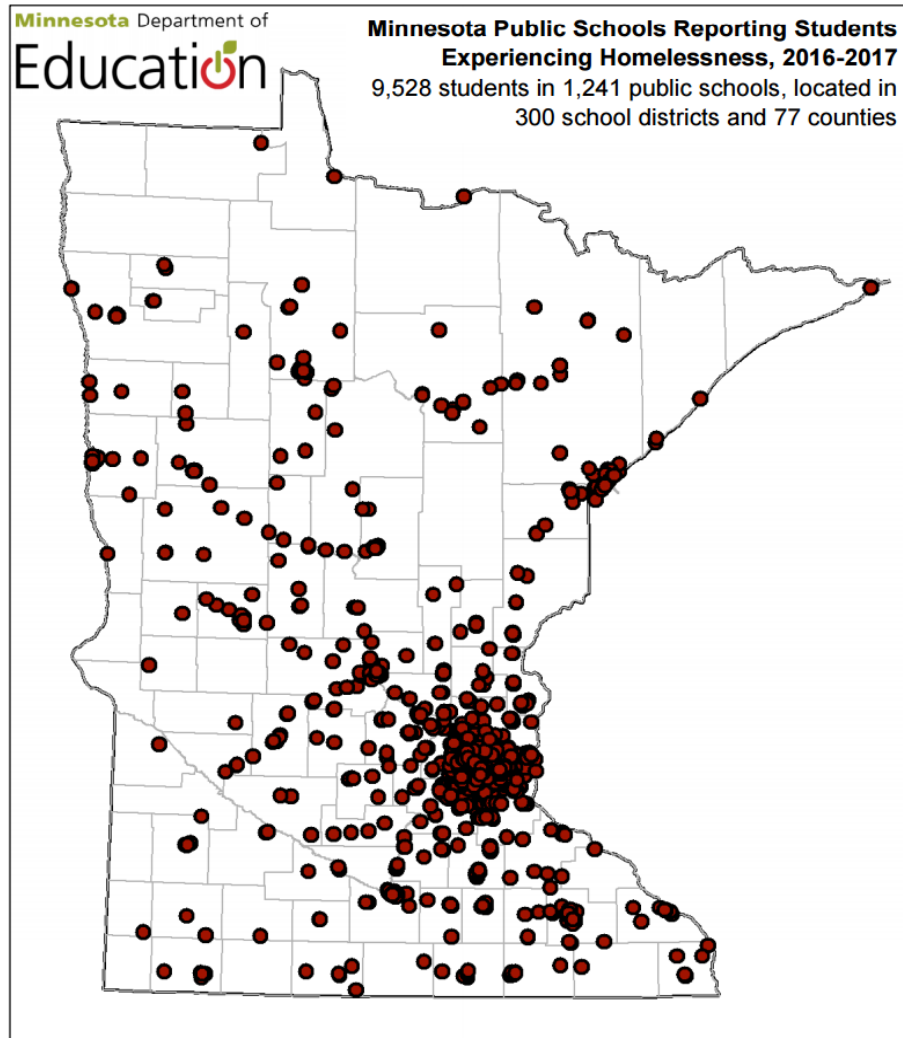
# McKinney-Vento Act student entitlements

- Maintaining school attendance and stability by:
  - Identifying homeless students quickly and reliably.
  - Assisting with school enrollment.
  - Supporting (based on student's best interests) ongoing enrollment at a school of origin or a local school.
  - Providing transportation to the school of origin or local school, including from a shelter or temporary location.
  - Maintaining enrollment at selected school throughout duration of homelessness and remainder of school year.
- Supporting school success by:
  - Ensuring that fees do not impede a homeless student's ability to participate in academic or extracurricular activities.
  - Awarding appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed.

# McKinney-Vento Act local responsibilities

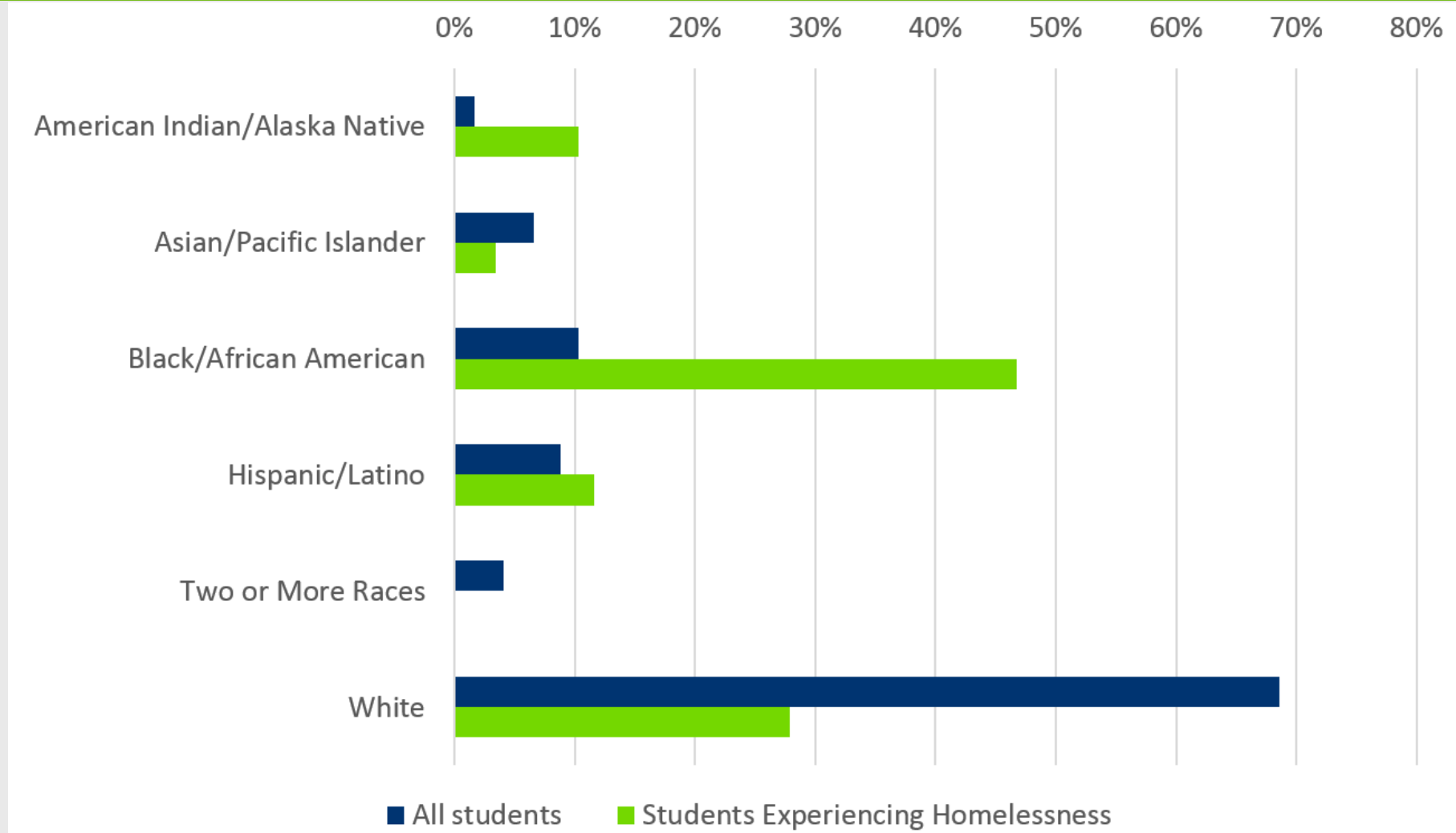
- Every school district must designate a McKinney-Vento homeless liaison.
- Responsibilities include:
  - Serving as the district's key homeless education contact.
  - Coordinating district-wide McKinney-Vento implementation.
  - Ensuring that homeless students are identified and enrolled.
  - Participating in specific professional development and technical assistance activities.
  - Helping to identify policy barriers to homeless students' enrollment, attendance and success.
  - Building awareness within the district and among its partners.
  - Linking school and community resources.
  - Ensure unaccompanied youth are informed of their status as independent students and obtain verification of that status.

# Wide Geographic Distribution



- 9,528 homeless students in:
  - 1,241 schools.
  - 300 districts.
  - 77 counties.
- Based October 1, 2016 enrollment census.

# Racial Distribution of Minnesota Students, by Homeless Status



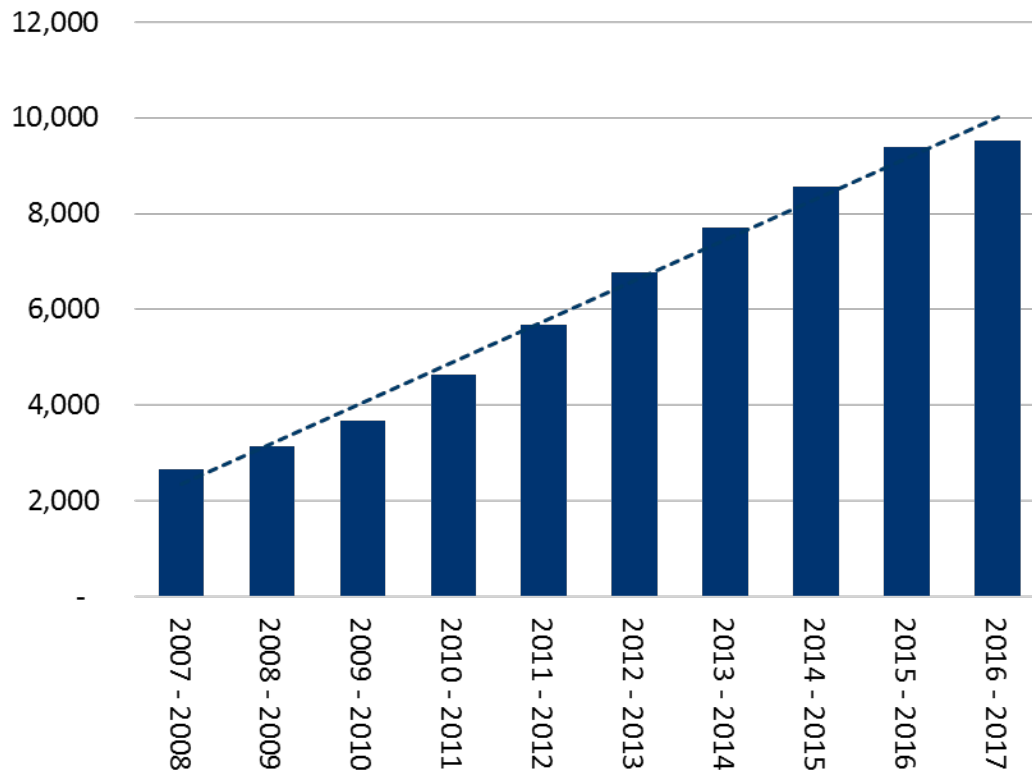


“We are not going to be able to tackle the issues of the achievement gap without addressing the issue of mobility in our student populations.”

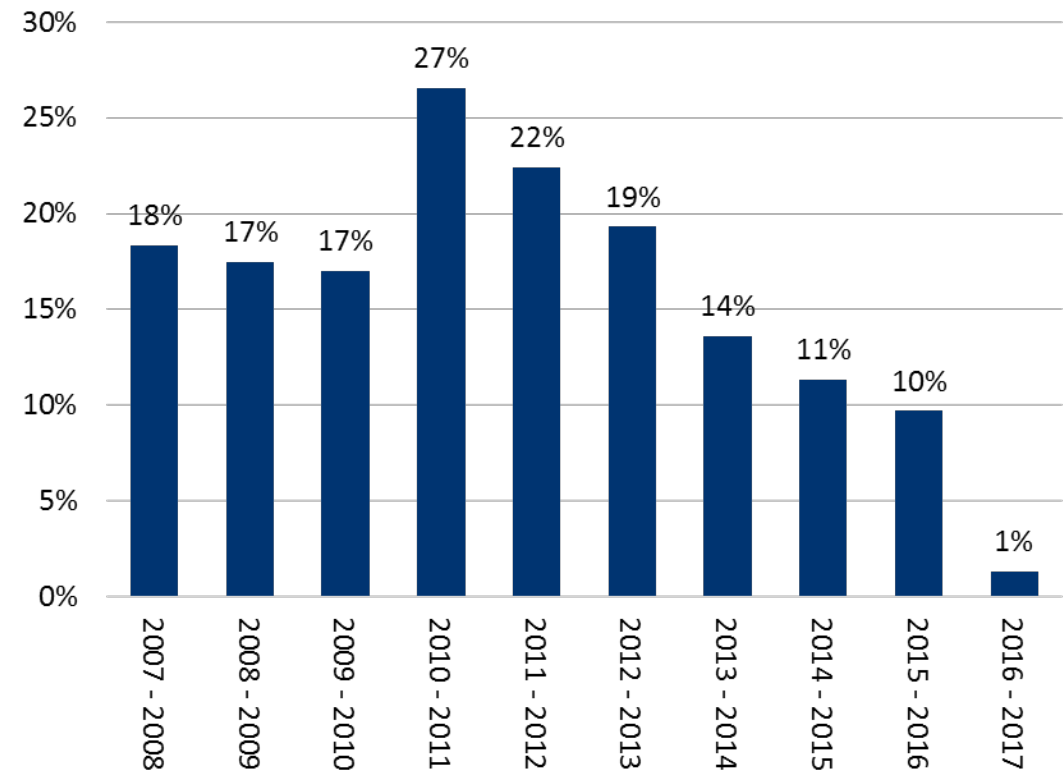
*Dr. Ann Masten, Regents Professor,  
Institute of Child Development, University of Minnesota*

# Growth in Students Facing Homelessness

## Students Identified as Homeless in October 1 Enrollment Census

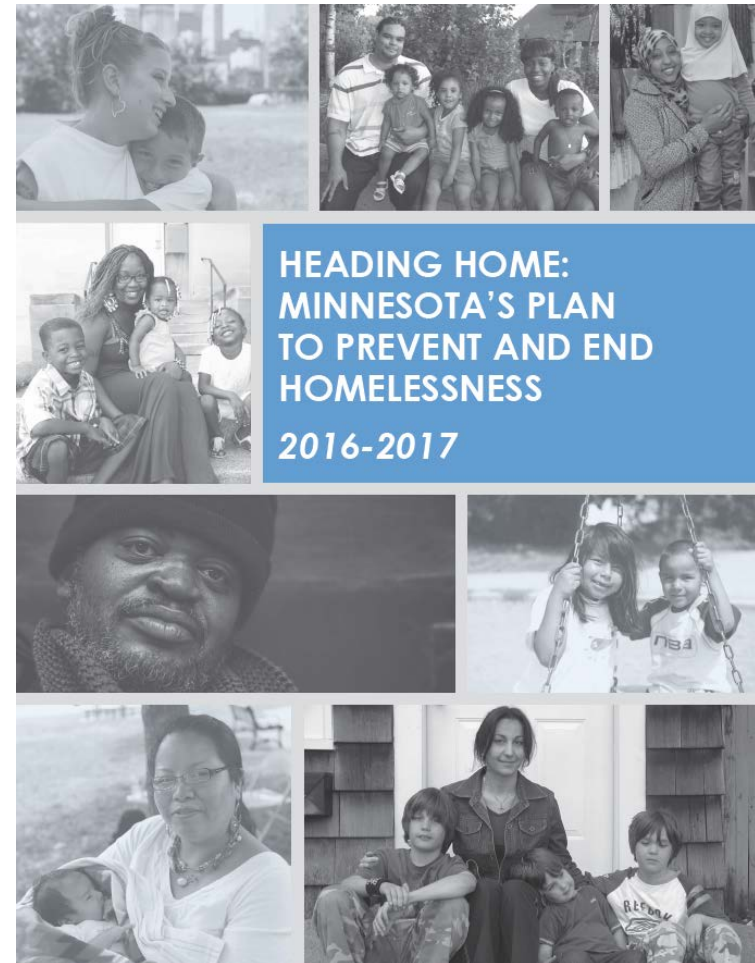


## Change Relative to Prior Year in Students Identified as Homeless



# The Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness

- Corrections.
- Education.
- Employment and Economic Development.
- Governor's Office.
- Health.
- Higher Education.
- Housing.
- Human Rights.
- Human Services.
- Metropolitan Council.
- Public Safety.
- Transportation.
- Veterans Affairs.



# Homeless Indicator

- Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS).
- Data Element in the Student File.
- Homeless Flag.
- [MARSS Data Elements.](#)
- Students who qualify under the federal Homeless definition any time during the current school year are to be reported as “Y” Homeless.

# Homelessness

- Each district or charter school has an individual appointed to serve as the homeless liaison.
- The liaison has the responsibility to designate a student as homeless.
- The liaison must provide written and signed documentation of students identified as homeless.

# Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.20, subdivision 2

- The state statute which has implications for children and youth who are homeless.
- Consistency between students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) and without IEPs.
- Clarifies transportation responsibilities.
- Aligns district of residence for non-shelter students.

# District of Residence

- The resident district, in most cases, is the district in which the parent/legal guardian is currently residing.
- The resident district will change each time the parent moves.
- More complicated family situations will be discussed later.

# Education Responsibilities

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is federal law that specifies that children and youth experiencing homelessness may:
  - Remain in his/her school of origin – the school the student was attending when the student became homeless or when the staff were first aware of the homeless situation.
  - Enroll in a school whose attendance area includes the place where the student is currently living.



# Education Responsibilities (2)

Minnesota Statutes allow all public school families, including those experiencing homelessness, to:

- Open enroll to a third district, or
- Transfer to a charter school.

# Complicated Family Situations

Resident District is defined as follows:

- A. Where the parent or legal guardian resides.
- B. Where the student resides at the time when any of these occurred:
  - Parental rights terminated by court order.
  - Parent/guardian is not living in Minnesota.
  - Parent or guardian with custody is in the Minnesota correctional system, prison or halfway house.
  - No district of residence can be determined.

# Complicated Family Situations (2)

- C. If a district of residence cannot be determined, where the student is living, or
- D. If district of residence is not agreed upon among involved districts, as determined by the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

# Complicated Family Situations (3)

- For a youth on his/her own (not under the direct control of his/her parent or legal guardian), having left home or was kicked out, the resident district remains where the parent or legal guardian resides even if the student is no longer living at home.

# Enrollment of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

- A student must be immediately enrolled and be attending school even if the resident district is not immediately determined or is in question.
- If no other district of residence can be determined, the school district of residence shall be the school district where the student currently resides.

- For families that are homeless and highly mobile, the resident district changes as the parent and students move to another district.
- Therefore, tracking family movement and exchanging with the new resident district will be necessary.

- Homeless Flag – When a student first becomes homeless during a given school year, a new enrollment record is required.
  - If the student starts the school year as homeless this is the only record needed.
  - If student starts school, and then became homeless, a new record would be created with the homeless flag set to Y.
  - There is no requirement to end the record when a student moves to permanent housing. It is a district decision if a new record would be created, it won't create an error, however it will generate warning message #387.

# MARSS for Homeless Students

- The student's homeless status needs to be re-evaluated for the following year.
- Report Economic Indicator as "Free" while reported as homeless.
- Eligible for Title I services.
- Generally, the resident district is where parent resides.



# State Aid Category (SAC) for Homeless

SAC is dependent on school of enrollment and where parent resides:

- 00 - if living in district of enrollment.
- 11 - if returning to independent school district of origin.
- 08 - if enrolled in charter school.
- 01 - if utilizing open enrollment to transfer elsewhere.

# MARSS 51 Homeless Federal Count

- Local MARSS Web Edit System (WES) report.
- List of all students flagged as homeless during the school year.
- Export to Excel and provide to the homeless liaison to indicate:
  - Nighttime residence on first night of homelessness .
  - Unaccompanied youth.
- Data used for state/federal reporting.
- Note: When exporting to Excel be sure to specify “Data Only.” The additional data columns do not appear on the initial report, but will be included as columns in the excel spreadsheet.

# Transporting Students Experiencing Homelessness - Responsibility

- The district that enrolls the homeless student will be responsible for the transportation.
- For charter schools, the district or charter school currently providing transportation for all other students must provide transportation.
- For cooperative and intermediate school districts, the resident district is responsible for providing transportation.
- Transportation funding – through the Special Education Aid Entitlement Formula.

# Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.20, subdivision 2(c)

- (c) The serving district is responsible for transporting a homeless pupil to and from the pupil's district of residence. The district may transport from a permanent home in another district but only through the end of the academic school year.
- When a pupil is enrolled in a charter school, the district or school that provides transportation for other pupils enrolled in the charter school is responsible for providing transportation.
- When a homeless student with or without an individualized education program attends a public school other than an independent or special school district or charter school, the district of residence is responsible for transportation.

# Transportation Provided By

## Transportation could be provided by:

- Rerouting regular school bus routes past shelters, motels and other places where students live.
- Using existing routes such as those set up to serve special education programs, desegregation programs or nonpublic schools.
- Contracting with the parent or guardian of the child.
- Issuing public transit passes.
- Using a taxi service.
- Contracting with other districts.
- Collaborating with other public agencies.

# Transportation Funding

- The cost of transporting students experiencing homelessness will be recorded in Finance Dimension 728, Special Transportation of Selected Students, on the year-end Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) report.
- This includes students with IEPs that do not require special transportation and students without an IEP. For students that have IEPs, that require special transportation accommodations, record the transportation expenditures in UFARS Finance Dimension 723, as Finance Dimension 723 prevails over 728.
- When a student is transported on a regular bus route, and the regular bus route does not have any special accommodations, the cost of the service should be recorded in Finance Dimension 720, Regular, on the year-end UFARS.

# Transportation MARSS Reporting

- Students experiencing homelessness will be reported in MARSS with Transportation Category 06 – Special.
  - This includes students with IEPs that do not require special transportation and students without an IEP. For students that have IEPs, that require special transportation accommodations, report Transportation Category 03 – Disabled. As Transportation Category 03 – Disabled prevails over Transportation Category 06 – Special.
  - When a student is transported on a regular bus route, and the regular bus route does not have any special accommodations, report the Transportation Category 01 – Regular.

# Transportation of Students Experiencing Homelessness

More information on transportation of students experiencing homelessness is found in the document:

- [Transportation of Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
  - From the [MDE home page](http://education.state.mn.us) (<http://education.state.mn.us>)
  - Districts, Schools and Educators
  - Business and Finance
  - School Finance
  - Transportation
  - By Student Type



# Thank you!

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