



An Overview of ARP-HCY State Plans



American Rescue Plan Homeless Children and Youth Program

This NCHE brief:

- Provides a summary of the American Rescue Plan Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) program state plans submitted as part of the application for funding by September 2021.
- Describes trends in how states are using the funds to address the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness who have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Features innovative practices for expanding the capacity of state and local educational agencies to address the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021,¹ which included an \$800 million reservation within the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund to address the specific and urgent needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness, in light of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds were to be used to address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of these children and youth.

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) awarded these funds to state educational agencies (SEAs) in two disbursements: ARP Homeless I (allocated in April of 2021) and ARP Homeless II (allocated in July 2021).

- ARP Homeless I funds were awarded in April 2021, using the same formula and requirements as the Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EHCY) grants. These funds were awarded quickly to SEAs in order for the funds to be spent immediately to address the urgent needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness and to enable SEAs and local educational agencies (LEAs) to increase their capacity by hiring staff, dedicating resources, and planning partnerships with community-based organizations.²
- The ARP Homeless II funds were awarded to SEAs in summer 2021. The SEAs, in turn, were required to distribute the funds to LEAs via a formula that used the LEA allocation under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the number of identified children and youth experiencing homelessness.³

For both ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II funds, states were required to allocate at least 75% of the funding to LEAs via subgrants. States were allowed to utilize up to 25% of the funding from each installment for state-level activities to support training, technical assistance, capacity-building, and engagement at the state and LEA levels. ARP-HCY funds must be obligated by September 30, 2024.

ED required each SEA to submit an application with a state plan for the ARP-HCY funds. The ARP-HCY state application required the plans to describe how states would:

¹ View the full statute of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: <https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr1319/BILLS-117hr1319enr.pdf>.

² SEAs had the option to run a new competition, and several were already recompeting their Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) grants when ARP Homeless I funds were made available. These SEAs were allowed to fold these funds into their existing competitions.

³ Cardona, M.A., Dear Colleague Letter, April 23, 2021: <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/04/ARP-Homeless-DCL-4.23.pdf>.

- Grant ARP Homeless I funds to LEAs with the greatest concentrations of students experiencing homelessness.
- Build the capacity of the SEA and LEAs to increase services for children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Supplement and not replace ESSER-funded programs.
- Provide wraparound services for children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Identify and connect students in historically underserved populations who experience homelessness to educationally related supports and wraparound services.
- Collaborate and contract with community-based organizations and encourage their LEAs to do so.⁴

The ARP-HCY funds provided states the opportunity to expand the range of their services and supports to LEAs that had not previously received subgrants, address barriers faced by children and youth experiencing homelessness, and target services to historically underserved populations.

Purpose of this Brief

This brief is a review of the ARP-HCY state plans from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.⁵ The review is not intended to be evaluative, but instead represents a summary of the content of the plans. The plans, in many cases, are somewhat general, representing states' early efforts to think through how to meet the requirements of the ARP-HCY program. (There are two additional NCHE briefs planned that will go into more detail about wraparound services and underserved populations.) For many SEAs, significant outreach to programs and organizations to address the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness is a new level of support and service provision, and states are determining the best ways to address these new requirements. As SEAs and LEAs build their capacity to serve children and youth experiencing homelessness over the next year, the ARP-HCY plans will evolve to reflect more complete implementation.

The summary describes overall trends among all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico with illustrative examples from the plans. The summary also includes innovative practices, which feature some of the more unique approaches to expanding SEA and LEA capacity, providing wraparound services, and serving children and youth and their families experiencing homelessness from historically underserved populations.

We hope that state coordinators for EHCY programs, local homeless liaisons,⁶ and homeless services providers may be inspired to expand their programs and services from reading this report.

Educating Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in the Time of COVID-19

Children and youth experiencing homelessness face many challenges that interfere with their enrollment, attendance, and success in school. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these challenges. Typically, many children and youth experiencing homelessness are identified while attending school or upon enrollment in a new school; consequently, the closure of schools during the pandemic likely impacted the 7.7% decrease in the number of students identified as homeless enrolled in public schools from the 2018-2019 school year to the 2019-2020 school year.⁷ As classes went online, many of these children and youth did not have the requisite stable housing, technology, or internet connection to enable them to participate in remote learning. Although many children suffered

⁴ For more information on the ARP-HCY program, view the ED ARP-HCY program web page: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/american-rescue-plan/american-rescue-plan-elementary-secondary-school-emergency-relief-homeless-children-youth-arp-hcy/>. Also, view the ARP-HCY resources page of the National Center for Homeless Education: <https://nche.ed.gov/legislation/arp/>.

⁵ View the ED web page with links to all approved state ARP-HCY plans: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/american-rescue-plan/american-rescue-plan-elementary-secondary-school-emergency-relief-homeless-children-youth-arp-hcy/arp-hcy-state-plans/>.

⁶ Local homeless liaisons will also be referred to interchangeably as "homeless liaisons" and "liaisons" throughout this brief.

⁷ NCHE National Aggregated Data: <https://profiles.nche.seiservices.com/ConsolidatedStateProfile.aspx>.

emotionally and socially during the pandemic, which forced schools to rely on virtual learning to ensure the health and safety of students and educators, children and youth experiencing homelessness likely faced increased challenges due to the instability of their housing circumstances, along with poverty, hunger, and health needs. Children and youth who depended on the food, clothing, and other supports that schools provide on a regular basis faced additional challenges accessing them when schools were offering remote instruction.

The ARP-HCY funds offer unprecedented opportunities for SEAs and LEAs to expand their capacity to serve children and youth experiencing homelessness. While most EHCY programs have historically focused on the educational needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness, with the ARP-HCY funds, SEAs and LEAs have been able to coordinate with other agencies and organizations to become part of a broad system of support to address the myriad needs of these children and youth, including services for students in historically underserved populations. Moreover, SEAs have been able to provide support and subgrants to LEAs that have under-identified children experiencing homelessness or not previously had subgrants in order to enable these LEAs to build their EHCY programs.

Using ARP-HCY Funds to Build State and Local EHCY Program Capacity

Most state plans describe using ARP-HCY state-level activity funds to hire additional staff to provide training and technical assistance to LEAs (especially to LEAs that had not previously received EHCY subgrants), manage the ARP-HCY LEA subgrants, monitor LEA subgrantees, create more robust data systems, and expand resource networks.

Two states, New York and California, are expanding state capacity by funding the development of state technical assistance centers. New York has developed an application to create a Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (p. 1).⁸ California will award technical assistance center contracts to organizations to build the capacity of its County Offices of Education (COEs) to support LEAs in serving children and youth experiencing homelessness (p. 3).

To increase SEA capacity for training and technical assistance related to serving children and youth experiencing homelessness, Washington and Ohio plan to fund community-based organizations to support LEAs across the states. Washington proposes to hire a community-based organization that has worked with the SEA and LEAs in the past to implement the supports that the SEA has put into place to help LEAs plan for and provide wraparound services to children and youth experiencing homelessness (p. 3). The Ohio Department of Education will contract with a community-based organization to provide professional development to subgrantees and LEA homeless liaisons (p. 1).

Several states, such as California, Missouri, New Mexico, Texas, and Wisconsin, are contracting with their SEA's regional education service centers to provide training, technical assistance, and connections to resources for local homeless liaisons. California, for example, awarded ARP Homeless I funds to 47 COEs, which support LEAs, including charter schools, by "performing tasks that can be

Following is a summary of capacity-building strategies proposed by states in the ARP-HCY state plans:

- Hire additional staff.
- Utilize regional educational service centers to work with LEA homeless liaisons.
- Improve data systems to identify areas of greatest need and conduct systems mapping for state and local resources to target funds and services more efficiently.
- Leverage the experience of seasoned homeless liaisons in training new homeless liaisons.
- Provide a variety of resources to LEAs, including extensive training and technical assistance, online training modules, and resource manuals, with a special emphasis on bringing new subgrantees up to speed.
- Conduct statewide comprehensive needs assessments.
- Establish homeless education advisory boards comprised of local liaisons, service providers, and other stakeholders for needs assessment, planning, and identifying partners.

⁸ Page numbers, unless otherwise noted, reference ARP-HCY state plans retrieved and reviewed in April 2022. Because some ARP-HCY state plans may undergo revision, page numbers referencing sections of the state plans included in this brief may vary in the future.

done more efficiently and economically at the county level” (p. 6).

The EHCY programs in Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania have long implemented a system of providing regional subgrants to lead LEAs in which the homeless liaisons provide training and technical assistance to LEAs in their regions. The Illinois state plan states that the SEA “recognized the current existing subgrantee structure to be the most effective and efficient way to meet the immediate needs as they have ready access to all districts throughout the state” (p. 8). Michigan’s Regional Grant Coordinators Network works with liaisons in their areas to provide a variety of supports, including services specific to ARP-HCY funding such as meeting with stakeholders to determine the impact of COVID-19 on students experiencing homelessness (p. 3). New Jersey’s five Regional Grantees meet monthly to analyze program outcome data and form data teams in each region to share best practices on evidence-based interventions (p. 13).



States such as Ohio, North Carolina, and Virginia are leveraging the experience of veteran homeless liaisons to share best practices in trainings and support for newer liaisons. Ohio conducted a training for liaisons specific to identification, retention, and wraparound services, resulting in the creation of a community of practice of liaisons who will provide on-going peer-to-peer support and collaboration with other liaisons (p. 1). North Carolina will create a mentor-mentee program for homeless liaisons. The program will connect experienced homeless liaisons with new homeless liaisons. The mentor-mentee program will provide a stipend to the mentors for the time spent working with their mentees (p. 12).

Several states are broadening their perspectives on the needs of and services for children and youth experiencing homelessness with homeless education advisory boards. State plans from Georgia, Idaho, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin describe using homeless education advisory boards comprised of local liaisons, service providers, and other stakeholders for needs assessment, planning, and identifying partners. State plans from South Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin mention including the voices of youth and families with lived experience of homelessness on their advisory boards and providing stipends to the youth and families to ensure equity of participation.

The ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II funds are providing a foundation for partnerships and good practices that will hopefully last far beyond the ARP-HCY program. All state plans describe new partnerships with state and local organizations and agencies that will likely continue after the ARP-HCY funds are expended. Many states are providing training to their SEA and LEAs on topics such as cultural competency, trauma, understanding housing and service provider systems in their state, and data analysis, which will empower them to become strong providers of targeted and integrated services for vulnerable students. Georgia is utilizing funds to “modernize data systems and communication protocols to identify and track the academic progress, participation, and engagement of students experiencing homelessness” (p. 5). New Jersey is developing a five-year statewide homeless strategic plan (p. 11). The Washington state plan specifically mentions an emphasis on “improving coordination and initiating systemic change that will be sustained beyond the ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II grant period” (p. 4). North Carolina is addressing “pandemic and future disaster readiness” by developing a disaster plan manual for homeless liaisons, informed by experiences with hurricanes in the eastern part of the state and the pandemic, to ensure that LEAs are prepared to serve the critical needs of students experiencing homelessness during a time of any emergency (p. 11).

Innovative Practices – Building SEA and LEA Capacity

- California will allocate ARP Homeless I funds through a competitive process to select LEAs that are developing innovative practices that can be studied, adapted, and shared in statewide trainings (p. 3).
- Delaware is providing user-friendly tools for identification, such as a script for registrars, posts for social media and websites, and videos (p. 3).
- Missouri is exploring developing software that will allow LEAs to accurately determine families' homeless status through a decision-tree-based process (p. 2).
- Montana is contracting with the Montana State University College of Education and the Center for Research in Rural Education to connect LEAs to graduate students who can assist them with data analysis, research, and program development (p. 12).
- New Jersey is purchasing a State Homeless Case Management System to assist LEA liaisons with tracking and monitoring children and youth experiencing homelessness that will enable the use of a variety of data sets (p. 11).

Providing Wraparound Services for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Following is a summary of strategies for providing wraparound services proposed by states in the ARP-HCY state plans:

- Increase SEA and LEA participation on advisory boards, coalitions, and councils.
- Convene agencies and providers or create communities of practice that focus on issues related to children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Expand or explore how the Full-Service Community Schools model can efficiently provide wraparound services for children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Conduct awareness campaigns to familiarize families and organizations with educational and other services available to children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Include guest speakers from agencies and service providers in LEA trainings to increase awareness of support services.
- Develop resource directories or online portals to enable LEAs to access information on resources for children and families experiencing homelessness.
- Hire community navigators to develop partnerships with agencies and community-based organizations and to help LEAs connect with organizations to provide wraparound services to children and youth experiencing homelessness.

The application for ARP-HCY funds requires SEAs and LEAs to provide wraparound services for children and youth experiencing homelessness. The ARP-HCY statute does not define wraparound services, but these are generally considered to be services that provide comprehensive supports, such as food, housing, physical and mental health services, and educational services. The state plans describe the proposed efforts of SEAs and LEAs to collaborate and contract with organizations to become part of a comprehensive system of support for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

One of the conditions for receiving ARP-HCY funds is that these funds are to be used to supplement, not replace ESSER funds. The wraparound activities in the ARP-HCY state plans include both those that uniquely target the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness and those that enhance the activities in the state's ESSER plan to ensure that these activities will be expanded to meet the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Therefore, many of the activities included in the ARP-HCY state plans are part of the ESSER state plans and demonstrate an

integration with existing and broader wraparound services while targeting the unique needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Most state coordinators and local homeless liaisons prior to the ARP-HCY funding have regularly participated on councils and advisory boards, but the state plans indicate that the additional funding has allowed SEAs and LEAs to increase their staff and capacity to be involved with more statewide and local organizations and agencies. This heightened involvement will enable SEAs and LEAs to become familiar with more resources as well as familiarize external agencies and organizations with the needs of and educational supports available to children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Several of the plans note that their state coordinators participate regularly on their state governor’s council on homelessness, state COVID-19 leadership meetings, Balance of State meetings, and meetings with other state agencies, such as early childhood offices and child welfare departments. Some of the state plans describe convening agencies and organizations to discuss common issues and collaborative approaches. Arkansas formed an ARP homeless committee of stakeholders to create a multi-tiered rapid response system to identify and provide wraparound services (p. 5). New Mexico will develop communities of practice on homelessness in the areas of early childhood and transition to post-secondary education that bring together many stakeholders for awareness and coordination of services and support (p. 8). Oklahoma plans to create a Wraparound Service Council with representatives from other departments, including counseling, Special Education, and 21st Century teams, to provide LEAs the opportunity to connect students and families experiencing homelessness directly to community resources (p. 10). The Oklahoma State Department of Education will also collaborate with LEAs and community service agencies to create a Wraparound Services Delivery Model that involves leadership, organizational support, and accountability from all partners (p. 10).

Approximately 10 state plans describe ways in which the SEAs, using both ESSER funds and ARP-HCY funds, will support the expansion of community schools, which are based on the model of Full-Service Community Schools from Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Full-Service Community Schools model⁹ promotes school collaboration with outside organizations for services, which may include family and community engagement, expanded learning time opportunities, health and dental care, mental health support, and childcare. The Idaho State Department of Education collaborated with the United Way to create the Idaho Community Schools Coalition¹⁰ and awarded the coalition a subgrant, which it will use to award minigrants¹¹ to LEAs to help them establish community schools and resource centers (p. 16). In Iowa, LEAs are encouraged to create more community schools by contracting with community-based organizations and through public and private partnerships (p. 4). In New Mexico, ARP-HCY funds will be used to implement Community School Hubs with a community navigator to work in coordination with the community school coordinator. The hub will be a referral point for the homeless and migrant education programs (p. 13).

A critical aspect for providing wraparound services is reaching out to those who need the services. Several state plans, like those for Connecticut, Ohio, Louisiana, and Vermont, propose to conduct statewide public awareness campaigns. The Connecticut plan describes a grassroots marketing campaign scheduled to launch in summer and early fall 2021. Connecticut’s ARP-HCY funds will facilitate tailored outreach to students and families experiencing homelessness to increase awareness of services available to eligible students (p. 2). The Ohio Department of Education proposes to conduct a statewide media campaign to increase awareness of the definition of homelessness and the availability of targeted supports in schools (p. 5). Louisiana is contracting with Louisiana Public Broadcasting to provide platforms to connect with all families in strategic ways, noting that many families are unaware of local liaisons in the school districts (p. 4).

Most state plans propose to use ARP-HCY funds to build the capacity of LEAs to provide wraparound services for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Many states are developing resource directories or online portals for liaisons to quickly access resources, such as housing, food, and healthcare. ARP-HCY state plans describe many types of liaison trainings, both virtual and on-site, that

⁹ For more information of the Full-Service Community Schools model, visit <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/school-choice-improvement-programs/full-service-community-schools-program-fscs/>.

¹⁰ For more information on the Idaho Community Schools Coalition, visit <https://idahocoalitionforcommunitieschools.org>.

¹¹ Several state plans describe the use of minigrants as a mechanism to award small amounts of funding to encourage innovative practices or to fund small programs that might not qualify for a larger grant but need support. For example, in addition to Idaho’s use of minigrants described above, Colorado will award minigrants to community-based organizations well-positioned to serve students in historically underserved populations (p. 6); New Mexico will award minigrants as part of strategic outreach to incentivize LEAs that under identify students experiencing homelessness (p. 4); and Virginia will provide minigrants to non-subgranted LEAs for staffing to link families experiencing homelessness to services and for contracting with community-based organizations (p. 6). Minigrants are a way to spread the reach of the ARP-HCY funds.

featured guests from state agencies and community-based organizations. Trainings in some cases included sessions to help liaisons effectively establish partnerships with community-based organizations, including regional trainings in Louisiana for liaisons and other staff on collective impact and on how to bring stakeholders to the table and establish common goals (p. 4). Many state ARP-HCY subgrant applications require LEAs to show evidence of partnerships or contracting with community-based organizations for wraparound services. Some plans mention that community partnerships will become part of the LEA monitoring protocol.

Fifteen ARP-HCY state plans describe hiring community navigators to enable SEAs to identify and develop partnerships with agencies and community-based organizations and to help LEAs connect with organizations to provide wraparound services to children and youth experiencing homelessness. In several other states, such as Michigan, New Jersey, and New Mexico, SEAs are contracting with regional educational service centers to support LEAs in providing wraparound services. The District of Columbia plans to award competitive grants directly to community-based organizations to provide wraparound services. Grant recipients in the District of Columbia are expected to work with LEAs to ensure a coordinated provision of services (p. 3).

Table 1 provides a list of the types of programs, associations, organizations, and agencies mentioned in the state plans with which SEAs and LEAs propose to partner for wraparound services.

Table 1. Types of Programs, Associations, Organizations, and Agencies Mentioned in the ARP-HCY State Plans

Programs	Boards, Coalitions, Associations, and Councils	Agencies and Organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Century Community Learning Centers • Adult education programs • Early childhood programs • Head Start • Career and technical education programs • Migrant education programs • Student dropout and re-engagement programs • Title I preschool • Title III state-level programs • Youth Homelessness Demonstration Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After-school networks • Community action coalitions • Full-Service Community Schools • Governor’s councils on homelessness • Health advisory councils • Housing coalitions • School counselor associations • State COVID-19 response councils • State Interagency Council on Homelessness • Tribal associations • Youth advisory boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 211 information and referral • 4-H Clubs • Boys & Girls Clubs • Community colleges • Departments of community affairs • Departments of corrections, juvenile justice • Departments of social services and child welfare • Departments of work force services • Faith-based organizations • Food banks • Homeless shelters • HUD Continuum of Care or Balance of State • Housing agencies and authorities • Immigrant and refugee organizations • Institutions of higher education • Latinx service agencies • Mental health organizations • Parent Information Centers • Poverty law centers • Public libraries • Regional educational service centers • State public broadcasting companies • United Way organizations • YMCAs and YWCAs

Innovative Practices – Providing Wraparound Services

- The Alabama SEA works with 211 Connects, a United Way free information and referral service (p. 10). When families experiencing homelessness who have school-aged children call 2-1-1, 211 Connects links them to LEA services as well as other local resources for food programs, shelter and housing, disaster relief, and education and employment opportunities.
- Delaware conducted 2021 summer programs in hotel-based learning spaces (p. 2).
- Florida’s Families and Youths Making Victorious Progress database provides one-stop services to help children and youth and families experiencing homelessness find local resources (p. 19).
- Hawaii conducts community outreach in converted school buses and vans. The mobile outreach program is building relationships with families and providers in the transition back to school. During outreach, parents meet with school officials and complete paperwork for enrollment while children play sports, read books, and make art with partnering agencies and volunteers (p. 2).
- Massachusetts’s subgrantees are required to maintain homeless education service coordinating committees, which include an array of community-based organizations, district staff, and surrounding liaisons (p. 2).
- The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction developed a systemwide protocol in the summer of 2021 to ensure that children and youth, including those experiencing homelessness and their families could access nutritional food, P-EBT cards, school supplies, connectivity devices, and community services. North Carolina also developed a centralized identification and referral protocol for housing agencies and liaisons (p. 5).

Meeting the Needs of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in Historically Underserved Populations

While homelessness under any circumstances has devastating impacts on children and youth and their families, there are many subpopulations experiencing homelessness that are not only disproportionately impacted by homelessness but that have also been historically underserved by schools and service providers.

A key area of focus for ARP-HCY funds is to ensure that subpopulations of historically underserved children and youth receive targeted services. Subpopulations mentioned in the application for ARP-HCY funds include rural, Tribal, students of color, children with disabilities, English learners, LGBTQ+, and pregnant, parenting, or caregiving. States were required to explain in their state plans how they would ensure that these vulnerable groups are served, and specifically how the SEA and LEAs would contract with community-based organizations that serve these populations.

Most ARP-HCY state plans indicate that services will target all students experiencing homelessness, including in historically underserved populations. Many of the state plans describe the initial steps that the SEA has taken to identify and contract with community-based organizations that serve historically underserved populations. For example, the Arkansas state plan describes awarding subgrants to regional service cooperatives that partner with community-based organizations that will “assist in identifying and serving students in historically underserved populations” (p. 7). Ohio proposes to contract with a homeless service provider to create a community of practice for statewide supports that will provide training to homeless liaisons to increase awareness of and support for serving students in historically underserved populations (p. 7).

Almost half of the state plans mention specific subpopulations of historically underserved children and youth experiencing homelessness and the community-based organizations that will deliver services to these subpopulations. However, states that did not mention serving specific subpopulations may intend to serve some of the subpopulations as part of their contracts with community-based organizations. For example, some may contract with youth agencies to provide services; this could include services for pregnant or parenting youth or LGBTQ+ youth, but the state plans did not specify if that was the case.

The most frequently mentioned subpopulation of historically underserved children and youth experiencing homelessness is Tribal populations. For example, Alaska will provide technical assistance

and training to homeless liaisons receiving subgrants with a focus on Alaska Native students (p.5). Maine plans to contract with a Tribal health community-based organization to provide specific outreach, identification, wraparound services, and service provision to Native American students experiencing homelessness (p. 4). Montana’s Office of Public Instruction (OPI) will partner with OPI’s Tribal Relations and Resiliency Unit and with Title III, which also serves Native students. The Tribal Relations and Resiliency Unit will provide training and technical assistance to the state coordinator and LEA homeless liaisons upon request (p. 8). The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) is requiring that a portion of an LEA’s subgrant funds partnerships with community-based organizations, in particular to support rural and Tribal populations. The NDDPI will allow local leaders to develop these partnerships for the best interest of their specific student populations and will include assurances in both ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II subgrant applications that the LEA will identify and support historically underserved populations (p. 10).

Following is a summary of strategies for meeting the needs of students experiencing homelessness in historically underserved populations proposed by states in the ARP-HCY state plans:

- Include representatives from underserved populations and/or community-based organizations that serve underserved populations in the process to develop and revise strategic plans for serving children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Include in the state’s contracts with or requests for applications for subgrants to community-based organizations (from the state set-aside) a requirement that the CBO must describe its experience in serving students experiencing homelessness in historically underserved populations.
- Provide awareness training to LEAs that focuses on specific underserved populations in their region.
- Provide extra points in subgrant applications for contracting with community-based organizations.
- Collaborate with SEA programs that address student equity and diversity or serve specific groups of historically underserved populations.
- Award contracts to local community-based organizations so that they may develop partnerships to serve specific underserved student populations in their region.
- Share data with LEAs and community-based organizations on the prevalence of homelessness among specific underserved populations.

The next most frequently mentioned subpopulation is rural communities. State plans addressing the needs of students experiencing homelessness in rural communities focus on disseminating ARP-HCY funds to LEAs that have not historically identified a number of students experiencing homelessness large enough to qualify for a subgrant under the EHCY program. For example, the Idaho state plan explains that in previous EHCY subgrant cycles, there were no small, rural LEAs that received funds, yet over 7,600 students experiencing homelessness were identified in these LEAs. ARP Homeless I and Homeless II funds have provided subgrants in these locales and supported training and technical assistance to the LEAs receiving subgrants for the first time (p. 15). Some states will contract with community-based organizations to concentrate services in rural areas, such as Hawaii, which will contract for services in rural communities on the islands where families stay together in makeshift shelters and overcrowded houses (p. 5).

For pregnant, parenting, and caregiving youth experiencing homelessness, Delaware plans to communicate with the Delaware Adolescent Program, Inc., which provides a standards-based education for pregnant and parenting teens with unique outreach, mentoring, and supportive services (p. 7). Idaho awarded an ARP Homeless I grant to a newly created charter school opening in the fall of 2021 which supports pregnant and parenting teens and their children. Homeless liaisons throughout the region were notified of this opportunity for pregnant and parenting teens and referred students for enrollment throughout the summer of 2021 (p. 15).

For LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness, several state plans feature partnerships with programs and organizations that serve these youth. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (DESE) Educational Stability Team has a partnership with the Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ+ students, which is at the forefront of anti-bullying, suicide prevention, and creating a welcome school climate (p. 7). The Montana state coordinator will collaborate with the Montana Continuum of Care’s Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program to connect LEAs to professional development and technical assistance regarding the needs of LGBTQ+ youth (p. 16).

NDDPI plans to work with YouthWorks as a community partner, which provides outreach and services to historically underserved populations, including rural, LGBTQ+, and teen parents (p. 8).

Several state plans proposed to serve subpopulations that were not mentioned in the application. State plans including these subpopulations describe coordinating with the programs and organizations that serve these groups. For example, Maine will contract with a community-based organization to serve immigrant communities throughout the state (p. 3) and will contract with an immigrant-focused mental health provider (p. 5). Two states that propose to partner with organizations that serve Latinx students are Virginia (Virginia Hispanic Foundation) (p. 6) and Idaho (Commission on Spanish Affairs) (p. 16). Oregon proposes to serve communities in 20 LEAs that were severely impacted by wildfires in 2020. These were LEAs that for the most part did not have subgrants. The ARP-HCY funds will support increased training for the local liaisons in the identification and re-engagement of youth, trauma-informed practices, and establishing community partnerships and regional consortia (p. 4).

Other Subpopulations Mentioned in the State Plans

- Migrant
- Latinx
- Early childhood
- Immigrant, refugee
- Military
- Wildfire impacted

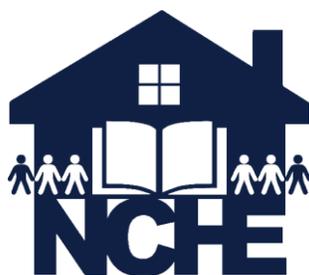
The ARP-HCY application required states to explain how they would encourage LEAs to award contracts to community-based organizations to help identify and support historically underserved populations. Most states plan to offer training and technical assistance on familiarizing liaisons with community-based organizations and ways to develop partnerships. Several states, such as Colorado (p. 6) and Connecticut (p. 9), offer points for contracting with community-based organizations in LEA subgrant applications. Some states, including those with community navigators, propose to help LEAs identify community-based organizations with which to partner.

Innovative Practices – Serving Underserved Populations

- Idaho will contract with regional housing coalitions from the state’s Continuum of Care programs to conduct community resource fairs to encourage more liaisons to become members of these coalitions. Agencies and programs that serve historically underserved populations will be included to create a network of local support for students. LEAs will be encouraged to contract with these agencies and programs (p. 15).
- Massachusetts will engage with local liaisons and the DESE’s Educational Stability Committee to review and share data that indicates that 80% of Massachusetts children and youth experiencing homelessness are Black or Latinx. With a greater awareness of the incidence of homelessness among these two subpopulations of students, LEAs will be encouraged to contract with community-based organizations that are culturally and racially responsive (p. 7).
- The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) collaborates on planning with both the Minnesota Housing and Minnesota Department of Human Services. These two organizations fund several community-based organizations to prevent and end homelessness and host annual meetings with their grant administrators. These meetings provide an opportunity for a more intentional connection between MDE and these programs (p. 8).
- North Carolina proposes to conduct work sessions with liaisons where they are required to bring one community-based organization partner serving historically underserved populations with them. Those who attend the workshop can apply for a minigrant to support an agreed upon project (p. 4).
- In Oklahoma, an LEA needs assessment requires liaisons to include the number of children and youth experiencing homelessness that are part of an underserved group of students and include identified resources available to them. Liaisons must research the community-based organizations in their community (p. 13).

Conclusion

The ARP-HCY state plans offer a wide range of approaches to utilizing ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II funds. While each state's plan is unique, based on the size of the state and level of funding, the plans together provide a wealth of ideas that can be applied in many contexts for serving children and youth experiencing homelessness, especially those in historically underserved populations. While the focus of the plans is to provide support for students experiencing homelessness who were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, they include new approaches that we encourage states to consider to expand EHCY services and establish a broad array of partnerships that will impact state and LEA EHCY programs for years to come.



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