



Federal Policy Update on Child & Youth Homelessness

April 29, 2026



General Housekeeping



This webinar will last one hour



Please type questions into the Q&A box



Session is being recorded



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SchoolHouse Connection



SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness, from prenatal to postsecondary, through strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with youth, families, schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, and service providers.

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About National Network for Youth

**NN4Y is on a mission to
transform systems so that no
young person in America
experiences homelessness.**

NN4Y works with young leaders and youth service providers from across the country to prevent and end youth, young adult, and young parent family homelessness and human trafficking. Together, we envision a future in which all young people have a safe place to call home with endless opportunities to achieve their fullest potential.



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Today's Agenda

- **Federal Funding**
 - FY2027 Budget Process: Timeline and What to Expect
- **Federal Agency Action and Litigation Update**
- **Other Legislation**
- **How to stay engaged**



FY2027 Budget Process: Timeline and What to Expect

What is the Outlook for FY2027 Federal Funding?

This is an election year. That means:

- It is highly unlikely that Congress will pass all 12 appropriations bills prior to the end of the fiscal year (September 30, 2026).
- A short-term continuing resolution likely will be needed to keep agencies open until after the November elections.
- Nonetheless, Congress has begun working on the FY2027 budget and aims to make as much progress as possible before August recess.

It is critical to engage in FY2027 appropriations advocacy because where they end up in August is where they will pick up post-election.

FY2027 Appropriations Timeline

- **April:** President's Budget released; each member of Congress finalizes their priorities.
- **April-May:** House and Senate Committees will hold hearings on the President's FY2027 Budget
- **May-July:** House and Senate Appropriations Committees will hold markups on their versions of each of the 12 appropriations bills.

Bipartisan Support for FY2027 EHCY and RHYA Funding

Thanks to your advocacy, a record number of Member of Congress signed on to bipartisan FY27 letters for EHCY and RHYA funding:

- 151 U.S. Representatives signed the House letter
- 33 U.S. Senators signed the Senate letter

The letters are very important, but they are only one strategy - individual Congressional offices also must be engaged.

President's FY2027 Budget Proposal

Keep in Mind:

- The Administration's FY2027 budget proposal is just that – a proposal. It is a wish list, not law.
- Congress ultimately decides the funding levels of essential programs that support children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness.
- However, the House majority in particular will be under pressure to reflect the President's priorities in their bills.

K12 Programs in the President's budget

Only 7 K-12 programs would continue to exist - if a program is not listed, its funding would be eliminated.

- **Title I** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level
- **Impact Aid** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level
- **Charter Schools** – Funding increased by \$60 million (14%) over enacted level but ED may transfer \$60 million from other programs to charter schools
- **Indian Education** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level
- **Special Education grants to states** – Funding increased but now also includes 7 other special education programs
- **Special education infant and toddler state grants** – Funding increased by \$50 million (8%)
- **Special Olympics** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level

President's FY2026 Budget Proposal:

Programs Targeted for Elimination by Consolidation

- 17 programs – including the McKinney-Vento Act's EHCY program – would be eliminated via a 'consolidation' (i.e. block grant)
- The Trump Administration claims that state and local education agencies could choose to use funds for the purposes of the 17 programs
- The reality is that these programs cease to exist. **They are zeroed out.**
- We have seen – in the pandemic and otherwise - that without targeted funding, homeless students are not identified or served. That means they aren't in school to benefit from any local, state, or federal funds.

What Does “Return to the States” Mean for Homeless Students?

SHC analyzed all 50 states’ education codes:

- Only five states provide *all* of the core protections provided by the McKinney-Vento Act, independent of the McKinney-Vento Act itself: CO, MD, NJ, OR, and WA.
- A handful of states have revised their state education codes to provide *some* of the core protections.
- The majority of states rely entirely on the McKinney-Vento Act to provide homeless children and youth with any of the core protections.
- Only four states provide dedicated state funding for homeless students to supplement EHCY: CO, ME, NM, WA.
- Three additional states provide specific transportation reimbursement for homeless students: MA, MN, NY.

Current Strategy for Preserving EHCY

- Focusing on Republican members on [the House Appropriations Committee](#), or other Republicans who have supported education funding
- **The ask: Please preserve EHCY funding this year, just as you did last year. Do not include it in any consolidation proposal.**
- [One-page fact sheet on EHCY](#)

Higher Education in the President's FY2027 Budget

Only 8 national post-secondary education programs, plus student loan programs, continue to exist in this budget request. If a program is not listed, its funding would be eliminated.

- **Pell grants** – a \$10.548 billion increase intended to meet a shortfall that the Congressional Budget Office estimates as \$16.9 billion over FY26 and FY27. Freezes the maximum award at \$7,395 for the fifth consecutive year - which amounts to a cut, in light of inflation. There is concern that legislators may look to restrict eligibility to meet the short-fall.
- **Federal Work Study** – A 90% (\$1.1 billion) cut.
- **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level
- **Strengthening historically black graduate institutes** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level
- **Strengthening HBCU masters programs** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level
- **Transition programs for students with intellectual disabilities** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level
- **Strengthening tribally controlled colleges and universities** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level
- **Tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions** – Funding frozen at FY 2026 level

Of the national post-secondary programs, all but Pell grants are currently part of interagency agreements to be managed by the Department of Labor and Department of Interior.

President's FY2027 Budget Proposal: Department of Health and Human Services

Key Points:

- Total budget request for HHS: **\$111.1 billion** (12.5% decrease from FY2026).
- Eliminations include the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and Preschool Development Grants.
- Proposes **\$146 million** for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act program (RHYA). RHYA is currently funded at \$146.3 million.
- Proposes **\$12.4 billion** for Head Start and **\$8.8 billion** for the Child Care and Development Block Grant. This maintains current funding levels.

President's FY2027 Budget Proposal:

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Key Points:

- Total budget request for HUD: **\$73.5 billion** (13% decrease from FY2026).
- Eliminates the Continuum of Care (CoC) program and transferring the \$4 billion of CoC money to Emergency Solutions Grants (proposed last year).
- Eliminates the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program and Youth Homelessness System Improvement Grants.
- Eliminates the Fair Housing Initiatives Program.
- Proposes a **\$5 million** increase for Foster Youth to Independence vouchers.

Please Help Us Educate Policymakers

- 95% of Congressional staff that we speak to have never heard of McKinney-Vento, or RHYA, or know much about federal programs serving homeless children, youth, and families.
- The vast majority of Congressional staff have never had anyone meet with them about McKinney-Vento or family or youth homelessness - local, state, or national
 - If Congressional staff don't know, their bosses likely don't know
 - It is much easier to cut or harm programs that are unknown or perceived as being irrelevant to a district/state.
- Please fill out [this form](#) if you are interested in helping educate your Members of Congress.
 - We'll respond with more information.
 - We can set up virtual meetings, help prepare, and even facilitate meetings.

In-District Advocacy

In-district advocacy is engaging with your lawmakers and their staff when they are in their home districts and states rather than in DC.

- ★ Meet with lawmakers and their staff at their local offices.
- ★ Host a site visit to show the impact of your programs and services.

[*Use our in-district toolkit!*](#)

Upcoming State Work Periods

Senate:

- May 4 - 8, 25 - 29
- June 29 - July 10
- August 10 - September 11

House:

- April 27 - May 1
- May 25 - 29
- June 15 - 19
- July 6 - 10
- July 27 - August 28



Federal Agency Updates

“Dismantling” the U. S. Department of Education

- The Trump Administration has entered into interagency agreements (IAAs) that move most federal education programs to other federal agencies as a “proof of concept” that the Education Department is not necessary.
- The entire Office of Elementary and Secondary Education is slated to move to the Department of Labor this summer (EHCY, Title I, II, III)
- FY2026 funding (2026-2027 school year) for formula programs (including EHCY, Title I, Title III, Migrant Education, etc.) will go out July 1st through ED’s grants system.

Why It Matters: Disruption, Loss of Expertise, and Loss of Capacity

Related Resource:

[What the U.S. Department of Education is Required to Do for Homeless Children and Youth - And Why It Matters](#)

- Federal education programs will encounter disruptions: new systems, processes, and political appointees who are unfamiliar with the populations and policies.
- This reorganization will strain staff capacity even further.
- Key ED functions like data, monitoring, guidance and responding to inquiries from parents, youth, schools and providers are jeopardized.

Department of Health and Human Services

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act NOFOs

Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for [Basic Center Programs](#), [Street Outreach Programs](#), and the [National Communications System](#) are expected this summer.

Street Outreach Programs have been restored as a standalone NOFO this cycle!

Factors impacting NOFO release date:

- ✓ FY2026 appropriations report language stated that HHS must release RHYA NOFOs “in a timely manner.”
- ✗ NOFOs must go through more rounds of approval than they have previously.
- ✗ HHS is proposing to change RHYA regulations to give more power over program implementation to NOFOs.

Department of Health and Human Services

RHYA Regulation Changes

HHS' [proposal](#) would **remove a number of RHYA regulations** that they deem either:

- Unnecessary for regulation and better suited as a directive in the NOFO, or
- Duplicative, meaning the language already exists in statute (law) or another regulation.

We are concerned that eliminating these regulations would:

- Destabilize the consistent, national standard that RHYA programs are held to.
- Disrupt stability for long-term program planning.
- Give Administrations more power to change RHYA programs year to year.
- Delay the NOFO process if the NOFO is sued over exceeding statutory authority.

Department of Health and Human Services

RHYA Grantees Directed to Make Harm Reduction Statement

What happened: The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) directed all RHYA grantees to **remove select harm reduction activities** from their plans and budgets.

What providers did: Grantees submitted a statement verifying that they do not use RHYA money for those activities (they're not allowed to, anyway). Many providers **removed the words “harm reduction”** from their plans and budgets and replaced with something more neutral, like “safety planning.”

Why this matters: Under previous NOFOs, grantees were **required to discuss how they implement harm reduction activities** for youth. The Administration continues to backtrack on previously agreed upon grant terms and flag “taboo” words or phrases.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Continuum of Care (CoC) NOFOs

- The lawsuit over the **FY2025 CoC NOFO** is still ongoing—it's unclear when an updated FY2025 NOFO will be released, if at all.
 - ◆ The lawsuit is challenging the short timeline for application; the drastic cuts to permanent housing projects; and the NOFO's assertion that it can reject applications from programs that have ever in their history engaged in DEI or gender-inclusive practices.
- The FY2026 appropriations bill stated that the **FY2026 CoC NOFO** must be issued **no later than June 1, 2026**, and that awards from the NOFO must be made **no later than December 1, 2026**.
 - ◆ HUD has forecasted it will be published May 29, 2026.

Department of Housing and Urban Development



Continuum of Care (CoC) Automatic Renewals

- The FY2026 appropriations bill directed HUD to **automatically renew FY2025 CoC grants**, including Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grants, based on:
 - ◆ When the CoC's funding expires (**Q1**, **Q2**, **Q3**, or **Q4**), and
 - ◆ Whether HUD had released awards under an updated FY2025 NOFO by specified deadlines.
 - ◆ HUD has missed two out of three of those deadlines.
- On March 31, HUD announced the release of **\$349 million** in renewals for the 622 CoCs that expired in **Q1**.
 - ◆ Some CoCs started to receive awards starting in mid-April, but some CoCs still haven't received awards.
- On April 27, HUD announced the release of **\$1 billion** in renewals for the 1,826 CoCs expiring in **Q2**.
- If HUD has not issued awards under a new FY2025 NOFO by **July 1, 2026**, then it must automatically renew CoCs expiring in **Q3** and **Q4**.

Federal Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development

NATIONAL NETWORK
 for YOUTH
collaborate • advocate • transform

Proposed Regulation Changes to the Equal Access Rule

HUD's [proposed regulation changes](#) would:

- Require all HUD programs to “place, serve, and accommodate” based on “sex,” using a similar definition to the one found in [this Executive Order](#).
- Permit facilities to “require reasonable assurances or evidence to establish” sex. (The current Equal Access rule limits intrusive questioning or documentation requirements about a person’s SOGI.)
- Remove all SOGI nondiscrimination provisions across all HUD programs.
- Attempt to make this federal mandate supercede any state or local anti-discrimination laws.

This regulation change will be challenged in court soon.

We encourage you to submit comment—NN4Y will have a template to share soon and comments are due 6/29/26.

Federal Legislation on Child, Youth, and Family Homelessness

Legislation

Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act (RHYTPA)



RHYTPA reauthorizes and updates the current Runaway and Homeless Youth Act program.
([S.2012](#)/[H.R.3856](#))

This bill is moving! Here's how you can help:

- ★ Have your organization [endorse RHYTPA](#).
- ★ Ask your Members of Congress to cosponsor by filling out the Take Action Form on the [RHYTPA page](#).

Legislation

Other Important Legislation



We are still working on these bills and you may hear from us for further advocacy opportunities.

- ★ **Homeless Children and Youth Act:** Ensures that children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness are no longer shut out of homeless assistance because they do not meet HUD's restrictive definition of homelessness. [More info.](#)
- ★ **Housing for Homeless Students Act:** Allows college students who are or have experienced homelessness to remain full-time and live in housing funded by the Low Income Housing Tax Credit. [More info.](#)
- ★ **Higher Education Access and Success for Homeless and Foster Youth Act:** Removes barriers and ensures that homeless and foster youth have clear and reliable pathways into and through higher education. [More info.](#)

Legislation

Other Important Legislation



Legislation to Support Foster Youth

- ★ Foster Youth Housing Opportunity Act ([H.R. 7432](#))
- ★ Foster Youth Workforce Opportunity Act ([H.R. 7343](#))
- ★ Foster Youth Postsecondary Education and Success Act ([H.R. 7463](#))
- ★ Fresh Starts for Foster Youth Act ([H.R. 7529](#))
- ★ Support for Expectant and Parenting Foster Youth ([H.R. 7655](#))
- ★ Chafee Opportunities for New Networks and Existing Connection Trust (CONNECT) Act ([H.R. 7995](#))
- ★ Increasing Access to Foster Care Through Age 21 Act ([H.R. 8498](#))

Q&A

SHC and NN4Y Trackers

- [SHC Federal Policy Page](#)
- [Read NN4Y's latest blog posts](#)
- [NN4Y's Take Action Center](#)
- [Sign up for NN4Y's Newsletter to stay up-to-date](#)





I AM HERE: Vital Document Legal Hotline for Youth

A free, dedicated state-specific legal assistance hotline for **youth experiencing homelessness** to help obtain:

State ID cards and licenses

Social Security Cards

Birth certificates

Documents needed to obtain an ID and license

**Text or
Call!**

1-888-870-DOCS

*Voicemails and texts are welcome and will be returned.

Wednesday Hours (Starting May 6, 2026)

6 AM - 2 PM Eastern • 7 AM - 1 PM Central

8 AM - 4 PM Mountain • 9 AM - 5 PM Pacific

**Baker
McKenzie.**

NATIONAL

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- News related to education and homelessness



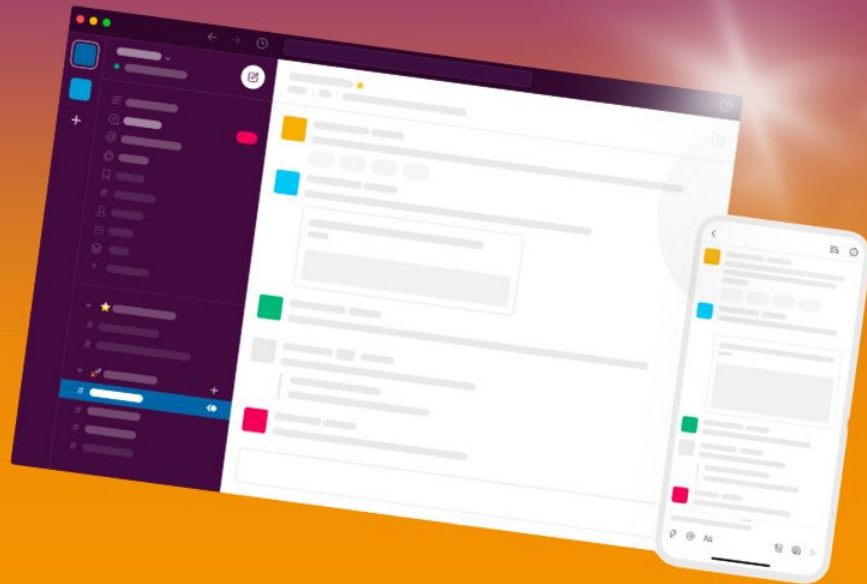
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