



Reimagining Liaison Work in Charter Schools

**Strategies for Supporting Highly Mobile
Students in Charter & Independent
Study Environments**



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MEET THE PRESENTER



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Opening Reflection

Who is in the Room?



You may be here as:

- A **new McKinney-Vento liaison** learning the role for the first time
- An **experienced liaison** who has supported students for years
- Someone working in a **district, charter school, or county office**
- A liaison serving students in **virtual or independent study settings**

Session Objectives

Participants will learn:

- Identification and Indicators
- Relationship-centered outreach
- Charter Schools as Stabilizing Anchors
- Support during IEPs, Truancy, 504s, MTSS meetings
- Cross-County Resources
- Case Management & Documentation Best Practices
- Cultural Responsiveness & Strength Based Approach
- See Through the Trauma Lens
- Train and Empower School Staff



Identification and Indicators

Identifying Homelessness in Virtual Learning Environments



- Frequent address changes or contact information changes
- Students logging in from different locations
- Unstable internet access or technology disruptions
- Background clues during virtual sessions (cars, hotels, shared spaces)
- Families hesitant to share a physical address
- Students frequently traveling between locations
- *Inconsistent attendance or sudden disengagement
- Parent comments about moving, staying with relatives, or temporary housing

Relationship-Centered Outreach



Build Rapport



Trust-Based



Active Listening



Compassionate Communication



Whole Person



Check-In Strategy

Monthly Family Check-Ins

- Simple Website
 - McKinney-Vento Rights
 - County Wide Resources
 - Mental Health Resources
- Monthly Emails w/Links
- Develop a Needs Assessment
- Quick Check-In Survey
- Quick Text Check-In



Liaison Resources

Needs Assessment



Quick Check-In



Charter Schools as Stabilizing Anchors

- School stability during housing transitions
- Flexibility of independent study programs
- Access to Education
- Supporting continuity of education
- Reduced disruption when families must relocate suddenly
- A consistent educational environment during periods of uncertainty



Support During IEPs, Truancy, 504s, and MTSS, and Other Meetings

Supporting Students in Critical Meetings



- Prepare for the Meeting
- Ensure McKinney-Vento protections are considered
- Advocate for housing-related barriers
- Help teams understand the student's full context
- Provide resources and support plans

Cross-County Resources

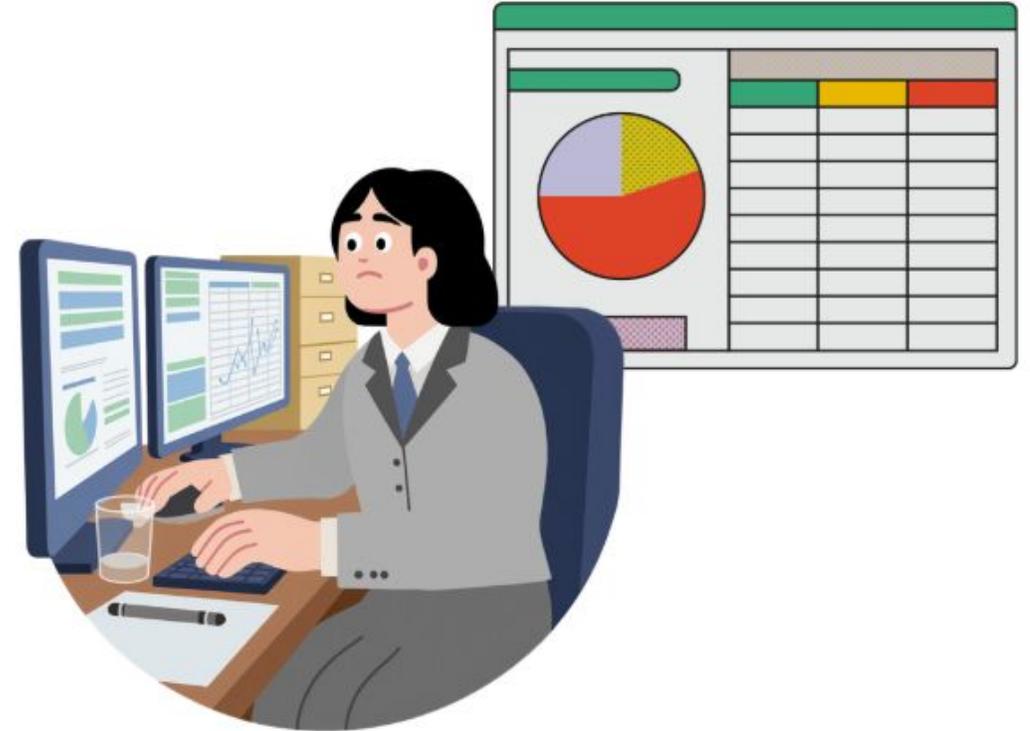
What It Means and What it Looks Like.

- Build County Resources
- Refer to 211
- [FindHelp.org](https://www.findhelp.org)
- Coordinate with local & county liaisons
- Build & maintain resource networks
- *Phone Calls are a must!



Case Management & Documentation Best Practices

- Consistent outreach logs
- Service and referral tracking & documentation
- Housing updates and compliance tracking
- Clear communication with school teams
- Documentation of family contacts (calls, texts, emails)



Why Liaison Work Looks Different in Charter Schools



Many Charter Schools:

- Serve large geographic regions
- Operate virtual or hybrid models
- Enroll families who relocate frequently
- One Liaison for one LEA
- One Liaison and multiple hats!
- Gray Areas

Example from my work:

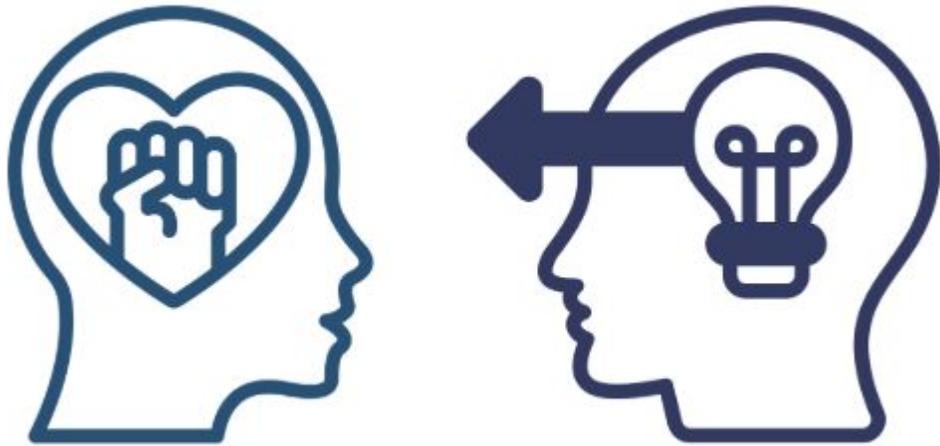
- Serving 15 Counties in California
- Different Regions -Southern CA, Central Coast, Northern CA
- Serving, Urban, Suburban and Rural Areas
- Families relocating more frequently
- Families not always communicating a move

Cultural Responsiveness

- Learn and understand other cultural perspectives
- Language accessibility
- Avoid assumptions
- Build trust with families who may fear systems or institutions
- Provide information in families' preferred language
- Be mindful of immigration concerns that may affect communication
- Each CA region can be different in many ways



Strength-Based Approach



“You are capable of great things!”

- Recognizing family resilience
- Focusing on strengths, not deficits
- Empowering families to access resources
- Celebrating small successes

Seeing Through the Trauma Lens

- Housing instability impacts emotional wellbeing
- Behavioral and academic challenges may reflect trauma
- Compassionate responses from educators
- Sudden disengagement or inconsistent participation
- Difficulty concentrating or completing work
- Increased anxiety, stress, or emotional withdrawal



Training and Empowering School Staff

- Staff training on identifying housing instability
- Building awareness of McKinney-Vento protections
- Addressing assumptions and bias
- Clear referral pathways to the liaison
- Strategies for supporting students in virtual environments
- Collaboration between liaisons, teachers, counselors, and other support staff.





Lessons Learned from Practice

- Every family's situation is unique
- Trust takes time
- Collaboration strengthens support
- Small supports can make a big difference
- There are happy endings-transitions



Reimagining Liaison Work in Charter Schools



- Beyond compliance
- Challenges in Identification
- Building systems of support
- Creating sustainable outreach models
- Strengthening cross county community connections
- Growing your network

Discussion & Questions

- What strategies have worked for you?
- What challenges are you seeing in your schools?



Let's Stay Connected!

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Thank You For Being Here

**“The Essence of Life is to Serve Others and
do Good.”**

-Aristotle

