



Affordable Housing for Educational Achievement Demonstration (AHEAD) Act

Sponsored by U.S. Senator Patty Murray

Homelessness or housing instability can be a significant barrier to educational success for students across the country. Students experiencing homelessness or housing instability have poorer academic outcomes, increased rates of absenteeism, and are less likely to graduate from high school.ⁱ School districts are uniquely positioned to help prevent and address issues related to child and family homelessness while housing providers can play a critical role in promoting positive outcomes for children and families by providing stable housing opportunities and other services.

The AHEAD Act would provide funding to help school districts, housing authorities, and community partners to collaborate in unprecedented ways to address children's education and housing needs in a coordinated fashion. Under this new program, school districts would apply in partnership with local housing authorities and other community-based organizations for a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to implement innovative projects to:

- **Address and prevent child and family homelessness**
 - School districts could supplement current efforts to help families find and maintain housing by centralizing support services within schools.
 - Housing authorities could hire an education coordinator to run education or mentorship programs at housing locations, connect residents to educational support services, and facilitate family engagement activities
- **Promote educational stability and academic achievement**
 - School districts could provide training and professional development opportunities for teachers, school leaders, and other educators on best practices for meeting the needs of students experiencing homelessness.
 - Housing authorities could help families find affordable housing within an area with high-quality schools.
- **Improve outcomes for children and youth from low-income families**
 - School districts could work with housing authorities to address chronic absenteeism or to promote access to high-quality early learning opportunities.
 - Housing authorities could build or improve data systems to better track and target education and social services to children and families living in affordable housing.

Partnerships would apply for either a two year planning grant to begin collaboration efforts and develop a memorandum of understanding or a five-year implementation grant to implement projects that address families' housing needs and provide education and community-based services for low-income, at-risk children. This demonstration project will enable agencies and community partners to implement and evaluate innovative ideas at the intersection of housing and education policy.

i. National Center for Homeless Education, "Homeless Education Research", available at <https://nche.ed.gov/research/>; Kull et al "Missed opportunities: Education among youth and young adults experiencing homelessness in America." (2019) Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, available at https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/ChapinHall_VoYC_Education-Brief.pdf