BUILDING STRONG PATHWAYS:

Strengthening the Transition from High School to College for Foster and Homeless Youth

EOPS Association Annual Conference
October 29, 2018
Today’s Presenters

Carolyn Ho
*Project Associate*
John Burton Advocates for Youth

Chris Dech
*Project Director, Foster Youth Support Network*
Riverside Community College District

Veronica Salmeron-Sosa
*Counselor, Coordinator, NextUp*
Fresno City College: State Center
Community College District
College Aspirations vs. College Realities

**Foster Youth**
- Want to go to college: 86%
- Enroll: 55%
- Complete 2 or 4 year degree: 8%

**Homeless Youth**
Estimates for homeless youth are similar, though reliable data is scarce (only 5 states report on homeless students) and difficult to collect.

Homeless high school students are 86% more likely to drop out than youth in stable housing. [AmericasPromise.org](https://AmericasPromise.org)
Yet – We know that education pays off

Unemployment rates and earnings by educational attainment, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Unemployment rate (%)</th>
<th>Median usual weekly earnings ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1,836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1,401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s degree</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than a high school diploma</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 3.6%  
All workers: $907

Note: Data are for persons age 25 and over. Earnings are for full-time wage and salary workers.  
Other Ways Education Pays Off

- Lower rates of incarceration
- Improved health outcomes
- Increased career satisfaction
- Higher levels of civic participation, including voting
- Greater likelihood of one’s children attending college
Barriers Facing Foster and Homeless Youth When Enrolling in College

- Lack of identification
- Lack of school supplies and transportation
- Poor health, fatigue, hunger, anxiety, and trauma
- Prejudice and misunderstanding
- Homeless students: Parents not wanting to get involved due to fear of judgement, authorities removing their children, etc.
- Lack of legal guardian for an unaccompanied homeless youth; foster custodians not versed in college experience
Foster and Homeless Youth Often Lack Critical Connections Needed to Access College

- Inadequate academic preparation; FY history of changing schools
- Nearly 1 in 5 FY has a disability, 2x rate of general population
- Lack of adult role models
- Lack of financial resources
- Lack of information about college matriculation process - 46% of foster youth report not receiving enough help with college planning
Legal Remedies to Help Homeless and Foster Youth

- Education for Homeless Youth Act: McKinney Vento Act (Federal) + Success for Homeless Youth In Higher Education Act (CA AB 801)
- Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (California)
These programs can provide the critical linkages between high school and college for homeless and foster youth.
Each school district has a *McKinney Vento Liaison* charged with:

Providing stability, access, and support for the academic success for homeless children and youth

McKinney Vento Liaisons are empowered to declare a student homeless under the legal provisions of the McKinney Vento Act
## McKinney Vento Homeless Definition

Applies at college level (AB 801)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence</th>
<th>A <strong>regular</strong> residence is one that is used on a normal, standard, and consistent basis.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An <strong>adequate</strong> residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes doubling up due to financial hardship, motels, public spaces, campgrounds, cars, parks, abandoned buildings, shelters</td>
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</table>
Homeless Students on Campus – AB 801

AB 801 mirrors McKinney-Vento in calling for all college campuses to have a Homeless Student Liaison

AB 801 Provides priority registration to verified homeless youth

AB 801 Made verified homeless youth automatically eligible for a CA College Promise Grant

McKinney Vento Liaisons can be invaluable in identifying, verifying and connecting homeless students to liaisons the community college

- Many students, even though verified as homeless in high school, may not self-identify as homeless in college, thus missing out on helpful benefits
Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP)

One element of their mandate is to facilitate transition to college and career from high school.

Training, Coordination, Assistance

Ensure all education rights are met for every foster youth in school in that county.

All 58 counties; housed in the County Office of Education (COE)
FYSCP Coordinators

Work with public school district liaisons, high school counselors, Child Welfare/Probation, ILP, and other community organizations supporting foster youth

Convene trainings and a county-wide Executive Advisory Council; help coordinate special events - such as college matriculation events

Larger counties have specialists that focus on post-secondary education
Small counties sometimes combine homeless and foster youth programs

Contact List on California Department of Education Website: cde.ca.gov
FYSCP and District Liaisons

- Eager to make strong connections with college personnel.
- FYSCP programs vary a lot county by county.
- Most FYSCP coordinators and district staff are not postsecondary ed specialists. They need your expertise.
- They lose touch with the youth as soon as they graduate. They want to hand them off to you during their senior year.
The Foster Youth FAFSA Challenge!

2018/2019 Goal

At least 60% of California’s high school seniors in foster care complete the FAFSA/CADAA

Last year’s rate = 45%
Students overall = 58%
Access to Higher Education

Veronica Salmeron-Sosa
Counselor, Coordinator, NextUp
Fresno City College,
State Center Community College District
THE COURTSHIP

• STUDENT FOCUS
ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

- FCSS -- FYSCP
- SCCCD
- FCC Administration
- K-12 District Liaisons
- Probation
- Community Partners
- DSS, Ed Liaisons, ILP
- Foster Family Agencies
- Other On Campus Collaborations
# A2HE HIGH SCHOOL - 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00am – 8:00am</td>
<td>Students board school busses/vans</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Check-In/Register Students on Bus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00am – 8:50am</td>
<td>Registration and Check-In</td>
<td>OAB East Lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Check in by District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receive Lanyard and A2HE Backpack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00am – 9:50am</td>
<td>Dee Hankins – Keynote Speaker</td>
<td>OAB Auditorium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00am – 12:15pm</td>
<td>Program Rotation</td>
<td>Lawn west of OAB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FCC Tour</td>
<td>Front of EOPS Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater Department</td>
<td>East Side of Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College Express</td>
<td>OAB 231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:20pm – 1:50pm</td>
<td>Lunch and SocEmo Activities</td>
<td>Lawn west of OAB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

- Fresno Area High School Foster Youth
  - Highlight campus program
  - Tours
  - College information
  - Social Emotional activity time
  - Breakfast and lunch and snacks
  - 125-160 student yearly
  - Evaluation
BEING A PART OF THE TEAM

• STUDENT FOCUS
• ON CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS
• INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIONS
• ESTABLISHED EVENT VS NEW EVENT
• “IN KIND” ASSISTANCE
CHALLENGES

- Not understanding parameters
- After the meeting, let's go to the meeting...
- Integrity of the program
- “go to” person
FUTURE STEPS...

THE A2HE BRAND

• EXTREME REGISTRATION
• MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENT
• LEADERSHIP
• INTRO TO NEXTUP
• FINANCIAL AID

Fresno City College
Seamless College Transitions

Chris Dech

*Project Director, Foster Youth Support Network*
Riverside Community College District
RCC-RCOE College Connection

Began in 2009

RCC staff provides college transition services to students in RCOE alternative education schools, detention facilities, and group homes.

Began serving foster youth only, scope widened to support all at-risk youth.
High school counselor position – called an Educational Liaison -

- Funded by Riverside Department of Public Social Services.

Provides academic counseling services to foster youth referred by social workers.

Campus Guardian Scholars staff meet with the RCOE school counselor and their assigned foster youth students to assist with enrollment steps and academic advising.

Coordinates training on foster youth educational rights for new staff members and partner community organizations

- Example, joint presentation to Aspiranet and Walden transitional housing programs
 Attendance at RCOE Foster Youth Advisory Council

First meeting attended, provided a presentation on campus Guardian Scholars programs, eligibility, and services available to students (single point of contact)

- Ended with an ask (activity) about how the colleges and the high schools could work more closely in support of transitioning foster youth

College GS programs now attend the Advisory Council regularly, receiving updates about current activities at high school sites throughout the county

- GS programs share student outcomes and upcoming activities and events, such as Welcome Day, and Voices and Visions (spoken-word poetry event for foster care awareness month)
## College Bound Welcome Days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specifically for foster youth</th>
<th>• Developed In conjunction with FYSCP and feeder high school districts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Held at Moreno Valley College, Riverside City College, and Norco College</td>
<td>• High schools transport foster youth students grades 9-12 to their respective colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students receive -</td>
<td>• support program presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• campus tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• opportunity to complete their FAFSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Peer support</td>
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Innovation Award - Foster Youth Support Network

New RCCD initiative seeks to deepen the partnership between our colleges and feeder high schools

Serves students in grades 9-12

Resource Specialist assigned to each college and works on site in each local high school

Transitional assistance and a warm hand-off from high school to campus FY support program

College and Career Readiness

- Work with students using embedded curriculum in californiacolleges.edu
- Track student matriculation steps and college readiness lessons completed through Salesforce database
Innovation Award-
Foster Youth Support Network

Created a college-transition focused sub-committee of RCOE FYSCP

Share best practices and work together to provide true wrap around support for foster youth

RCOE FYSCP
County ILP
DPSS
Transitional housing programs
RCCD college staff
High school districts
Activity

1. List key contacts/educational liaisons that you know who serve foster youth in your service area in the first column. Then put a check in the “Need to Find” column for any potential partners where you don’t already have a connection.

2. Identify any existing collaborations or events that you see potential for expanding or enhancing.

3. List 1-2 “Best Next Steps” you plan to take when you return to your campus in order to strengthen the pathway to your college for foster and homeless youth.
Question & Answer

This presentation will be posted on our websites:
http://www.jbaforyouth.org/trainings-2/ under October 30, 2018
Presenter Contact Information

Veronica Salmeron-Sosa
*Counselor, Coordinator, NextUp*
Fresno City College
559-443-8556
veronica.salmeron@fresnocitycollege.edu

Carolyn Ho
*Project Associate*
John Burton Advocates for Youth
415-348-0099
carolyn@jbayforyouth.org

Chris Dech
*Project Director, Foster Youth Support Network*
Riverside Community College District
951-328-3803
Christopher.Dech@rccd.edu

Deborah Pruitt
*Program Manager*
John Burton Advocates for Youth
510-919-7770
deborah@jbayforyouth.org