



WEB-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Action Research to Study Homelessness and High Mobility in School Communities: *Summary of Essays* 2005-2006

I. Academic Achievement and Flexible Instructional Strategies

Chapter 1: *Overcoming Barriers to Parent Participation – A Study of the Barriers that Limit Parents of Homeless and Highly Mobile Children from Participating in Their Child’s Education* by Kathy Gansemer, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, (Denver, Colorado)

Studies the barriers that limit parents of homeless and highly mobile children from participating in their child's education. Features research on the importance of parental involvement and issues related to poverty. Tracks and outlines the development of an after-school, homework help group for parents and children. An extensive appendix includes sample of surveys and assessments.

Chapter 2: *An Initiative to Increase Enrollment of Homeless and Highly Mobile Students in Our On-Site After School Homework Help enrichment Class* by Linda Meyer, Lowry Elementary School, (Denver, Colorado)

Examines how social economic issues impact access to resources in school-based settings. Provides chronology of action taken to address barriers and increase participation of homeless and highly mobile students in after school enrichment classes. Includes suggestions on how this work can be replicated in other schools.

Chapter 3: *Assisting with Homework – A Study Focusing on the Completion of Homework with Highly mobile students in a 4th Grade Classroom* by Anna Kluver-Fensler, Lowry Elementary School, (Denver, Colorado)

Tracks the development of a lunchtime, homework help club called “Lunch Bunch.” Examines results and offers reflection on the process.

Chapter 4: *Homework* by Tamara Marocco, Lowry Elementary, (Denver, Colorado)

Explores how to make homework meaningful for students. Includes an examination of the history, purpose and value of homework. Special attention is given to parental involvement and instruction for English Language Learners.

Chapter 5: *What Ways Can I Adjust My Teaching Style to Provide Meaningful Entry Points into Title Math Lab for my Homeless and Highly Mobile Students?* by Tobey Cho Bassoff, Columbine Elementary, (Longmont, Colorado)

An experienced, participatory action researcher tracks her efforts to improve educational instruction and math assessment for English Language Learners in transition. Included are her reflections, frustrations, and successes. Features use of Calendar Math and compliance with the Family Education Rights Protection Act (FERPA.)

Chapter 6: *Homeless and Highly Mobile Students – At Risk Factors and Educational Struggles in Northeastern Colorado* by Pam Watson, Columbine Elementary, (Fort Morgan, Colorado)

Considers the challenges teachers face in balancing standardized reading instruction with student engagement. Includes discussion of risk factors that impact academic achievement of homeless and highly mobile students and offers practical information to enhance educational practices.

II. School Attachment and Access to Educational Services

Chapter 7: *Our Hidden Homeless Population* by Anne Marie Arbo, Interfaith Hospitality Network; Jim Neigherbauer, Ferguson High School; and Laurie Smith, High School Academy, (Loveland, Colorado)

Describes process in interviewing students and families to gain a greater awareness of the prevalence and issues of homelessness in a small city. Presents findings and identifies next steps to increase community awareness of the homeless population.

Chapter 8: *Improving Communication and Increasing Access to Resources* by Mak Tibbetts, School Parent/Business Owner, (Fort Morgan, Colorado)

Provides a look at homelessness in a rural area, based on a community survey to gauge awareness, perceptions, and impacts. Discusses survey findings and includes action steps for schools and communities.

Chapter 9: *Are We Helping or Hurting? A Community Approach to Homelessness* by Malora H. Horn, and Philip P. Powers, (Roanoke, Virginia)

The intent of the study was to determine how the city of Roanoke helps those who are homeless. Explores community services offered and examines if these services help by preventing reoccurrences homelessness or do they unintentionally hurt by creating a cycle of homelessness.

Chapter 10: *Ashdown Schools* (Ashdown, Arkansas) by Susan Simmons, Ashdown School District, (Ashdown, Arkansas)

Discusses improving customer services to student and families and explores use of staff name badges. Includes interviews, surveys, and planned actions to create welcoming atmosphere in schools.

Chapter 11: *Improving the Parent Involvement of Spanish-speaking, Homeless and Highly Mobile Families* by Heather Wilson, Lowry Elementary, (Denver, Colorado)

Explores improving parent and student involvement in schools by fostering family/school communication and making after school programs more accessible. Special attention is given to homeless/highly mobile families with elementary school-aged children and Spanish-speaking parents. Offers suggestions for enhancing use of “Thursday Folders” and language translation of materials.

III. Student Attendance and Welcoming School Climate

Chapter 12: *Our Success Story: Meeting the Needs of Our Highly Mobile and Homeless Children* by Cynthia D. Delp and Rebecca A. Swanson, Fallon Park Elementary School, (Roanoke, Virginia)

Provides a close up look at mobility in a low-income elementary school through student surveys and a case study. Includes strategies to increase connectedness to school and access to educational resources.

Chapter 13: *Lessons Learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita* by Becky Darce, Christina Richardson, and Sara Williams, Bryan Independent School District, (Bryan, Texas)

An account of a Texas School District's response to address the needs of students and families who were displaced by hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Concludes with recommendations on what schools can do to improve emergency preparedness and crisis management.

Chapter 14: *Homeless and the Increase of Highly Mobile Students* by Kay York, Yvonne Bond, and Kim Befeld, Ashdown Schools, (Ashdown, Arkansas)

Discusses issues of homelessness and high mobility in a rural school district in Southwest Focuses on the impacts of Hurricane Katrina on students, families and schools. Includes results of interviews and survey and outlines action steps to improve services and promote a positive school climate.

Chapter 15: *Stevens Elementary Mobility Study* by Scott Hastie, Marie Norby-Loud, and Mark Wilensky, Stevens Elementary, (Wheat Ridge, Colorado)

Provides an in depth look at mobility in a suburban elementary school. Includes information on creating supply kits, tracking mobility based on housing patterns, and implementing a process to welcome new students. Offers literature review on effects of homelessness on the ability of children to learn. Concludes with a step-by-step, assessment plan and outlines next steps in the study.

Chapter 16: *Welcoming Climate: Student and Family Transitions* by Ron Pfulg, Columbine Elementary, (Fort Morgan, Colorado)

Assesses services and supports for students in transition at a rural elementary school. Examines use of surveys and interviews to collect information and offers suggestions in developing research questions. Includes implementation plan to improve supports for students and their families.

Chapter 17: *Developing a Welcoming School Culture at Lowry* by Cari Riedlin, Lowry Elementary School, (Denver, Colorado)

Details steps taken by an urban elementary school to assess and improve school climate. Special attention is given to developing a protocol to register and enroll students throughout the school year. Offers suggestions on replicating an assessment of school climate and concludes with next steps.

Chapter 18: *Knowing When a Welcoming Culture Prepares Students for Academic Success* by Ethan Ecord, Keating Education Center, and (Pueblo, Colorado)

A math teacher at an alternative high school examines barriers to instruction and explores creating a welcoming school culture. Includes background information and offers an example of challenges students face. Suggestions to for replication included.

Index of Key Words: Offers an at-a-glance look at topics and materials included in the chapter essays.

To download the book, [Action Research to Study Homelessness and High Mobility in School Communities: Collection of Essays - 2005-2006](#), or select a chapter to review, visit the National Center for School Engagement website @ www.schoolengagement.org.

Index of Keywords

Keywords	Chapters
Academic Achievement	1, 3, 6, 12, 15
Access to Resources	2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16
After School Program	2, 11
Assessment (achievement/instructional and needs)	5, 6, 10, 15
Attendance/Enrollment	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
Classroom Management	18
Community (Awareness of Homelessness/High Mobility)	7, 8, 9
Confidentiality	5
Elementary School,	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 15, 16
Flexible Instruction	3, 4, 5, 18
Guidelines for Replication	1, 2, 15, 17, 18
High School	7, 13, 18
Homework	1, 3, 4
Hurricane Displaced Students and Families	13, 14
Language (English Language Acquisition/Translation)	1, 4, 5, 6, 11, 16
Literature Review	4, 6, 8, 15
Math	5, 18
Parent and Family Involvement	1, 3, 4, 8, 11
Poverty	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 16
Reading	5, 6
School District	10, 13, 14
Surveys	-parent/family surveys – 1, 3, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17 -student surveys – 3, 6, 7, 12, 14, 16 -teacher/school surveys– 8, 15, 17 -community surveys – 8, 9
Transitional Housing/Shelters	1, 7
Tracking Mobility	12, 14, 15
Welcoming School Climate	2, 5, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18