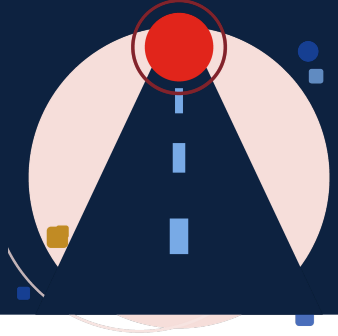
SEAT 18

THE SEAT SERIES • HANDOUT A • SEAT CARD: DO THIS MONDAY

McKinney-Vento Liaisons • Grades 6-12

Unaccompanied and Working Youth

How do we support older students who are on their own, working, or carrying adult responsibilities?



THREE MOVES FOR THIS WEEK

☐ Liaison as advocate

Cost: $0

The liaison helps unaccompanied youth enroll and access services.

☐ Flexible schedule

Cost: $0

Offer schedule options for students who work or care for others.

☐ Credit plan

Cost: $0

Map partial credits and a path to graduation.

TALKING WITH AN OLDER STUDENT

1. Who are you staying with right now?
2. Are you working or caring for anyone?
3. What schedule would let you keep earning credit?
4. What is one thing that would help this month?

CLASSIFY BEFORE YOU CONSEQUENCE

Withdrawal
Work and caregiving. Flexible schedules and credit recovery.

Avoidance
Feeling out of place among peers. Connect to an adult advocate.

Refusal
Exhaustion and stress. Health and counseling.

Truancy
Choosing work to survive is withdrawal. Ask first.

AVOID THESE MISSTEPS

- x Requiring a parent signature to enroll unaccompanied youth
- x Treating work-driven absence as defiance
- x Ending supports at age 18 without a transition plan

HOW YOU WILL KNOW IT WORKS

Leading: Unaccompanied youth with a graduation plan
Lagging: Credit accrual each term

Evidence: Schools Spared, Children Punished, Ch. 8 (Jaylen, composite case); Annie E. Casey Foundation, Teen Birth Rates and Educational Outcomes; OECD report on long-term student absence (causes reported); BLS, The Economics Daily (Aug 26, 2026).

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