

EDUCATION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS PROCEDURE

Superintendent/designee Responsibilities

1. Give special attention to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths not currently attending school
2. Review and revise rules or procedures that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths.
3. Give consideration to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residence, birth certificates, school records, and other documentation.
4. Appoint a liaison for homeless children.

Liaison Responsibilities

The superintendent/designee will designate a local liaison for children and youth living in a homeless situation and their families. The local liaison will serve as one of the primary contacts between families and school staff, district personnel, and other service providers.

The responsibilities of the liaison include, but are not limited to:

1. Children and youth living in a homeless situation are identified by school personnel and through coordination with other entities and agencies.
2. Children and youth living in a homeless situation enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in schools in the district.
3. Families, children, and youth living in a homeless situation receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start or other public preschool programs.
4. Families, children and youth living in a homeless situation receive referrals to health, dental, mental health, housing, substance abuse, and other appropriate services.
5. Parents and guardians are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in that education.
6. Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth are informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin or to the selected school.
7. Compliance with all policies and procedures and mediation of enrollment disputes.

8. Public notice of the educational rights of children and youth living in a homeless situation is disseminated in public places such as schools, meal sites, shelters, and other locations frequented by low income families.
9. School personnel providing McKinney-Vento services receive professional development and other support.
10. Unaccompanied youth are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same challenging academic standards as other children and youth, including receiving partial credits, and are informed of their status as independent students for the FAFSA and receive verification of the status.

Professional Development

1. The local liaison will provide guidance and training for all District and school personnel on the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and this policy *at least once a year*.
2. Training will be designed to assist staff:
 - a. In identifying signs of homelessness;
 - b. Increase staff awareness of homelessness;
 - c. Build the capacity to respond to specific problems in the education of children and youth living in a homeless situation;
 - d. Heighten the understanding and sensitivity of personnel to the needs of these children and youth;
 - e. Understanding the rights of homeless children and youth under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
 - f. Facilitate immediate enrollment; and
 - g. Ensure compliance with this policy.

Coordination

The local liaison will coordinate with and seek support from organizations and agencies as needed and appropriate to provide effective and comprehensive services to homeless children and youth not currently attending school.

Organizations and agencies could include:

1. State Coordinator for Homeless Education;
2. Public and private service providers in the community;
3. Housing and placement agencies;
4. Local liaisons in neighboring districts; or
5. District transportation department; etc.

School Selection

1. Each child or youth living in a homeless situation has the right to remain at his or her school of origin or enroll in any public school that students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.
2. School selection for children and youth living in a homeless situation will be made on a case-by-case basis and according to the best interest of the child or youth.
3. In making the best interest determination, the district will, to the extent feasible, keep the student in the school of origin, unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the student's parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth.
4. Students may remain at their school of origin the entire time they are in transition and until the end of any academic year in which they become permanently housed.
5. The school selection determination will be based on a student-centered, individualized analysis of factors related to the child's safety and educational well-being.
6. Factors to be considered in determining the best interest of the student and feasibility of school of origin placement include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Age of the child or youth;
 - b. Commute distance and the impact it may have on the student's education;
 - c. Personal safety issues;
 - d. Student's need for special instruction or programming;
 - e. Length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or other temporary location; and
 - f. Time remaining in the school year.

7. Services that are required to be provided, including transportation to and from the school of origin, will not be considered in determining feasibility.

Special Education

1. Evaluations of homeless children and unaccompanied youth suspected of having a disability shall be given priority and coordinated with the students' prior and subsequent schools as necessary, to ensure timely completion.
2. When necessary, the District's Director of Federal Programs shall designate a surrogate parent for unaccompanied youth suspected of having a disability.
3. Any necessary IEP meetings or re-evaluations shall be conducted expeditiously.
4. If complete records are not available, Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams shall use good judgment in choosing the best course of action, balancing procedural requirements and the provision of services with the goal of avoiding any disruption in appropriate services.
5. Homeless pre-school aged children with disabilities shall be referred for preschool services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
6. Homeless children under age three (3) will be referred for at-risk services under Part C of IDEA and screened to determine if referrals for additional Part C services are appropriate.

Title I

1. Funds shall be reserved as necessary to provide homeless children and unaccompanied youth attending non-participating schools services comparable to those provided to Title I students attending participating schools.
2. Reserved funds will also be used to provide educationally related support services to homeless children and unaccompanied youth both in school and outside of school and to remove barriers that prevent regular attendance.

Transportation

1. Parent/guardians and unaccompanied youth shall be informed of their right to transportation before they select a school for attendance.
2. In order to avoid forced school transfers, at a parent/guardian's request, transportation shall be arranged without delay and provided to and from the school

of origin for the entire time the child or unaccompanied youth has a right to attend that school.

3. The length of commute will only be considered in determining the feasibility of placement in the school of origin based on potential harm to the student.
4. In addition to transportation to and from the school of origin upon request, children and youth shall also be provided with other transportation services comparable to those offered to other students.
5. If the homeless student or unaccompanied youth is living and attending school in Bonneville Joint School District, the District will arrange transportation.
6. If the student or unaccompanied youth is living in Bonneville School District but attending school in another, or attending school in this District but living in another, this District will follow the inter-district transportation agreement to determine who is required to arrange transportation.