

HOMELESS STUDENTS

Children who meet the Federal definition of "homeless" will be provided educational services in the same manner as all other students of the District. Homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and the District will work with homeless students and families to provide stability in school attendance and other services.

Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and include those who meet any of the following criteria:

- A. share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
- B. live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- C. live in emergency or transitional shelters;
- D. are abandoned in hospitals;
- E. awaiting for foster care placement;
- F. have a primary night time residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, or
- G. live in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting; or

are migratory children who are living in circumstances described in A-G above.

The District shall remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless students in schools in the District. Homeless students shall be enrolled immediately, even if they do not have the necessary enrollment documentation such as immunization and health records, proof of residency or guardianship, birth certificate, school records, and other documentation.

Homeless students will be provided services comparable to other students in the District, including:

- A. Transportation services;
- B. Educational services for which the homeless student meets eligibility criteria including services provided under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or similar State or local programs, educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency;
- C. Programs in vocational and technical education;
- D. Programs for high ability students;
- E. School nutrition programs;
- F. Before-and-after school programs; and
- G. Preschool programs.

Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin or the local attendance area school, according to the child's best interest. The school of origin is the school that the student attended when permanently housed or last enrolled. The local attendance area school is any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.

Homeless students have the right to dispute their school assignment, if their assignment is other than their school of origin. In determining the best interest of the student, the District shall, to the extent

feasible, keep the student in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the homeless student's parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth. If the student is sent to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian, a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal, will be provided to the homeless student's parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth. If there is an enrollment dispute, the student will be immediately enrolled in the school in which the parent or guardian seeks enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent, guardian, or homeless child will be informed of the District's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The District liaison will carry out the dispute resolution as provided by state law.

The School Board requires that these rights and the dispute process be communicated to the parent or guardian of the homeless student or unaccompanied youth.

In addition to notifying the parent or guardian of the homeless student or unaccompanied youth of the rights described above, the District shall post public notice of educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness in each school, and at locations frequented by parents or guardians and unaccompanied youths, in a manner and form understandable to them.

The Superintendent will appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children who will perform the duties as assigned by the Superintendent and proscribed by law. Liaison will participate in professional development and other technical assistance activities as determined appropriate by the State Coordinator. The Liaison will ensure that:

- A. Homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- B. Homeless children and youth are enrolled in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed within the District;
- C. School personnel providing McKinney-Vento services receive sufficient professional development and other support;
- D. Homeless families and homeless children and youth receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
- E. Homeless families and youth have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible including through the Head Start Act, early intervention services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and other preschool programs.
- F. That school personnel, service providers, advocates working with homeless families, parents, guardians and homeless children and youths are informed of the duties of the liaison.
- G. Parents and guardians of homeless youth are informed of educational and related opportunities and are provided meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
- H. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act.
- I. Parents and guardians of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin and are assisted in accessing transportation services.
- J. Unaccompanied youths are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same state academic standards as established for other children and youths, are informed of the status of unaccompanied youths as independent students under section 40 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20U.S.C. 1087vv), and the rights of unaccompanied youths to receive verification of this status from the local liaison.

The homeless liaison will assist, to the extent feasible, the homeless students and their parent(s) or guardian(s) or unaccompanied homeless students in their efforts to provide documentation to meet State and local requirements for entry into school.

At the request of the parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the local homeless liaison, transportation shall be provided for a homeless student to and from the school of origin as follows:

- A. If the homeless student continues to live in the district in which the school of origin is located, transportation will be provided in accordance with District policy/administrative guidelines.
- B. If the homeless student moves to an area served by another corporation, though continuing his/her education at the school of origin, the corporation of origin and the corporation in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. If the corporations cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

All records for homeless students shall be maintained so that they are available in a timely fashion and can be transferred promptly as necessary. All records regarding a homeless student shall be treated as a student education record consistent with policy. Further, a homeless child's living situation shall not be deemed directory information.

No Board policy, administrative procedure, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless children.

42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq. (McKinney - Vento Homeless Assistance Act)
I.C. 9-24-3-1

Revised [Date]