

# Homeless Policy

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## *Homeless Children and Youth Policy*

No student shall be discriminated against, segregated nor stigmatized based on their homeless status. Barriers to the enrollment and retention of Homeless Children and Youth (HCY) are diminished as much as is reasonably possible. Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular nighttime residence including but not limited to the following:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
3. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters.
4. Abandoned in hospitals.
5. Awaiting foster care placement.
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings.
8. Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.
9. Living as run-away children.
10. Abandoned or forced out of homes by parents/guardians or caretakers.
11. Living as school age unwed mothers in houses for unwed mothers if they have no other living accommodations.

The Title I Coordinator serves as Homeless Education Liaison and ensures that HCY are: identified, enrolled in school, receiving appropriated educational services, and informed of available resources and opportunities. Additionally, the Liaison shall perform the following tasks:

1. Disseminate public notice of McKinney-Vento rights in locations frequented by parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth, in a manner and form understandable to parents, guardians, and youth.
2. Be capable of carrying out duties described in the McKinney-Vento Act.
3. Coordinate the delivery of services with the local agencies that provide services to homeless children and youth and families,
4. Facilitate the transfer of records from other schools districts the student attended,
5. Ensure all staff are trained regarding HCY,
6. Ensure homeless students have appropriate transportation to and from school.
7. Communicate with state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive and affordable housing,

8. Ensure that a public notice of the educational rights of HCY is appropriately and timely posted.

Educational Rights & Requirements  
(National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth)  
[The McKinney-Vento Act, as amended](#)

#### Enrollment and Participation

- Homeless youth must be immediately enrolled in school, even if they have missed enrollment deadlines.
- Policies must be developed, reviewed, and revised to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of homeless students in school, including barriers due to fees, fines, and absences.
- If a dispute arises over eligibility, school selection or enrollment, the child or youth must be immediately enrolled in the school in which the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth seeks enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.
- In the case of a dispute, written explanations must be provided of decisions related to school selection or enrollment made by the school including the right to appeal.

#### Credit Accrual and College Readiness

- The liaison must ensure that unaccompanied homeless youth have opportunities to meet the same State academic achievement standards as the State establishes for other children and youth, including by implementing procedures to remove barriers that prevent homeless youth from receiving credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed at a prior school.
- The liaison must ensure that unaccompanied homeless youth are informed of their status as independent students for college financial aid and may obtain assistance to receive verification for the FAFSA.
- The liaison must ensure eligible homeless children can access early intervention services under IDEA Part C.
- The liaison must coordinate McKinney-Vento and special education services within the LEA,

#### Confidentiality

- Schools must treat information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation as a student education record, subject to all the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

#### Access to HUD Homeless Assistance

- The Liaison is authorized to affirm whether children and youth meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition of homelessness, to qualify them for HUD homeless assistance programs.
- The Liaison must refer homeless families and students to housing services, in addition to other services.

#### Foster Care HCY/Local Child Welfare Agency

- The liaison will assist the child welfare agency to develop a transportation plan to maintain foster youth in school of origin.
- The liaison will ensure that foster youth in need of transportation to the school of origin promptly receive it in a cost-effective manner, and in accordance with the child welfare agency's authority to use child welfare funding available under section 475(4)(A) of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act to provide transportation.
- The liaison will ensure that if there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to the school of origin, LEAs will provide it if:
  - They are reimbursed by the child welfare agency;
  - The LEA agrees to pay the costs; or
  - The LEA and the child welfare agency agree to share the costs.
- The Liaison shall be the designated point of contact for the local child welfare agency
- Unaccompanied homeless youth age 14 and older are exempted from the parental consent requirement to receive mental health assessments and services

HCY Education Dispute Policy and Procedures: HCY students have the same rights and responsibilities as Non-HCY students, as outlined in the *ALL* Handbook. Properly identified HCY students accused of an infraction are entitled to appeal administrative expulsions or suspensions to the *AESS* Governing Board during a regularly scheduled meeting or at the prerogative of the Board, a special meeting. A written request for a hearing must be received five or more working days prior to a regularly scheduled Board meeting. A quorum of Board members must be present to consider an appeal. HCY students may remain enrolled until the dispute is settled, however any student who is disruptive or who presents a viable risk to other students, staff members, or school property may not remain on campus. Written Governing Board decisions will be provided and, for HCY students, Board decisions for HCY student may be appealed at the State-level.