

PANGBURN
SCHOOL
DISTRICT

Table of Contents

Statement of Philosophy

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth

Enrollment

Guardianship

Residency

School Selection

Lunch Waiver

Fee Waiver

Comparable Services

Transportation

Complaint/Dispute Resolution Process

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

It is the belief of the _____ Public School District that all students can and will learn. The McKinney-Vento Homeless program removes barriers to learning for homeless children and youth. All homeless children and youth will be served using all resources available to the district.

DEFINITION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The term 'homeless children and youths' means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to economic hardship.

It includes children and youth who:

- are temporarily sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- are living in motels, hotels, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- are living in emergency shelters
- are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement
- have a nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- are runaway children or children who are abandoned

Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) will be considered homeless if they meet the above definition.

Homeless status is determined in cooperation with parents or in the case of unaccompanied youth by the program social worker and/or district program liaison. Homeless status may be documented through a variety of forms such Residency Form, McKinney-Vento Referral Form and/or through direct contact with school staff.

ENROLLMENT

The terms 'enroll' and 'enrollment' are defined to mean attending school and participating fully in school activities.

The school selected shall immediately enroll the child/youth, even if the child or youth lacks records normally required for enrollment. Records will immediately be requested from the previous school.

Homeless students who do not live with their parents or guardians may enroll themselves in school.

RESIDENCY

A homeless child or youth is a resident if the child is personally present somewhere within the district with a purpose to remain but not necessarily to remain permanently.

The child or youth shall be considered a resident when living with a parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis not solely for school purposes or for participation in extra curricular activities.

1. Homeless children, youth and unaccompanied youth will be enrolled immediately, even if they lack immunizations and/or records ordinarily required for enrollment. Documents and records that can not be used for enrollment delays include but are not limited to:
 - A. transcripts/school records
 - B. immunization, health, medical records
 - C. birth certificates
 - D. proof of residency
 - E. proof of guardianship

Residency cont.

2. Once the student is enrolled it is the responsibility of the school to contact the previous school and request records.
3. The program social worker should be contacted as soon as possible to assist the family with supplies and other needs. This can be done through the building contact for homeless or by contacting the program social worker directly.

SCHOOL SELECTION

Placement in a school shall, according to the child's best interest,

- Continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness, in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year, or for the duration of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year.
- Enroll the child or youth in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.
- Parents/guardians may request their child attend any school in the Green Bay Area School District and to the extent feasible the district will try to comply with these requests.

In determining the best interests of the child or youth, to the extent feasible the child or youth will be kept in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, for the duration of homelessness.

In the case of unaccompanied youth, the program liaison or designee will assist in placement or enrollment decisions considering the requests of such unaccompanied youth.

The school of origin means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parents or guardian or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

LUNCH WAIVER

1. When a student is identified as homeless they are automatically waived with or without paperwork. This is at the INITIAL point of identification.
2. The free status stays with that student the entire school year until the student is "permanently" housed. Then they must complete the paperwork/application.

FEE WAIVER

Student fees for the purposes of serving homeless children include but are not limited to: fees for field trips, fees for Art courses/projects, Foods courses, Technical Education courses/projects, and yearly class fees. These fees are to be automatically waived. The waiving of fees will be done directly by the program social worker and/or a building administrator.

To encourage all homeless students to participate in all school activities, payment of all student fees will be waived if the student is identified as homeless.

If necessary, the Homeless Donation Account may provide reimbursement to schools for field trips that are out of pocket expenses for homeless students. This account may also be used to pay for expenses such as packets for picture day, book fairs, etc... These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by the program social worker, and are dependent upon a number of factors which may include available funds in the Donation Account.

The wording of this section is dependent upon district decisions on waivers for homeless students.

COMPARABLE SERVICES

Each homeless child or youth shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, such as

- Preschool programs
- School supplies
- Transportation services
- Educational services for which the child or youth meets eligibility criteria such as ELL or special education programs
- Programs for "At Risk" students
- Programs for gifted and talented students
- School nutrition programs
- Title I services

TRANSPORTATION

1. At the request of a homeless child's parent/guardian or the program social worker in the cases of unaccompanied youth, transportation to the school of origin will be provided to homeless children and youth for the duration of homelessness, following best interest provisions (outlined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act under Local Education Agency Requirements).
 - A. In order for transportation to be set up, the program social worker will determine with the family the best means of transportation.
 - B. If it is determined that the student would be best served (especially younger children) on a school bus, an alternate form of transportation is immediately arranged until school bussing can be arranged through the transportation department.
 - C. At the time of a cab being set up, the program social worker will email the transportation department to request bussing. Once a bus is arranged, the transportation department will email the program social worker to stop cab service due to bussing being arranged. School and family are informed by the program social worker. If there is no bus available, a cab continues unless a more economical and appropriate option can be worked out between the program worker and family.

Transportation cont.

- D. When permanent housing is secured, the parent/guardian may choose to keep the child or youth in the school of origin until the end of the academic year but the parent/guardian is then responsible for transportation. At this point, parents/guardians can choose to enroll the child in the school in the attendance area in which they live.
2. When the child, youth or unaccompanied homeless student's temporary residence and school of origin are two different school districts, the districts will collaborate on the method and cost of transportation. The districts will share the cost of transportation.
3. Refugee students who are not independently housed may be considered homeless unless families choose to not be considered so. The homeless social worker/interpreters will discuss McKinney-Vento with families to determine if they are homeless. It will be determined based on where the student resides and where the program is for the refugee students if transportation is necessary. If it

is deemed unsafe or too far for a non-English speaking homeless student to walk or arrange for their own transportation, then they will be transported the same as other homeless students. The guidelines listed above will be followed in those situations as w

COMPLAINT/DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

WRITTEN NOTIFICATION FORM

This form should be completed by a school administrator or Homeless Liaison when the parent's/guardian's request to return to the school of origin is denied. Fax completed form to _____ and give original to the parent/guardian.

Date: _____ School: _____

Name and Title of Person Completing Form: _____

In compliance with Section 722(g)(3)(E) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001, the following written notification is provided to:

Parent/Guardian: _____

Student(s): _____

After reviewing your request to enroll the student(s) listed above, the enrollment request is denied. This determination was based upon:

Please have parent/guardian sign and date below to indicate that they have received a copy of this form.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

- You have the right to appeal this decision by completing the attached Dispute Resolution Form or provide your explanation verbally to the district's Homeless Liaison: _____
 - Resolution by the Homeless Liaison will be made within 7 business days of receipt of Dispute Resolution Form.
 - If the matter is not resolved at that level, the Superintendent shall issue the District's decision within 10 business days of the second dispute by parent/guardian.
 - If the matter is not resolved at that level, the parent/guardian may appeal this decision by contacting the Arkansas Department of Education Homeless Education Coordinator (see contact information below).
- The student listed above has the right to enroll immediately in the requested school, including full participation in all school activities pending resolution of the dispute.
- You may contact the state coordinator if further help is needed:
State Coordinator for Homeless Education
Arkansas Department of Education
Office – 501-683-5428
FAX – 501-682-5136
- You may seek the assistance of advocates or attorneys.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION FORM

This form is to be completed by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth when a dispute arises over school enrollment. The information may be shared verbally with the Homeless Liaison instead of completing this form. The Homeless Liaison can be contacted at _____.

Date submitted: _____

Student(s): _____

Person completing form: _____

Relation to student(s): _____

I may be contacted at (phone or e-mail): _____

I wish to appeal the enrollment decision made by: _____

School: _____

I have been provided with a written explanation of the school's decision (check one):
_____ Yes _____ No

You may include a written explanation to support your appeal in this space, or you may provide your explanation verbally.

Signature of person submitting dispute: _____

Return completed Form to school or Homeless Education Program office.

-----For School Use-----

Fax a copy of this completed form to the _____.

Give a copy to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.

Maintain the original at school

Date received by Homeless Liaison: _____

Potential Warning Signs of Homelessness

Note: While these are considered warning signs, please recognize that they only offer general guidance. There is significant variability within the school-age homeless population. Individual students may differ significantly from the following general characteristics.

Lack of Continuity in Education

- Attendance at many different schools
- Lack of personal records needed to enroll
- Inability to pay fees
- Gaps in skill development
- Mistaken diagnosis of abilities
- Poor organizational skills
- Poor ability to conceptualize

Poor Health/Nutrition

- Lack of immunizations and/or immunization records
- Unmet medical and dental needs
- Increased vulnerability to colds & flu
- Respiratory problems
- Skin rashes
- Chronic hunger (may hoard food)
- Fatigue (may fall asleep in class)

Transportation and Attendance Problems

- Erratic attendance and tardiness
- Numerous absences
- Lack of participation in after-school activities
- Lack of participation in field trips
- Absences on days when students bring special treats from home
- Inability to contact parents

Poor Hygiene

- Lack of shower facilities/washers, etc.
- Wearing same clothes for several days
- Inconsistent grooming – well-groomed one day and poorly groomed the next

Lack of Privacy/Personal Space After School

- Consistent lack of preparation for school
- Incomplete or missing homework (no place to work or keep supplies)
- Unable to complete special projects (no access to supplies)
- Lack of basic school supplies
- Loss of books and other supplies on a regular basis

- Concern for safety of belongings
- Refusing invitations from classmates

Social and Behavioral Concerns

- A marked change in behavior
- Poor/short attention span
- Poor self esteem
- Extreme shyness
- Unwillingness to risk forming relationships with peers and teachers
- Difficulty socializing at recess
- Difficulty trusting people
- Aggression
- "Old" beyond years
- Protective of parents
- Clinging behavior
- Developmental delays
- Fear of abandonment
- School phobia (student wants to be with parent)
- Need for immediate gratification
- Anxiety late in the school day

Reaction/Statements by Parent, Guardian, or Child

- Exhibiting anger or embarrassment when asked about current address
- Mention of staying with grandparents, other relatives, friends, or in a motel or comments, such as:
 - "I don't remember the name of our previous school."
 - "We've been moving around a lot."
 - "Our address is new; I can't remember it." (may hide lack of permanent address)
 - "We're staying with relatives until we get settled."
 - "We're going through a bad time right now."
 - "We've been unpacking, traveling, etc.," to explain poor appearance and/or hygiene.

(These warning signs were adapted from flyers developed by Illinois and Pennsylvania Departments of Education)