

STUDENTS

Education for Homeless Children and YouthI. DEFINITION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN OR YOUTH

A homeless child or youth includes:

- A. One who lacks a fixed, regular nighttime residence including;
 - 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 the lack or alternative adequate accommodations;
 - 3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
 - 4. Are abandoned in hospitals;
 - 5. Awaiting foster placement;
 - 6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
 - 7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
 - 8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples;
 - 9. A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
 - 10. An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized.

- B. Considerations of the relative permanence of living arrangements will be made on a case by case basis. In general, children or youth living on the streets or in welfare hotels, emergency or transitional housing shelters, cars, abandoned buildings, and other inadequate accommodations will be considered homeless. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing or economic hardship may qualify as homeless.

- C. Unaccompanied youth: means a youth not in physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes; any youth on their own in any of the homeless situations described in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act.

II. THE HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM

A. Program Model:

The Homeless Education Program is an integrated support model that serves homeless children and youth in Kennewick School District either within their school of origin or the school of their choice within the district. This includes all schools in

the district and the alternative education program. Services are provided through existing programs and mechanisms that integrate homeless individuals with non-homeless individuals. This model is designed to reduce isolation, maximize stability and maintain consistency for this population of children and youth.

B. Support Components:

1. A Liaison for Homeless Students and other members of the Homeless Education Program team will coordinate the following services to provide that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has an opportunity for equal access to an education in the Kennewick School District as provided to other children and youth.
2. Records and Enrollment
 - a. If critical enrollment records are not immediately available for homeless children, school staff will work with these children and other agencies to prevent unnecessary delays. Homeless Education Program advocates will work with families to explain and assist with enrollment. Documents will be obtained in a timely manner.
 - b. School staff will consider the impact that attendance area boundaries have on homeless students and when appropriate will modify these requirements to meet the best interest of the homeless student. Homeless children will be allowed to continue in their school of origin for the remainder of the academic year or if the child becomes homeless between academic years for the following academic year unless to do so would negatively impact other children or the school district's educational programs. To the extent feasible, placement requests made by a parent or guardian will be honored, unless otherwise required to meet the needs of other students or the district's education programs. In all cases of school placement the best interest of the homeless child will be given serious consideration.
 - c. When request for records for a homeless child is made by an enrolling district, the records will be sent in a timely fashion.
3. Attendance
 - a. Homeless Education Program staff will monitor attendance to ensure that families know that transportation is available and to problem solve with parents if excessive absence occurs.
4. Transportation
 - a. Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a

different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

5. Success in School

- a. In-service will be provided to assist staff in such areas as identification of homeless children, awareness of the rights and needs of homeless children and their families, and strategies for working with homeless children.
- b. Supplemental instruction and extended year programs such as summer school and homework centers will be identified and made available as resources allow.
- c. Assessment of educational needs will, as necessary, be expedited to help provide appropriate access to programs and services.
- d. Services for preschool students may be provided through the ECEAP program.

6. Coordination and Collaboration for Comprehensive Services

- a. The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issue of transportation and records transfer; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. His coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students where such children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, such as schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.
- b. Homeless children and youth who are eligible will be enrolled in school food programs.

III. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

A. Dispute Resolution Procedure

The District shall insure the child/youth attends the school in which they sought enrollment while the dispute process is being carried out.

Notification of Appeal Process

If the district seeks to place a homeless child in a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the parent, the school district shall inform the parent of the right to appeal. The district shall provide the parent with written notice including:

1. An explanation of the child's placement;
2. Notification of the parent's right to appeal;
3. A description of the dispute resolution process; and
4. A summary of the federal legislation governing placement of homeless students (McKinney- Vento Act).

B. Appeal to the School District Liaison - Level I

If the parent disagrees with the district's placement decision, the parent may appeal by filing a written request for dispute resolution with the district's homeless liaison or a designee.

The liaison must log the complaint, including the date and time the complaint was filed.

1. A copy of the complaint must be forwarded to the liaison's supervisor and the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee.
2. Within five working days of receiving the complaint, the liaison must provide the parent with a written decision and notification of the parent's right to appeal.
3. If the parent wishes to appeal, the liaison shall provide the parent with an appeals package containing:
 - a. the parent's grievance;
 - b. the decision rendered at Level I; and
 - c. additional information provided by the parent and/or homeless liaison.

C. Appeal to the School Superintendent or Superintendent's Designee - Level II

The parent may appeal the district's liaison's decision to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee using the appeals package provided at Level I.

1. Within five working days of the Level I decision the parent must request a conference and submit the appeals package to the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee;
2. The Superintendent or designee will arrange for a personal conference to be held with the parent within five working days of receiving the Level I appeals package.

3. Within five working days of the conference with the parent the Superintendent or designee will provide the parent with a written decision and notification of the parent's right to appeal.
4. A copy of the Superintendent's or designee's decision will be forwarded to the district's homeless liaison.

D. Appeal to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction - Level III

The parent may appeal the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee's decision to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

1. The parent must request, within five working days of the parent's notification of the Level II decision, that the Superintendent or designee initiate a review by the OSPI;
2. The Superintendent or designee shall immediately forward all written documentation and related paperwork to OSPI's homeless education coordinator;
3. OSPI shall make a decision within five working days of receiving the appeal;
4. OSPI's decision will be forwarded to the district's homeless liaison. The liaison will distribute the decision to the parent and the local Superintendent or designee.

The final decision made by OSPI shall be the final resolution between the disputing LEA's for placement of a homeless child or youth in the district.

Legal References: [Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act 1994](#)
 [RCW 28A.225.215](#) Enrollment of Children Without Legal Residence
 [WAC 392-141-148](#) Special Transportation
 [Title I, Part C](#) No Child Left Behind
 [42 U.S.C. 11431](#) at seq. McKinney-Vento homeless Assistance Act

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