

## HOMELESS CHILDREN REGULATION

The District shall maintain forms provided by the Commissioner of Education for designating a homeless child's District of attendance and shall make such forms available to a homeless child who seeks admission to school or to the parent or person in parental relation who seeks to enroll such child in school. The District's McKinney-Vento liaison for homeless students shall assist the homeless child and/or parent or person in parental relation in understanding their rights under the law and provide them with information regarding the educational and related opportunities available to them.

### Admission Procedures

Upon identifying a student experiencing homelessness, the Superintendent of Schools, his/her designee, or the McKinney-Vento liaison shall immediately:

1. ensure that the Commissioner of Education's designation form has been completed;
2. admit the homeless child even if the child or his/her parent or guardian is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment or has missed application or enrollment deadlines, or there is an unresolved dispute regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment;
3. determine whether the designation made by the designator is consistent with the best interests of the homeless child;
4. where applicable, contact the school district where the child's records are located for a copy of the homeless child's school records;
5. where applicable, forward a copy of the designation form to the Commissioner of Education and/or the child's school district of origin;
6. notify the child and/or the parent or guardian of the educational and related opportunities available to homeless children including transportation to the district of origin, and help arrange for transportation and other services such as those under Title I, Section 504, IDEA, and federal school meals;
7. ensure that the child receives the educational services for which they are eligible;
8. ensure that parents and/or guardians are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in their child's education;
9. ensure that homeless children and their families receive referrals for health care services, dental services, mental health services, substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services;
10. ensure that any enrollment disputes are promptly mediated in accordance with law and regulation;
11. assist in obtaining required immunizations, health screenings, or immunization or health records; and
12. when assisting unaccompanied youth, ensure that the youth is enrolled in school, provided opportunities to meet the same academic standards as other children and youths, and informed of their status as an independent student for purposes of applying for federal financial aid for college and their right to receive verification of this status.

School placement decisions for homeless children will be based on the best interest of the child and shall:

1. presume that keeping the child in the district of origin is in the child's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent and/or guardian or unaccompanied youth; and
2. consider student-centered factors such as the effect of mobility on student achievement, education, the health and safety of the child, giving priority to the wishes of the child's parent and/or guardian or unaccompanied youth.

If the District determines that it is not in the best interests of the student to attend the school district of origin or the school requested by the designator, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall provide the parent and/or guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision, together with a statement regarding the right to appeal the decision, in a manner and form understandable to such parent and/or guardian or unaccompanied youth. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall refer any such dispute to the district's McKinney-Vento liaison for resolution. During the pendency of any dispute, including all available appeals, the homeless child will be enrolled in the designated school district and provided with requested transportation.

### Transportation

The District, upon notice of a child's homelessness status and designation by the parent and/or guardian or unaccompanied youth as the district of attendance, shall provide transportation services to the homeless child in the most cost effective manner, unless the child is entitled to receive transportation from the Department of Social Services. In accordance with applicable law:

1. where a child attends the district of current location, but not the school of origin, the District shall provide transportation to such child on the same basis provided to resident students;
2. where a child attends the school of origin, the District shall provide transportation to and from the child's temporary housing location and the school for the duration of homelessness and through the end of the school year in which the child becomes permanently housed and one additional year if that year constitutes the child's terminal year in the designated school;
3. where such transportation is in excess of fifty (50) miles one way, such transportation shall only be provided if the Commissioner of Education determines that it is in the best interest of the child;
4. the District shall provide transportation for the duration of the child's homelessness, as well as during the pendency of any disputes;
5. if the District recommends that a homeless child attend a summer educational program and lack of transportation is a barrier to participation, the District shall provide transportation; and
6. the District shall provide transportation to extracurricular or academic activities where the homeless child is eligible for such activities and a lack of transportation is a barrier to participation.

### Dispute Resolution Process

If, following a review of the designation form, the Superintendent or his/her designee finds that the student is either not entitled to status as a homeless child or unaccompanied youth, to attend the District's schools, or to receive transportation (if requested), the McKinney-Vento liaison will contact the parent, guardian, or child to provide them an opportunity to present the District with additional information. The liaison will then carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.

Following the resolution process, the Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall provide the parent, guardian, or child with a written final determination regarding homeless status, enrollment, school selection, and/or transportation. Such notice shall provide an explanation of and/or rationale for the District's determination and include a statement regarding the right to appeal and the name, address, and telephone number of the McKinney-Vento liaison. The notice shall also include, as an attachment, the form petition for commencing an appeal to the Commissioner of Education.

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee must ensure that the District's final decision is delivered to the parent, guardian, or child in a timely manner. The student shall remain enrolled and be provided with transportation (if requested) until at least thirty (30) days following receipt of the District's written notice of its final determination.

If the parent, guardian, or student commences an appeal to the Commissioner of Education within thirty (30) days of the District's final determination, the homeless child or youth will be permitted to continue to attend the school he/she is enrolled in at the time of the appeal and/or receive transportation to that school until the Commissioner of Education renders a decision.

Adoption date: