

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

JBD

STUDENTS HOMELESS STUDENTS

~~MAY 18, 2011~~

Identification

In collaboration with school personnel and community organizations, the district liaison will identify children and youth in transition in the district, both in and out of school. The district liaison will train school personnel on possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity, and respectfulness when identifying families and youth as in transition, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the district liaison.

Due to the requirement to identify students quickly so that they can be enrolled without delay, building personnel with whom parents are likely to have initial contact need to be knowledgeable of required procedures and best practices. Other agencies and resources in the community may have contact with families in transition and also contribute to timely identification. Families and youths need to be made aware of their rights and support available through the *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act* as the first step to stabilize children's and youth's education.

Information, including a McKinney-Vento Student Residency Affidavit completed and signed by the guardian or unaccompanied youth, is sent to the district liaison. Eligibility must be determined initially without all of the information typically required of families so as not to delay enrollment. Subsequent to the initial determination, however, follow-up procedures confirm that eligibility was warranted or needs to be denied.

The district liaison will keep data on the number of children and youth in transition in the district; where they are living; their academic achievement (including performance on state and districtwide assessments); and the reasons for any enrollment delays, interruptions in their education, or school transfers.

School Selection

Each child and youth in transition has the right to remain at his or her school of origin. In selecting a school, children and youth in transition will remain at their schools of origin to the extent feasible, unless that is against the parent or youth's wishes. Students may remain at their schools of origin the entire time they are in transition and until the end of any academic year in which they become permanently housed. The same applies if a child or youth loses his or her housing between academic years.

Feasibility will be based on the needs and interests of the particular student and the parent or youth's wishes. Potential feasibility considerations include:

- The age of the child or youth
- The distance of a commute and the impact it may have on the student's education
- Personal safety issues
- A student's need for special instruction (e.g., special education and related services)
- The length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or other temporary location
- The time remaining in the school year

Services that are required to be provided, including transportation to and from the school of origin and services under federal and other programs, will not be considered in determining feasibility.

Enrollment

The school selected for enrollment must enroll any child or youth in transition immediately. Enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including:

- Proof of residency
- Transcripts/school record (The enrolling school must contact the student's previous school to obtain school records. Initial placement of students whose records are not immediately available can be made based on the student's age and information gathered from the student, parent, and previous schools or teachers.)
- Immunizations or immunization/health/medical/physical records (If necessary, the school must refer students to the local liaison to assist with obtaining immunizations and/or immunization and other medical records. Health records may often be obtained from previous schools or state registries, and school- or community-based clinics can initiate immunizations when needed.)
- Proof of guardianship
- Birth certificate
- Any other document requirements
- Unpaid school fees
- Lack of uniforms or clothing that conforms to dress codes
- Any factor related to the student's living situation

Unaccompanied youth must also be enrolled immediately in school. They may either enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling, or district liaison.

Transportation

At a parent's request, transportation will be provided to and from the school of origin for a child or youth in transition if determined to be in the child's or youth's best interest.

Transportation will be provided for the entire time the child or youth has a right to attend that school, as defined above, including during pending disputes. The district liaison will request transportation to and from the school of origin for unaccompanied youth. The length of the commute will be considered only in determining the feasibility of placement in the school of origin based on potential harm to the student, as discussed above. Parents and unaccompanied youth must be informed of this right to transportation before they select a school for attendance.

Requests will be processed and transportation arranged without delay. If the student in transition is living and attending school in this district, this district will arrange transportation. If the student in transition is living in this district but attending school in another, or attending school in this district but living in another, this district will coordinate with the neighboring district to arrange transportation. Inter-district disputes will not result in a student in transition missing school. If such a dispute arises, this district will arrange transportation and immediately bring the matter to the attention of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. In addition to receiving transportation to and from the school of origin upon request, children and youth in transition will also be provided with other transportation services comparable to those offered to housed students.

Services

Children and youth in transition will be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the selected school, including:

- Transportation (as described above)
- Title I, Part A, services (as described below)
- Educational services for which the student meets eligibility criteria, including special education and related services and programs for English language learners
- Vocational and technical educational programs
- Gifted and talented programs
- Before-school and after-school programs

School personnel must also inform parents of all educational and related opportunities available to their children and provide parents with meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education.

Disputes

If a dispute arises over any issue covered by this policy, the district Homeless Dispute Resolution Procedures will be followed. Meanwhile, the child or youth in transition will be admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute. The student will also have the rights of a student in transition to all appropriate educational services, transportation, free meals, and Title I, Part A, services while the dispute is pending.

The school where the dispute arises will provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal and will refer the parent or youth to the district liaison immediately. The district liaison will ensure that the student is enrolled in the requested school and receiving other services to which he or she is entitled and will resolve the dispute as expeditiously as possible. The parent or unaccompanied youth will be given every opportunity to participate meaningfully in the resolution of the dispute. The district liaison will keep records of all disputes in order to determine whether particular issues or schools are delaying or denying the enrollment of children and youth in transition repeatedly.

The parent, unaccompanied youth or school district may appeal the school district's decision as provided in the state's dispute resolution process.

Free Meals

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has determined that all children and youth in transition are automatically eligible for free meals. On the day a child or youth in transition enrolls in school, the enrolling school must submit the student's name to the district's Food Services Department for immediate processing.

Title I, Part A

Children and youth in transition are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services, regardless of what school they attend. The district will reserve such funds as are necessary to provide services comparable to those provided to Title I students to children and youth in transition attending non-participating schools. Reserved funds will be used to provide education-related support services to children and youth in transition.

Our district's Title I plan will be coordinated with our McKinney-Vento services, through collaboration between the Title I Coordinator and the district Liaison. Children and youth in transition will be assessed, reported on, and included in accountability systems, as required by federal law and U.S. Department of Education Regulations and Policy Guidance.

Coordination and Training

The district liaison will coordinate with and seek support from the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, public and private service providers in the community, housing and placement agencies, the pupil transportation department, local liaisons in neighboring districts, and other districts and agencies. The district liaison will assist the school in making referrals to appropriate health care services, including dental and mental health services. Coordination will include conducting outreach and training to those agencies and participating in the local continuum of care, homeless coalition, homeless steering committee and other relevant groups. Both public and private agencies will be encouraged to support the local liaison and our schools in implementing this policy.

The district liaison will provide annual training to increase staff awareness of homelessness, facilitate immediate enrollment, ensure compliance with this policy, and increase sensitivity to children and youth in transition.

References

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. Sections 11431-11436

Title I, Part A, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Sections 6311-6315

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Sections 1400 et seq.

Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, 42 U.S.C. Sections 1751 et seq.

June 5, 1992 Policy of the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Livonia Public Schools School District Homeless Dispute Resolution Procedure

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

It is the responsibility of the Livonia Public Schools School District (LPS) to resolve complaints or disputes regarding individuals covered by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. When a complaint or dispute arises, the following procedures are to be followed:

Local Level

LPS Designated Homeless Liaison

If a question concerning the education of a homeless child arises, the first person to contact in the school district is the homeless liaison. LPS is required to have a designated homeless liaison, with someone in every school able to identify said homeless liaison. If there is a complaint about services for the homeless student(s), the complainant is to be provided a copy of this complaint procedure.

- The homeless liaison should discuss the complaint with the complainant and the complainant is to be provided copies of the policies that the LPS Board of Education has adopted concerning the education of homeless children and youth.
- A determination is to be made as to whether the requested services for the homeless student are consistent with LPS Board of Education policy.
- If the complaint is not resolved, the complainant will be advised to present it in writing to the homeless liaison.
- A written proposed resolution of the complaint or plan of action is to be provided to the complainant within five (5) business days of the date of receipt of the written complaint.

Director of Elementary or Secondary Education

If the complaint is not resolved with the homeless liaison within five (5) days, it may be taken to the district's Director of Elementary or Director of Secondary Education (as applicable). In addition to presenting the written complaint, an appointment will be made for the complainant to meet with the appropriate Director to discuss the complaint. At the end of the discussion with the appropriate director, a written resolution will be provided within five (5) business days of the date of the discussion.

State Level

Michigan Department of Education (MDE)

If the complaint is not resolved in a satisfactory manner at the local level, the complaint may be directed to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).