

BOARD of EDUCATION Fort Smith Public Schools



ACTION

TITLE: Student Handbook Proposals for 2017-2018 - #1

DATE: 4-21-2017

BACKGROUND/CONSIDERATIONS: Proposal 1 relates to Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which requires a description of how the district meets the requirements of the McKinney-Vento law in relation to homeless and foster students. Specifically, the method for meeting transportation requirements must be included. This proposed verbiage has been approved by Dana Davis, McKinney-Vento State Coordinator.

(New/added text is underlined, text to be removed from the handbook is stricken through, and handbook text unchanged is typed unchanged.)

RECOMMENDATION:

The district handbook committee recommends the following change be made to the district student handbook concerning the McKinney-Vento Homeless Program

Section I. Attendance Policies, New Letter C. (previous C and all other will move down one letter), **McKinney-Vento, page 2**

C. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Program

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Program helps remove barriers to learning for students experiencing homelessness or placement in foster care. The term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence. In an effort to identify and assist students experiencing homelessness, the district provides liaisons at both the building and district level. The liaisons are tasked with administering the regulations and procedures as outlined in the McKinney-Vento Act while complying with the provisions of the Fort Smith Public Schools Homeless Education Program. Enrollment requirement exceptions for homeless and foster care youth are listed above in “B, 1. Enrollment documentation”.

1. Transportation of Homeless and Foster Care Students – Under the “Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015” students awaiting foster care placement and students in actual foster care are eligible for the same transportation services as students designated as “homeless”. Such services will be comparable to those provided for non-homeless students.

Fort Smith Public Schools acknowledges that the responsibility for transporting children to and from school belongs to the parent. However, due to the size of the district, the student population, and the locations of various programs and schools: it is the policy of the Fort Smith Public Schools to provide transportation exceptions if a student meets at least one of the following conditions:

- a. A student attending his/her home school lives outside a two-mile radius of his/her school.
- b. A student who cannot attend his/her home school due to overcrowding. He/She will be transferred and bussed from their home school to a school that has space available at his/her grade level.
- c. Special needs students, with a qualifying disability, may be picked up at home, at a neighborhood school, or at a bus stop near their home.
- d. School to school program transfers for some secondary classes that are provided at locations other than the home school.

2. FSPS Transportation Policy for Homeless and Foster Care Students

Homeless and Foster Care Students (HFCS), that wish to attend a school outside their school of location may do so, if it is determined by the parents; the school administration; and the local welfare agency, in the case of foster care students, to be in the best interest of the child.

For the purposes of school transportation, Homeless and Foster Care (HFCS) students will be considered "at-large students" eligible to ride to or from any bus stop that serves their school of choice. (Comparable Service)*

If the school of choice is within a two mile radius of their residence, then no bus transportation will be provided. (Comparable Service)*

However, if any school within that two mile radius has a bus route that connects to their school of choice, the HFCS student may ride that bus from that school to their school of choice. This is an additional service that we provide to HFCS students and this option is not available to other students and parents. (Additional Service)**

If the school of choice or a connecting school is outside a two-mile radius of their residence, then the FSPS will make arrangements for that student to be transported from a bus stop or a neighborhood school, to the school of choice. Parents should be aware that this option may require earlier pick up /later drop off times and possibly one or more bus transfers to get the students to their destination. (Additional Service)**

Students in foster care or awaiting foster care are eligible for these same transportation services if requested by the local welfare agency. However, in order to account, control, and share transportation costs, a completed registration form, along with documentation from the Department of Human Services of each qualifying student's status (only those students requesting bus transportation), must be made and provided to the District each school year. The registration form and documentation letter should be submitted to the FSPS Homeless Liaison by September 15th of each year; who will then forward copies to the FSPS Student Services Office and the FSPS Transportation Office by October 1st of each year. If HFCS students are being transported between neighboring school districts, then both districts share the responsibility and the costs of arranging transportation details. The cost for any additional services for foster students, such as those listed above, will be the

responsibility of the local welfare agency, as stated under the provisions of the law.**

*Paragraph 3; Sect. A –Transportation Services – 42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(4) Comparable Services ** The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 and Amendments on Foster Care in Title 1 Part-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

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** The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 and Amendments on Foster Care in Title 1 Part-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

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ACTION

TITLE: Student Handbook Proposals for 2017-2018 - #2

DATE: 4/21/2017

BACKGROUND/CONSIDERATIONS: Proposal 2 relates to accounting of “parent permission days” for elementary students. Elementary attendance is recorded in half days, a.m. and p.m. This change reflects the limitation of parent permission to five a.m. and five p.m. absences. This will prevent a student from using parent permission for 10 a.m. or 10 p.m. absences which would be equivalent to 5 days but would result in missing the same part of the instructional day 10 times. We believe that 10 absences from the same instructional time frame would be damaging to a student’s academic growth.

(New/added text is underlined, text to be removed from the handbook is stricken through, and handbook text unchanged is typed unchanged.)

RECOMMENDATION:

The district handbook committee recommends the following change be made to the district student handbook concerning the accounting of elementary parent permission days.

Section I. Attendance Policies, Attendance, A. Absences, 2. Parental Permission, b., page 5

b. The student may not exceed five (5) parental permission absence days for the school year. If a student exceeds five (5) days of parental permission absences in any class for the school year, all parental permission days ~~thereafter~~ beyond the first five (5) are classified as unexcused.

For the purposes of elementary school attendance, parent permission days will be counted in the form of five (5) a.m. and five (5) p.m. absences. No more than five (5) of either a.m. or p.m. absences will be excused as parental permission.

BOARD of EDUCATION Fort Smith Public Schools



ACTION

TITLE: Student Handbook Proposals for 2017-2018 - #3

DATE: 4/21/2017

BACKGROUND/CONSIDERATIONS: Proposal 3 relates to maintaining “in process” status for a student who has not been fully immunized as required by state law. For a student to be “in process” and to prevent being excluded from school as a result of insufficient immunization, an appointment must be proven for the needed immunizations. This change would require the parent provide a hard copy of that appointment from a health care provider who will administer the needed immunizations.

(New/added text is underlined, text to be removed from the handbook is stricken through, and handbook text unchanged is typed unchanged.)

*****NOTE – Since submitting at the committee meeting on May 8, it was discovered that the location of this change was incorrect. This change is located in Section III of the handbook (listed below) instead of Section I as was previously recorded.***

RECOMMENDATION:

The district handbook committee recommends the following change be made to the district student handbook concerning the immunization requirements and “in process” status.

Section III. Student Health, G. Immunization Requirements for Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 4., page 11

A facility may temporarily admit a child provided that the child becomes appropriately immunized, is in process of receiving the needed doses of vaccine, or shows proof that he or she has applied for an exemption for those vaccines he or she has not received within thirty (30) program days after the child’s original admission. In process may only be verified with a paper copy of a scheduled appointment from a health care provider who will administer the needed immunizations. Any student without all required immunizations (or approved serology) may be excluded from school in the event his or her health is jeopardized by a communicable disease outbreak.

BOARD of EDUCATION Fort Smith Public Schools



ACTION

TITLE: Student Handbook Proposals for 2017-2018 - #4

DATE: 4/21/2017

BACKGROUND/CONSIDERATIONS: Proposal 4 relates to eligibility for athletic completion and requirements for 9th grade students participating in varsity athletics on high school athletic teams in sports not available at the junior high level.

(New/added text is underlined, text to be removed from the handbook is stricken through, and handbook text unchanged is typed unchanged.)

RECOMMENDATION:

The district handbook committee recommends the following change be made to the district student handbook concerning student eligibility for athletic competition.

IX. Eligibility for Athletic Competition, In District Transfers, page 24

A student who chooses to transfer schools within the district and who is entering the eighth, ninth, eleventh, or twelfth grade will lose athletic eligibility for that school year unless the student attended the receiving school the entire previous year. If a ninth grade student entering the tenth grade desires to transfer out of his attendance zone, that student must inform the Fort Smith Public Schools' Director of Athletics and Student Activities. If a student has made a legal transfer to a school in 7th grade or 10th grade by July 1 then chooses to return to his/her home attendance area school, eligibility will be lost for 365 days.

A student who chooses to transfer schools within the district and is entering the eighth, ninth, eleventh, or twelfth grade will lose athletic eligibility for that school year unless the student attended the receiving school the entire previous year. A ninth grade student may participate in a sport not offered at his/her junior high school. If a ninth grade student desires to transfer out of his/her attendance area to participate in athletics not offered at his/her junior high school, the following conditions must be met:

1. The student must be granted an Attendance Area Exception from Student Services for the following school year. The Attendance Area Exception will take effect the fall semester of the tenth grade year.

2. The student and his/her parent or guardian must sign a Declaration of Intent with the Fort Smith Public Schools Director of Athletics and Student Activities.

If the student returns to his/her home attendance area, athletic eligibility will be lost for 365 days. If a ninth grade student entering the tenth grade desires to transfer out of his attendance zone, that student must inform the Fort Smith Public Schools Director of Athletics and Student Activities. If the student has made a legal transfer to a school in the 7th grade or 10th grade by July 1 and then chooses to return to his/her home attendance area school, eligibility will be lost for 365 days.

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ACTION

TITLE: Student Handbook Proposals for 2017-2018 - #5

DATE: 4/21/2017

BACKGROUND/CONSIDERATIONS: Proposal 5 relates to bus rules and an update of expectations in terms of distractive noises.

(New/added text is underlined, text to be removed from the handbook is stricken through, and handbook text unchanged is typed unchanged.)

RECOMMENDATION:

The district handbook committee recommends the following change be made to the district student handbook concerning bus rules.

XVII. Transportation Rules for Students, Bus Rules, #6, page 32

6. Students are not to eat, drink, smoke, spit, litter, use obscene language or gestures, ~~play radios/tape/dvd/MP3 players, video games or band instruments~~ or make any distracting noises at any time. Texting is allowed but voice calls are not allowed.