

Homeless Education

Code #427.00

It is the policy of the Tri-County Area School District to ensure that homeless children and youth are provided with equal access to its educational programs, have an opportunity to meet the same challenging academic standards, are not segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and to establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.

Definitions:

1. The term "homeless children and youth" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. It includes children and youth who:
 - A. Are temporarily sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason.
 - B. Are living in motels, hotels or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
 - C. Are living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters.
 - D. Are abandoned in hospitals.
 - E. Are awaiting foster care placement.
 - F. Are living in public or private places not designated for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
 - G. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings.
 - H. Are living as runaway children or children who are abandoned.
2. Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition.
3. Homeless status is determined in cooperation with parents or guardians or in the case of unaccompanied youth the local educational agency liaison. Homeless status may be documented through a variety of Department of Public instruction forms

such as Homeless Education Program: School Selection Form and/or through direct contact with District staff.

District Services:

1. The District Administrator has primary administrative-level oversight of the District's services for homeless children and youth. He/she, or a qualified administrative-level designee, shall be responsible for (A) providing any required assurances to applicable state and federal agencies that the District is complying with applicable state and federal requirements related to the education of homeless children and youth; and (B) reasonably monitoring compliance with such assurances.
2. The District Administrator shall designate a staff member who shall serve as the District's liaison for homeless children and youth. The District's liaison for homeless children and youth will work with the administrators and other District personnel to periodically review existing policies, procedures, practices, and data to identify and develop proposals to remedy and remove barriers that homeless children and youth may face in the school enrollment and admission processes, in regularly attending school, in accessing applicable support services (such as guidance counselors), in accessing academic programs, academic activities, or extracurricular activities or in receiving appropriate credit for prior academic work.
3. The District's liaison for homeless children and youth will also ensure that:
 - A. Homeless children and youth residing in the District are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies. Special attention will be given to the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youth who are not currently attending school.
 - B. Homeless children and youth are enrolled in, and have a full an equal opportunity to succeed in schools in the District.
 - C. Homeless families and homeless children and youth have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible, including services through Head Start, early intervention services under laws applicable to students with disabilities and other preschool programs.

- D. Homeless families and homeless children and youth receive referrals to other appropriate services (e.g., health care services, dental health services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services).
- E. The parent or guardian of a homeless child and any unaccompanied homeless youth is informed of the educational and related opportunities available to them and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of the child/youth.
- F. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth is disseminated in locations frequented by parents and guardians of such children and youth, and unaccompanied youth, such as the schools, public libraries and family shelters. The notice shall be disseminated in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth.
- G. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with legal requirements.
- H. The parent or guardian of a homeless child and any unaccompanied homeless youth is fully informed of transportation services that may be available to them under the law and they are assisted in accessing such transportation services.
- I. School personnel providing services to homeless children and youth receive professional development and other support. The liaison for homeless children and youth will also receive and participate in professional development and other support activities as required by the Department of Public Instruction, the District and federal law.
- J. Unaccompanied homeless youth are (1) enrolled in school; (2) have opportunities to meet the same challenging academic standards as established for other children and youth, including receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school; and (3) are informed of their status as independent students under Section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087vy) and that they may obtain assistance from the District's liaison for homeless children and youth to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in Section 483 of such Act.
- K. Appropriate school personnel assist homeless children and youth with their educational transitions (e.g., from early childhood to elementary school,

elementary school to middle school/junior high school, middle/junior high school to high school and from high school to post-secondary options).

- L. The District's Title I plan describes the services the District will provide homeless children and youth to support the enrollment, attendance and success of homeless children and youth.
- M. Reliable, valid and comprehensive data needed to meet the established legal requirements related to homeless children and youth is collected, reported to the public and provided to the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.
- N. School personnel, service providers, advocates working with homeless families, parents and guardians of homeless children and youth and homeless children and youth are informed about the liaison's duties.

Legal Reference: McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act 2002

Cross Reference: 411.00 Equal Educational Opportunities

Prior Approval:

Attorney Review: June, 2018

Approved: June 26, 2018