

HOMELESS STUDENTS

The Board shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children within the District, encourage their enrollment and eliminate barriers to their education, which may exist in district policies or practices, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws.

Further, it is the policy of the Board of Education that no child or youth shall be discriminated against or stigmatized in this school district because of homelessness. Homeless students, as defined by federal and state statutes, residing within the district or residing in temporary shelters in the district are entitled to free school privileges.

Homeless students within the district not placed in a shelter remain the district's responsibility to provide continued educational services. Such services for the child may be:

1. continued in the school ("school of origin") that the student attended when permanently housed or the school of last enrollment (for a period not exceeding the end of the school year); or
2. provided in the school that is attended by other students living in the same attendance area where the homeless child lives.

To the extent feasible, a homeless child will be kept in the school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of the parent/guardian or impracticable due to distance and transportation issues (e.g., time on the bus).

Homeless children shall be provided educational services that are comparable to those provided to other students enrolled in the district, including but not limited to, Title I, transportation services, compensatory educational programs, gifted and talented, special education, ESL, health services and food and nutrition programs.

The Superintendent of Schools shall refer identified homeless children under the age of eighteen who may reside within the school district, unless such children are emancipated minors, to the Connecticut Department of Child and Families.

The district administration shall attempt to remove existing barriers to school attendance by homeless emancipated minors and youth eighteen years of age:

1. The selected school for the homeless child shall enroll the child, even in the absence of records normally required for enrollment. The last school enrolled shall be contacted to obtain records.

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2. Other enrollment requirements that may constitute a barrier to the education of the homeless child or youth may be waived at the discretion of the Superintendent. If the district is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the district shall administer tests or utilize other reasonable means to determine the appropriate grade level for the child.
3. Fees and charges, which may present a barrier to the enrollment or transfer of a homeless child or youth, may be waived at the discretion of the Superintendent.
4. Transportation services must be comparable to those provided other students in the selected school. Transportation shall be provided to the student's school of origin in compliance with federal and state regulations. The latter requires the sharing of financial and logistical responsibilities with the school of origin.
5. Official school records policies and regulations shall be waived at the discretion of the Superintendent, in compliance with federal statutes.
6. The district shall make a reasonable effort to locate immunization records from information available. The District's liaison shall assist the parent/guardian in obtaining the necessary immunization and records. The District shall arrange for students to receive immunizations through health agencies and at District expense if no other recourse is available. Immunizations may, however, be waived for homeless youth only in accordance with provisions of Board of Education policy on immunizations.
7. Other barriers to school attendance by homeless children or youth may be waived at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.

The District's educational liaison for homeless children is the Regional School District No. 7 School Social Worker.

Students residing in a temporary shelter are entitled to free school privileges from the district in which the shelter is located or from the school district where they would otherwise reside if not for the placement in a temporary shelter. The district in which the temporary shelter is located shall notify the district where the student would otherwise be attending. The district is so notified may choose to either:

1. continue to provide educational services, including transportation between the temporary shelter and the school in the home district (not to exceed the end of the current school year);
or
2. attend the school that is attended by other students living in the same attendance area.

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The Superintendent shall develop regulations, to ensure compliance with applicable statutes in the implementation of this policy.

(cf. 5143 Student Health Assessments and Immunizations)
(cf. 5146 Child Abuse and Neglect)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-253(e) School privileges for children in certain placements, non resident children and child in temporary shelters.

17a-101 Protection of children from abuse. Reports required of certain professional persons. When child may be removed from surrounding without court order.

17a-102 Report of danger of abuse.

17a-103 Reports by others.

17a-106 Cooperation in relation to prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

46b-120 Definitions.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (PL 107-110-Sec 1032)