

Annual Notification Last updated 07/30/2022

Rights of Students Experiencing Homelessness McKinney-Vento Act:

If you live in any of the following situations, you may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

- In a Shelter
- In a motel or campground due to lack of accommodation
- In a car, park, abandoned building or bus/train station
- Doubled up with other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship

McKinney-Vento Act:

Definition of Homeless (McKinney-Vento Act Sec. 725(2); 42 U.S.C 11435(2)): Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence: } "Doubled up" - Sharing the housing of others due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons. } Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations. } Living in emergency or transitional shelters. } Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live. } Migratory children living in above circumstances. } Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings. } Unaccompanied Youth - Children or youth who meets the definition of homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Residency and Educational Rights: Students who are in temporary, inadequate and homeless living situations have the following rights in the Griffith Public Schools } Immediate enrollment in the school in whose attendance area they are currently staying, even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment; } Access to free meals and textbooks, Title I and other educational programs and other comparable services including transportation; } Attendance in the same classes and activities that students in other living situations also participate in without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations.

******The definition of "Homeless children" under the McKinney-Vento ACT, means children or youths who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.*******

****** The McKinney-Vento Act requires schools to enroll students experiencing homelessness immediately, even if the student is unable to provide documents that are typically required for enrollment. This means, the student must be permitted to begin attending classes in his or her attendance, area school and participate in school activities without interruption.**

Please contact the Homeless Liaison for the Griffith Public School Corporation: Tracy Whitman, Director of Curriculum and Human Resources 602 N Raymond St. (219) 924-4250, ext. 1005, twhitman@griffith.k12.in.us

McKinney Vento Student Rights:

Unaccompanied youth have the right to:

- Remain in their school of origin
- Transportation to and from the school of origin
- Immediately enroll in a new school serving the area in which they are currently living even if they don't have typically required documents.
- Equal access to programs and services such as gifted and talented education, special education, vocational education, and English Language Learner services. Griffith Public Schools shall remove any /all barriers to the enrollment and retention of children and youth in homeless situations. Students in homeless situations shall be free from segregation, isolation, and stigmatization.

***The term "enroll" is defined as attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

*** "School of Origin" is defined as the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

Right to Appeal:

- If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.
- The child, youth parent, or guardian shall be referred to the McKinney-Vento District Liaison, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible in accordance with the enrollment disputes section of the McKinney-Vento Act as follows.
- Work with the McKinney-Vento District Liaison to ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the enrollment disputes section of the McKinney-Vento Act as follows:
 - I. the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute; INDIANA EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN & YOUTH
 - II. the parent or guardian of the child or youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal
 - III. the child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the McKinney-Vento District Liaison, who shall carry out the Dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute; and
 - IV. in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the McKinney-Vento District Liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute. If a dispute arises over qualification for McKinney-Vento services, the child or youth shall receive all McKinney-Vento rights and services provided by Griffith Public Schools, pending resolution of the dispute. The child, youth parent, or guardian shall be referred to the McKinney-Vento District

Liaison, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act as follows.

- Work with the McKinney-Vento District and Building Level Liaisons to ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the enrollment disputes section of the McKinney-Vento Act as follows:
- V. the child or youth shall receive all McKinney-Vento rights and services, pending resolution of the dispute;
 - VI. the parent or guardian of the child or youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal
 - VII. the child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the McKinney-Vento District Level Team, who shall carry out the Dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute; and
 - VIII. in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the McKinney-Vento District Liaison shall ensure that the youth receives all McKinney-Vento rights and services pending resolution of the dispute.

Helpful links and resources:

The Social Worker, Erica Rios- 600 N. Wiggs, (219) 924-4281, erios@griffith.k12.in.us, can provide more information on needed assistance for possible shelter, clothing, and needed essentials for families in crisis.

- Indiana Dept. of Education McKinney-Vento information for parents and youth

<https://www.in.gov/doe/home/mckinney-vento-homeless-children-and-youth-program/>