



Book	Policy Manual
Section	Instruction
Title	Programs for Homeless Students
Code	IGBCA
Status	Active
Adopted	November 11, 1993
Last Revised	February 9, 2017

The District recognizes that homeless students are particularly vulnerable and need special assistance to access and benefit from the education environment. Therefore, in accordance with state and federal law, the District will attempt to promptly identify homeless students and ensure that they receive access to a free, appropriate public education and related services in the mainstream school environment.

Homeless students are individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence and include the following:

Youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or other similar settings due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.

Youth who have a primary night-time residence which is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation.

Migratory youth who meet one of the above described circumstances.

### **Enrollment**

The selected school must immediately enroll the homeless student even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, immunization or other health records, proof of residency, or other documentation, and even if the student has missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness. Outstanding fines, fees or absences cannot be used as reasons to deny enrollment of the student. However, the district may require a parent/guardian of a homeless student to submit contact information.

Immediately upon identifying the student as being eligible for homeless services, the selected school will make special efforts to ensure that the student is attending class and participating fully in school activities.

### **Placement**

If a homeless child requests admission to the District, the District will involve the parent in determining whether it is in the best interest of the child to be enrolled in the District or to remain in the school of origin. If the youth is unaccompanied by a parent, the district liaison will consider the views of the youth in deciding where the youth will be educated, as well as student-centered factors related to the student's best interest, including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health and safety of homeless students, giving priority to the request of homeless student's parent/guardian or the unaccompanied student. The choice regarding placement is not dependent upon whether the youth lives with his/her homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

If the district determines that placement should be in the school of origin, the student will continue his/her education in the school of origin for the duration of the homelessness when the student's family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year, and for the remainder of the academic year even if the student becomes permanently housed during the academic year.

If the district determines that it is not in the best interest of the student to attend either the school of origin or the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student, the district must provide a written explanation of the reasons for its determination. The explanation must be given in a manner and form understandable to the parents/ guardians or unaccompanied student and will include information regarding the right to appeal the district's determination.

If the student is unaccompanied, the district liaison will assist the student in placement or enrollment decisions, will give priority to the view of the student, and will provide the student with notice of his/her right to appeal the district's decision.

### **School of Origin**

"School of origin" is defined as the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled, including a public preschool. When the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term will then include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

### **Services**

Each homeless student will be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the District including, but not limited to, transportation services; educational services for which the student is eligible such as educational programs for disadvantaged, disabled, and gifted and talented students, programs in career and technical education; school nutritional programs; pre-school programs and before and after school care programs; and programs for students with limited English proficiency. Homeless students will not be segregated in a separate school or in a separate program within a school based on the students' status as homeless.

The District will coordinate services for homeless students with local social service agencies and other agencies or entities providing services to homeless students and their families, including services and programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. The District will also coordinate transportation, transfer of school records and other inter-district activities with other school districts.

### **Transportation**

If it is deemed to be in the best interest of the homeless youth to attend the school of origin, including a public preschool, transportation to and from that school will be provided if the parent or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the district liaison requests. In such case the Ritenour School District and the district of origin are responsible for apportioning the responsibility and costs for transporting the child. The costs will be shared equally unless a different agreement is reached. If a homeless student becomes permanently housed in the middle of the school year, the District will continue to provide transportation to the school of origin for the remainder of the school year.

Transportation to the school of origin will be provided even if a homeless preschooler who is enrolled in a public preschool moves to another district that does not provide a widely available or universal preschool.

### **Records**

Any records ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or other health records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs of each homeless student will be maintained so that appropriate services may be given the student, so that necessary referrals can be made, and so that records maybe transferred in a timely fashion if the student enters a new school district. Copies of records shall be made available upon request to students or parents in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Information about a homeless student's living situation will be treated as a student education record and will not be deemed to be directory information under FERPA.

### **District Liaison for Homeless Children and Youth**

The Assistant Superintendent for Intervention and Student Support  
2420 Woodson Road  
Overland, Missouri, 63114  
Ph: (314) 493-6006; F: (314) 426-9589

The Assistant Superintendent for Intervention and Student Support acts as the District's liaison for homeless children and youth. The district liaison will also designate and train another district employee to serve as the liaison in the absence of the district liaison.

### **District Liaison Responsibilities**

The district liaison will attend all required professional development and other technical assistance activities as determined appropriate by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The District will attempt to inform school personnel, service providers and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the district liaison.

The district liaison's duties are to ensure that:

With the assistance of school personnel and other entities and agencies, homeless youth, including preschool age children, are identified, enrolled in the appropriate school, and have an equal opportunity to succeed in the District schools.

Homeless families and students have access to and receive education services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and Early Head Start, early intervention services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and preschool programs administered by the district, as well as referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services and other appropriate services.

Notice of the educational rights of homeless youth is posted and disseminated in schools, family shelters and other locations where such youth are most likely to receive services.

**Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with law.**

Unaccompanied youth are assisted in placement or enrollment decisions, their views are considered, and they are provided notice of the right to appeal.

Homeless parents and children are informed of their entitlement to transportation services and assisted in accessing transportation to the school of attendance.

Assistance is provided in obtaining needed immunizations and immunization and medical records.

School personnel providing services to homeless students and their parents/guardians receive professional development and other support.

Unaccompanied students are 1) enrolled in school; 2) have opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic standards that are established for other students; and 3) are informed of their status as independent students under laws applicable to higher education and that they may obtain assistance from the district liaison in order to receive verification of this status for the purposes of applying for federal student aid.

The District collects and reports reliable, valid and comprehensive data to DESE regarding homeless students.

Homeless high school students receive information and individualized counseling regarding college readiness, college selection, the application process, financial aid and the availability of on-campus supports.

Effort is made to enroll preschool-age homeless children in preschool.

**Disputes**

Parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth may appeal district decisions regarding eligibility, enrollment or placement in accordance with the Standard Complaint Resolution Process adopted by DESE.

1. Parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth will submit disputes to the district liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible. The liaison will provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth a written explanation of any decisions relating to eligibility, enrollment or placement. The written explanation will include:
  - A description of any other options the school considered;
  - The reasons other options were rejected;
  - A description of any other relevant factors to the district's decision and information related to the eligibility or best interest determination including the facts, witnesses and evidence relied upon and their sources;
  - Appropriate timelines to ensure any relevant deadlines are not missed; and
  - Contact information for the district liaison and the state coordinator for homeless children and youth (state coordinator) and a brief description of their respective roles.
2. The district liaison will discuss the explanation with the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth and answer any related questions.
3. If the explanation provided to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth does not resolve the dispute, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth should notify the district liaison, who will provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with the standard state complaint resolution process and ensure that the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth has the contact information for the state coordinator. If requested, the district liaison will assist any unaccompanied youth in submitting the appeal.

The student will remain enrolled and will be allowed to attend and fully participate in all school activities during the dispute process.

If the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth are English learners, use a native language other than English, or need additional supports due to a disability, the district will make translators, interpreters or other support services available without charge and in the appropriate language.

§§ 167.020, .181, 210.003, RSMo.

McKinney — Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act of 2001 42 U.S.C.

Legal Refs: §§ 11431 – 11435.

19 CSR 20-28.010

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C., 1232g

34 C.F.R. Part 99

EEA-STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

IGBCB-MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Cross Refs: JECA-ADMISSION OF RESIDENT STUDENTS

JHCB-INOCULATION OF STUDENTS

JO-STUDENT RECORDS