

Descriptor Term: EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Descriptor Code: JQN

Rescinds: JQN

Board Approved: 2/10/2020

Previously Approved: 5/18/2015

Students age 5-21 who can be classified as homeless and who live within the boundaries of the Gulfport School District are eligible to attend school in the District.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

A homeless child or an unaccompanied youth is an individual who:

1. Lacks a fixed, regular and adequate residence or has a primary night time residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
2. Is temporarily staying with relatives or friends due to caretakers' recent loss of jobs, housing or financing as opposed to living together for cultural or traditional reasons.
3. Is an agricultural migrant child who typically does not remain in one location more than two weeks.
4. Lives in an emergency or transitional shelter.
5. Resides on the street or in a tent or vehicle.
6. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.

Any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained by an Act of Congress or State Law is not homeless or a homeless individual.

The "school of origin" is the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

The "place of abode" includes any of the places indicated in the text above.

Pursuant to and in compliance with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act of 2001, 42USC11431, it shall be the policy of this school district, to the extent practicable under requirements relating to education established by state law, that each eligible child of a homeless individual and each eligible homeless youth will have access to a free appropriate education comparable to the education provided the children of district residents who are non-homeless, without isolation or stigma.

The placement of an eligible homeless child or youth will be made according to the Assignment to Schools Policy (JBCCA) and will take into consideration the best interests of the homeless child

or youth and placement requests made by a parent.

The choice of placement in either the "school of origin" or the school serving the "place of abode" will take place regardless of whether the child or youth is living with the homeless parent(s) or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parent(s).

Provided the homeless child or youth meets eligibility criteria, he/she will be provided transportation services; compensatory education programs for the disadvantaged; educational programs for the handicapped and for students with limited English proficiency; programs in career and technical; programs for the gifted and talented; and school meals programs.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Act) acknowledges that disputes may arise between a local educational agency (LEA) and the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, or unaccompanied youth, when the LEA seeks to place him or her in a school other than the school of origin or the one requested by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth. Guidance regarding the definition of homeless, the responsibilities of the LEA in serving homeless children and youth, school selection, eligibility and enrollment is provided in the Act. The Act includes dispute resolution among the required duties of the LEA liaison and the State Educational Agency (SEA).

The district will follow the State approved policy and procedures found in Miss. Admin. Code 7-3:40.1, State Board Policy Chapter 40, Rule 40.1.

Any and all records ordinarily kept by this school district, including immunization records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, evaluations for special services and programs shall be kept on homeless children and youth and will be forwarded in a timely fashion should a child or youth enter a new school or school district; and in a manner consistent with Section 1232g of Title 20.

Should the District receive assistance under Section 11432 of the Act, it will coordinate with local social service agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to such children or youth and their families.

Should the District receive assistance under Section 11432 of the Act, it will designate a homelessness liaison to insure that homeless children and youth enroll in and succeed in the schools of their district; and, homeless families, children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.

The homeless liaison will inform school personnel, service providers and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the liaison.

The District has and will continue to review and revise, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youth in schools selected in accordance with paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of page 2 of this policy.

In reviewing and revising such policies, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, requirements of immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records, or other documentation and guardianship.

Disputes which may arise regarding the assignment of a homeless child or youth or regarding any other issues concerning compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act or any other matters dealing with the education of homeless children and youth will be directed to the attention of the school official(s) responsible for that particular matter for prompt resolution. In the event the dispute cannot be resolved locally, any aggrieved party may make written request for a review of the matter to the Office of Federal Programs, Homeless Education Coordinator, P.O. Box 771, Jackson, MS 39205.

Legal Reference: As cited above