

Students and Families in Transition

*McKinney-Vento Guidance for Parents, Guardians
and Youth in transition*

THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT: • guarantees the rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness to a free and appropriate public education • requires a local homeless education liaison in every school district ensures: • immediate enrollment • access to needed services • school stability • support for academic achievement

Homeless Liaison: Julie Hahn

314-493-6086

McKinney-Vento Program Contact Information

Person to Contact	Name of Contact and Phone Number	Role
Ritenour School District Homeless Coordinator	Julie Hahn (314) 493-6086 hahnj@ritenourschools.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure identification, enrollment and opportunity to succeed in school • Provide information of educational and related opportunities • Collaborate with state coordinator • Educate parents, personnel and advocates of the rights of youth in homeless situation
Director for Special Education	Angi Fouste (314) 993-8100 byrnesd@ritenourschools.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist homeless coordinator with supporting students with IEP needs and resources
Ritenour Student Services and Registration Department	Robin Kern, Yibeli Lopez, Sindy Morales (314) 493-6016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help facilitate the enrollment process and gathering of student records • Assists with cab transportation
College and Career Advisors	Cabrina Noonan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with college enrollment, applications, FAFSA and career opportunities
State Coordinator for Homeless Education	Tera Bock (573) 522-8763 Tera.bock@dese.mo.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists with disputes when not resolved at the local level
Bilingual Family Liaison	Victoria Forgash (314) 493-6047	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists Spanish speaking families with making sure families are connected to the homeless liaison

Services We Provide:

- Assistance with Ritenour School District enrollment and registration process
- Assistance to obtain transportation to the child's school of origin when possible
- Assistance with school supplies, clothing and other resources needed for school
- Assistance with fees related to the full participation of school and school activities (i.e. field trips)
- Transportation assistance to promote parental involvement
- Referrals to community resources that include medical, food, housing, mental health and others
- Interpretation and translation services as needed
- Assist with educational services for which students are eligible including special education, preschool programs, 504 plans and other appropriate services
- Assistance with obtaining immunization and medical records
- Assistance with postsecondary planning and enrollment to colleges
- In-district medical assistance through our health clinic
- Represent the needs of unaccompanied youth



• Definition of Homelessness

Ritenour School 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, Ritenour School 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.

For additional information see Policy ICBCA for the Ritenour School District.

The McKinney-Vento law says that homelessness includes individuals who do not have a fixed, regular and adequate home because they have lost their own home.

This means:

- Individuals who have lost their own home, suffering a financial hardship or similar reason;
- Individuals who are sharing the housing of others;
- Individuals who are living in hotels or motels or in campgrounds or trailer parks that are not viewed as year round homes because they do not have accommodations, such as heat or running water;
- Individuals who are living in emergency shelters or who have been abandoned in hospitals;
- Individuals who are living in cars, parks or public spaces.

Unaccompanied Youth

Unaccompanied youth is defined as a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. The ACT does not provide an age range.

These young people may include those who:

- Were asked to leave home by a parent;
- Left home with the consent of a parent;
Have no formal custody papers or arrangements while their parents are in jail, the hospital, or a rehabilitation center; or
- Ran away from home.

Youth on their own cannot be kept out of school because they do not have a parent or guardian to enroll them.



Rights of Homeless Parents and their Homeless Students

- Your child may stay in the school he or she was in before becoming homeless or enroll in a school where the child is living for the time being;
- You may make this choice of schools with the best interests of your child in mind;
- Your child must receive the transportation he or she needs;
- You can expect to enroll your child in school without delay, even if you do not have paperwork, such as your child's birth certificate or medical records;
- Your child has the right to receive free meals;
- Your child must receive the same special programs and services that other children receive, including special education, migrant education and vocational education;
- Your child must receive the same public education other children receive, including preschool.
- Your child cannot be separated from other students in a different school or different program because he or she is homeless;
- Your child may attend the school you choose, even if there is a dispute while the dispute is in the appeal process;
- After being placed in permanent housing, your child may stay in his or her original school for the rest of the school year and receive transportation to that school.



Enrollment Disputes

Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with law. 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.

- 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.
- The district liaison will **discuss the explanation** with the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth and answer any related questions.
 - 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.

Homeless Duration

The McKinney-Vento Act protects the rights of homeless children and youth for the duration of their homelessness. This means students have access to all rights and services from school year to school year if their living circumstance meets the definition of “homeless.”

Once a Ritenour School District student has been identified as homeless, he/she has access to services for one academic school year. If students experience homelessness beyond one academic school year, all services are still accessible to these students with proper documentation and re-enrollment to determine identification status.

Transportation

Getting to and from school can create stress and an additional barrier to education for homeless students and their families. Ritenour School District provides transportation for homeless students to support student success and educational stability. If a child qualifies for transportation, arrangements are made for pick-up and drop-off to and from home and school.

Options:

- Mileage reimbursement (to and from home/school)-Reimbursements must be turned in on a monthly basis to the homeless liaison for payment.
- Cab transportation (to and from home/school)-Students must sign and comply with transportation agreement. Students missing the cab without cancellation more than 3 times will no longer qualify for cab services.
- Students residing in the district boundaries are bus eligible if they meet transportation qualifications.



COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

24-HOUR EMERGENCY/CRISIS

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RESPONSE (BHR)
(314) 469-6644

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RESPONSE YOUTH CONNECTION HELPLINE
1 (844) 985-8282
Text BHEARD 31658

MISSOURI CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT HOTLINE
1 (800) 392-3738

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1 (800) 273-8255
Text TALK to 741-741

SAFE CONNECTIONS
(314) 531-2003

RITENOUR SAFELINE
(314) 493-6205

CRISIS NURSERY
(314) 768-3201

YOUTH IN NEED EMERGENCY SHELTER
(636) 946-3771

EPWORTH YOUTH EMERGENCY SHELTER
(314) 727-6294

TREVOR PROJECT LGBTQ HELPLINE
1 (866) 488-7386
Text START to 678678

COUNSELING

ANNIE'S HOPE
Grief and loss support
(314) 965-5015

CHADS FAMILY SUPPORT COUNSELING PROGRAM
(314) 952-8274

EPWORTH FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK
For children under 13
(314) 705-0186

FAMILY FORWARD
(314) 534-9350

PROVIDENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
(314) 533-8200

KIDS IN THE MIDDLE
For children who are experiencing divorce or parent separation
(314) 909-9922

LUTHERAN FAMILY & CHILDREN SERVICES
(314) 787-5100

ST. VINCENT HOME FOR CHILDREN
(314) 261-6011

ST. FRANCIS COMMUNITY SERVICES
Bi-Lingual Counseling
(314) 932-3300

YOUTH IN NEED
(314) 594-5010 St. Louis
(636) 946-0101 St. Charles

Counselors and Social Workers

- Buder Elementary—493-6300
- Iveland Elementary—493-6330
- Kratz Elementary—493-6360
- Marion Elementary—493-6400
- Marvin Elementary—493-6430
- Early Childhood Center-493-6240
- Wyland Elementary—493-6460
- Hoech Middle—493-6200
- Ritenour Middle—493-6250
- Ritenour High—493-6105
- Int. Welcome Center (IWC)— 493-6213
- Husky Academy-493-6031

