

# TEHCY

# Texas Education Homeless Children and Youth

(Presentation from the TEHCY Website (Texas Education Agency))

# McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

The purpose of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is to identify and remove barriers for children and youth experiencing homelessness and ensure that students in these circumstances have equitable access to all available supports and resources to meet the same challenging state academic standards established for all students.

## Who is Considered Homeless?

Any student who lack a “fixed regular and adequate nighttime residence” – not in your home – living with a friend or associate, a relative, motel, hotel, trailer park, camping ground, in an automobile, bus or train stations, a place without water or electricity.

# Guiding Questions?

- Are you living somewhere temporarily?
- Are you living in another place other than your home?
- Are you living with a friend, girlfriend, boyfriend or a relative with or without a legal guardian?
- Are you living in a place with no running water or electricity?
- Are you living with someone other than your parent or your legal guardian?

# Barriers to School Enrollment and Attendance

- A lack of information regarding rights and choices
- A lack of transportation
- A lack of school clothing
- A lack of school records/birth certificates
- A lack of immunizations/immunization records

# Benefits for Students who Qualifies as McKinney - Vento

- Enroll in school immediately without any records
- Grades and Attendance will be monitored and assistance may be provided.
- Transportation – If a student moves to another surrounding district, GISD will transport the student to and from school which allows a student to remain in their school of origin.
- A school must eliminate any barriers that prevent students from being successful.
- Liaison and Case Manager will monitor discipline, attendance and grades.

# Homeless Student Enrollment

Students who are experiencing homelessness are to be enrolled immediately. Districts cannot require students experiencing homelessness to provide proof of residency, immunizations, birth certificates, guardianship documents, or any other sort of required paperwork before enrolling. Requiring missing paperwork or any other delay to enrollment is a violation of the McKinney-Vento Act.

# Homeless School Determination

Students who are experiencing homelessness have the right to attend school in their school of origin or in the school attendance area where the family or youth is currently residing. School of origin is defined as the school in which the child/youth was enrolled when they became homeless or the school in which the child/youth was last enrolled. The campus a child attends is determined by which campus can serve the best interests of the child. In Texas, a student experiencing homelessness may enroll in any district they choose, regardless of the location of their residence, school of origin, or attendance zone campus. [TEC § 25.001(b)(5)]



# Transportation

Students experiencing homelessness have the right to transportation to their school of origin. This provision applies even if a student moves outside of the school of origins' attendance zone or district boundaries. School of origin transportation must continue for the duration of the child's homelessness or until the end of the school year in which a child becomes permanently housed.

# Title I Services

Students experiencing homelessness who are not on a Title-I campus are eligible to receive Title-I services. These services are provided at the discretion of the LEA through existing Title-I programs or through the use of Title-I, Part A set-aside funds for students who are not on Title-I campuses. Students on Title-I campuses may receive additional supplemental services to the services being provided on their campus through the Title-I, Part A set-asides as well. Services may include personal school supplies, items of clothing that are necessary to meet a school's dress requirement, immunizations, supplemental counseling services, tutoring, costs associated with credit recovery, or other similar activities to address a child's opportunity for school success.

# Disciplinary Challenges

- Disruptive or defiant behaviors, such as Fight-Flight-Freeze responses, can be a result of situationally developed trauma for a student experiencing homelessness. These could include, but are not limited to:
- Prolonged lack of basic needs (e.g., food, water, clothing, etc.)
- Frequent transitions between temporary living locations and changing of schools.
- Gaps in academic and functional abilities (e.g., below grade level achievement, difficulty establishing relationships and trust with adults and peers, etc.) Toxic stress from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can change brain development and affect how the body responds to stress. LEAs should be aware of how trauma can impact the behavior of students experiencing homelessness

# Prevention Measures for Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy

- Developed a behavior improvement plan
- Offer school-based community service
- Refer the student to services aimed at addressing the student's truancy (e.g., counseling, mediation, mentoring, a teen court program, community-based services, or other in school or out-of-school services).
- Texas Education Code (TEC) § 25.0915

# Assistance to Students and Families in GISD

- **Uniforms**
- **Back packs and School Supplies**
- **Referral to outside agencies – Mental Health, Medical and Dental**
- **Toiletry Needs**
- **Assist with housing and utilities**
- **School of Origin – Transportation**
- **Assistance with obtaining needed items for school**
- **Eliminate any barriers**
- **Monitor attendance and discipline**

# Dispute Resolution Process

Disagreements over school enrollment and best interest determinations must be resolved through the dispute resolution process. While in the dispute resolution process the child is entitled to attend the campus in question until the matter is resolved.

# District Contact Information

- **Mary Patrick, M.Ed – Executive Director of Special Programs/Homeless and Foster Care Liaison**  
**Marypatrick@gisd.org**
- **Doris Martinez – Bilingual/Elementary Case Manager**  
**Dorismartinez@gisd.org**
  - **Cheryl Chatman – Secondary Case Manager**  
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