

HOMELESS AND MIGRANT STUDENTS

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures that all children and youth who are homeless, or in transition, receive a free appropriate public education and are given meaningful opportunities to succeed in our schools.

Schools in the [Bristol Warren Regional School](#) District will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment.

Information regarding this policy, including the educational rights of children and youth identified as homeless will be distributed to all students upon enrollment and once during the school year, provided to students who seek to withdraw from school, and posted in every school in the district, as well as other places where children, youth, and families in transition receive services.

Definitions

Children and youth in transition means children and youth who are otherwise legally entitled to or eligible for a free public education, including preschool, and who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- Children and 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, campgrounds, or trailer parks due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals;
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Children and youth who are living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting.
- Migratory children and youth who are living in a situation described above.

A child or youth will be considered to be in transition for as long as he or she is in a living situation described above.

Unaccompanied youth means a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who is in transition as defined above. The more general term youth also includes unaccompanied youth.

Enroll and enrollment means attending school and participating fully in all school activities.

Immediate means without delay.

Parent means a person having legal or physical custody of a child or youth.

School of origin means the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

Local liaison is the staff person (diane.sanna@bwrsd.org) designated by our district and each district in state as the person responsible for carrying out the duties assigned to the local homeless education liaison by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Identification

Children and youth in transition in the district, both in and out of school will be identified. Data will be collected on the number of children and youth in transition in the district; where they are living; their academic achievement (including state and local assessments); and the reasons for any enrollment delays, interruptions in their education, or school transfers.

School Selection

Each child and youth in transition has the right to remain at his or her school of origin or to attend any school that houses students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living. The term 'school of origin' means the school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool. The term "school of origin" shall include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

Therefore, in selecting a school, children and youth in transition will remain at their schools of origin to the extent feasible, unless that is against the parent or youth's wishes. Students may remain at their schools of origin the entire time they are in transition and until the end of any academic year in which they become permanently housed. The same applies if a child or youth loses his or her housing during the summer.

Services that are required to be provided, including transportation to and from the school of origin and services under federal and other programs, will not be considered in determining feasibility.

Enrollment

Enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including:

- Proof of residency
- Transcripts/school records (The enrolling school must contact the student's previous school to obtain school records. Initial placement of students whose records are not immediately available can be made based on the student's age and information gathered from the student, parent, and previous schools or teachers.)
- Immunizations or immunization/health/medical/physical records (If necessary, the school must refer students to the local liaison to assist with obtaining immunizations and/or immunization and other medical records.)
- Proof of guardianship
- Birth certificate
- Remove barriers - to the identification of homeless children and youths, enrollment and retention of homeless children and youths, due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences.
- Lack of clothing that conforms to dress code
- Any factor related to the student's living situation

Unaccompanied youth must be enrolled immediately in school. They may either enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling, or local liaison.

Transportation

Parents and unaccompanied youth will be informed of this right to transportation before they select a school for attendance. At a parent's or unaccompanied youth's request, transportation will be provided to and from the school of origin for a child or youth in transition. Transportation will be provided for the entire time the child or youth has a right to attend that school, as defined above, including during pending disputes. It is this district's policy that inter-district disputes will not result in a student in transition missing school. If such a dispute arises, the district will arrange transportation and immediately bring the matter to the attention of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. In addition to receiving transportation to and from the school of origin upon request, children and youth in transition will also be provided with other transportation services comparable to those offered to housed students.

Comparable Services

Children and youth in transition shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the selected school, including:

- Transportation
- Title I, Part A services - Children and youth in transition are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services, regardless of what school they attend
- Educational services for which the student meets eligibility criteria, including special education and related services and programs for English language learners
- Programs in career and technical education
- Gifted and talented programs
- Before- and after-school programs
- Pre School - LEA will ensure that children in transition receive priority enrollment in preschool programs operated by the district, including exempting children in transition from waiting lists. Children in transition with disabilities will be referred for preschool services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The local liaison will collaborate with Head Start and other preschool programs.
- Free meals - On the day a child or youth in transition enrolls in school, the enrolling school must submit the student's name to the LEA Food Service office for immediate processing.

When applying any district policy regarding tardiness or absences, any tardiness or absence related to a child or youth's living situation will be excused.

Disputes

If a dispute arises over any issue covered in this policy, the child or youth in transition will be admitted immediately to the school in which enrollment is sought pending final resolution of the dispute. The student will also have the rights of a student in transition to all appropriate educational services, transportation, free meals, and Title I, Part A, services while the dispute is pending.

The school where the dispute arises will provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal and will refer the parent or youth to the local liaison immediately. The local liaison will ensure that the student is enrolled in the requested school and receiving other services to which he or she is entitled and will resolve the dispute as expeditiously as possible. The parent or unaccompanied youth will be given every opportunity to participate meaningfully in the resolution of the dispute. The local liaison will keep records of all disputes in order to determine whether particular issues or schools are delaying or denying the enrollment of children and youth in transition repeatedly. The parent, unaccompanied youth, or school district may appeal the school district's decision as provided in the state's dispute resolution process.

Training

The local liaison will conduct training regarding Title IX-A requirements and sensitivity/awareness activities for all LEA staff.

Coordination

The local liaison will coordinate with and seek support from the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, public and private service providers in the community, housing and placement agencies, the LEA transportation department, local liaisons in neighboring districts, and other organizations and agencies. Coordination will include conducting outreach and training to those agencies. Both public and private agencies will be encouraged to support the local liaison and our schools in implementing this policy.

LEGAL REF:

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§11431 – 11436

Adopted: March 31, 2025

Bristol Warren Regional School District, Bristol, Rhode Island