

<u>Section J:</u> Students	Knox County Board of Education		
	Students Experiencing Homelessness	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Code: Issued:
			J-140 5/03
		Reviewed:	Revised:
	10/23	12/23	

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To ensure that students experiencing homelessness, referred to as students in transition by ESSA, shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth:¹

Students in transition are individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.² These students include:

1. Students sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or students abandoned in hospitals;
2. Students who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
3. Students living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings; and
4. Migratory students who are living in circumstances described above.

ENROLLMENT

Students experiencing homelessness shall be immediately enrolled, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment (i.e. academic records, immunization records, health records, proof of residency), or missed the district’s application or enrollment deadlines.³ Parents/legal guardians are required to submit contact information to the district’s homeless coordinator.³

PLACEMENT

For the purpose of this policy, school of origin shall mean the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled, including a preschool/pre-k program.⁴ School of origin shall also include the designated receiving school at the next grade level when the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin.⁴

Placement shall be determined based on the student’s best interest.⁵ At all times, a strong presumption that keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student’s best interest shall be maintained, unless doing so would be contrary to a request made by the student’s parent/legal guardian or the student in the case of an unaccompanied youth.⁶ When determining placement, student-centered factors, including but not limited to impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety shall be considered.⁶ The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the student lives with their parents/legal guardians.⁷

If it is not in the student’s best interest to attend the school of origin, or the school requested by the parent/legal guardian or unaccompanied youth, the director or his/her designee shall provide a written explanation of the reasons for the determination, in a manner and form that is understandable to the

1 parent/legal guardian or unaccompanied youth.⁶ The written explanation shall include a statement
 2 regarding the right to appeal the placement decision.⁶ If the placement decision is appealed, the district
 3 shall refer the parent/legal guardian or unaccompanied student to the student support services supervisor,
 4 who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible and in accordance with the
 5 law.⁸

6 **RECORDS**

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 8 Records ordinarily kept by the school shall be maintained for all students in transition. Information
 9 regarding a student in transition's living situation shall be treated as a student education record, and shall
 10 not be considered directory information.⁹

11 **SERVICES¹⁰**

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 13 Each student is provided services comparable to those offered to other students within the district,
 14 including transportation, special education services, programs in career and technical education (CTE),
 15 programs for gifted and talented students, and school nutrition.

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 17 A homeless liaison shall ensure this policy is implemented throughout the district. The homeless liaison
 18 shall ensure:

- 19 1. Students in transition are quickly identified and have access to education and support services, to
 20 include Head Start and district pre-k programs;
- 21 2. Coordination with local social service agencies and other entities providing services to school
 22 districts;
- 23 3. Coordinate transportation, transfer records, and other inter-district activities with other school
 24 districts;
- 25 4. Coordinate transportation to the school of origin or choice for students;
- 26 5. Refer students and their families to health care services, dental services, mental health and
 27 substance abuse services, and housing services;
- 28 6. Assist students in obtaining immunizations, medical or immunization records, and any additional
 29 assistance that may be needed;
- 30 7. Public notice of the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness is disseminated in
 31 places frequented by parents/legal guardians of students experiencing homelessness, including
 32 schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens; and
- 33 8. Unaccompanied youth are enrolled and informed of their status as independent students.
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Legal References:

1. McKinney-Vento Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 Subtitle B §§ 721-725.
2. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 725.
3. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 722(g)(3)(C)(i), § 722(g)(3)(H).
4. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 722(g)(3)(I).
5. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 722(g)(3)(A).
6. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 722(g)(3)(B).
7. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 722(g)(3)(F).
8. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 722(g)(3)(E).
9. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 722(g)(3)(G).
10. McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by ESSA (Pub. L 114-95), § 722(g)(4)-(6).

Cross Reference:

- Knox County Board of Education Policy J-150 School Admissions.

Approved as to Legal Form
 By Knox County Law Director 10/31/2023
 /Gary T. Dupler/Deputy Law Director