DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE

RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:

The Karns City School District (District) seeks to ensure that each homeless student has equal access to the same, free, appropriate public education, as provided to other District students.

RULE:

A. IDENTIFICATION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS:

1. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Act), 42 U.S.C. § 1143a (2) et. Seq., defines homeless students as those who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes:

a. Children and youth who:

1) Share the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;

2) Live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;

3) Live in emergency or transitional shelters;

4) Are abandoned in hospitals; or

5) Are awaiting foster care placement.

b. Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans;

c. Children and youth who live in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or

d. Migratory children who quality for homeless because they are living in circumstances set forth in Items 1, 2, and 3 above.

2. The parent/guardian of a student who demonstrates evidence of living in a homeless situation will be given a Form (Student Residency Statement) to complete and send to the District's Homeless Liaison to determine eligibility according to the above definition.

B. SCHOOL SELECTION:

1. Enrollment Options:

Homeless students may:

a. Enroll in the school servicing the attendance zone where the student resides; or

b. Continue enrollment in the school of origin, when feasible. The school of origin is the school the student attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

2. Determining which school the child attends will be based upon the student's best interest. Every effort shall be made, to the extent feasible, to keep the student in his/her school of origin unless doing so is against the wishes of the parent/guardian. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Liaison will assist in the placement and enrollment decisions. (Enrollment in School of Origin Request Form).

3. A homeless student who attends his/her school of origin in accordance with paragraph 1 above may:

a. Attend that school for the duration of homelessness;

b. Stay in the school for the remainder of the academic year if the student becomes permanently housed during the academic year; or

c. Attends their school for the duration of homelessness if the student becomes homeless between academic years.

C. **TRANSPORTATION:**

Transportation will be provided to and from the school of origin if requested by the parent/guardian where required by the federal law at 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii). In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the transportation request will be made by the Homeless Liaison (Procedure for Transportation).

D. **DISPUTE RESOLUTION:**

1. If the District denies the school of origin request, the parent/guardian shall be provided with a written explanation of the District's decision, including the right to appeal. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Liaison will provide written notification to such youth including the right to appeal (Written Notification and Dispute Resolution Form).
2. If a parent/guardian disputes the District's decision:
    a. The student shall be immediately admitted to the school in which he/she is seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute;
    b. The dispute shall be referred to the District's Homeless Liaison who will consult with the Student Support office for resolution within 7 business days of receipt of the Dispute Resolution Form;
    c. If the matter is not resolved at that level, the Superintendent shall issue the District's decision within 10 business days of second dispute by parent/guardian.
    d. If the matter is not resolved at that level, the parent/guardian may contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education state homeless coordinator.

E. **ENROLLMENT/WITHDRAWAL OF HOMELESS STUDENTS:**

1. A homeless student should be enrolled immediately even if the student lacks records normally required for enrollment.
2. The Principal or designee shall notify the Homeless Liaison when a homeless student is identified by having a parent/guardian completed a Form (Student Residency Statement).
3. The school shall provide the parent/guardian a copy of Form (Information for Parents).
4. If a homeless student arrives at school without a parent/guardian, the unaccompanied youth shall be enrolled immediately and the Guidance Counselor notified. The Guidance Counselor shall contact the parent/guardian and complete the enrollment process. Students must meet the District's age eligibility criteria for enrollment.
5. Homeless students qualify for free breakfast and lunch Form (Procedure for Free Lunch).
6. When students enroll without records (i.e., transcripts/grade reports, birth certificate, immunizations/health records) the Principal or designee shall:
    a. Contact the former school to request the student's records and discuss immunization information and tentative placement;
    b. Create a cumulative record if it is determined that the records are not available;
    c. Refer the student to public health and provide follow-up to ensure that the student has been immunized, if there are no immunization records; and
    d. Contact the Homeless Liaison for additional assistance.
7. Parents/guardians shall provide the school with contact information.
8. **Withdrawal:**

Homeless students often leave school without officially withdrawing. If the school is contacted by another district for a homeless student's records, requested information shall be provided and school records sent within 15 days to the receiving school district.

F. **ROLE OF THE HOMELESS LIAISON**

The role of the District's Homeless Liaison is to provide that:

1. Homeless students and unaccompanied youth:
    a. Are identified by school personnel;
    b. Enroll in and have an equal opportunity to succeed in school;
    c. Receive educational services for which they are eligible;
    d. Are referred to the Guidance Counselor if other support resources are needed.
2. Parents/guardians of homeless students are made aware of educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with a meaningful opportunity to participate in their children's education;

3. Public notices of the educational rights of homeless students are disseminated in schools and such places as family shelters;
4. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
5. Parents/guardians and unaccompanied youth are informed of the transportation services provided by the District, including transportation to the school of origin, when required;
6. Students who do not have immunization or medical records are assisted;
7. Collaborate and coordinate with State Coordinators for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and community and school personnel responsible for providing education and related support services to homeless children and youth.