NORTH FORK LOCAL SCHOOLS
McKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT
LEA ENROLLMENT RESPONSIBILITIES
and
ENROLLMENT DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The North Fork Local Schools is committed to facilitating the timely resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth. The process may address issues concerning: enrollment, transfer of records, transportation, comparable services, guardianship, medical records, residency, school of origin/school of choice issues along with any related homeless education concerns.

ENROLLMENT - Reference - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C.S. § 11432(g)(3)(A)-(C)

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act includes definitive language concerning the enrollment of homeless children and youth including:

The local educational agency shall according to the youth's best interest:

- Continue the child's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness-
  - In any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year or
  - For the remainder of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year or
- Enroll the child or youth in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

In determining the best interest of the child or youth, the local educational agency (LEA) shall:

- To the extent feasible, keep the homeless child or youth in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child's or youth's parent or guardian.

- Provide a written explanation to the parent or guardian, including a statement regarding the right to appeal if the local educational agency sends the child or youth to a school other than the school of originor a school requested by the parent or guardian.

- Refer unaccompanied youth to the homeless liaison designated by the LEA to provide assistance in placement and/or enrollment decisions. The views of the unaccompanied youth will be considered and the youth will be notified of the right to appeal.

ENROLLMENT DISPUTE RESOLUTION

References
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assist
ance Act, 42 U.S.C.S. § 11432(g)(3)(E)
U.S. Department of Education McKinney-Vento
Homeless Assistance Act Non-regulatory Guidance
(July 2004)(Pages 17-18)

GENERAL GUIDELINES –

- Disputes should be resolved at the district level rather than the school level.

- The dispute resolution process should be as informal and accessible as possible allowing for impartial and complete review.

- Parents, guardians and unaccompanied youth should be able to initiate the resolution process directly at the school they choose, as well as at the district LEA homeless liaison's office.

- Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth should be informed that they can provide written or oral documentation to support their views.

- Students are to be provided with all services for which they are eligible while the disputes are being resolved.

- Written documentation should be complete, as brief as possible, simply stated and provided in a language the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth can understand.

RESOLUTION PROCESS –

- Should a dispute arise over school selection or enrollment in a school the following procedure is to be followed:

- The LEA shall provide the parent or guardian with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment.

- The LEA shall inform the parent or guardian in writing of their right to appeal the decision.

- Should the dispute continue the LEA shall refer the parent or guardian to the local LEA liaison who shall review the complaint and issue an opinion in writing to the parent or guardian.

- Should the dispute continue the LEA liaison shall assist the parties involved in presenting the situation to the Ohio Department of Education homeless education coordinator.

- The state homeless education coordinator shall recommend a decision for distribution to the parent, local superintendent and local educational agency liaison.

- Should the dispute continue the final appeal is made to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for review and disposition.

North Fork Local Schools
Dispute Review Guide Homeless

Case:
Date Initiated:
Date Resolved:
Summary of Dispute:
Resolution:

Before			
Issue	✓	What Went Well	What Needs Improvement
All school and LEA staff were trained on the McKinney-Vento Act.			
The local homeless liaison was familiar with the State and local homeless dispute resolution policy.			
All school and LEA staff were trained on what is required when a parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth initiates a dispute.			
Timelines were clear and reasonable.			
The written notice was reviewed for appropriateness.			
School and LEA staff were trained in ways to diffuse disagreements and to treat parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth respectfully.			
The local liaison implemented the dispute process according to LEA and SEA policies.			

During			
Issue	✓	**What Went Well**	**What Needs Improvement**
Parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth was provided written notice of the LEA's decision.			
Local homeless liaison or school staff explained the dispute process.			
Local homeless liaison ensured that parent or guardian was able to meet deadlines or was provided assistance or flexibility, and addressed other barriers for the parent to implement the process.			
Parent or guardian was referred to advocate or attorney for assistance.			
Local homeless liaison assisted unaccompanied youth with the process.			
School immediately enrolled student in the school where enrollment was sought and provided full services.			
Local liaison obtained information and documentation in appropriate ways.			
Local liaison compiled sufficient information and documents for the State Coordinator or other third parties.			
All necessary parties were apprised of the resolution and their role in its implementation.			
If the dispute was not found in the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth's favor, the local liaison discussed the outcome with and worked with the			

complainant on strategies to implement the solution while keeping the best interest of the child at the forefront.			

After			
Issue	✓	**What Went Well**	**What Needs Improvement**
The local liaison reviewed the case with all parties involved at the LEA and SEA level for lessons learned.			
Appropriate changes in procedures and policies were implemented.			
School and LEA staff received further training as needed.			

Dispute Policy Improvement Action Plan

What Needs to be Done	Person Responsible	Deadline

Information and Resources

Coalition on Homelessness and Housing (COHHIO)
www.cohhio.org • (614) 280-1984

LAU Resource Center for English as a Second Language (ESL) Bilingual and Multicultural Education
education.ohio.gov Keyword: Limited English Proficient Students • (614) 466-9827

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)
www.naehcy.org • (866) 862-2562

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
www.nlchp.org • (202) 638-2535

SERVE Improving Learning through Research and Development
www.center.serve.org/nche
(800) 308-2145 (Toll-free)

U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov
(800) USA-LEARN • (800) 872-5327 (Toll Free)

Ohio | Department of Education

Susannah Wayland
Ohio Department of Education
Center for Accountability and Continuous Improvement
Office of Federal Programs
25 S. Front St., Mail Stop 404
Columbus, OH 43215-4183
Phone: (614) 466-4161
Fax: (614) 752-1622
Toll-free: (877) 644-6338
TTY: (614) 387-0970

E-mail: Susannah.Wayland@education.ohio.gov
Website: education.ohio.gov
Keyword: Homeless Students

March 2014

A Parent's Guide to the Rights of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness



Ohio | Department of Education

education.ohio.gov

The Rights of Homeless Parents and their Children

Your child has the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there;
- Stay in the school that he or she was attending before becoming homeless or the school he or she last attended, if that is your choice and it is feasible;
- Enroll in school immediately, even if you do not have all the paperwork, such as your child's school or medical records;
- Access the same special programs and services that are provided to other children, including special education, migrant education and vocational education;
- Receive the same public education that is provided to other children, including preschool. (Your child cannot be separated from the mainstream school environment because he or she is homeless. He or she cannot be segregated in a separate school, separate programs within a school or separate settings within a school).

If your child is assigned to a school not of your choosing, the school district must explain its decision in writing.

You have the right to appeal the district's decision regarding the school to which your child has been assigned. Your child has the right to go to the school of your choice while the dispute is being resolved.

If you move, you should...

- Contact the school district's local liaison for homeless education for help in enrolling your child in a new school or arranging for your child to continue in his or her former school;
- Contact the school and provide any information you think will assist the teachers in helping your child adjust to the new situation;
- Tell the school the date you are leaving and start the transfer of your records;
- Ask for a copy of your child's school records, including:
  - An updated transcript;
  - The grade your child is in;
  - Any important medical information about your child's needs;
  - Scores your child made on any standardized tests;
  - If possible, allow your child to say goodbye to friends and teachers.



How you can help your child?

- Make sure your child attends school every day;
- Read to your child. Even a few minutes a day makes a difference.
- Make education a family priority
- Help your child develop good study habits;
- Meet with your child's teachers and other school personnel.

McKinney-Vento Program

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Children and Youth Program was designed to make sure all homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education as children and youth who are not homeless. This includes preschool education.

State and local educational agencies are required to develop, review and revise policies to remove barriers to the enrollment, attendance and success in school that homeless children and youth may experience.

Local educational agencies also must provide homeless children and youth with the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content and state student performance standards to which all students are held.

North Fork Local Schools

TRANSPORTATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Dear Parent/Guardian/Unaccompanied Youth,

Your child(ren) or you, as an unaccompanied homeless youth, are currently eligible for services through the McKinney-Vento program. Per the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, transportation will be provided to your child(ren) or you, as an unaccompanied youth, to and from school.

The following describes our agreement with you regarding transportation:

Pick-Up
Students must be at the bus stop or selected location at the time provided by the transportation department. Drivers can wait no more than three minutes from your scheduled time.

Drop-Off
An adult pre-approved by parents and guardians must be present at the bus stop or selected location to pick-up students too young to be left unsupervised. The transportation department will provide the time that the adult must be present for pick-up of students; parents and guardians must notify the liaison or the transportation department if an adult other than the parent or guardian will be picking up the student.

Communication of Absences
If a student is going to be absent from school and therefore does not need transportation for part or all of a day, parents or guardians must call and inform the designated driver no later than [X] a.m. on the day of the absence so the driver can adjust the route accordingly.

Driver's Name: [Insert]
Contact Phone Number: [Insert]

Behavioral Expectations
Students and parents are expected to follow the North Fork Local Schools policies for student behavior. Disciplinary actions for students who violate the behavior policies will be followed as they are for any student in the district.

If North Fork Local Schools fails to provide the agreed upon transportation services, the liaison should be contacted. Your liaison is the Superintendent and may be reached at 740-892-3666

If a student's residence changes, the transportation department must be contacted by 12:00 p.m. to allow for transportation to be arranged. Transportation requests and changes may take up to three

days to be routed, so temporary transportation may be provided while routing is arranged. The transportation department may be contacted at: 740-892-2006.

Please sign below to acknowledge that you understand and agree with these expectations and terms.

Date	Parent/Guardian/UHY Name (Printed)	Signature

Date	Name of Liaison (Printed)	Signature

NORTH FORK LOCAL SCHOOLS
HOUSING INFORMATION FORM

Your answers will help determine if the student meets eligibility requirements for services under the McKinney-Vento Act.

Student _____ Parent/Guardian _____

School _____ Phone _____

Age _____ Grade _____ D.O.B. _____

Address _____ City _____

Zip Code _____ Is this address Temporary or Permanent? (circle one)

Please choose which of the following situations the student currently resides in (you can choose more than one):
_____ House or apartment with parent or guardian
_____ Motel, car, or campsite
_____ Shelter or other temporary housing
_____ With friends or family members (other than or in addition to parent/guardian)

If you are living in shared housing, please check all of the following reasons that apply:
_____ Loss of housing
_____ Economic situation
_____ Temporarily waiting for house or apartment
_____ Provide care for a family member
_____ Living with boyfriend/girlfriend
_____ Loss of employment
_____ Parent/Guardian is deployed
_____ Other (Please explain)

Are you a student under the age of 18 and living apart from your parents or guardians? Yes No

Housing and Educational Rights

Students without fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residences have the following rights:

1) Immediate enrollment in the school they last attended or the local school where they are currently staying even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations;
2) Transportation to the school of origin for the regular school day;
3) Access to free meals, Title I and other educational programs, and transportation to extra-curricular activities to the same extent that it is offered to other students.

Any questions about these rights can be directed to the local McKinney-Vento liaison at [Insert phone number] or the State Coordinator at [Insert phone number].

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and understand the above rights.

_____

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Unattached Youth *Date*

_____

Signature of McKinney-Vento Liaison *Date*

School Selection Checklist for Decision Making

(Adapted from the Texas Homeless Education Office)

School of Origin Considerations	Local Attendance Area School Considerations
☐ Continuity of Instruction *Student is best served due to circumstances that look to his or her past.*	☐ Continuity of Instruction *Student is best served due to circumstances that look to his or her future.*
☐ Age and Grade Placement of the Student *Maintaining friends and contacts with peers is critical to the student's meaningful school experience and participation. The student has been in this environment for an extended period of time.*	☐ Age and Grade Placement of the Student *Maintaining friends and contacts with peers in the school of origin is not particularly critical to the student's meaningful school experience and participation. The student has attended the school of origin for only a brief time.*
☐ Academic Strength *The child's academic performance is weak and the child would fall further behind if he/she transferred to another school.*	☐ Academic Strength *The child's academic performance is strong and at grade level; the child would likely recover academically from a school transfer.*
☐ Social and Emotional State *The child is suffering from the effects of mobility, has developed strong ties to the current school, and does not want to leave.*	☐ Social and Emotional State *The child seems to be coping adequately with mobility, does not feel strong ties to the current school, and does not mind transferring.*
☐ Distance of the Commute and Its Impact *The advantages of remaining in the school of origin outweigh any potential disadvantages presented by the length of the commute.*	☐ Distance of the Commute and Its Impact *A shorter commute may help the student's concentration, attitude, or readiness for school. The local attendance area school can meet all of the necessary educational and special needs of the student.*
☐ Personal Safety of the Student *The school of origin has advantages for the safety of the student.*	☐ Personal Safety of the Student *The local attendance area school has advantages for the safety of the student.*
☐ Student's Need for Special Instruction *The student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504 or special education and related services, can be better met at the school of origin.*	☐ Student's Need for Special Instruction *The student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504 or special education and related services, can be met at the local attendance area school.*
☐ Length of Anticipated Stay *The student's current living situation is outside of the school of origin's attendance zone, but the living situation continues to be uncertain. The student will benefit from the continuity offered by remaining in the school of origin.*	☐ Length of Anticipated Stay *The student's current living situation appears stable and unlikely to change suddenly; the student will benefit from the developing relationships with peers in school who live in the local community.*

Norht Fork Local Schools
Needs Assessment Worksheet and Summary

Needs Assessment Worksheet

Issue	*Guiding Questions*	*Status/Comments*
Awareness	• What is the level of awareness/education of LEA program administrators and school personnel regarding the statutory requirements of McKinney-Vento and Title IA legislation relative to the education of homeless children and youth? • What is the level of awareness/education in other community agencies and networks, such as homeless coalitions, shelter providers, and other service providers? • Are homeless education posters displayed in each school in the community?	
Policies/ Procedures	• How often do you review/revise district policies, regulations, and practices that might be barriers to the school enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless students? • What kinds of outreach efforts are in place and by whom to target the identification of homeless children and youth in your community? • Does the LEA obtain data on homeless students from shelters? • How are homeless families informed, in a language they understand, of the educational rights of their children regarding enrollment, transportation, etc.? Is information posted in places they are likely to see? • Are shelter personnel and other service providers aware of the district's obligation to provide transportation to the school of origin? • How do you support homeless students' right to attend the school of origin when doing so is in their best interest? • What kinds of parent involvement activities and initiatives are implemented district-wide? Are supports provided to encourage and assist homeless families in being involved? • What issues/barriers are addressed consistently in calls received by the local liaison requesting information or technical assistance? • Do you provide basic services and supports, such as school supplies, fee waivers, and transportation, as needed? • Does the district have a written dispute resolution policy? Are parents provided with a copy when disputes arise?	
Identification/ Enrollment/ Access	• How many homeless children and youth have been identified as homeless in your district? • How many homeless unaccompanied youth have been identified? • How many homeless preschool-age children have been identified? (birth-2 and 3-5)? • How many homeless migrant homeless students have been identified? • Do you enroll homeless students immediately?	

Identification/ Enrollment/ Access *(continued)*	• Do you identify and remove barriers to school enrollment, attendance, and success in school for homeless students? Are barriers specific to homeless unaccompanied youth eliminated? • How many homeless shelters are in your district? • How many school-aged children reside in homeless shelters in your district? • How many students are doubled-up with friends or family due to lack of housing? • How many homeless students are in other kinds of living situations? • How many homeless students have moved within the district, or from outside the district in the past school year? • Do you consider data relative to poverty, unemployment, foreclosures, and other economic trends in your community when assessing the accuracy of your numbers of homeless students identified and served? • Is it likely that there are homeless children and youth in the community who have not been identified and are not attending school?	
Student Success	• What percentage of identified homeless students in your district are grade-level proficient in reading, math, and science? • Is the academic proficiency of homeless students increasing in your district? • Does analysis of proficiency data factor in length of time enrolled in the school where tested? • Does the reporting process recognize discrepancies in data as students move from school to school or from district to district? • What other indicators, in addition to academic achievement scores, do you monitor? (e.g. attendance, chronic absenteeism, grade-level promotion/retention, graduation rates, disciplinary referrals, etc.)	
Collaboration – Internal	• What is the frequency of communication between the local liaison and Title IA program leaders in your district? • What kinds of decisions are made jointly between homeless education and Title IA? • How does your Title IA plan address the needs of homeless students? • How do homeless education liaisons and Title IA coordinators collaborate to address the needs of homeless unaccompanied youth? Homeless preschoolers (Birth-3 and 4-5)? Homeless migrant students? Homeless students awaiting foster care? • Are the reservation of Title IA funds, the amount, and the use determined jointly between Title IA coordinators and the local liaison? • Is the amount determined based on data from a needs assessment? • Is a description of the Title IA reservation, and how the funds are used, included in your Consolidated Plan submitted to the State? • Is a description of the Title IA reservation included in your McKinney-Vento subgrant program description? • How many homeless students are participating in Title IA programs? (Schoolwide? Targeted Assistance? Other?)	

	• What is the level of coordination with other program personnel (transportation, nutrition, counseling, drop-out/truancy, special education) • How many homeless students are receiving special education services?	
Collaboration - External	• What is the frequency of communication between the local liaison and community agencies that serve homeless families? • What community agencies are active in the provision of services to homeless children, youth, and families in your community? • Do LEA staff members participate in collaboration with Head Start, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs, HUD, etc.? • What community agencies collaborate with the LEA on data collection? • Are community agencies working with homeless families aware of the statutory requirements of McKinney-Vento and Title IA legislation? • What specific projects/initiatives are underway as a result of collaboration within the community network? • How would you assess the overall quality and effectiveness of community collaboration?	
Resources/ Capacity	• What resources are available to meet the unique needs of your homeless students? • Does your district receive a McKinney-Vento subgrant? If so, what supplemental services are provided with those funds? • If your district does not receive a McKinney-Vento subgrant, what supplemental services are provided and how are they funded? • What amount of Title IA funds is reserved to meet the needs of homeless students in your district? • How are these funds used? • What happens with Title IA funds that are unspent at the end of the fiscal year? • How are pupil transportation services provided by the district for homeless children and youth? • Are public transportation options provided by the district when needed? • What other LEA supports are available?	
Additional Questions for Charter Schools (if applicable)	• How many homeless students are attending your charter school? • How are services provided to homeless students in your charter school? • Are you receiving McKinney-Vento subgrant or Title IA funds? • Is technical assistance being provided to charter school personnel regarding the educational rights of, and provision of services for, homeless children and youth? How and by whom? • How are you ensuring that school administrators and staff are providing services and supports in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act?	

Needs Assessment Summary

Complete each section below based on the results of the Needs Assessment Worksheet.

1 = Many areas of concern; several compliance issues; technical assistance is needed
2 = Implementation is minimally adequate; systems, tools, and mechanisms are needed to strengthen implementation; technical assistance is needed
3 = Implementation is adequate; procedures are in place but could be improved
4 = Program is strong and robust, with model systems, tools and mechanisms in place

Awareness *(circle one)*: **1 2 3 4**

Most Important Challenges:

Further Data Needed:

Further Action Needed:

Policies/Procedures *(circle one)*: **1 2 3 4**

Most Important Challenges:

Further Data Needed:

Further Action Needed:

Identification/Enrollment/Access *(circle one)*: **1 2 3 4**

Most Important Challenges:

Further Data Needed:

Further Action Needed:

Student Success *(circle one)*: **1 2 3 4**

Most Important Challenges:

Further Data Needed:

Further Action Needed:

Collaboration - Internal *(circle one)*: **1 2 3 4**

Most Important Challenges:

Further Data Needed:

Further Action Needed:

Collaboration - External *(circle one)*: **1 2 3 4**

Most Important Challenges:

Further Data Needed:

Further Action Needed:

Resources/Capacity *(circle one)*: **1 2 3 4**

Most Important Challenges:

Further Data Needed:

Further Action Needed:

Guidance/Monitoring *(circle one)*: **1 2 3 4**

Most Important Challenges:

Further Data Needed:

Further Action Needed:

1. **Based on the summary scores above, list in order of priority the areas needing improvement:**

2. **What strengths exist to assist in addressing these areas of concern?**

3. **What general strategies will you use to address these priorities?**

4. **In what areas do you anticipate needing additional resources and/or technical assistance?**

5. **What process will you use to generate an action plan to address your most pressing issues?**