Tahoe Lake Elementary School
Family Handbook

Welcome to a wonderful year of learning and growth at Tahoe Lake! We are so glad you are a Tahoe Lake family! To help all our Tahoe Lake Cubs have a happy and successful year, please take a few minutes to review the information included in this handbook. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our Principal, Mrs. Foucek, or your child's teacher. Mrs. Foucek can be reached at (530) 582-2704, by call or text at (530) 584-9343 or by email at sfoucek@ttusd.org.

Tahoe Lake Elementary Vision

Developing each child's confidence, imagination, problem-solving, and academic skills is our foremost mission. Our school is a safe place where our caring and encouraging spirit results in student and staff connectedness and high levels of learning and growth for all students. We know that 'Happy Children Learn.'

Tahoe Lake Elementary School strives to be a respected place of learning where all children are safe, cared for, and connected.

Tahoe Lake School Will Provide a Rigorous Education for Each Student Through:

- A hands-on science-focused education, with an emphasis on Lake Tahoe's natural environment
- Targeted instruction with measurable achievement for every student, every day
- A safe and respectful campus supportive of high levels of learning for all
- Strong relationships with all families and community partners

TTUSD prohibits, at any district school or school activity, discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, intimidation and bullying, based on actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, immigration status, ethnic group identification, ethnicity, age, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, medical information or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. This shall apply to interns, volunteers, and job applicants when applicable. For questions, concerns, or complaints, please contact the District Equity and Title IX

Compliance Offie Dr. Annamarie Cohen, Executive Director of Student Services (530) 582-2560 (for students) or acohen@ttusd.org or Mike Shepherd, Executive Director of Human Resources (530) 582-2500 ext. 20432 or humanresources@ttusd.org (for employees).

Safe Campus

Tahoe Lake is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students. To meet this end, all exterior doors are locked during the school day and all visitors and volunteers must enter and exit school via the main entrance. All volunteers and visitors must sign in at the office and obtain a badge.

Behavior Guidelines

We know that all Tahoe Lake Cubs can be safe, respectful, and responsible, and by doing so help themselves and others be safe and happy as they learn; therefore, we teach the following expectations and expect them to be supported at home.

Area	BE SAFE	BE RESPECTFUL BE KIND	BE RESPONSIBLE DO YOUR JOB
All Common Areas and Hallways	· Walk · Keep your hands and feet to yourself · Stay in your class line	· Help others · Stand up for yourself and others · Respect the work hanging in the hallways by looking at it with your eyes · Move quietly; don't distract students in classes	· Use quiet voices · Be on time · Go directly to your destination · Take care of your school · Carry a hall pass to use bathrooms, go to office, and for classroom volunteering
Cafeteria and Lunchtime	· Walk · Sit with your knees under the table	· Use good manners · Say "Please," "Thank you," and "May I please be excused?" · Visit quietly and kindly with your neighbors · Make room for classmates at your table · No cuts in line	· Eat your lunch · Raise your hand for help · Stay in your seat until dismissed · Clean up after self and others · Recycle
Playground and Recess	· Two hand touch for ball games · One hand touch for tag · No throwing sticks, rocks, snowballs, etc. · Think before you act	· Use nice words · Listen to and value other people's ideas · Offer help · Invite others to play · Think of other's feelings · Apologize for accidental encounters	· Use equipment for its intended purpose · Take care of equipment · Stay in the boundaries · Play/exercise · Follow the rules of the game · Drink water and use the bathroom appropriately
Bathrooms	· Keep your feet on the floor · Walk · Keep water in the sink · Report messes to teacher	· Give people privacy · Use a quiet voice	· Make sure toilet flushes · Wash your hands · Put used paper towels in trash can
Special Events and Assemblies	· Walk · Sit with your class	· Sit on your bottom · Be quiet	· Attend · Allow · Appreciate · Applaud

Classrooms	· Keep your hands, feet, and body to yourself · Play by the rules · Make good choices · Use supplies and equipment for their intended purposes	· Remember the Golden Rule: Treat others the way you want to be treated · If you don't have something nice to say, don't say it at all · Share and take turns · Listen, and look at the person who is speaking	· Do quality work · Follow directions and rules and remind others too · Try your best and do your best · Be in control of your actions · Follow all rules when there is a guest teacher
Arrival in the Morning	· Use crosswalks · Walk on sidewalks	· Playground rules and hallway rules BEFORE and AFTER school are the same as during school	· Stay on the playground until the bell rings · Ask permission to go inside · Line up with your class when the bell rings · Eat breakfast in the cafeteria
Dismissal After school	· Keep your hands, feet, and body to yourself · Stay out of bus lanes · If being picked up, stay in pickup area until your parent comes up to get you	· Cuts are not allowed. You can't give them and you can't take them	· If bus is ready, board immediately. If bus isn't ready, line up in a single file line · If bus is late, bus duty will decide on playground privileges. Your backpack will hold your place in line
On the School Bus	· Remain seated at all times · Use emergency doors only in an emergency · Hanging out of windows is not permitted · Throwing things is not allowed · Be at your bus stop five minutes early	· Be respectful on the bus driver and follow his or her directions · Use quiet voices. Shouting inside the bus or out the window is not respectful · Use nice words.	· Follow all school bus rules · You must have a bus pass to ride the bus · Scan your bus pass when you get on and when you get off the bus · Keep your personal items in your backpack · Electronics usage is determined by the driver · All school rules apply on the bus

Tahoe Lake Elementary Home and School Compact

A successful education is the result of the partnership and efforts of the student, teachers, AND parents. It is important for ALL members of our Tahoe Lake Family to support student learning!

Student Expectations

I realize that my education is important. I know I am the one responsible for my own success. Therefore, I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Maintain a positive attitude & believe in my ability to succeed
- Be safe, be respectful, be responsible
- Dress appropriately for learning, for playing, and for the weather
- Complete and turn in assignments on time
- Be a cooperative learner, and ask for help when needed
- Limit screen time every day
- Discuss my school day, good and bad, with my parents

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Student Signature Date

Parent Expectations

I understand that my participation in my student's education will help his/her achievement and attitude. Therefore, I will continue to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Model the positive behavior & attitude I hope to instill in my student
- Get my child to school on time every day– attendance is important!
- Provide a quiet place/time every day for my student to do homework or read
- Volunteer in the classroom or at school events
- Review all school communications
- Attend Back-to-School Night, parent conferences, Open House, and other school events
- Ensure my student gets adequate sleep & a healthy diet
- Limit screen time every day
- Discuss the school day, good and bad, with my child

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Parent Signature Date

Staff Expectations

We understand the importance of the school experience to every student and our role as educators and role models. Therefore, we agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of our ability.

- Support and model the school's behavior, discipline, and dress codes
- Teach appropriate content standards and skills
- Strive to address the individual needs of each student
- Communicate with parents regarding each student's progress
- Provide a safe, healthy, and positive learning environment for students
- Correct and return appropriate work in a timely manner
- Communicate homework and classwork expectations



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Principal's Signatureon behalf of all Staff Date

Attendance

Good attendance is essential for student learning and is required by state law. It is of utmost importance that parents contact school whenever their child is absent. **Please call 582-2700 before 8:00 am to explain your child's absence; it is ok to leave a message**. When students are marked absent without earlier verification from a parent, an automatic phone call goes home before 9:00 am to alert parents to call to verify.

Absences:

There are two kinds of student absences from school: Excused and Unexcused.

- **Excused Absence:** illness, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, appearance in court, observance of a religious holiday, or school-related activity, such as an athletic event
- **Unexcused Absence:** any other absence is considered unexcused.

When students have **three unexcused absences** or **five excused absences,** district attendance letters will be sent to the parents according to California Attendance Laws. If a child has 10 or more absences in a school year, a doctor's note may be required to excuse absences for illness. If your child is late to school, please bring them to the office for a pass to class. If you need to check your child out early, please come to the office where we will call for them for check out. For attendance tracking purposes, it is very helpful if you bring a doctor's note to school when your child has seen a doctor, dentist, or other medical provider when he or she has missed school.

Independent Study

We understand that situations arise that require students to miss school. For any absence of three days or more, you may ask for Independent Study. Independent Study may cover up to fifteen days of missed school. Students gone more than fifteen days will be unenrolled or accrue unexused absences. Once an independent study contract has been arranged, students will be given assignments by their teacher to keep them on track academically while away from school, and once the assignments are completed, the days off campus will not count as absences. All Independent Study requests must be made at least two weeks in advance via this online request form.

Change in After-School Plans

Whenever possible, please send a note with your child to their teacher to explain a change in the normal routine of after-school plans. If plans change during the day, please call the office at 582-2700 so we can ensure that your child gets their change of plans and can safely get to their destination. We cannot guarantee that changes in after-school plans can be honored if they are called in during the last two hours of the school day, so advance notice is important. Students may only ride the bus if they have a bus pass. Bus changes are not allowed.

Student Cell Phones, Smart Watches, and Other Communication Devices

Ideally, students will not have phones or other communication devices at school. If a student does have a device at school, it needs to be OFF and in their backpack at all times. If a parent needs to communicate with their child during the school day, they should call the office for a message to be delivered.

If a student is using a phone or other communication device at school, the following steps will be taken:

1st Offense: Teacher asks student to put cell phone/equipment away and notifies the office and parents.

2nd Offense: Teacher refers student and cell phone/equipment to administrator. Administrator notifies parents and holds device until end of day. Student assigned reflection.

3rd Offense: Teacher refers student and cell phone/equipment to administrator. Administrator holds phone until parent is able to retrieve the phone and documents on student record. Administrative Conference with student and parent to discuss and review cell policy. Student assigned reflection.

Tahoe Lake cannot assume responsibility for any lost or stolen electronics. They are safer at home.

Parent Volunteers

We love parent support in the classroom and otherwise at school. All volunteers must be cleared by our district office. The information to be cleared can be found at ttusd.org or by emailing humanresources@ttusd.org. All volunteers must check in at the office every time to get a volunteer badge. Please bring your Driver's License the first time you volunteer or visit so you can register in our Raptor system for volunteering. We make every effort to use district buses for field trips; however, if we require volunteer parent drivers for a field trip, parents must be cleared as a volunteer driver by the district office. If you have

been cleared to drive previously, you will only need to provide proof of current insurance to continue to be cleared to drive.

Snow Days

All snow days are announced by the district office. Families who have current phone numbers in our automated calling system will receive a call at 6:00 am. Snow days are also posted on the district website at TTUSD.org and announced by local media outlets such as 101.5 Truckee Radio and KCRA news. To receive the earliest snow day notification, please download the TTUSD app to your mobile device. The TTUSD app is a great way to receive all school related information.

Drop Off and Pick Up

A safe day at school starts and ends with a safe drop-off and pick-up. Teachers are on yard duty on the playground and in the drop-off zone starting at 8:00 am each morning. Please do not drop students off before 8:00 am. All students should be dropped off in the drop-off lane, which is the lane farthest from the school building. The lane closest to the school is for buses. It is important to keep the flow of traffic going, so please never park and get out of your car in the drop-off lane. If your child requires assistance getting out, please park in the parking lot and walk them to the crosswalk, where staff will meet them. Buses park in our loading zone after the bell rings, so cars cannot be left in the loading/drop-off zone. On rainy days, students will go to the gym until the bell rings at 8:15 to stay dry. If you arrive after the 8:15 bell, please park and walk your child to the office to check in.

All students line up in their class' assigned spot when the bell rings to start the day, and all students are walked by their teacher to the pickup spot and buses at the end of the day. To pick up your child at the end of the day, please park and walk to the crosswalk in the parking lot where the handicapped parking is. Students will be released to cross to the parent when seen. We want to ensure that all students are always safely picked up by the appropriate person, so please connect with your child's teacher at the end of the day.

Lost and Found

Lost clothing and other items are put in the lost and found next to the gym in the hope they will be 'found.' Please check the lost and found when you are on campus. All lost items are also put out on tables periodically throughout the school year to help with the return to owner. Any items still in the lost and found at the end of the school year will be donated to charity. Labeling all items greatly increases the chances that they will never be 'lost' in the first place, so please put your child's last name on all items that come to school.

Student Health

Tahoe Lake does not have a school nurse on campus every day. If your child complains of not feeling well in the morning or has any symptoms of illness, please keep them home until they are well. If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be called to pick them up. A child is too sick to attend school if they have a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, significant signs or symptoms of illness (e.g., persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, lethargy). Please notify the office if your child has a contagious/infectious disease. This will help us to keep other children, especially those with a compromised immune system, safe. If your child requires medicine to be administered at school, please contact the office to connect with the school nurse to complete the appropriate documentation with your doctor.

FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES ALL SCHOOL MEALS ARE FREE!

Menus can be found at www.ttusd.org/food

TTUSD school meals (breakfast and lunch) are free for all TTUSD students, regardless if a meal application has been submitted. ***However,*** we ask that you fill out a new meal application every school year in order to be considered for the many benefits below for your student/family.

These benefits may include but are not be limited to:

- Summer Sun Bucks EBT, CalFresh food card per child, up to $120 per household - Info here
- Waived or reduced AP & College Application fees, PSAT/SAT application fees
- Specific scholarship opportunities for those who are eligible for free or reduced meals

HOW TO APPLY FOR FREE MEALS

Complete one application per household. Prior meal applications do not carryover, a new application for the 2025-2026 school year must be submitted. **The school bus application does not qualify as a meal application.**

1. Visit www.linqconnect.com**, register for an account and fill out an application. Registering for an account allows you to print an eligibility letter.**
2. Request a paper application and/or contact the TTUSD Food Services Department by phone 530-582-2528 or email food@ttusd.org

TTUSD WELLNESS POLICY

A healthy school environment is important for student academic success, long-term health, and well-being. This document outlines TTUSD's goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. The TTUSD Wellness Policy applies to all foods and beverages served, sold, or given to students during instructional hours and it sets nutrition standards for meal times throughout the school day. The policy also includes specific nutrition guidelines for food fundraising (any food or beverages sold) or foods brought on campus/district wide for celebrations or rewards on campus and district wide.

Lunch and Snack Guidelines:

All students will have at least 20 minutes to eat at lunchtime and can have more time if they need it. All students also have a snack time in the morning for which they should bring a healthy snack or get one from the cafeteria. Tahoe Lake Cubs expend a lot of energy learning and playing, and it is important that they have healthy food to keep them going. Please follow our Wellness Policy for all food items. A healthy lunch is available in the cafeteria every day.

Tahoe Lake Wellness Policy for Classrooms

Food will not be used as a reward or a punishment at school or in the classroom.

- Students are not allowed to bring sodas to school and should not bring candy for the morning snack.
- The school staff (classified and certificated) is encouraged to serve as positive role models in promoting an active and healthy lifestyle for students.

- The Tahoe Lake community (students, parents, and staff) support TTUSD in wanting to provide the best possible learning environment for our students. To do so, we will strive to provide a school-wide environment that supports and reinforces healthy behaviors for all of our students.

All birthday celebrations must be prearranged with the classroom teacher and will not include any food items. Some ideas are:
-Stickers, pencils, or erasers for each child in the class.
-Donation of a book to the classroom or school library in your child's name.
-Planning a special art, science, or other activity with your child's teacher.
-Classroom celebrations (holidays, 100th Day of School, etc.) will focus on healthy food choices with not more than one non-nutritious food or beverage per celebration. Class celebrations will be held after the lunch period whenever possible.
-Only healthy snack items will be offered at the annual Walk-a-thon.
-Sodas will not be sold at school fundraising events, and the majority of foods offered will be considered healthy.

Student Safety/Bullying

The Tahoe Truckee Unified School District is committed to providing an educational environment free of any bullying and unlawful or offensive harassment. The District's anti-harassment policy applies to all persons involved in the district's educational environment and prohibits unlawful harassment by any student or any employee of the District. Violation of this policy by a student may result in discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion, depending on the nature and seriousness of the violation.
Unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to
1. Verbal conduct such as derogatory comments.
2. Visual conduct.
3. Physical actions such as assault, unwanted touching, or blocking of normal movement
4. Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

If an individual thinks he or she is being unlawfully harassed, the individual should immediately notify an administrator, counselor, teacher, or other staff member.

To file a complaint, the individual should provide details of the incident(s), the names of the individuals involved and the names of any witnesses. The complaint should be, but is not required to be, in writing. The District encourages all individuals to report any incidents of harassment forbidden by this policy immediately so that complaints can be addressed quickly and fairly. Teachers are expected to monitor and address student behavior so that every student may learn in a safe environment. Recurring instances of inappropriate behavior and/or bullying should be reported to the administration.

Annual Notice to Parents: Right to Request Teacher Qualifications

Our district receives federal funds for Title I programs. You have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher(s).If you request this information, the district or school will provide you with the following as soon as possible:
a. If the teacher has met state licensing requirements for the grade level and subjects in which the teacher is providing instruction;

b. If the teacher is teaching under an emergency status for which state licensing requirements have been waived;
c. The type of college degree major the teacher has and the field of discipline for any graduate degree or certificate; and
d. If your child is receiving Title I services from paraprofessionals and, if so, his/her qualifications.
If you would like to request this information, please contact the office at 582-2700.

Student Dress Code

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is appropriately dressed to learn and play at school. All students must wear closed-toe shoes and clothes that have appropriate coverage. It is also important that all clothes allow for active play. All students must have tennis shoes on PE days. Please be aware of the weather and make sure your child has clothes appropriate for the forecast. We play outside in all weather.

Playground Rules

- No hitting or rough play.
- No tag or chase on the play structures.
- If a ball goes outside the play area, students notify yard duty who will determine if it is safe for ONE student to get the ball, or if an adult needs to get it.
- Students must stay in boundaries and be visible to yard duty at all times.
- No toys from home.
- If students need to use the restroom, they must ask permission and get a hall pass before being allowed to go one at a time.
- Students must go immediately to their line when the bell rings.
- Hands and feet should be kept to oneself: no tackle games, play fighting, shoving, wrestling, hitting. If a game or action could hurt someone, it should not be played.

Snowy Days on the Playground

- Playing in the snow at recess is a highlight at Tahoe Lake. Students who play in the snow must wear snow boots, a snowsuit or a jacket, snow pants, and mittens or gloves. Please help your child to bring the appropriate clothes to enjoy the snow.
- Students will slide on the slide hill only in a seated position, feet first, one at a time.
- Students will not jump off snow hills or plowed snow mounds.
- Students will not run and slide on the icy blacktop.
- Students are responsible for keeping their clothing dry.
- Students will not roughhouse or push in the snow.
- No throwing snow balls… ever!

Before and After School Care

We are very fortunate to have wonderful before and after-school care in our community. Below is the contact information for three of the organizations that serve the majority of our students.

A+	(530) 583-1534
RAP (TCPUD)	(530) 583-3796
Boys and Girls Club	(530) 546-4324

A positive and strong connection between Tahoe Lake families and school is important for the success and well-being of all of our students. Please know that our office and classroom doors are always open to parents. Please don't ever hesitate to call, email, or come to school with any questions or concerns. Have a happy day at Tahoe Lake!

Williams Complaint Notice
2026–27
California Department of Education
Tahoe Truckee Unified School District

Notice to Parents, Guardians, Pupils, and Teachers

1. There should be sufficient textbooks and instructional materials. That means each pupil, including English learners, must have a textbook or instructional materials, or both, to use in class and to take home.

2. School facilities must be clean, safe, and maintained in good repair.

3. There should be no teacher vacancies or misassignments.

- There should be a teacher assigned to each class and not a series of substitutes or other temporary teachers.
- The teacher should have the proper credential to teach the class, including the certification required to teach English learners if present.
- Teacher vacancy means a position to which a single designated certificated employee has not been assigned at the beginning of the year for an entire year or, if the position is for a one-semester course, a position to which a single designated certificated employee has not been assigned at the beginning of a semester for an entire semester.
- Misassignment means the placement of a certificated employee in a teaching or services position for which the employee does not hold a legally recognized certificate or credential or the placement of a certificated employee in a teaching or services position that the employee is not otherwise authorized by statute to hold.

4. A complaint form may be obtained at the school office, district office, or downloaded from the school's website.



KNOW YOUR IMMIGRATION RIGHTS AND PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW

You have the right to apply for and secure housing without sharing your immigration status. California law prohibits housing providers from asking about your immigration status unless you are applying for affordable housing funded by the federal government. Additionally, housing providers cannot harass or intimidate you by threatening or sharing information about your immigration status to ICE, law enforcement, or other government agencies.

You have the right to access emergency medical care. Federal laws and regulations ensure the rights of all people, including undocumented immigrants, to access emergency medical care.

You have the right to a workplace free of harassment and discrimination. Under California law, you are protected from harassment and discrimination based on your national origin, ancestry, race, ethnicity, and other protected characteristics. Your employer cannot threaten to call immigration authorities as retaliation for reporting harassment or discrimination on the job. Your employer is also not allowed to ask about or look into your immigration status, unless they must do so to comply with federal immigration law and regulations, and you are not required to share this information.

You have the right to ask companies to stop selling your data or to delete your data. It is important to understand your data privacy rights, and it can be helpful to reduce the number of companies that are storing or selling data about you. For information on these rights and how to exercise them go to **oag.ca.gov/privacy/ccpa**.

You have the right to an attorney. If you are arrested by police, you have the right to a government-appointed lawyer. If you are detained by ICE, you have the right to consult with a lawyer, but the government is not required to provide one for you. You can ask for a list of free or low-cost alternatives. To find a legal aid organization near you, go to lawhelpca.org.

You have the right to access your police report. State and local law enforcement agencies cannot deny a victim of a crime access to their crime report because the victim cannot prove lawful presence in the country.

Your child has a right to a free public education regardless of immigration status. They also have a right to be in a public school learning environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, and intimidation. Schools must accept a variety of documents from the student's parent or guardian to demonstrate proof of age and residency. Information about citizenship/immigration status is never needed for school enrollment. You do not have to share information regarding passports or visas, or regarding the immigration status of a child, parent, guardian or other family member. And you do not have to provide a social security number or other card for either enrollment or for free or reduced-price school breakfast and lunch.

State and local law enforcement cannot ask for your immigration status for immigration enforcement purposes. California law expressly prohibits law enforcement from inquiring about a person's immigration status for immigration enforcement purposes.

State and local law enforcement cannot share your personal information for immigration enforcement purposes. This includes your home or work address for immigration purposes, unless that information is available to the public or unless that information involves previous criminal arrest, convictions or similar criminal history.

State and local law enforcement cannot assist ICE with immigration enforcement, with very limited exceptions. This means state and local law enforcement cannot investigate, cannot interrogate, cannot arrest, and cannot detain you unless they are part of a joint federal task force where the primary purpose of the task force is not immigration enforcement.

REPORT A COMPLAINT:

- If you believe your rights have been violated, report it to the California Dept of Justice at oag.ca.gov/report.
- If you believe you were subject to discrimination, harassment or retaliation, report it to the California Dept of Civil Rights at calcivilrights.ca.gov/complaintprocess/

IMMIGRATION HELP RESOURCES:

- Law Help CA: lawhelpca.org
- Immigration Law Help: immigrationlawhelp.org

McKinney-Vento Act: Quick Reference

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.) is a federal law that provides important educational rights and services to PreK-12 children and youth experiencing homelessness. The U.S. Department of Education has published guidance to help state and local educational agencies implement the law. This document summarizes the McKinney-Vento Act's key provisions and provides corresponding legal citations.

Eligibility

"Homeless children and youth" means children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including those who are sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; staying in motels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to the lack of an adequate alternative; staying in shelters or transitional housing; or sleeping in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or similar settings. 42 U.S.C. §11434a(2). "Unaccompanied youth" includes homeless children and youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. 42 U.S.C. 11434a(6).

Office of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

Every state educational agency (SEA) must designate an Office of State Coordinator that can sufficiently carry out duties in the Act. 42 U.S.C. §11434a(2). Some key duties include:

- Responding to inquiries from homeless parents and unaccompanied youth. 42 U.S.C. §11432(f)(7).
- Providing professional development programs for liaisons and others. 42 U.S.C. §11432(f)(6).
- Conducting monitoring of local educational agencies to enforce compliance. 42 U.S.C. §11432(f)(5).

Local Educational Agency Homeless Liaisons

Every local education agency (LEA) must designate a liaison for students experiencing homelessness who is able to carry out the duties described in the law. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(ii). Some key duties include:

- Ensuring that homeless children and youth are identified and enrolled in school, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in school. 42 U.S.C. §§11432(g)(6)(A)(i)-(ii).
- Participating in professional development and other technical assistance offered by the state. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(iv).
- Ensuring school personnel receive professional development and other support. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(6)(A)(ix).
- Ensuring that unaccompanied homeless youth are informed, and receive verification, of their status as independent students for college financial aid. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(6)(A)(x)(III).
- Ensuring that homeless children, youth, and families receive referrals to health, dental, mental health, housing, substance abuse, and other appropriate services. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(6)(A)(iv).
- Disseminating public notice of McKinney-Vento rights in locations frequented by parents and youth, in a manner and form understandable to them. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(6)(A)(iii).

School Stability

- Children and youth experiencing homelessness can remain in their school of origin for the duration of homelessness and until the end of an academic year in which they obtain permanent housing, if it is in their best interest. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(A).
- LEAs must make best interest determinations that presume that staying in the school of origin is in the best interest of the child or youth; consider specific student-centered factors; prioritize the wishes of the parent,

guardian, or unaccompanied youth; and include a written explanation and right to appeal if the LEA determines that school stability is not in the best interest of the child or youth. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(B).
● The definition of school of origin includes both the designated receiving school at the next grade level (if there is a feeder school pattern), and preschools. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(I).
● Transportation to the school of origin is required, including until the end of the academic year when a student obtains permanent housing. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(iii).

School Enrollment and Participation

● Homeless children and youth must be enrolled in school immediately, even if they lack documents or have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C).
● "Enrollment" is defined as attending classes and participating fully in school activities. 42 U.S.C. §11434A(1).
● SEAs and LEAs must develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of homeless students in school, including barriers due to fees, fines, and absences. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(I).
● States must have procedures to ensure that homeless children and youth do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities. 42 U.S.C.§11432(g)(1)(F)(iii).

Disputes

- If a dispute arises over eligibility, school selection or enrollment, the child or youth must be immediately enrolled in the school in which the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth seeks enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(E)(i).
- The school must refer the student, parent, or guardian to the LEA's homeless liaison to carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible. The homeless liaison must ensure that the dispute resolution process is also followed for unaccompanied youth. The homeless liaison should assist the student, parent, or guardian in preparing the dispute and make available school resources including copying, mailing or obtaining records.
- A written explanation of the LEA's decision regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment must be provided, including the right to appeal to the COE. The written explanation shall be complete, as brief as possible, simply stated, and provided in a language that the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth can understand.
- If the decision is appealed by either party (LEA, parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth), then the homeless liaison shall forward all documentation to the COE's homeless liaison. The COE homeless liaison should have only five (5) working days to resolve the dispute decision. A written explanation of the COE's decision must be provided to all parties involved with a right to appeal to the CDE.
- If the decision is appealed by either party (LEA, parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth), then the COE homeless liaison shall forward all documentation and related paperwork to the CDE Homeless Education Program. Upon review of all parties information, the CDE will notify all parties of the final determination of eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision withing ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal. CDE Homeless Education Program: 866-856-8214 or HomelessEd@cde.ca.gov

Preschool Children

● The definition of school of origin includes preschools. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(I).
● Liaisons must ensure homeless families and children can access Head Start, Early Head Start, LEA-administered pre-school programs and early intervention services under IDEA Part C, if eligible. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C).

Financial Aid, Credit Accrual, and College Readiness

● Liaisons must ensure that unaccompanied homeless youth are informed, and receive verification, of their status as independent students for college financial aid. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(6)(A)(x)(III).
● States must have procedures to identify and remove barriers that prevent students from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(F)(ii). Liaisons must implement those policies. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(6)(A)(x)(II).
● State plans must describe how homeless youth will receive assistance from school counselors to advise, prepare, and improve their readiness for college. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(K).

Reserving Funds from Title I, Part A to Serve Students Experiencing Homelessness
● All LEAs that receive Title I Part A funds must reserve funds to support homeless students. 20 U.S.C. §6313(c)(3)(A).
● Reserved funds may be used for services not ordinarily provided by Title I, including local liaisons and transportation to the school of origin. 20 U.S.C. §6313(c)(3)(C)(ii).
● State report cards must include disaggregated information on the graduation rates and academic achievement of homeless children and youth. 20 U.S.C. §§6311(h)(1)(C)(ii) and (iii).

Contact Information:

Tahoe Truckee Unified School District Annamarie Cohen, Ph.D Executive Director Student Services 11603 Donner Pass Road Truckee, CA 96161 530-582-2560 acohen@ttusd.org	Placer County Office of Education Alicia Rozem Coordinator, Foster/Homeless/CSEC 1400 W. Stanford Ranch Rd Rocklin, CA 95765 279-253-0795 arozum@placercoe.org	California Department of Education State Homeless Education Coordinator 1430 N Street, Suite 6208 Sacramento, CA 95814 866-856-8214 HomelessEd@cde.ca.gov