

EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, NYS Education Law 3209 and Commissioner's Regulations allow a homeless child or a person in a parental relationship to a homeless child or when the homeless child is living in a shelter for runaway or homeless use the Director of the shelter to designate this District as the District of attendance for the homeless child when this District is either the school district of current location, the school district of origin, or is a school district participating in a Regional Placement Plan. A questionnaire upon enrollment will be used to determine whether a student is potentially a homeless child.

The District will maintain open communication with the Department of Social Services as well as any shelters in the District in order to assist in identifying students potentially homeless.

A homeless child or youth is a child under the age of 21, including preschool students, and is defined in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Commissioner's Regulations §100.2 (x). The term homeless child, however, shall exclude children living in foster care or otherwise placed through a government agency into a family home at board, school for the mentally retarded, hospital or other institution for care, custody and treatment of children under the direction of the Department of Social Services, Office of Mental Health or the Division for Youth. An unaccompanied youth shall be treated as a homeless child.

In accordance with Education Law, the student's designator for the district of attendance may be the person in a parental relationship, the student together with the McKinney-Vento liaison, or the director of a residential program for runaway or homeless youth in consultation with the student.

The District will request the designator for a designation for attendance of one of the following: school district of origin or school district of location. The District will presume upon enrollment that attendance in the district of origin is in the child's best interests unless doing so is contrary to the child's request. In making a determination of the child's best interests, the District will consider any student-centered factors but will give priority to the child's request. If the District determines attendance in another District would be in the child's best interests, a written explanation shall be provided.

Homeless child and youth shall be entitled to access to District programs on the same basis as all other District students. Homeless student and youth shall be to the extent possible, integrated with non-homeless children.

Students who obtain permanent housing part way through the year are entitled to remain in the school for the remainder of school year. The student may be able to remain in the school of origin for one additional year if the year constitutes the student's terminal year in the school building.

The School District designates the High School Principal as the McKinney-Vento Liaison for homeless children and youth for the District. In addition to any other duties required by law, this person shall be responsible for reporting to the Board of Education on an annual basis the number of homeless children in the District, the placement of these children, and any suggestions for lowering any barriers to enrollment, attendance, school success and retention of homeless children and youth in the District.

Where the District receives a completed Commissioner's form designating the District as the school of attendance for a child and disputes issues relating to school enrollment or school selection of that student, the following shall occur:

1. the student shall be immediately enrolled in the designated school;
2. prior to making a final determination on the disputed issue, the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee shall afford the student or person in parental relation to the student an opportunity to submit information to the District addressing the disputed issue;
3. the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee shall render a decision in writing and provide a copy to the student or person in parental relation. The decision must be in a manner understandable to the person in a parental relationship or student. It shall also contain a statement of the McKinney-Vento Liaison's available to assist the student with any appeal.

A written decision shall include an explanation of the school's decision and a statement regarding the right to appeal the decision to the Commissioner of Education within 30 days as required by law. The McKinney-Vento liaison must assist the student in bringing an appeal including but not limited to providing the person in a parental relationship with a copy of the form petition and assistance in completing the petition, copying, accepting service of the papers on behalf of the District, filing the petition with the NYS Education Department, accepting service of subsequent papers and provide the parent with a signed and dated acknowledgement of receipt of the petition. If the decision is appealed, the student remains enrolled pending the Commissioner's determination.

The School District will collect and transmit to the Commissioner of Education in accordance with the Commissioner's rules, a report containing information the Commissioner determines necessary to assess the educational needs of homeless children and youths.

TRANSPORTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- A social services district is responsible for providing transportation to students in temporary housing, including preschool students and students with disabilities who are eligible for benefits under Social Services Law §350-j and placed in temporary housing arrangements outside their designated districts. Where the social services district requests that the District provide or arrange for transportation for a student in temporary

housing in the circumstances above, the District shall provide or arrange for the transportation and directly bill the social services district so that the district will be fully and promptly reimbursed for the cost of the transportation.

- If the District is the designated school district of attendance, the District shall provide for the transportation of each homeless student or unaccompanied youth up to 50 miles each way from the district of location. Transportation will be provided on the same basis as is provided to the District's resident students including but not limited to extracurricular activities.
- Where a student in temporary housing must cross state-lines to attend a school of origin, the District will coordinate with the district of origin in the neighboring state to provide transportation services.

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