

**Procedures Manual
For Enrolling Homeless Students**



Revised July 2017

Webster County School District Procedures for Enrolling Homeless Students

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act assures preschool-aged and school-aged children certain rights.

Definition:

The McKinney-Vento Acts defines “homeless children and youth” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youth who are:
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (*sometimes referred to as doubled-up*);
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
 - Abandoned in hospitals; or
 - Awaiting foster care placement;
- 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 human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
- Unaccompanied youth include young people who have run away from home, been thrown out of their homes, and/or been abandoned by parents or guardians.

Requirements:

The McKinney-Vento Act provides certain rights for homeless students. They include waiving certain requirements such as proof of residency when students are enrolling and allowing categorical eligibility for certain services. The Act also states:

- Homeless students may attend their school of origin or the school where they are temporarily residing.
- Homeless students must be provided a written statement of their rights when they enroll and at least two times per year
- Homeless students may enroll without school, medical, or similar records.
- Homeless students have a right to transportation to school.
- Students must be provided a statement explaining why they are denied any service or enrollment.
- Students must receive services, such as transportation, while disputes are being settled.

Procedures for Identifying a Homeless Student

A student may be considered homeless if:

- The student indicates a homeless status at the time of enrollment
- An affidavit of residency indicates that the arrangement is temporary due to necessity (due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason)¹

Procedures for Enrolling a Homeless Student or Unaccompanied Youth²

The school may not deny, delay, or transfer enrollment solely because a student is homeless, or because a homeless student is unable to produce school, medical, or residency records.

A school enrolling, or about to enroll, a homeless student shall:

- Immediately enroll the student, regardless of the availability of educational and/or immunization records
 - If a student attempts to register without a parent/guardian, effort should be made to contact the parent/guardian
 - The homeless student may not be barred from enrollment due to lack of immunization until an effort has been made to obtain records. If records cannot be obtained, assistance should be provided in getting the student properly immunized.
 - If a birth certificate is not available, the student should be registered. Department of Human Services may be contacted to assist in obtaining a copy of the birth certificate.
 - The student will be identified as homeless in STI
- Make a reasonable effort to verify that the child is homeless.
- Contact the school last attended to obtain relevant academic and other records
 - If student records cannot be obtained or records are not available an educational record (cumulative folder) will be developed. In these cases, an academic diagnostic test may be administered to assist in the determination of the student's skill levels and appropriate placement.
 - Priority shall be given in evaluations of homeless student suspected of having a disability.
- Provide free meals within one school day after the student enrolled. If necessary, assistance will be provided for completion of free and reduced lunch forms.
- Provide access to the same services comparable to those offered to other students in the school which the homeless student attends such as:
 - transportation services
 - educational services
 - school nutrition programs
 - preschool
 - vocational and technical programs
 - extra-curricular and enrichment activities

¹ Complete the Homeless Education Identification Form

²*Unaccompanied youth* include young people who have run away from home, been thrown out of their homes, and/or been abandoned by parents or guardians.

- Coordinate with and/or refer student to other community resources in offering assistance to the homeless student/family
- Contact the district homeless liaison
- Since all of Webster County Schools are school-wide Title I schools, all students whether homeless or not have access to Title I academic services.

It is important that the academic and educational programs for children who are temporarily without a home are no different than those of the general student population.

Student Residency Form

This form is intended to address the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act (Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act). The question below is to assist in determining if the student meets the eligibility criteria for services provided under the McKinney-Vento Act. In the event that the child is not staying with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s), use the caregiver authorization form to address guardianship issues.

Where does the student stay at night?

_____ in a shelter

_____ in another location that is not appropriate for people (e.g., an abandoned building)

_____ in a motel/hotel

_____ temporarily with more than one family in a house, mobile home, or apartment (because the family does not have a place of its own)

_____ in a car

_____ other (in an arrangement that is not fixed, regular, and adequate and is not described by the other choices)

_____ at a campsite

Name of school: _____

Name of student: _____ Student's date of birth: _____

I, (name) _____
 declare as follows: I am the parent/legal guardian of (name of student) _____,
 who is of school age and is seeking enrollment in (name of school district) _____.
 Since (date) _____, our family has not had a permanent residence.

Under penalty of perjury under the laws of this state, I declare that the information provided here is true and correct and of my own personal knowledge and that, if called upon to testify, I would be competent to do so.

Name of person completing the form: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address:

Phone number: _____ E-mail address:

I can be reached for emergencies at: _____

Determining Feasibility of School Placement Form

Name of student: _____

Date: _____

According to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, a homeless child or youth has the right to attend the school of origin or the local attendance area school, according to the best interest of the child:

- The **school of origin** is defined as:
 - the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed; OR
 - the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled
- The **local attendance area school** (local school) is defined as:
 - any public school that nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend

This form will assist in determining which placement decision would be in the student's best interest.

Please provide the following information for the attendance options for the student:

School that the child or youth attended when permanently housed:

Name of school and district:

Dates of attendance:

Living arrangement at the time:

School in which the child or youth was last enrolled:

Name of school and district:

Dates of attendance:

Living arrangement at the time:

Local Attendance Area School

Name of school and district:

Current living arrangement:

1.

1. Are the school of origin and the local attendance area school in the same school district?
2. Which school does the child/youth want to attend? Why?

3. Which school does the parent want the child/youth to attend? Why?

4. What is the distance and time spent on travel from the current residence to the school of origin?

5. If transportation is currently unavailable to the school of origin, how can it be arranged?

6. What time of year is it (at the beginning of the school year, near the end of the school year, during the summer)?

7. How long did the child/youth attend the school of origin? Were meaningful social and educational relationships established?

8. Are there specific people in the school of origin who have been providing support or assistance to the family or child/youth experiencing homelessness?

9. Are there special programs, such as gifted, bilingual, or remedial education, in which the child/youth has been participating at the school of origin?

If yes, please describe.

Are these special programs also available at the local attendance area school?

10. Based on a knowledge of the family's situation, how long is the family likely to remain at the current residence?
11. What is the likelihood that the family experiencing homelessness will reestablish residency in the attendance area of the school of origin?

Based on answers to the previous questions, the school district recommends the following school:

Individuals consulted to determine that this placement is in the student's best interest were:

Signature(s) of the individual(s) making the recommendation:

Notification of Enrollment Decision

To be completed by the receiving school when an enrollment request is denied.

Date: _____

Name of person completing form: _____

Title of person completing form: _____

Name of school: _____

In compliance with section 722(g)(3)(E) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the following written notification is provided to:

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Name of Student(s): _____

After reviewing your request to enroll the student(s) listed above, the enrollment request is denied. This determination was based upon:

You have the right to appeal this decision by contacting the school district's local homeless education liaison.

Name of local liaison: Sue Anne Boatman

Title: Federal Programs Director/Homeless Liaison

Phone number: 662-258-5921 ext. 10