

Homeless Student Policy

The School shall provide an educational environment that treats all students equally. Every homeless student shall have access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are not homeless. This commitment to the educational rights of homeless or unaccompanied students applies to all services, programs, and activities provided or made available.

The School shall designate a staff member to be the school liaison for homeless students (“School Liaison”). The School shall display the contact information for the School Liaison in the building. Awareness training shall be provided to all staff members. All questions and concerns of the staff members should be referred to the School Liaison.

A student may be considered eligible for services as a “Homeless Child” under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act if he or she is presently living:

- With other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- In a shelter, temporary shared housing, or transitional living program
- In a hotel/motel, campground, or similar situation due to lack of alternatives
- At a bus station, park, car, or abandoned building
- In a temporary or transitional foster care placement

According to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, eligible students have the right to:

- **Immediate Enrollment:** Proof of residence, birth certificate, immunization records, and other documentation cannot serve as a barrier to enrollment to the school.
- **School Selection:** The eligible student has the right to select from the following schools:
 - The school he/she attended when permanently housed (School of Origin)
 - The school in which he/she was last enrolled (School of Origin)
 - The school in the attendance area in which he/she currently resides (School of Residency)
- **Participation in Programs:** Students have a right to access all of the school’s programs and services on the same basis as all other students, including special education, school breakfast and lunch, and any extra-curricular activities.
- **Transportation:** Any eligible student attending his/her School of Origin has a right to transportation to and from the School of Origin.
- **Dispute Resolution:** Should a dispute arise over school selection or enrollment in a school the following procedure is to be followed:
 - The School Liaison shall provide the parent or guardian with a written explanation of the school’s decision regarding school selection or enrollment.
 - The School Liaison shall inform the parent or guardian in writing of their right to appeal the decision.
 - Should the dispute continue the School 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 and School Liaison.
- Should the dispute continue the final appeal is made to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for review and disposition.

The School Liaison for Homeless Students shall ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless student and any unaccompanied youth is:

- Assisted in accessing transportation to the selected school;
- Provided assistance in exercising the right to attend the school of his/her choice;
- Serviced without being labeled as homeless by school personnel;
- Provided the above information in a manner and form understandable to the parent or guardian, and if necessary, in the native language of the parent or guardian.