

Procedure

FILE:JFABD

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized in December 2000 as part of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), ensures educational rights and protection for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Regulations require each district to designate a “Homeless Education Liaison.” The Manager of Social Emotional Learning is the designee for the WPS and may be reached at x3175. This act also provides a broad mandate to districts to clarify policies or practices that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance and school success of homeless children. In order to accomplish this, we have adjusted existing WPS procedures for enrolling new students and/or the changing of their address to accommodate, not discriminate against, homeless students and their families.

The Federal Government defines a homeless child or youth as one who lacks a “fixed regular and adequate residence or has primary night-time residence not designated as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings” (McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, Section 103(A) (1) (2).

By definition, the following children are considered homeless:

- Children/adolescents living in family, adolescent, emergency and transitional housing shelters
- Children/adolescents living in cars, abandoned buildings, and on the street
- Sick or abandoned children/adolescents in hospitals, who would otherwise be released if they had a place to go
- Children/adolescents living temporarily in trailer parks or campgrounds because they lack a permanent place to live
- Children living apart from parents or guardians for any reason and including runaways and youths who have been “thrown out” of their own home environment or have left due to abuse and who are living in a shelter, on the street, or, who move from one friend’s house to another in a cycle of transiency, otherwise known as “unaccompanied youth.”
- Children/adolescents living in “doubled up”, overcrowded situations, with or without their parents, with friends or relatives because they have been displaced from their previous residence due to an emergency situation or the loss of housing due to economic hardship

A child temporarily without a home may continue to attend the school of origin (the school they were attending when permanently housed or the school in which last enrolled) or a school within the new zone where they are temporarily living. This right applies both within the city and between school districts. The school district(s) is (are) responsible for providing transportation, if available, as long as the ride to school is not unreasonably long and in the child’s best interest.

This right is guaranteed under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

For students experiencing homelessness:

- Confidentiality (to protect privacy rights) – provide a private place for enrollment and completion of paperwork.
- Immediate enrollment in school (with or without medical records and/or transcripts, or proof of address).

- Transportation back to school of origin, if feasible (contact the Homeless Resource Specialists at x3175).
- Receive same services as other students.
- Support of Homeless Resources Specialists, Child Study Liaisons (both at x3175) and the District Homeless Liaison when necessary (Manager of Social Emotional Learning at x3175)

SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT AND TRANSPORTATION

Elementary level including Woodland Academy: All enrollments and changes in home address must be handled at the Parent Information Center. PIC staff will have all parents/guardians who are unable to provide proof of residency complete the *Student Address Verification Form*.

- Families living in a shelter can produce verification from the shelter.

Secondary level including Claremont Academy: Parents/guardians/students notifying schools of a change in address or seeking to enroll in a school must show proof of residency. If they are not able to prove residency, they must complete the *Student Address Verification Form*.

- Families/students living in a shelter can produce verification from the shelter.

A copy of all *Student Address Verification Forms* must be faxed to:

- 1) Homeless Resource Specialist and Child Study Liaison (FAX: 3178)
and
- 2) Parent Information Center School Choice Coordinator (FAX: 3113)