

# CITY HEIGHTS PREP

---

## CHARTER SCHOOL

---

### Homeless Policy

#### PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 1 To outline administrative procedures governing the enrollment and education of Homeless children.

#### B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS

- 1 **Federal Law:** Elementary & Secondary Education Act, Subtitle B, Section 1034, now known as the McKinney Vento Education for Homeless Children & Youth Act, 2007
- 2 **Academic Achievement.** It is the policy of the Congress that students who lack a fixed, adequate nighttime residence (homeless) have access to the education and other services they need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging academic achievement standards to which all students are held.
- 3 **Segregation.** It is the policy of the Congress that homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment. Schools must not provide services in settings within a school that segregate Homeless children from other children and youth, except as is necessary for short periods of time for health and safety emergencies, or to provide temporary, special, and supplementary services. District and site policies and practices must ensure that Homeless children are not segregated or stigmatized on the basis of their status as homeless.

#### C. GENERAL

##### 2. Definitions

- a. **Homeless children:** An individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- (1) Children and youth living with a friend, relative or someone else because they lost their home or cannot afford housing.
- (2) Children and youth who are staying in a motel, hotel or campground due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations.
- (3) Children and youth who are living in an emergency or transitional shelter or a domestic violence shelter, or are awaiting foster care placement.
- (4) Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- (5) Children and youth who are living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, bus or train station or similar setting.

- b. **Unaccompanied youth:** A youth not in the physical custody of a parent/ guardian, who is in transition as defined above.

- c. **Enrolled:** Attending school and fully participating in school activities.

d. **School of origin:** The school the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled. .

e. **Liaison:** A staff person designated by the school to ensure the rights of homeless studentsal situations and their families. Liaisons must ensure that:

(1) Homeless children are identified by school personnel and activities are coordinated with other entities and agencies.

(2) Homeless children enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school.

(3) Homeless families, children and youth receive all educational services for which they are eligible and referrals to health, mental health, dental and other appropriate services.

(4) Homeless parents/guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.

(5) Enrollment disputes are mediated and records of all disputes are kept in order to determine if particular issues or schools are repeatedly delaying or denying the enrollment of Homeless children.

(6) Homeless parents/guardians and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, including to the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing transportation services.

(7) There is collaboration and coordination with state and county liaisons and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children.

## D. IMPLEMENTATION

### 1. Enrollment

a. The district immediately *enrolls* homeless students, even if they do not have required documents, such as school records, medical records, proof of residency or other documents.

**Note:** The term “enrolled” is defined as attending classes and fully participating in school activities.

b. The enrolling school obtains school records from the previous school, and students must be enrolled in school while records are obtained.

c. If a student does not have immunization or medical records, the liaison immediately assists in obtaining them, and the student must be enrolled in school in the interim.

2. **Students With Disabilities or Suspected Disabilities.** Evaluations of Homeless children suspected of having a disability shall be given priority and evaluation coordinated with students’ prior school, as necessary, to ensure completion of a full evaluation.

a. When necessary, the district shall expeditiously designate a surrogate parent for unaccompanied youth suspected of having a disability.

b. If a student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) the enrolling school will immediately implement it.

c. Any necessary IEP meetings or re-evaluations shall be conducted in accordance with state and Federal law.

d. If complete records are not available, IEP teams must use good judgment in choosing the best course of action, balancing procedural requirements and the provision of services. In all cases, the goal will be to avoid any disruption in appropriate services.

**3. Dispute Resolution.** When a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the child/youth must be immediately enrolled in the school in which he/she is seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute.

a. A written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment must be provided if a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth disputes such a school selection or enrollment decision, including the right to appeal. The written explanation shall be simply stated and provided in a language that the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth can understand.

b. The parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth should be advised that they can provide written or oral documentation to support their positions about school selection or enrollment.

c. If the dispute remains unresolved at the district level or is appealed, then the district liaison shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the liaison at the county office of education. The county liaison will review the materials and determine the school selection or enrollment decision within five (5) working days of receipt of the materials. The county liaison will notify the district liaison and the parent of the decision.

d. If the dispute remains unresolved or is appealed, the county liaison shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the state liaison. The state liaison will notify the parent of the final school selection or enrollment decision within five (5) working days of receipt of the materials.

#### **4. Transportation**

a. At a parent's/guardian's request, a student in transition must be provided with transportation to and from his/her school of origin. The transportation service must be comparable to that provided to other students.

b. For unaccompanied youth, transportation to and from the school of origin must be provided at the liaison's request.