



KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT

1000 KELTON AVENUE · PITTSBURGH, PA 15216
PHONE 412.571.6000 · FAX 412.571.6006

August 18, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As the Homeless Coordinator for the Keystone Oaks School District, I am contacting you to share important information regarding the education of homeless youth under the McKinney Vento Act. The McKinney Vento Act is a policy of Congress, passed in 1987, which states educational agencies shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.

The McKinney Vento Act indicates that every school district shall, according to the child's best interest:

- 1.) Continue the student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during the academic school year
- 2.) For the remainder of the academic year, if the child becomes permanently housed during an academic year
- 3.) Enroll students in an public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend

Students are considered "homeless" and entitled to protection under the McKinney Vento Act under these circumstances:

- Sharing housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camp grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations, are living in emergency or transitional shelters, are abandoned in hospitals
- Primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation for human being
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- "Migratory Children" whose parents are migratory agricultural workers, including dairy workers and fisherman, who have moved from one school district to another in the preceding 36 months
- Awaiting foster care placement
- "Unaccompanied Homeless Youth" any child who is not in the physical custody of their parents or guardian. They may have run away, been thrown out of their home, been abandoned by parents, or separated from their parents for any reason



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School Placement based on the Best Interest of the Child/Youth:

Appropriate school placement arrangements, based on the child's best interest, should be implemented through cooperative efforts of the respective chief school administrators. Each case presents a unique set of circumstances and, therefore, requires an individualized response. In all cases, the District shall comply, to the extent feasible, with the request made by the parent or guardian regarding school selection, shall attempt to minimize disruptions and shall maintain the highest possible degree of continuity in programs for all homeless students. The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

In determining the best interest of the child or youth under McKinney-Vento Act, the District shall:

- 1.) Keep a homeless child or youth in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child's or youth's parent or guardian
- 2.) Provide written explanation, including a statement of regarding the right to appeal, to the homeless child's or youth's parent or guardian, if the District sends such a child or youth to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian
- 3.) In the case of an Unaccompanied Youth, ensure that the homeless liaison considers the views of the unaccompanied youth and provides notice to the youth regarding the right to appeal

Thank you for taking the time to review this information. If you have any questions regarding the education of homeless youth or if your family is experiencing an episode of homelessness, please contact me at 412-571-6013 or lochie@kosd.org.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Lochie

Supervisor of Pupil Services K-12