

Policy Guide



Policy No. 240

Section PUPILS

Title HOMELESS STUDENTS

Adopted MARCH 15, 2016

Revised MARCH 21, 2017

POLICY NO. 240 HOMELESS STUDENTS		
Section 1	<p><u>Authority</u></p> <p>The Board recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to district students. The Board shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children within the District, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.</p> <p>The Board may waive policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation and success in school of homeless students, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent and following the McKinney Vento Act.</p>	<p>SC 1306 Title 22 Sec. 11.18 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 et seq.</p>
Section 2	<p><u>Definitions</u></p> <p>Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and nighttime residence, and include the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship. 2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations. 	<p>42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a</p>

**POLICY NO. 240
HOMELESS STUDENTS**

3. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters.
4. Abandoned in hospitals.
5. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings.
7. Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.
8. Runaway children (under the age of 18) and children who have been abandoned or forced out of the home by parents/guardians or other caretakers. The foregoing includes children in temporary shelters awaiting assistance from social service agencies, or who are living alone on the street or who move from place to place among family members, friends or acquaintances. This also includes youth from ages 18 to 21 who still qualify for regular or special education services under applicable law.
9. Living as school age unwed mothers in houses for unwed mothers if they have no other living accommodations.

School of origin is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

POLICY NO. 240 HOMELESS STUDENTS		
Section 3	<p><u>Delegation of Responsibility</u></p> <p>The Board designates the Superintendent or his/her designee to serve as the District’s liaison for homeless students and families.</p> <p>The District’s liaison shall coordinate with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youth and families. 2. Other school districts on issues of records transfer and transportation. 3. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. <p>The District’s liaison shall provide public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens.</p>	<p>42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432</p> <p>42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432</p>
Section 4	<p><u>Guidelines</u></p> <p>Students shall not be discriminated against, segregated nor stigmatized based on their status as homeless.</p> <p><u>Enrollment/Placement</u></p> <p>To the extent feasible, and in accordance with the student’s best interest, a homeless student shall continue to be enrolled in his/her school of origin while s/he remains homeless or until the end of the academic year in which s/he obtains permanent housing. Parents/guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living or other schools. If a student is unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, the District liaison will consider the views of the student in determining where s/he will be enrolled.</p> <p>The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, pursuant to District policies. However, the District may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information. The District liaison may contact the previous school for oral confirmation of immunizations, and the</p>	<p>42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432</p> <p>42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432</p> <p>42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432 Pol. 200, 201, 203, 204, 209, 216</p>

**POLICY NO. 240
HOMELESS STUDENTS**

school shall request records from the previous district, pursuant to Board policy.

Homeless families are not required to prove residency regarding school enrollment.

If the District is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the District shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's placement.

School/Health Records

The receiving school district may contact the district of origin for oral confirmation that the student has been immunized, but must not be a barrier to enrollment. Oral confirmation between professionals is a sufficient basis to verify immunization with written confirmation to follow within thirty (30) days. The instructional program should begin without delay after the enrollment process is initiated and should not be delayed until the procedure is completed.

The enrolling district's liaison will assist the parent/guardian/student in obtaining necessary immunizations, medical screenings or medical records.

Disputes/Complaints

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent/guardian/student will be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision on the dispute, including the right to appeal. The parent/guardian/student will be referred to the district liaison, who will carry out the state's grievance procedure as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied student, the district liaison shall ensure that the student is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

Pol. 203, 209

**POLICY NO. 240
HOMELESS STUDENTS**

If disputes or complaints of noncompliance arise regarding the education of homeless students, the following steps shall be taken:

1. The person filing the complaint shall first contact the school or District through the district liaison, the principal, or Superintendent to present their concerns to the people closest to the situation and most likely to be able to resolve it quickly.
2. If Step 1 is not successful or is not possible under the circumstances, contact should be made with the Homeless Project Education Liaison, or the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will accept complaints directly through the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program.
3. Individual cases may be referred to the PDE's Office of Chief Counsel and the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education as needed, by the State Homeless Coordinator.

PDE will deliver a response within fifteen (20) business days of the receipt of the complaint. The complaint may arrive in the form of a copy of the school/district letter or on the Dispute Letter Form if given directly to a Liaison of the Homeless Initiative.

Services

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other district students including, but not limited to, transportation services; school nutrition programs; vocational programs and technical education; preschool programs; programs for students with limited English proficiency; and educational services for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students.

42 U.S.C. Sec.
11432
SC 1306

**POLICY NO. 240
HOMELESS STUDENTS**

Transportation

The District shall provide transportation for homeless students to their school of origin or the school they choose to attend within the school district.

42 U.S.C. Sec.
11432
SC 1306
Pol. 810

If the school of origin is outside District boundaries or homeless students live in another district, but will attend their school of origin in this district, the school districts shall agree upon a method of apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.

Fiscal Responsibilities

Reporting and reimbursement will be done according to the McKinney-Vento Act.

42 U.S.C. Sec.
11431 et seq.

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 1306

State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 11.18, 403.1

No Child Left Behind Act – 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.

Education for Homeless Children (McKinney-Vento Act) – 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 et seq.

Family Education Rights and Privacy, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations – 34 CFR Part 99

Guidelines for Enrollment of Homeless Children – Federal Register, 67 Fed. Reg. 10698

PA Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan

Board Policy – 200, 201, 203, 204, 209, 216, 810