

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS

This policy is intended to direct compliance with Arizona State Laws and Arizona Administrative Code and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 and should be read as consistent with those documents.

The implementation of this policy shall assure that:

- homeless students are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless;
- homeless students are immediately enrolled in school;
- transportation is provided to and from the school of origin for the homeless student as applicable and found in the law and Policy JFAA.

Definitions

The term "homeless students" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes:

- students who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- students who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- students who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- migratory students who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.

The term 'school of origin' means the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

The term 'unaccompanied youth' includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Liaison for Homeless Students

The Chief Executive Officer will designate an appropriate staff person as liaison for homeless students who will carry out duties as assigned. Among those duties will be the responsibility to coordinate activities and programs in the best interest of homeless students that will include, but not be limited to, establishment of procedures to:

- 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 an academic year; or
 - for the remainder of the academic year, if the student becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- Enroll the student in any public school that nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.

Best Interest of the Homeless Student

In determining the best interest of the homeless student, the school shall:

- To the extent feasible, keep a homeless student in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the student's parent or guardian;
- Provide a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal, to the homeless student's parent or guardian, if the homeless student is sent to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian; and
- In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison for homeless students shall assist in placement or enrollment decisions, considering the views of such unaccompanied youth, and providing notice to such student of the right to appeal.

Other Relevant Policies and Procedures

Implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act requires the coordination with a number of policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are listed below as cross referenced and are incorporated in this policy and these procedures by such reference.

Adopted: November 16, 2007

LEGAL REF.: A.R.S. 15-816 through 15-816.07
15-821
15-823 through 15-825
42 U.S.C. 11301, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance
Act of 2001

CROSS REF.: EEAA - Walkers and Riders
IKEB - Acceleration
JF - Student Admissions
JFAA - Admission of Resident Students
JFAB - Admission of Nonresident Students
JFB - Open Enrollment
JG - Assignment of Students to Classes and Grade Levels
JLCB - Immunizations of Students
JLH - Missing Students
JR - Student Records
JRCA - Request for Transfer of Records

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Admission

The school selected by the homeless student shall immediately admit the homeless student, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation.

The enrolling school shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain relevant academic and other records.

If the student needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the student to the liaison for homeless students, who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records.

Admission Disputes

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school:

- The student shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute;
- the parent or guardian of the student shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or student to appeal the decision;
- the student, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the liaison for homeless students, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute in accord with the procedure found in the Arizona State Plan; and
- in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison for homeless students shall ensure that the student is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

Enrollment Decision

The decision regarding enrollment shall be made regardless of whether the student lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

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(Liaison Position)

The School shall designate a liaison for homeless students and, in conjunction with the state coordinator, shall inform school personnel, service providers, and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the School liaison.

The School liaison for homeless students shall ensure that:

- homeless students are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the District's schools;
- homeless families and students receive educational services for which such families and students are eligible, including:
 - Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the School, and
 - referrals to health care and immunization services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services;
- the parents or guardians of homeless students are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated where such students receive services under the Homeless Assistance Act, such as:
 - schools
 - family shelters, and
 - soup kitchens;
- disputes over school selection or enrollment in a school are mediated in a manner that:

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- immediately admits the student to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute,
 - provides the parent or guardian of the student with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding the school selection or enrollment, and informs the parent, guardian, or student of the rights to appeal the decision,
 - expeditiously carries out the dispute resolution process after receiving notice of the dispute, and
 - in the case of an unaccompanied youth, ensures that the student is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute;
- the parent or guardian of a homeless student, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including arrangements for transportation to the school of origin;
 - the parent or guardian of a homeless student, and any unaccompanied youth, is assisted in accessing transportation to the selected school.

As a part of the duties, the School liaison for homeless students will coordinate and collaborate with state coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless students.

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(Notice)

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001, 722 (e)(3)(C), the parent or guardian (student if unaccompanied) is to receive and acknowledge notice of the rights set forth below.

The parent or guardian of a homeless student (student if unaccompanied) has the right to:

- 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 an academic year; or
 - for the remainder of the academic year, if the student becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- Enroll the student in any public school that nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.
- Appeal if the homeless student is sent to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian;
- Enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school without being segregated from the nonhomeless student population;
- Receive educational services for which such families and students are eligible, including:
 - Transportation services, meals programs;
 - Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the School; and
 - referrals to health care and immunization services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.
- Identification or service without being stigmatized as homeless by school personnel;

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A parent or guardian (student if unaccompanied) may contact the State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youths at;

The Arizona Department of Education
1535 W Jefferson
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Telephone: 602 542-7462

A parent or guardian (student if unaccompanied) may contact the District Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths at;

Ajo Unified School District No. 15
Attn: Loranzo Morales
PO Box 68
Ajo, AZ 85321
Telephone: (520) 387-3273
E-mail: ajotech@tabletoptelephone.com

The District Liaison for Homeless 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 exercise of the right to attend the school of choice and other necessary services; and
- provided the above information in a manner and form understandable to the recipient and if necessary and to the extent feasible, in the native language of the recipient.

The signature below indicates that the signatory has received and understands this information on rights.

Signature of Parent, Legal Guardian
(or unaccompanied student)

Date

One (1) copy to signatory and one (1) to the liaison officer file.