

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Purpose: To provide education and support for homeless children and youth.

Policy: The board will make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children and youth of school age within the district, encourage their enrollment and eliminate existing barriers to their receiving an education which may exist in district policies or practices. The designated coordinator for identification of homeless children and for tracking and monitoring programs and activities for these children is the Strawberry Hill Elementary Principal.

“Homeless children and youth” means individuals from age three through age 21 who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:

- sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- abandoned in hospitals;
- awaiting foster care placement;
- living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- children and youth 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;
- migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition.

Incarcerated children and youth and children and youth in foster care are not considered homeless.

The elementary principal shall serve as the District’s liaison for homeless children and youth. The liaison shall ensure that:

- homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- homeless children and youth enroll in school and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in school;
- homeless children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and preschool programs administered by the District, and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services;
- parents/guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of available educational and related opportunities provided to their children and of the opportunities for the parents/guardians to participate in the education of their children;
- the District disseminates public notices in places in which homeless children and youth receive services of their educational rights;

- the District informs parents/guardians, and unaccompanied youth of transportation services, including to and from the school of origin, and provides assistance in accessing the transportation to school;
- enrollment disputes are properly mediated.

The liaison shall also assist parents/guardians, and unaccompanied youth in enrolling in school and accessing school services, obtaining student records, arranging for immunizations, and shall help to coordinate transportation services.

Immunization Records. A homeless child or youth will not be denied enrollment for lack of immunization records if the child is transferring from another school and the school confirms the presence of the immunization record. The District liaison will make a reasonable effort to locate immunization records from the information provided or will arrange for the student to receive immunizations.

Student Records. Homeless children and youth transferring into the District may provide student records directly to the District. The District will not require that the records be forwarded from another district or school before the child may enroll. The District will then request the student's records from the previous district or school attended by the student. Homeless children and youth transferring out of the District may be provided directly copies of student records to take with them.

Waiver of School Fees. School fees shall be waived in accordance with the District's policy on waiver of fees or if necessary for the homeless child or youth to obtain equal access to a free public education. The District liaison shall also assist students in accessing resources for appropriate school clothing.

Free and Reduced-Price Meals. The application process for free and reduced price meals shall be expedited for homeless children and youth. The District may determine if a student is homeless and requires free meals without completing the full application process.

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