

Homeless Education, Title X: McKinney-Vento Policy

Michigan International Prep School

The Board of Trustees recognizes the right of all students, including those who are homeless, to receive a free appropriate public education and to be given meaningful opportunities to succeed in schools. The School will ensure that homeless children and youth are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment.

Information regarding this policy, including the educational rights of homeless children and youth, is available to all families and students as part of the school's handbook and can be accessed 24/7 on our website in the Learning Coach Resources section.

Definitions

The McKinney-Vento Act defines "homeless children and youth" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes –

- Children and youth who are:
 - sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as *doubled-up*);
 - living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
- abandoned in hospitals; 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;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

If a child or youth's living situation does not clearly fall into the situations described above, the school should refer to the McKinney-Vento definition of "fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence" and consider the relative permanence of the living arrangements. Note that incarcerated children and youth and children and youth in foster care are *not* considered homeless.

Unaccompanied Youth means a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence as defined above. The more general term youth also includes unaccompanied youth.

Enroll and *enrollment* means attending school and participating fully in all school activities.

Immediate means without delay.

School of Origin means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

Local Liaison is the staff person designated by our district as the person responsible for carrying out the duties assigned to the local homeless education liaison by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Identification

Homeless children and youth will be identified. Data will be collected on the number of enrolled students identified as homeless children; where they are living; their academic achievement (including state and local assessments); and the reasons for any enrollment delays, interruptions in their education, or school transfers.

School Selection Rights

Enroll in the local school (School of residence); or continue attending the last school attended while permanently housed or the school in when they were last enrolled (school of origin), based on the preference of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied homeless youth.

If the school district believes that the school selected is not in the best interest of the child, then the district must provide a written explanation of position and give the option to appeal the decision.

Services that are required to be provided, including transportation to and from the school of origin and services under federal and other programs, will not be considered in determining feasibility.

Enrollment

The school shall immediately enroll the homeless child or youth, even if the child or youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, proof of residency, or other documentation.

Transportation

Homeless children and youth will be provided with transportation services comparable to those offered to the other students in the school. Students may also receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested.

Services

Students experiencing homelessness must and will be provided with services that are comparable to services offered to other students not experiencing homelessness. These services include educational programs or services such as programs for children with disabilities, programs for students with limited English proficiency, vocational education, and programs for gifted and talented students, for which a student experiencing homelessness meets the eligibility criteria. Homeless children and youth are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services.

Training

The local liaison will participate in and share information with staff regarding McKinney-Vento Title X requirements and sensitivity/awareness annually.

Coordination

A local liaison will be appointed as the school's primary contact between homeless families, school personnel, and other service providers. The liaison is responsible for coordinating services to ensure that homeless students IMMEDIATELY enroll in school and have an opportunity to succeed academically.

The liaison shall also collaborate and coordinate as needed with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, and community personnel who work with these students and their families. The liaison will also be a point of reference for making referrals and recommendations for appropriate community and governmental agencies who may be able to provide additional assistance. Michigan International Prep School has a dedicated McKinney-Vento homeless committee which meets regularly to discuss issues pertaining to students facing homelessness and to make specific plans regarding students and families in our school who need support. This committee's mandate is to ensure all of our students and families facing homelessness are provided with everything they need – academically, socially, emotionally, nutritionally until their situation has a long-term solution. Our committee works closely with the Clinton County RESA to use all applicable grant dollars allocated to them to ensure our students have access to winter jackets, toiletries, and other necessary items for living well. Our group is also going to research and pursue grants dedicated towards supporting families facing homelessness so we can provide things outside of what the RESA grant dollars allow. We aim to lift all families up through a high-quality education, adequate housing, appropriate nutrition, and any necessary wrap around services they need. This work will continue throughout the school's history.

Disputes

If there is a dispute regarding any issue covered in this policy, the student will have the rights of a homeless child or youth to all appropriate educational services, transportation, and Title I, Part A services while the dispute is pending. The school will provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal and will refer the parent or unaccompanied youth to the local liaison immediately. Such notice will be in language the parent or unaccompanied youth can understand and include a summary of the dispute resolution process. Detailed dispute resolution procedures are included in the school's Homeless Education Procedures.

LEGAL REFERENCE:

- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. Sections 11431-11436
- Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Sections 6311- 6315
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Sections 1400 et. seq.
- Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, 42 U.S.C. Sections 1751 et. seq.
- June 5, 1992 Policy and Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.