

Provo City School District
Policy Series 3000: Students

3115 P1

Homeless Students

School personnel who identify students as homeless are required to notify the District Homeless Coordinator.

Definitions

Homeless Child

“Homeless child” means a child or youth. A child is “homeless” under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, if the child lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes:

1. Children who are sharing the housing of other persons due to a 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 transition shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
2. Children 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;
3. Children who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children living in circumstances above. “Migratory child” means a child who is, or whose parent, spouse, or guardian is, a migratory agricultural worker, including a migratory dairy worker, or a migratory fisher, and who, in the preceding 36 months, in order to obtain, or accompany such parent, spouse, or guardian in order to obtain, temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural or fishing work:
 - a. Has moved from one school district to another; or
 - b. Resides in a school district and migrates a distance of 20 miles or more to a temporary residence to engage in a fishing activity.

Unaccompanied Youth

“Unaccompanied youth” means a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who is homeless as defined above.

School of Origin

“School of origin” means the school that the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled.

Best Interest

In determining the “best interest” of a child, Provo City School District shall:

1. To the extent feasible, keep a homeless child in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of a child’s parent or guardian; and
2. Provide a written explanation to the homeless child’s parent or guardian, including a statement of appeal rights, if the District sends the child to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian; and
3. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, consider the views of the child and provide the notice required in the event of an enrollment dispute.

Enrollment

“Enroll” and “enrollment” include attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

Services for Homeless Students

The District shall serve homeless children according to their best interests. The District shall adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their homeless status.

District Homeless Coordinator

The District Homeless Coordinator for homeless children shall inform school personnel, service providers, and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the Coordinator. The Coordinator shall ensure that:

1. Homeless children are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
2. Homeless children enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, District schools;
3. Homeless families and children receive educational services for which they are eligible, including educational programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students; vocational programs and technical education; programs for students with limited English proficiency; school meals programs; Head Start and District preschool programs; before- and after-school care programs; and referrals to health care, dental, mental health, and other appropriate services;
4. The parents or guardians of homeless children are informed of the available educational and related opportunities and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;

5. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children is disseminated where such children receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens;
6. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act and District Due Process procedure;
7. The parent or guardian of a homeless child, and any unaccompanied youth, are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school or origin, and are assisted in accessing transportation to the school of enrollment.

Contact Information

The District may require the parent or guardian of a homeless child to submit contact information.

Enrollment

The school selected in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act shall immediately enroll a homeless child even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. The school shall immediately contact the last school attended to obtain relevant academic and other records. If the child needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the child's parent or guardian to the District's homeless liaison for assistance.

Enrollment in School of Origin

In determining feasibility of education a homeless student in his or her school of origin, the District shall consider the best interests of the student with regard to such relevant factors as:

1. Continuity of instruction
2. Age and grade placement of the student
3. Distance of the commute and its impact on the student's education or special needs
4. Personal safety of the student
5. Student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504 or special education and related services
6. Length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or other temporary location
7. Likely area of the family's or youth's future housing
8. Time remaining in the school year
9. School placement of siblings

Services, including transportation, that the District is required to provide shall not be considered in determining feasibility.

Admissions

The principal shall notify the District Homeless Coordinator within one school day of admission of a homeless student.

Enrollment Disputes

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The District shall provide the child's parent or guardian with a written explanation of the decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the right to appeal the decision. The District shall refer the child, parent, or guardian to the homeless liaison, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.

School Placement

The District shall not segregate homeless children. The District shall, according to the child's best interest and where feasible:

1. Continue the child's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness, if the child's family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year;
2. Continue the child's education in the school of origin for the duration of the academic year, if the child becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
3. Enroll the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child is actually living are eligible to attend; or
4. Transfer to the school district or charter school where the child is actually residing or domiciled, if space is available as defined under Utah Admin. Rules R277-616-1(I).

The District shall make the choice regarding placement without regard to whether the child lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

In determining where the child is residing or domiciled, the District may consider:

1. The place, however temporary, where the child actually sleeps;
2. The place where an emancipated child or an unemancipated child's family keeps its belongings;
3. The place which an emancipated child or an unemancipated child's parent considers to be home; or
4. Such recommendations concerning a child's domicile as made by the State Department of Human Services.

The determination of where the child resides or is domiciled may not be based on:

1. Rent or lease receipts for an apartment or home;
2. The existence or absence of a permanent address; or
3. A required length of residence in a given location.

If a child's residency or eligibility is in question, the child shall be admitted to school until the issue is resolved.

If guardianship of a minor child is awarded to a resident of the District by a court or through appointment by the District under Utah Code 53A-2-202, the child becomes a resident of the District and no tuition may be charged in connection with the change of residency district.

Transportation of Homeless Students

The District shall follow practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, at the request of the homeless liaison) to and from the school of origin, as follows:

1. If the homeless child lives in the district in which the school of origin is located, the district of origin will provide the child's transportation to and from the school of origin.
2. If the homeless child lives in a district other than that in which the school of origin is located, the district of origin and the district where the homeless child is living shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school of origin.
3. If the districts are unable to agree, the responsibility and costs shall be shared equally.

Continuation of Transportation

The District shall provide transportation to a homeless student assigned to attend the school of origin, as provided by law. If such a student ceases to be homeless, the District shall continue to provide transportation to and from the school of origin through the end of the school year, upon request from the parent or guardian.

Barriers to Enrollment

The District shall review and revise any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children. The District shall give consideration to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. The District shall give special attention to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children who are not currently attending school. In addition, the District shall adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their homeless status.

Comparable Services

The District shall provide a homeless child with services that are comparable to services offered to other students in the school in which the child is enrolled, including:

1. Transportation services;
2. Educational services for which the child meets the eligibility criteria;
3. Programs in vocational and technical education;

4. Programs for gifted and talented students; and
5. School nutrition programs.

Notice

Information regarding this policy will be:

1. Distributed to all students identified as homeless upon enrollment and once during the school year or as requested
2. Posted in every school in the district

Dispute Resolution Process

In the event that a homeless student, or his or her parent or guardian, has a complaint about admission, placement, or services provided by the District, that person shall use the complaint resolution procedures set out in Provo School District Due Process procedure. When the principal becomes aware of a complaint, he or she shall notify the District Homeless Coordinator for homeless students within one school day. At all times the District Homeless Coordinator or designee shall accompany and assist the student, parent, or guardian in the dispute resolution process. Throughout the dispute resolution process, the homeless student shall be permitted to attend classes, receive the requested services, and participate fully in school activities.

Approval Date:

March 12, 2013