

HOMELESS EDUCATION PLAN

Purpose of the Program

Homeless children and youth will be provided the opportunity to receive a free and appropriate public education regardless of their residency status. The program will ensure that these students are afforded equal access to academic and other services that will allow them to meet the same challenging state achievement standards as non homeless students.

The program provides procedural guidelines to ensure that homeless students are not denied enrollment due to the lack of registration documentation at the time of enrollment. Homeless children and youth, including preschool age children, will be enrolled immediately pending obtainment of necessary documents. The school counselor will assist parents, guardians or unaccompanied youth in obtaining the proper documentation.

The homeless education program makes every effort to provide homeless children and youth with a stable school environment by enrolling students in the *school of origin* and providing them with transportation to and from the *school of origin*. Provisions are made for parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth to decline enrollment in the *school of origin*.

The program provides for a homeless liaison who will ensure program implementation and coordinate efforts to ensure that homeless children and youth, including preschool age children, are provided the opportunity for academic success.

Identification and Registration Procedures

Homeless children and youth are often undetected. The system will conduct training sessions with the appropriate school personnel to inform them of methods of identifying homeless children without stigmatizing terminology. The system will use a *Residency Questionnaire* to facilitate identity of homeless children and youth, as well as preschoolers. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth will complete the *Residency Questionnaire* at the time of registration. The school counselor may provide appropriate assistance to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth in answering the questionnaire if necessary.

A copy of the *Residency Questionnaire* must be submitted to the Central Office Homeless Liaison on the day of registration. The school will maintain the original form in a file separate from the student's permanent record for audit purposes during the year. This file should be house in the school counselor's office.

The parent or guardian may enroll a homeless child or youth with or without proof of residency, birth certificate, social security number, immunization record, or school records. The school counselor will provide the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth appropriate assistance in obtaining the necessary records and documents for enrollment. Enrollment without the required immunization record will be pending receipt or acquisition of immunization documentation. The existing method of assigning a student number will be utilized when a student enrolls without a social security number.

An unaccompanied youth may enroll himself/herself. In this case, the school principal or designee will immediately contact the Central Office Homeless Liaison to report the enrollment of an unaccompanied youth. The school will provide the youth with proper assistance in language that the student understands. The Central Office Homeless Liaison will assist the homeless unaccompanied youth in obtaining eligible educational services.

The application process for free and reduced priced meals can be expedited for homeless children and youth. The determination for free meals may be made without completing the full application process.

Identification of Homeless Preschoolers

The Central Office Homeless Liaison will collaborate with local community service agencies (e.g. Head Start, Department of Human Resources, Health Department, faith based organizations and the court system, etc.) and school personnel to identify homeless preschoolers. The system will also include homeless preschoolers and children in the “Child Find” process as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act.

School Placement

The school system will make school placement decisions in the “best interest” of the homeless child or youth. Students will continue in the *school of origin* for the duration of homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or for the remainder of the academic year if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year. Students may enroll in any public school that non homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.

If school enrollment decision is contrary to the wishes of the child or youth’s parent/guardian, the school will provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the decision, a statement of the right to appeal, and the procedure for appealing the placement decision. The complainant must file a School Enrollment Dispute Form with the school in which the student is presently enrolled. The principal of this school will notify the Central Office Homeless Liaison of the dispute and take steps to resolve the dispute.

When a dispute arises regarding school placement, the system will immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, pending resolution of the dispute. The Central Office Homeless Liaison will expeditiously take steps to resolve the dispute following the district dispute resolution policy in conjunction with the adopted grievance policy. If the dispute cannot be resolved locally, the parent or guardian may request a review of the State Superintendent, Alabama Department of Education.

Homeless Education Liaison:

The homeless liaison shall work to ensure that homeless children and youth, including preschoolers are identified, enrolled in school, and receive all eligible services to facilitate student academic success. The responsibilities listed below are not all inclusive but shall be primary duties of the liaison.

The homeless liaison shall ensure that:

- Homeless children and youth 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 schools of the system;
- Homeless children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, and preschool programs administered by the school system, and referrals to health, mental health, dental and other appropriate services;

- Parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children, and are provided with meaning opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- Parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing transportation services;
- Transportation cost disputes between the school system and school system of enrollment are resolved;
- Sensitivity and confidentiality training is provided to transportation and school personnel regarding the needs of homeless children and youth;
- Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act;
- Public notice of educational rights of homeless students is dismissed to locations where children and youth receive services under Act;
- Required reports concerning the homeless education program are submitted to appropriate agencies and the State Department of Education; and
- Evaluation of the homeless education program is conducted annually and necessary program and implementation adjustments are made in a timely manner.

DeKalb County
Student/Family Residency Questionnaire

Your child may be eligible for additional educational services through Title I Part A, and/or Federal McKinney-Vento Assistance. Eligibility can be determined by completing this questionnaire.

Student Name			M/F	D.O.B.	Grade	School Name
First	Middle	Last				

1. Please indicate the student's nighttime residency. Check one box.

- A. Staying in shelter, FEMA trailer, or waiting for foster care placement.
- B. Doubled-up: Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason.
- C. Living in a car, park, campground, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing or similar.
- D. Temporarily living in a motel or hotel due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason.
- E. Unknown nighttime residence.
- F. Living in a permanent dwelling (either rented or owned) with a parent/guardian.

2. Unaccompanied Youth: not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian Check one box.

- Y. Student(s) is with an adult that is not a parent or legal guardian, or alone without an adult.
- N. Student does not meet the definition of "Unaccompanied youth".

Print Parent/Guardian Name **Signature** **Date**

(Area Code) Phone number **Street Address** **City** **State** **Zip**

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School Use Only

School Advocate or Administrator: Based on the above information and a brief interview with this family, I attest that to the best of my knowledge they are eligible for benefits under the McKinney-Vento Act:

Print Advocate or School Administrator Name (required) **Title** **Signature (required)**
Date

Copies to: 1. Homeless Education Liaison (Jennifer Williams fax 256-638-9720) 2. Student's Cumulative Record
3. CNP office

Condado de Dekalb
Cuestionario de la Residencia del Estudiante/Familia

Su hijo/a puede ser elegible para servicios adicionales educacionales bajo el Título 1 Parte A, y/o Asistencia Federal McKinney-Vento. Elegibilidad puede ser determinada por Completando este cuestionario.

Nombre del Estudiante		Ultimo	M/F	Fecha de Nacimiento	Grado	Nombre de la Escuela
Primer	Sur Nombre					

1. Por favor indica la residencia de la noche del estudiante. Marque un cuadro

- A. Se están quedando en un albergue, trailer FEMA, ó esperando por lugar del cuidado foster
- B. Familias múltiples: Compartiendo el hogar con otros debido a una pérdida de hogar, tiempos duros económicos, ó razón similar.
- C. Viviendo en un carro, campamento, lugar publico, edificio abandonado, hogar deficiente, ó similar.
- D. Vivienda temporaria en un motel ó hotel debido a la pérdida del hogar, tiempos duros económicos, ó razón similar.
- E. Residencia de la noche no conocida.
- F. Viviendo en una vivienda permanente (ambos rentado ó propia) con el padre/guardián.

2. Juvenil sin acompañamiento: no en la custodia física de un padre ó guardián marque un cuadro.

- S. Los estudiante(s) esta con un adulto que no es el padre ó el guardián legal, ó solo sin un adulto.
- N. El estudiante no alcanza la definición de "Juvenil sin acompañamiento"

Imprima Nombre del Padre/Guardián Firma Fecha

(Código local) numero de teléfono Dirección de la calle Ciudad estado código postal

Para el Uso de la Escuela Solamente

Defensor de la Escuela ó Administrador: Basado en la información de arriba y la entrevista breve con esta familia, al mejor de mi conocimiento ellos son elegibles para los beneficios del Acta McKinney-Vento.

Imprime Nombre del Defensor de la Escuela ó Administrador (**requerido**) Titulo **Firma (requerida)** Fecha

Copias al: 1. Asistente a la Educación sin Hogar Jennifer Williams fax 256-638-9720) 2. Record acumulativos del Estudiante
 3. oficina de CNP

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act of 2001

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, children in homeless situations have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there.
- Attend either the local school or the school of origin, if this is in their best interest; the school of origin is the school the child attended when he/she was permanently housed or the schooling which the child was last enrolled.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if missing records and documents normally required for enrollment such as a birth certificate, proof of residence, previous school records, or immunization/medical records
- Enroll, attend classes, and participate fully in all school activities while the school arranges for the transfer of records.
- Have access to the same programs and services that are available to all other students including transportation and supplemental educational services.
- Attend school with children not experiencing homelessness; segregation based on a student's status as homeless is prohibited.

If a dispute arises over any issue covered in this policy, the child or youth in transition will be **admitted immediately to the school** in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute. The student will also have the rights of a student in transition to all appropriate educational services, transportation, free meals, and Title 1 Part A, services while the dispute is pending.

Persons with complaints, grievances, or requests should present them for resolution to the local liaison for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act. The receiving school who denied enrollment must complete page 1 of the Written Notification of Enrollment Decision and provide to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth **and** the homeless liaison within 3 days of the decision. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth then has the right to appeal the enrollment decision by completing page 2 of the Written Notification of Enrollment Decision or by verbally contacting the district's homeless liaison within 5 days after the receipt of the school's decision. The district liaison will ensure that the student is enrolled in the requested school and receiving other services to which he/she is entitled and will resolve the dispute as outlined in the DeKalb County Board of Education's Grievance Procedures within the Policies & Procedures Manual. The parent or unaccompanied youth will be given every opportunity to participate in this process.

**In the event the dispute cannot be resolved locally, the parent or guardian may request a review of the State Superintendent, Alabama Department of Education.

Written Notification of Enrollment Decision

To be completed by the receiving school when an enrollment request is denied.

Date: _____

Name of person completing form: _____

Title of person completing form: _____

Name of school: _____

In compliance with section 722(g)(3)(E) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the following written notification is provided to:

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Name of Student(s): _____

After reviewing your request to enroll the student(s) listed above, the enrollment request is denied. This determination was based upon:

You have the right to appeal this decision by completing the second page of this notice or by contacting the school district's local homeless education liaison.

Name of local liaison: Jennifer Williams

Title: Homeless Education Liaison

Phone number: 256- 638-6921

In addition:

- The student listed above has the right to enroll immediately in the requested school pending the resolution of the dispute.
- You may provide written or verbal communication(s) to support your position regarding the student's enrollment in the requested school. You may use the form attached to this notification.
- You may contact the State Coordinator for Homeless Education if further help is needed or desired. Contact information for the State Coordinator: Beth Thomspson (334) 242-8199

*You may seek the assistance of advocates or an attorney.
A copy of our state's dispute resolution process for students
experiencing homelessness is attached.*

Written Notification of Enrollment Decision

To be completed by the parent, guardian, caretaker, or unaccompanied youth when a dispute arises. This information may be shared verbally with the local liaison as an alternative to completing this form.

Date: _____

Student(s): _____

Person completing form: _____

Relation to student(s): _____

I may be contacted at (phone or e-mail): _____

I wish to appeal the enrollment decision made by: _____

Name of School: _____

I have been provided with (please check all that apply):

_____ A written explanation of the school's decision.

_____ The contact information of the school district's local homeless education liaison.

_____ A copy of the state's dispute resolution process for students experiencing homelessness.

Optional: You may include a written explanation in the space below to support your appeal or you may provide your explanation verbally.

The school provided me with a copy of this form when I submitted it. _____ (initial)

