

White Pass School District No. 303

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Home of the Panthers
Preparing Students Today For Tomorrow
P.O. Box 188, RANDLE, WASHINGTON 98377-0188

Policy 3115 **Students**

Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school.

Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including those students who are:

- A. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
- B. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- C. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- D. Abandoned in hospitals;
- E. Awaiting foster care placement;
- F. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation;
- G. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings; or
- H. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The superintendent will designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families.

According to the child's or youth's best interest, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area the student is actually living.

Attendance options will be made available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district, including attendance rights acquired by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, and intra and inter-district choice options.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student will be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian will be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state policy. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

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Once the enrollment decision is made, the school will immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. However, enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including academic records, medical records, proof of residency, mailing address or other documentation. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student will be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school will be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. However, emergency contact information cannot be demanded in a form or manner that creates a barrier to enrollment and/or attendance at school.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families will coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students where such children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, such as schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

Cross References:	Board Policy 3120 3231 3413	Enrollment Student Records Student Immunization and Life-Threatening Conditions
Legal References:	<u>RCW 28A.225.215</u> <u>20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.</u> <u>42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.</u>	Enrollment of children without legal residences No Child Left Behind Act McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
Management Resources:	<i>Policy News</i> , October 2004 <i>Policy News</i> , October 2002	Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services Update NCLB Addresses Homeless Students

Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services

A. Enrollment:

1. The district will consider the best interest of the child in enrollment decisions;
2. The district shall not deny or delay enrollment of homeless students;
3. The district's need for student contact information shall not be in a form or manner that constructs a barrier for homeless students. For example, homeless students may not be excluded for failure to have a mailing address or emergency contact information;
4. The district's liaison shall:
 - a. Ensure that public notice is disseminated where homeless children receive services;
 - b. The district's liaison shall assure that students are identified by school personnel, enrolled in school and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed; and
 - c. The district liaison shall inform parents and guardians of educational and related activities and inform parents of transportation services.

B. Dispute Resolution Procedure

The District shall ensure that the child/youth attends the school in which they sought enrollment while the dispute process is being carried out.

Notification of Appeal Process

If the district seeks to place a homeless child in a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the parent, the school district shall inform the parent of the right to appeal. The district shall provide the parent with written notice including:

- a. An explanation of the child's placement and contact information for the district and OSPI homeless liaison;
- b. Notification of the parent's right to appeal(s);
- c. A description of the dispute resolution process including a petition form and timelines; and
- d. A summary of the federal legislation governing placement of homeless students (McKinney-Vento Act).

1. Appeal to the School District Liaison – Level I

If the parent disagrees with the district's placement decision, the parent may appeal by filing a written request for dispute resolution with the district's homeless liaison or a designee.

The liaison must log the complaint including the date and time the complaint was filed.

- a) A copy of the complaint must be forwarded to the liaison's supervisor and the Superintendent.

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- b) Within five working days of receiving the complaint, the liaison must provide the parent with a written decision and notification of the parent's right to appeal.
 - c) If the parent wishes to appeal, notification must be provided to the district liaison within ten business days of receipt of the level one decision. The liaison shall provide within ten business days of receipt of the level one decision. The liaison shall provide the parent with an appeals package containing:
 - 1. The complaint filed with the district liaison at Level I;
 - 2. The decision rendered at Level 1; and
 - 3. Additional information provided by the parent and/or homeless liaison.

2. Appeal to the School Superintendent - Level II

The parent may appeal the district's liaison's decision to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee using the appeals package provided at Level I.

- a) The Superintendent will arrange for a personal conference to be held with the parent within five business days of receiving the Level I appeals package.
 - b) Within five business days of the conference with the parent the Superintendent will provide the parent with a written decision and notification of the parent's right to appeal to OSPI.
 - c) A copy of the Superintendent's decision will be forwarded to the district's homeless liaison.
 - d) If the parent wishes to appeal to OSPI, notification must be provided to the district homeless liaison within ten business days of receipt of the Level II decision.
- 3. Appeal to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction - Level III**
- a) The district superintendent shall forward a copy of the Level II decision and all written documentation to the OSPI homeless liaison within five days of rendering a decision;
 - b) OSPI shall make a decision within five business days of receiving the appeal;
 - c) OSPI's decision will be forwarded to the district's homeless liaison. The liaison will distribute the decision to the parent and the local superintendent;
 - d) OSPI's decision will be the final resolution for placement of a homeless child or youth in the district.

C. Inter-District Disputes

If districts are unable to resolve a dispute regarding the placement of a homeless student, either district may submit a written request to OSPI seeking resolution.

OSPI will resolve the dispute within 10 business days of notification of the dispute and inform all interested parties of the decision.

Adoption Date: