

**Summers County Board of Education**

- Scope:** This policy is established to ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.
- Authority:** W. Va. Code § 18-8-4; State Board Policy 4110; 42 U.S.C. 11431, et seq. (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act).
- Adopted:** February 10, 2022.
- Amended:**
- Reviewed:** January 13, 2022.

**HOMELESS STUDENTS****Purpose**

Homelessness is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment. The County Board shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.

**Defined**

Homeless children and youth, including migratory children, are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and include those who meet any of the following criteria:

- share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- live in emergency or transitional shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals;
- 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; or
- live in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting.

The term "unaccompanied youth" includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

**Enrollment**

Where compulsory residency requirements or other requirements, in laws, regulations, practices, or policies, may act as a barrier to the identification of, or the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of, homeless children and youths, the County Board will review and undertake steps to revise such laws,

regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.

The school system shall remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless students in schools in the district. Homeless students shall be enrolled immediately, even if they do not have the necessary enrollment documentation such as immunization and health records, proof of residency or guardianship, birth certificate, school records and other required documentation.

### **School Attended**

Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin or the local attendance area school, according to the child's best interest. The school of origin is the school that the student attended when permanently housed or last enrolled. The local attendance area school is any public school in which the student is actually living and is eligible to attend.

### **Liaison**

The attendance director shall serve as the liaison for homeless children and will perform the following duties:

- ensure that public notice of the educational rights of students in homeless situations is disseminated where children and youth receive services;
- ensure that parents or guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- ensure that parents or guardians are informed of and assisted in accessing all transportation services for their children, including to the school of origin;
- coordinate with designee to help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school, after considering the youth's wishes, and provide the youth with notice of his/her right to appeal the county system's decision;
- immediately assist in obtaining immunizations or record of immunizations or other medical records for those students who do not have them, and assure that students are enrolled in school while the records are being obtained;
- ensure that homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- ensure that homeless children and youths enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in schools of the county system;
- ensure that homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which such families, children, and youths are eligible, including Head Start and Even Start programs and preschool programs administered by the county system and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services; and
- ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated as outlined in paragraph (3)(E) of Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Additionally, the liaison will coordinate and collaborate with the state Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth as well as with community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths and other duties as assigned by the Superintendent.