



WASB CODE: 411.2

EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Homeless children and youths residing in the Pecatonica Area School District shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths who reside in the District. They shall be provided the services and have access to the programs and activities that are offered to other children attending District schools, including transportation services, educational services for which the children/youths meet eligibility criteria (e.g., special education, Title I programming, programs and services for English Learners), gifted and talented programming, career and technical education programs, and school nutrition programs.

A homeless child or youth shall not be required to attend a separate school or program for homeless children and shall not be stigmatized by school personnel.

“Homeless children and youths” are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes, but is not limited to:

- children and unaccompanied youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- living in motels, hotels, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus stations, or similar settings.

DEFINITION

The McKinney-Vento Act states that children and youth who lack “a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” will be considered homeless [42 U.S.C. §11434A(2)(A)]. The Act does not define those terms. However, the following definitions may provide guidance:

(1) Fixed: Securely placed or fastened; not subject to change or fluctuation. A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.

(2) Regular: Normal, standard; constituted, conducted, or done in conformity with established or prescribed usages, rules, or discipline; recurring, attending, or functioning at fixed or uniform intervals. Consistent. A regular residence is one which is used on a regular (i.e., nightly) basis.

(3) Adequate: Sufficient for a specific requirement; lawfully and reasonably sufficient. Fully sufficient; equal to what is required; lawfully and reasonably sufficient. An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

The term “unaccompanied youth” includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

TRANSPORTATION

At the request of a homeless child’s parent/guardian or the homeless liaison in the cases of unaccompanied youth, transportation to the school of origin will be provided to homeless children and youth, following best interest provisions (outlined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act under Local Education Agency Requirements).

1. In order for transportation to be set up, the homeless liaison will determine with the family the best means of transportation.



2. The homeless liaison will arrange for transportation.
3. When a student obtains permanent housing, transportation to the school of origin must be provided until the end of the academic year, if it is in the student's best interest to remain in that school. At this point, parents/guardians can choose to enroll the child in the school in the attendance area in which they live. When the child, youth or unaccompanied homeless student's temporary residence and school of origin are two different school districts, the districts will collaborate on the method and cost of transportation. The districts will share the cost of transportation.

Refugee students who are not independently housed may be considered homeless unless families choose to not be considered so. The homeless liaison/interpreters will discuss McKinney-Vento with families to determine if they are homeless. It will be determined based on where the student resides and where the program is for the refugee students if transportation is necessary. If it is deemed unsafe or too far for a non-English speaking homeless student to walk or arrange for their own transportation, then they will be transported the same as other homeless students. The guidelines listed above will be followed in those situations as well.

IMMEDIATE ENROLLMENT

The terms 'enroll' and 'enrollment' are defined to mean attending school and participating fully in school activities. The school selected shall immediately enroll the child/youth, even if the child or youth lacks records normally required for enrollment. Records will immediately be requested from the previous school. Homeless students who do not live with their parents or guardians may enroll themselves in school.

PROCEDURE

The District Administrator has primary administrative-level oversight of the Pecatonica Area School District's services for homeless children and youths. He/she shall be responsible for

- (1) designating a staff member who shall serve as the District's liaison for homeless children and youths,
- (2) providing any required assurances to applicable state and federal agencies that the District is complying with applicable state and federal requirements related to the education of homeless children and youths; and
- (3) reasonably monitoring compliance with such assurances.

The District's liaison for homeless children and youths will work with administrators and other District personnel to periodically review existing policies, procedures, practices, and data to identify and develop proposals to remedy and remove barriers that homeless children and youths may face in the school enrollment and admission processes, in regularly attending school, in accessing applicable support services (such as guidance counselors), in accessing academic programs, academic activities, or extracurricular activities, or in receiving appropriate credit for prior academic work.



The District's liaison for homeless children and youths will also ensure that:

- (1) Homeless children and youths residing in the District are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies. Special attention will be given to the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school.
- (2) Homeless children and youths are enrolled in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in schools in the District.
- (3) Homeless families and homeless children and youths have access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible, including services through Head Start, early intervention services under laws applicable to students with disabilities, and other preschool programs.
- (4) Homeless families and homeless children and youths receive referrals to other appropriate services (e.g., health care services, dental health services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services).
- (5) The parent or guardian of a homeless child and any unaccompanied homeless youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to them and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of the child/youth.
- (6) Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents and guardians of such children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, such as the schools, public libraries and family shelters. The notice shall be disseminated in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths.
- (7) Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with legal requirements.
- (8) The parent or guardian of a homeless child and any unaccompanied homeless youth are fully informed of transportation services that may be available to them under the law and they are assisted in accessing such transportation services.
- (9) School personnel providing services to homeless children and youths receive professional development and other support. The liaison for homeless children and youths will also receive and participate in professional development and other support activities as required by the Department of Public Instruction, the District and federal law.
- (10) Unaccompanied homeless youths are:
 - a) enrolled in school,
 - b) have opportunities to meet the same challenging academic standards as the District establishes for other children and youths, including receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school, and,
 - c) are informed of their status as independent students under section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087vy) and that they may obtain assistance from the District's liaison for homeless children and youths to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 of such Act.
- (11) Appropriate school personnel assist homeless children and youths with their educational transitions
- (12) The District's Title I plan describes the services the District will provide homeless children and youths to support the enrollment, attendance and success of homeless children and youths.
- (13) Reliable, valid, and comprehensive data needed to meet the established legal



- requirements related to homeless children and youths is collected, reported to the public, and provided to the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youths.
- (14) School personnel, service providers, advocates working with homeless families, parents and guardians of homeless children and youths, and homeless children and youths are informed about the liaison's duties.

Unaccompanied and Homeless Youth will be:

- Immediately enrolled even without being able to produce records needed for enrollment
- Provided Transportation to and from the school of origin for the remainder of the academic year even if student finds permanent housing during this time.
- Provided services to students experiencing homelessness, such as free lunch
- Provided their educational rights of homeless children and youth

DISPUTE RESOLUTION:

A homeless child or youth has the right to remain at his or her school of origin (public school that the child attended when permanently housed, or the public school in which the child was last enrolled) or to attend any public school that other students who live in the attendance area are eligible to attend. If the student is eligible to attend more than one school, parents/caregivers or unaccompanied youth will have the option of choosing the school they wish to attend. When a dispute arises over school placement, the Homeless Coordinator or parent/caregiver or unaccompanied youth will complete a statement outlining their dispute (name/birth date of child(ren), school of origin and school of placement) and submit it to the School Psychologist for determination. After a determination is made, a copy of the completed report on the dispute will be provided to the individual. If the matter has not been satisfactorily addressed, the individual may submit a written request for a conference with the Superintendent.

Following the conference, the Superintendent will respond, in writing to the individual. If the matter has not been satisfactorily addressed, the individual may submit a written request to the Board to address the matter. After reviewing all material related to the matter, the Board will grant a hearing. The individual will be advised, in writing, of the Board's decision within five business days following the next regular Board meeting. The student has the right to attend the school of choice (school of origin or school of residence) until the dispute is resolved. The parents/caregivers or unaccompanied youth can contact the State Coordinator for Homeless Education (608) 267-7338 for additional information.

LEGAL REF.: Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 1
McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act
Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [20 U.S.C. § 6312

ADOPTED: November 18, 2019

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FULL-TIME STUDENTS

WASB: 412

Children attending school in the Pecatonica Area School District will be considered full-time students upon meeting the following criteria at the appropriate grade level.

1. Elementary students must be scheduled for attendance a full day.
2. Secondary students must be scheduled to carry at least six courses that meet daily unless the student is enrolled in Youth Options, a School-to-Work Program, an alternative education program, or other program or curricular modifications approved by the Board (e.g., children at risk programs, school age parent program, gifted and talented programming, homebound instruction).
3. This includes resident students attending a nonresident public school district on a full-time basis under the open enrollment law or a tuition waiver in accordance with state law.
4. Students with disabilities may be scheduled less than the minimum program if so prescribed by an individual education plan (IEP) team.

LEGAL REF: 118.14 Wisconsin Statutes
 118.153
 118.33
 118.51
 121.004(5) and (7)
 121.05
 121.84(4)
 Chapter 115, Subchapter V & VI
 PI 18 Wisconsin Administrative Code

CROSS REF.: 321-School Day
 341.2-Education for Employment
 342-Special Education
 342.1-Gifted and Talented Students
 342.2-Children at Risk Program
 343.4-Youth Options
 345.5-Graduation Requirements
 423-Open Enrollment
 431-Student Attendance
 Special Education Handbook

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