

## **SECTION 1: OVERVIEW/GENERAL INFORMATION:**

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act: The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is authorized under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) (McKinney-Vento Act). The McKinney-Vento Act was originally authorized in 1987 and most recently re-authorized on December 10, 2016 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The McKinney-Vento Act is designed to address the challenges that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under the McKinney-Vento Act, state educational agencies (SEAs) must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth. Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and related services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging state academic standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. SEAs and local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youth.

### **Definition of Homeless (McKinney-Vento Act Sec. 725(2); 42 U.S.C 11435(2)):**

Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence:

- ~ "Double up" - Sharing the housing of others due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons
- ~ Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- ~ Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- ~ Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live
- ~ Migratory children living in above circumstances
- ~ Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- ~ Unaccompanied Youth - Children or youth who meet the definition of homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

### **Residency and Educational Rights:**

Students who are in temporary, inadequate and homeless living situations have the following rights in the Westview School District:

- ~ Immediate enrollment in the school they last attended or the school in whose attendance area they are currently staying, even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment
- ~ Access to free meals and textbooks, Title I and other educational programs and other comparable services including transportation

~ Attendance in the same classes and activities that students in other living situations also participate in without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations

**Procedures for the Dissemination of Educational Rights:**

All schools within the Westview School Corporation shall ensure that public notice of the educational rights of students and families in homeless situations is disseminated where children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act. Posters will be posted in all school buildings, local shelters, local hotels, the local post office building, city hall, local library, and local food banks.

**SECTION 2: IDENTIFICATION AND ELIGIBILITY**

**Title 1 Services and Funding:**

In the Westview School Corporation, all children and youth who qualify for McKinney-Vento services are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services, whether or not they attend a Title I, Part A school or meet the academic standards required of other students for eligibility (Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Sec. 1115(b)(2)(E); 20 U.S.C. 6315(b)(2)(E)). This automatic eligibility acknowledges that the experience of homelessness puts children and youth at significant risk of academic failure, regardless of their previous academic standing. Additionally, all Westview School Corporation children and youth who qualify for McKinney-Vento services who are doing well academically are entitled to receive additional non-instructional education related support services needed to succeed in school.

**School Selection:**

Westview School Corporation will keep students in homeless situations in their school of origin, defined as the school attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled, unless it is against the parent or guardian's wishes or unless it is determined not to be in the student's best educational interest. Students and youth who qualify for McKinney-Vento Services are eligible to remain in their school of origin for the entire duration in which they are homeless and until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing. Students and youth who qualify for McKinney-Vento Services may also choose to enroll in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend.

**Procedures to Identify and Verify Eligibility of McKinney-Vento Students:**

Every current, returning, and new student in the Westview School Corporation must complete a McKinney-Vento Residency Questionnaire and Form (Appendix A). This McKinney-Vento Residency Questionnaire and Form will be utilized to determine if the student is facing a homeless situation. Follow-up contact to verify the information provided on the Westview School Corporation McKinney-Vento Residency Questionnaire and Form will be conducted within five (5) days of the completed enrollment.

### SECTION 3: SERVICES AND STANDARDS

#### **Transportation:**

Each Westview School Corporation child or youth facing a McKinney-Vento situation shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including transportation services.

Westview School Corporation will provide students and youth who qualify for McKinney-Vento Services with transportation to and from their school of origin, at a parent or guardian's request. For unaccompanied youth, Westview School Corporation will provide transportation to and from the school of origin at the request of the District McKinney-Vento Liaison. If the student's temporary residence and the school of origin are in the same district, Westview School Corporation will provide and/or arrange transportation to and from school. If the student is living outside of Westview School Corporation, then Westview School Corporation will assume the responsibility and cost of providing transportation to and from school.

Students and youth who qualify for McKinney-Vento Services are eligible to receive these transportation services for the entire duration of the academic year in which they are identified as homeless.

*\*\*\*"School of Origin" is defined as the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.\*\*\**

#### **Food Services:**

Each Westview School Corporation child or youth facing a McKinney-Vento situation shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including school nutrition programs. Students and youth who qualify for McKinney-Vento Services are eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch as offered by each school for the entire duration of the academic year in which they are identified as homeless.

#### **Textbooks and Technology:**

Each Westview School Corporation child or youth facing a McKinney-Vento situation shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including access to instructional materials, assessments, and technology. Students and youth who qualify for McKinney-Vento Services are eligible to receive free textbooks and technology fees as offered by each school for the entire duration of the academic year in which they are identified as homeless.

#### **Academic Services & Standards:**

Each Westview School Corporation child or youth facing a McKinney-Vento situation shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including educational services for which the child or youth meet the eligibility criteria (Title I services, pre- school, educational programs for children with disabilities or for students with limited English proficiency), programs in vocational and technical education, and programs for gifted and talented students as available.

## SECTION 4: ENROLLMENT

### Enrollment Procedures:

Any child or youth who claims to be homeless will be immediately enrolled in Westview School Corporation, even if they do not have required documents such as:

~school records

~medical records

~ proof of residency

~guardianship papers or other documents

Enrolling schools must obtain school records from the previous school, and students must be enrolled in school while records are obtained.

The McKinney-Vento District Liaison will assist unaccompanied youth in choosing and enrolling in a school after considering the youth's wishes, informing the youth of their rights to transportation and assisting the youth in accessing transportation, and informing the youth of their right to appeal school or school district decisions. The McKinney-Vento District Liaison must ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that may arise over school enrollment or placement.

Unaccompanied youth have the right to:

- Remain in their school of origin
- Transportation to and from the school of origin
- Immediately enroll in a new school serving the area in which they are currently living even if they do not have typically required documents (e.g. proof of guardianship)
- Equal access to programs and services such as gifted and talented education, special education, vocational education, and English Language Learner services.

Westview School Corporation shall remove any /all barriers to the enrollment and retention of children and youth in homeless situations. Students in homeless situations shall be free from segregation, isolation, and stigmatization.

*\*\*\*The term "enroll" is defined as attending classes and participating fully in school activities.\*\*\**

*\*\*\*"School of Origin" is defined as the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.\*\*\**

### Appeal and Dispute Processes:

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the McKinney-Vento Liaison, who shall carry

out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible in accordance with the enrollment disputes section of the McKinney-Vento Act as follows:

- I. the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute
- II. the parent or guardian of the child or youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal
- III. the child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the McKinney-Vento District Level Team, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute
- IV. in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the McKinney-Vento District Liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute

*\*\*\*The McKinney-Vento District Level Team consists of McKinney-Vento District Liaison, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Finances, Director of Transportation and the building principal.\*\*\**

If a dispute arises over qualification for McKinney-Vento services, the child or youth shall receive all McKinney-Vento rights and services provided by the Westview School Corporation pending resolution of the dispute. The child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the McKinney-Vento District Level Team, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act as follows:

Work with the McKinney-Vento Liaison to ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the enrollment disputes section of the McKinney Vento Act as follows:

- V. the child or youth shall receive all McKinney-Vento rights and services, pending resolution of the dispute
- VI. the parent or guardian of the child or youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal (Appendix B)
- VII. the child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the McKinney-Vento District Level Team, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute
- VIII. in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the McKinney-Vento District Liaison shall ensure that the youth receives all McKinney-Vento rights and services pending resolution of the dispute

## **SECTION 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Professional development for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act will be provided to all staff members of the Westview School Corporation via the following ways:

~Annual professional development meeting at each school building including office staff and cafeteria staff

~Annual professional development meeting with all bus drivers

~Information presented to all staff on annual basis

~School board presentation

**District Website:**

The Westview School Corporation will include a page that will be used to communicate McKinney-Vento information to students, parents, staff, and community members. Information on the Westview School Corporation's Website will include:

- Contact information for the McKinney-Vento District Liaison
- Notice of Rights for McKinney-Vento Families
- Dispute Resolution Documents
- Link to McKinney-Vento Resources

**SECTION 6: EDUCATIONAL STAFFING AND SUPPORT**

**McKinney-Vento District Liaison's Roles and Responsibilities:**

The School Social Worker at Westview Elementary serves as the District McKinney-Vento Liaison and will:

- Ensure that procedures are established and followed across the school district and provide each child or youth who qualifies for McKinney-Vento Services with a free and appropriate education
- Work collaboratively with transportation and food services personnel to coordinate appropriate services for any child or youth who qualifies for McKinney-Vento Services
- Disseminate critical information concerning the rights of students in homeless situations to all schools
- Post information regarding the availability of school programs and services for students facing homeless situations in local shelters, local hotels, the local post office building, local library, and local food banks
- Maintain a McKinney-Vento District Liaison Log to document the McKinney-Vento process for each child and youth who qualifies for McKinney-Vento services
- Plan and facilitate professional development regarding the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to all staff responsible for identifying and working with students facing homeless situations
- Work with building level staff and administration to facilitate success of the McKinney-Vento program and each student facing a homeless situation

- Meet with community agencies and volunteers to share resources and information and to evaluate impact of services
- Monitor all district data collection and reporting requirements on each child and youth who qualifies for McKinney-Vento services
- Attend state level professional development opportunities
- Monitor school attendance
- Make sure parents feel welcome and set the tone for further parental involvement
- Establish a trusting relationship with students and parents

**McKinney-Vento District Liaison:**

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OR

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McKinney-Vento Resources: <https://www.doe.in.gov/elme/indiana-education-homeless-children-youth-inehcy>

Appendix A Enrollment Form/Residency Questionnaire

Appendix B Dispute Resolution Procedure

Appendix C Dispute Resolution Form