

OSR #10

Van Buren Public Schools Homeless Dispute Resolution Procedure

McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act

It is the responsibility of Van Buren Public Schools to resolve complaints or disputes regarding individuals covered by the McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act. When a complaint or dispute arises, the following procedures are to be followed:

Local Level

a) School Staff

- Complaint is registered with the appropriate school staff directly responsible for issues related to the complaint.
- If the complaint is not resolved immediately, a meeting involving the parent/guardian and responsible staff will be held.
- If there is no resolution, the homeless liaison will be informed and will assist involved parties in understanding the issue, record meeting minutes and report resolution of the dispute or assist the parent/guardian in completing the Dispute/Complaint Form.

b) Principal /Supervisor

- If the complaint is not resolved, the complainant is provided with copies of, and clear explanations of, the policy which the Board of Education had adopted concerning the education of homeless students. Complainant will clearly understand whether the request is consistent with the Van Buren Public Schools' board policy.
- Dispute/Complaint form is taken to the next level of school administration.
- Liaison, school staff, and principal/supervisor will either review and support the recommendation (with no further action) or convene a meeting for collection of further information. IF the latter takes place, a written resolution will be provided within five days of the date of discussion.
- If the complainant does not agree with this resolution, then complaint will be taken to the Superintendent.

c) Superintendent

- Complaint is taken the Superintendent.
- Unless the Superintendent's interpretation of the dispute and/or the policies of the Board of Education are different, a written resolution will be provided within five days of the date of receipt of complaint.

State Level

a) Michigan Department of Education

- Written complaints, signed by complainant are sent to: State Homeless Coordinator, Office of Field Services, P.O. Box 300008, Lansing, MI 48909
- Included in the complaint are a description of the situation that prompted the complaint, the name(s) and age(s) of the child(ren) involved, the name(s) of the involved Van Buren personnel, and a description of the attempts that were made to solve the issue at the local level including copies of any documentation up to this point.

b) State Homeless Coordinator

- Gathers needed information from statements of parties involved and forwards the information to the director of the Office of Field Services along with recommendation for resolution or for further investigation.
- Within 30 days after receiving the complaint, Director of the Office of Field Services will recommend a resolution and will inform interested parties in writing of the decision. If complainant or one of the parties involved in the complaint disagrees with the decision, that party, may, within ten working days, appeal to the Deputy Superintendent. This appeal must be in writing and state why the party disagrees with the decision of the Director of the Office of Field Services.

c) Appeal to Deputy Superintendent

- Deputy Superintendent will render a final administrative decision and notify, in writing, the complainant and the school district(s) involved. If the party disagrees with the decision of the Deputy Superintendent in a matter concerning homeless children or youth, the party may request a review of the decision at the Federal level.

Federal Level

a) United States Secretary of Education

- In accordance with 34 CFR Part 299.11
- While the dispute is being resolved, the child or children in question must be enrolled in school.
- If the dispute is concerning the school of “best interest,” the child must be enrolled in the school preferred by that parent/guardian unless previous arrangements have implemented.

The following procedures are specified in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act:

Enrollment

If the parent/guardian is in disagreement when enrolling a new homeless student, immediately enroll the student in the school preferred by the parent/guardian until the dispute is resolved. It is the responsibility of the Van Buren Public School District Homeless Liaison to inform the parents/guardians of students who are homeless of the Dispute Resolution Procedures.

Written Explanation

Provide a written explanation to the parent/guardian of the school placement decision.

Liaison Responsibility

The district homeless liaison is assigned to carry out the dispute resolution in an expeditious manner.