

## **GCCSA EDUCATION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS AND STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE POLICY**

It is the school's intent to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment and retention in the charter school of children who are in foster care or who are homeless. All staff shall take reasonable steps to ensure that homeless children or children in foster care are not segregated or stigmatized and that educational decisions are made in the best interests of those students. The school will work with homeless students and foster care students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the attendance of homeless or foster care students not currently attending school. Homeless and foster care students will be provided school services for which they are eligible, including Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education and assistance with school lunches.

Per the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, homeless students are defined as those students lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in previous examples.

The Director shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the school's liaison for homeless students or foster care students and their families. Contact information for the liaison shall be located on the school website. To the extent feasible, homeless and foster care students will continue to be enrolled in the GCCSA while they remain homeless or in their foster care placement. If a homeless or foster care child wishes to be enrolled in GCCSA, they will be required to follow admission requirements just as any other student is required to. Once the child is admitted via admissions procedures, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to school policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall 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 school liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to school policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment, consistent with school policies. Homeless and foster care students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled and in the case of GCCSA, it is a charter school of their choice.

If a homeless student is living in another district but will attend the charter school, both their home district and the charter school will make reasonable efforts to coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student. The school's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with: local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children 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. The school's liaison will also review and recommend to the district policies that may eliminate barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

*Passed by BoT - 2/17/25*