



On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) was signed into law, reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Under the previous version of ESEA (the No Child Left Behind Act), the education of homeless children and youth was included in Title X, Part C. Under ESSA, homeless education is included in Title IX, Part A. The Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program entitles children who are experiencing homelessness to a free, appropriate public education and requires schools to remove barriers to their enrollment, attendance, and success in school. This Act protects all students who do not have a fixed, regular and adequate residence, such as students living in the following situations:

- doubled-up or sharing the housing with others due to an economic hardship;
- runaway/homeless youth shelters (even if parents invite the youth home);
- hotels or motels;
- shelters, including domestic violence shelters; transitional housing shelters; cars, abandoned buildings parks, the streets or other public spaces;
- campgrounds or inadequate trailer homes
- abandoned in a hospital
- other

Some key provisions in this federal law are listed below:

- Every LEA and charter school must designate a homeless liaison to determine a student's eligibility under the law.
- The homeless liaison is to assist families and school personnel in ensuring that students who are experiencing homelessness can enroll and succeed in school.
- Schools must immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness, even if at the time of enrollment, they do not have proof of residency, school and immunization records, birth certificates or other documents, and even if they are not accompanied by an adult.
- A student who is experiencing homelessness has the right to stay in his/her school of origin even if (s)he moves out of the district and if it is in their best interest.
- The LEA must arrange transportation for students experiencing homelessness to and from the school of origin even if the students temporary housing arrangement is out of the district at the request of the parent, guardian or homeless liaison.
- Students experiencing homelessness are eligible, based on individual need, for services that are provided to other students such as free or reduced school meals, services for English language learners, special education, vocational/technical education, gifted and talented services.



- Students experiencing homeless are automatically eligible for Title I services.
- If there is disagreement as to whether a student experiencing homelessness is eligible to attend the school (s)he chooses (between school of origin and school in the district of his/her new temporary residence), the school district is to provide a written explanation as to why they believe the student is not eligible and allow the student to go to the school (s)he chooses while such disagreements are settled (school of origin or the school located in the temporary residence). The LEA homeless liaison is responsible for settling such disagreements at the local level.
- Students in homeless situations are to attend schools with children who are not experiencing homelessness rather than be placed in separate schools because they are homeless.
- Students experiencing homelessness are to have the opportunity to meet the same high academic achievement standards as all students.

If you are in need of assistance please contact our Homeless Program Liaison Julie Rawls at 252-242-1880 ext. 229 or [jrawls@hobgoodcharterschool.org](mailto:jrawls@hobgoodcharterschool.org)

For more information on the North Carolina Homeless Education Program click here. <https://hepnc.uncg.edu/>