Policy IGBCA: PROGRAMS FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 10/17/2007 **| Last Revised Date:** 05/19/2021 **| Last Reviewed Date:** 09/18/2024

The North Nodaway County R-VI School District Board of Education recognizes that homeless students are particularly vulnerable and need special assistance to access and benefit from the education environment. Therefore, the district, in accordance with state and federal law and the Missouri state plan for education of the homeless, will give special attention to ensure that homeless students in the district are promptly identified and have access to a free and appropriate public education and related support services.

Eligibility for Services

Homeless students are individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and include the following:

1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.

2. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings.

4. Migratory children who meet one of the above-described circumstances.

District Liaison for Homeless Students

The board designates the following individual to act as the district's liaison for homeless students (homeless liaison):

Superintendent
705 East Barnard, P.O. Box 260
Hopkins, MO 64461
Phone: (660) 778-3411
Fax: (660) 778-3210

The homeless liaison shall designate and train another district employee to serve as the homeless liaison in the absence of the homeless liaison.

School of Origin

For the purposes of this policy, "school of origin" is defined as the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled, including a public preschool. When the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term shall then include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

Enrollment

The selected school shall immediately enroll the homeless student even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, immunization or other health records, proof of residency, or other documentation, and even if the student has missed any application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness. Students will be awarded appropriate credit for full or partial coursework in accordance with board policy. Outstanding fines, fees or absences shall not present a barrier to enrollment of the student. However, the district may require a parent/guardian of a homeless student to submit contact information.

Placement

The district will consider the best interest of the homeless student, with parental involvement, in determining whether the student should be enrolled in the school of origin or the school that nonhomeless students who live in

the attendance area in which the homeless student is actually living are eligible to attend. In determining the best interest of the student, the district will:

1. Presume that keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest except when doing so is contrary to the request of the student's parents/guardians or the student if unaccompanied by a parent/guardian.

2. Consider student-centered factors related to the student's best interest, including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health and safety of homeless students, giving priority to the request of the homeless student's parents/guardians or the unaccompanied youth.

The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the homeless student lives with a parent/guardian or has been temporarily placed elsewhere. If the student is unaccompanied, the homeless liaison shall assist the student in placement or enrollment decisions, give priority to the views of the student and provide the student with notice of the student's right to appeal the district's decision.

If the district determines that placement should be in the school of origin, the student will continue to be educated in the school of origin for the duration of the homelessness when the student's family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year, and for the remainder of the academic year even if the student becomes permanently housed during the academic year.

If the district determines that it is not in the best interest of the student to attend either the school of origin or the school requested by the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth, the district shall provide a written explanation of the reasons for its determination. The explanation shall be given in a manner and form understandable to the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth and shall include information regarding the right to appeal the district's determination.

The written explanation will include:

1. A description of the action proposed or refused by the district;

2. An explanation of why the action was proposed or refused;

3. A description of any other options the district considered;

4. The reasons other options were rejected;

5. A description of any other relevant factors to the district's decision and information related to the eligibility or best interest determination, including the facts and evidence relied upon and their sources;

6. Appropriate timelines to ensure any relevant deadlines are not missed; and

7. Contact information for the local liaison and the state coordinator for homeless students (state coordinator) and a brief description of their respective roles.

Services

Each homeless student shall be provided services comparable to the services offered to other students in the district including, but not limited to, transportation services; education services for which the student meets the eligibility criteria, such as education programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities and gifted students; programs in career and technical education; school nutrition programs; preschool programs; before- and after-school care programs; and programs for English learners. Homeless students will not be segregated in a separate school or program within a school based on the students' status as homeless.

The district will coordinate services for homeless students with local social service agencies and other agencies or entities providing services to homeless students and their families, including services and programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. The district will also coordinate transportation, transfer of school records and other activities with other school districts.

Unaccompanied Youths

An unaccompanied youth is a student who is not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian. The liaison will

work with unaccompanied youths on issues unique to their situations, such as informing them of their status as independent students under laws applicable to higher education and informing them that they may obtain assistance from the homeless liaison to receive verification of this status for the purposes of applying for federal student aid.

The homeless liaison, a school counselor or a school social worker will verify, when applicable, that a student is an unaccompanied youth as defined in federal law.

Transportation

If the homeless student's school of origin, including a public preschool, and temporary housing are located in the North Nodaway County R-VI School District, the district will provide transportation to and from the school of origin at the request of the parents/guardians or homeless liaison, provided it is in the best interest of the student.

If the homeless student's school of origin and temporary housing are located in two different school districts, the districts may agree on a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing transportation to the school of origin. If no agreement is reached, the districts will equally share the responsibility and costs for transporting the student. If a homeless student becomes permanently housed in the middle of the school year, the district will continue to provide transportation to the school of origin for the remainder of the school year.

Transportation to the school of origin shall be provided even if a homeless preschooler who is enrolled in a public preschool moves to another district that does not provide a widely available or universal preschool.

Records

When a homeless student enrolls in the district or a district school, the district will immediately contact the school the homeless student last attended in order to obtain academic or other relevant records.

Any records ordinarily kept by the school for each homeless student (including immunization or other health records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records and evaluations for special services or programs) shall be maintained so that the district is equipped to provide the student with appropriate services, make necessary referrals and transfer records in a timely fashion when a homeless student enters a new school district. Copies of records shall be made available upon request to students or parents/guardians in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Information about a homeless student's living situation shall be treated as a student education record and shall not be deemed to be directory information under FERPA.

Homeless Liaison Responsibilities

The homeless liaison will attend all required professional development and other technical assistance activities as determined appropriate by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The district shall inform school personnel, service providers and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the homeless liaison. The homeless liaison will ensure that:

1. Homeless students, including homeless preschool-age children and unaccompanied youths, are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies.

2. Homeless students, including unaccompanied youths, are enrolled in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in schools in the district.

3. Homeless families and students, including unaccompanied youths, have access to and receive education services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and Early Head Start, early intervention services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and preschool programs administered by the district, as well as referrals to healthcare services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services and other appropriate services based on their assessed needs.

4. The parents/guardians of homeless students are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their students and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their students.

5. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated in locations frequented by

parents/guardians, youths and unaccompanied youths, including schools, family shelters, public libraries and soup kitchens, in a manner and form understandable to the parents/guardians and youths.

6. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with law.

7. The parents/guardians of homeless students and unaccompanied youths are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing transportation to the selected school.

8. Unaccompanied youths will be assisted in placement or enrollment decisions, their views will be considered, and they will be provided notice of the right to appeal.

9. School personnel providing services to homeless students and their parents/guardians receive professional development and other support.

10. Students who need to obtain immunizations or medical or immunization records will receive assistance.

11. The district collects and reports reliable, valid and comprehensive data to DESE regarding homeless students.

12. All homeless high school students receive information and individualized counseling regarding college readiness, college selection, the application process, financial aid and the availability of on-campus supports.

13. Every effort is made to enroll preschool-age homeless children in preschool if they are not already enrolled.

Disputes

Parents/Guardians or unaccompanied youths may appeal district decisions regarding eligibility, enrollment or placement. The district will make every effort to resolve complaints or disputes at the district level. The homeless liaison will provide the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth a written explanation of any decision related to school selection or enrollment, including the right to appeal such decisions, and inform the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth of the district's complaint resolution process when a question or complaint arises concerning the education of a homeless student.

1. If the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth has a complaint regarding the education of a homeless student, the person must notify the homeless liaison. The homeless liaison serves as the intermediary between the homeless student and the school where the student is seeking enrollment. The homeless liaison shall provide a copy of or access to the district's policies addressing the education of homeless students and the district's complaint form to the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth.

2. The parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth can file a complaint in writing with the homeless liaison. The homeless liaison will provide a written resolution of the dispute or a plan of action within five days of the date the complaint was received by the homeless liaison. The parties may mutually agree to an extension of time; however, every effort should be made to resolve the complaint in the shortest possible time.

3. If the dispute is not resolved by the homeless liaison, the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth may file a written complaint with the superintendent or designee for review. The superintendent or designee will provide a written resolution or plan of action within five days of the date the complaint was received by the superintendent or designee. The parties may mutually agree to an extension of time; however, every effort should be made to resolve the complaint in the shortest amount of time.

4. If the dispute is not resolved at the superintendent level, the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth may file a written complaint with the board of education. The board will provide a written resolution of the dispute or a plan of action within 30 days of the date the complaint was received by the board. If the dispute is not resolved by the board in a manner satisfactory to the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth, an appeal may be brought to DESE in accordance with the state dispute resolution process, which the homeless liaison will provide to the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth.

While the dispute process is ongoing, the student in question must be enrolled and allowed to fully participate in school activities as well as receive transportation, if requested, to the school in which the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth seeks enrollment.

The district shall make translators, interpreters or other support services available without charge and in the

appropriate language to parents/guardians and unaccompanied youths who are English learners, use a native language other than English or need additional supports due to a disability.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State References	Description
§ 167.020, RSMo.	State Statute
§ 167.181, RSMo.	State Statute
§ 210.003, RSMo.	State Statute
§§ 193.265 RSMo.	State Statute
§§ 208.151, RSMo.	State Statute
19 C.S.R. 20-28.010	State Regulation

Federal References	Description
20 U.S.C. § 1232g	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
34 C.F.R Part 99	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
42 U.S.C. §§ 11431-11435	McKinney - Vento Homeless Children's Assistance Act

MSIP References	Description
I-3	MSIP STANDARDS

Cross References	Description
EEA	STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
EEA-AP(1)	STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES - (Student Transportation in Private Vehicles and Common Carriers)
JCC-1	TRANSFERS OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT
JEC-1	SCHOOL ADMISSIONS
JECA-1	ELIGIBILITY TO ENROLL
JECA-1-AP(1)	ELIGIBILITY TO ENROLL - (Foreign Exchange Students)
JECC-1	ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO GRADE LEVELS/CLASSES
JHCB	IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS
JHCB-AP(1)	IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS
KL	PUBLIC CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS
KLA	CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS REGARDING FEDERAL PROGRAMS