

**REGULATION**  
**Homeless Students Procedures**

**Descriptor Term: JBC(1)-R(1)**  
**Date: XXXXXX XX, 2023**

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The Bibb County School District ("District") seeks to ensure that each homeless student has equal access to the same, free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other District students.

**A. Definitions**

1. Homeless Children and Youth - Individuals lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:
  - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
  - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
  - Abandoned in hospitals;
  - Living in a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
  - Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
  - Migratory children living in conditions described above;
  - Unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, which also includes:
    - Living in runaway shelters, abandoned buildings, cars, on the streets, or in other inadequate housing (also known as "runaway" children and youth);
    - Denied housing by their families (also known as "throwaway" children and youth); and
    - School-age unwed mothers who are living in homes for unwed mothers because they cannot or are not allowed to live with their families or guardians and have no other available housing.
2. Legal Custodian - A person who has been given custody of the child by a court of proper jurisdiction.
3. Legal Guardian - The person to whom a probate or juvenile judge has transferred statutory parental rights for the child.
4. Parents - Are the children and youth's natural or adoptive mother or father. For the purposes of this policy, the definition of "Parent" will also include "Legal Custodian" and "Legal Guardian."
5. District's Homeless Liaison - The District employee designated by the Superintendent to assist homeless children and youth with enrollment, enrollment disputes, and school selection.
6. School of Origin - The school the student attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the student was last enrolled.
7. School of Residence - The school in the attendance area where the homeless children and youth actually reside.

8. School Record - An official transcript or grade record from the school last attended showing courses/subjects taken, grades/credits earned, and grade-level placement.

#### **B. Identification**

1. Registration personnel and school personnel will be trained annually to inquire about homelessness upon enrollment and withdrawal of students and notify the Homeless Liaison or designee if a student is suspected of experiencing homelessness.
2. Annual training will be provided to school personnel by the Homeless Liaison, regarding the possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity in identifying families and youth, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the Homeless Liaison or designee.
3. Families that are unable to provide required proof of residence and have not previously been identified as homeless are provided a questionnaire to assist in identifying homeless children and youth as part of the Affidavit of Residency process.
4. Upon identification, the Homeless Liaison or his or her designee will notify the parent, guardian or youth of their rights and services under the McKinney-Vento Act for eligible children and youth.
5. A copy of the brochure detailing the rights and services under the McKinney-Vento Act will be presented to each eligible family or sent via mail.

#### **C. Liaison for Homeless Students**

The Superintendent will designate an appropriate employee to be the District's liaison for homeless children and youth ("Homeless Liaison") and their parents. The Homeless Liaison and the families of children and youth will coordinate with the following:

1. Local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and their families;
2. Other school districts on issues of transportation and record transfers; and
3. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

This coordination will include providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth in schools, family shelters, and food assistance opportunities. The Homeless Liaison and the student's parent will also discuss barriers regarding the enrollment of the student in the District and possible solutions to address these barriers.

#### **D. School Selection/Enrollment**

1. Enrollment Options: To the extent feasible, homeless children and youth will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Alternatively, parents of homeless children and youth may request that the district enroll their student in the school in the attendance area where they are actually living.

2. Immediate Enrollment: The District will immediately enroll homeless children and youth even if the students lack records normally required for enrollment. The Homeless Liaison should assist students and families in obtaining immunization records, immunizations, or other documents as needed.
3. Enrollment Dispute: If a parent or guardian wishes to dispute eligibility or enrollment in a school, the Homeless Liaison or Superintendent's designee will review the reason for the dispute. After the review, the parent/guardian will be provided with a written explanation of the District's decision, including the right to appeal through the provisions of the Bibb County Board of Education. The Homeless Liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by the state. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.
4. Withdrawal: Homeless children and youth often leave school without officially withdrawing. If the District is contacted by another district for a homeless student's records, requested information will be provided and school records will be sent as required by law.

#### **E. Academic Credit**

Appropriate secondary education and support services will be provided to ensure that homeless youth, unaccompanied youth, and foster care students receive appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school. The District will collaborate with the prior school to calculate, award, and receive partial credits, as well as make any necessary adjustments to the student's schedule to permit the student to complete courses started elsewhere and to participate in credit recovery opportunities.

School personnel will enroll homeless youth in the same or equivalent classes as those attended at the sending school. If it is unclear as to which class is equivalent, school personnel will contact the sending school's registrar or counselor and ask for the course equivalent. The receiving school may request a written description or syllabus for any such class.

1. Partial Credit: Students can earn  $\frac{1}{2}$  credit for the semester in which the student earned a 70 or above.
2. Full Credit: Students can earn full credit (1.0) provided the student passes the second semester of a year-long class with a grade high enough to bring the semester average to 70 or higher.

#### **F. Transportation**

1. Homeless children and youth will be entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school zoned for where they currently reside.
2. The Homeless Liaison or his or her designee will consider feasibility in determining whether transportation will be provided. Feasibility includes factors, such as length of transit, that impact homeless children and youth and their ability to succeed in school. This is not a financial determination.

3. The Homeless Liaison or his or her designee will coordinate transportation services necessary for the student.
4. When transportation extends outside the school system the Homeless Liaison will coordinate with the other school system to divide the costs equally.

#### **G. School Meals**

Homeless children and youth will be entitled to school breakfast and lunch at no cost through the school nutrition program. The Homeless Liaison or designee will notify the Executive Director of School Nutrition or his or her designee regarding the student's eligibility for free lunch at the time of identification.

#### **H. Foster Care Students**

In collaboration with the local child welfare agency and school personnel, the District will ensure that students in foster care have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as provided to other children in the District and will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status in a foster care placement.

The local child welfare agency will make school placement determinations based on "best interest" using the standard that the student should generally be permitted to remain at his or her school or origin for the duration of time in foster care. At a parent, caretaker, or local welfare agency request, transportation will be provided to and from the school of origin for a student in foster care. Transportation will be provided for the entire time a student has a right to attend that school, including during the pendency of disputes.