



West Contra Costa
Unified School District

BULLETIN

No. S-13

Date July 12, 2010

Subject Education of Homeless Children and Youth

To Elementary/Secondary Principals

Prepared by Tashaka Merriweather

Department Families In Transition

Reviewed by _____

Approved _____

Wendell Greer,
Assistant Superintendent

Superintendent

Education of Homeless Children and Youth

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, reauthorized in January 2002, seeks to ensure that homeless children and youth have access to free appropriate public education on an equal basis with other children.

The West Contra Costa Unified School District Homeless Education Office provides support to schools in continuing the homeless child or youth's education in,

- a) the "school of origin," or
- b) enrolling the child or youth in the appropriate school in the attendance area where he or she is actually living.

By federal and state definition, the "School of Origin" is the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled. [Sec. 722 (g)(3)(G)]

The process for determining "residence" (a utility bill) does not apply when homeless children are identified because their parents are presently unable to establish "homes" on a permanent basis.

School placement arrangements, based on the child's best interests, should be implemented through the cooperative efforts of school administrators and staff. Each case is unique, requires an individualized response, and shall take into consideration the request made by the parents or guardians or Homeless Education Liaison in the case of unaccompanied youth regarding school selection.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS ONLY

Residency Requirements and Forms:

Homeless parents or caregivers of homeless students do not have to show proof of residency. They are not required to present a utility bill or other identifying documents.

Homeless parents are required to complete a Families In Transition Standardized Intake Form. Homeless children cannot be denied enrollment in a school because they lack a permanent address.

If a person enrolling the child or youth is not the parent, he/she must fill out a Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit section of the F.I.T. Standard Intake Form.

Unaccompanied Youth – The term unaccompanied youth includes youth in homeless situations who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian [McKinney-Vento Act Sec. 725(G)]. Unaccompanied

youth have the same rights as other students experiencing homelessness to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school.

To enroll an unaccompanied youth the school shall contact the district Homeless Education Liaison who will assist in this process. The unaccompanied youth must fill out a F.I.T. Standard Intake Form.

Enrollment Disputes: If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the child/youth must be immediately admitted to the school in which he/she is seeking enrollment pending resolution of the dispute. [Sec. 722 (g)(3)(E)(i)]

The parent/guardian/youth must be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision on the dispute, including the right to appeal (see attached). [Sec. 722 (g)(3)(E)(ii)]

The parent/guardian/youth must be referred to the Homeless Education Liaison who will carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. [Sec. 722 (g)(3)(E)(iii)]

Availability and Transfer of Student Records:

Homeless children and youth cannot be denied enrollment in a school because they lack certain records (academic records from previous schools or a birth certificate). [Sec. 722 (g)(3)(C)(i)]

The school must assist the parent/or unaccompanied youth in obtaining the missing records. Call the Homeless Education Office for assistance (307-4508). [Sec. 722 (g)(3)(C)(ii)]

Attendance at school should begin as soon as the parent/or unaccompanied youth has initiated the enrollment process and should not be delayed until records actually arrive.

If the homeless student has attended a California school prior to enrolling in your school, immunization records can be verified by telephoning the previous school and having the school fax the record. The sending school should send the actual immunization record with the other records. If the previous school cannot verify immunization records, have the parent complete the registration and refer them to the nearest clinic. Allow child to enroll on a 30-day waiver period. If, after 30 days, proof of immunization has not been presented, exclude the child and refer the case to SWAT for follow-up.

Homeless students have the right to participate in all special programs for which they qualify (such as free or reduced lunch/breakfast program, counseling, Special Education, GATE).

Homeless students should be referred **immediately** to the SST for monitoring while they remain at your school because of their special academic and affective needs.

After the child is enrolled, send the Families In Transition Standardized Intake Form to:

Families In Transition
1108 Bissell Avenue, Rm. 215
Richmond, CA 94801
(510) 307-4508
Contact email: fit@wccusd.net

Attachments

West Contra Costa Unified School District
WRITTEN NOTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT DECISION

To be completed by the receiving school when an enrollment request is denied.

Date: _____

Person completing form: _____

Title: _____

School: _____

In compliance with Section 722(g)(3)(E) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001, the following written notification is provided to:

Parent or Guardian: _____

Student(s): _____

After reviewing your request to enroll the student(s) listed above, the enrollment request is denied. This determination was based upon:

You have the right to appeal this decision by completing the second page of this notice or by contacting the school district's local homeless education liaison.

Tashaka Merriweather
Homeless Education Project Coordinator
307-4508

In addition:

- The student listed above has the right to immediately enroll in the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute.
- You may provide written or verbal documentation to support your position. You may use the form attached to this notification.
- You may contact the state coordinator for homeless education.

Contact information for the state coordinator:

Leanne Wheeler, State Coordinator for Homeless Education
(916) 319-1383

- You may seek the assistance of advocates or attorneys.

West Contra Costa Unified School District
WRITTEN NOTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT DECISION

To be completed by the parent, guardian, caretaker, or unaccompanied youth when a dispute arises. This information may be shared verbally with the local liaison, as an alternative to completing this form.

Date submitted: _____

Student(s): _____

Person completing form: _____

Relation to student(s): _____

I may be contacted at (phone or e-mail): _____

I wish to appeal the enrollment decision made by: _____

School: _____

I have been provided with:

- A written explanation of the school's decision.
- Contact information for the local homeless education liaison.
- A copy of the State's Enrollment dispute Resolution Process for students experiencing homelessness.

Optional: You may include a written explanation to support your appeal in this space or provide your explanation verbally.

The school provided me with a copy of this form when submitted, _____ (Initial)

