

POLICY: JEC-R

Approved: July 12, 2004

Reviewed:

Revised:

PROCEDURES FOR ENROLLMENT & PLACEMENT OF HOMELESS CHILDREN & YOUTHS

Children of homeless individuals and unaccompanied homeless youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian) residing in the District shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths who reside in the District. They shall be provided services comparable to services offered other children attending District schools, including transportation services, educational services for which the children/youths meet eligibility criteria (e.g., special education, Title I programming, gifted and talented programming), vocational and technical education programs and school nutrition programs. No homeless child or youth shall be required to attend a separate school or program for homeless children and shall not be stigmatized by school personnel.

A. District Liaison for Homeless Children & Youths

The Director of Pupil Services has been designated as the District's liaison for homeless children and youths, and will ensure that:

1. Homeless Children and youths residing in the District are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
2. Homeless children and youths enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in schools in the District.
3. Homeless families, children and youths receive educational services for which they are eligible and referrals to other appropriate services (e.g., health care services).
4. The parent/guardian of a homeless child and any unaccompanied homeless youth is informed of the educational and related opportunities available to them and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of the child/youth.
5. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated where such children and youths receive services such as the schools and family shelters.
6. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with legal requirements.
7. The parent/guardian of a homeless child and any unaccompanied homeless youth is fully informed of transportation services that may be available to them under the law and assist them in accessing such transportation services.

B. Admission and Placement of Homeless Child or Youth

When a homeless child or youth seeks enrollment in the District, these procedures shall be followed:

1. The homeless child's parent/guardian or any unaccompanied homeless youth shall be advised of their choice of schools. The homeless child/youth shall be allowed to either continue his/her education in the school of origin for the duration of the homelessness or be placed in the school that non-homeless children/youths who live in the attendance area in which the child/youth is actually living are eligible to attend. School selection decisions shall be made based on the best interest of the homeless child/youth.

If the District assigns a homeless child to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent/guardian, the District shall provide the child's parent/guardian with a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal the school selection decision. An unaccompanied homeless youth shall also be provided notice of his/her right to appeal the school selection decision. School selection disputes shall be handled as outlined in Section C below.

2. The homeless child/youth shall be immediately enrolled in the assigned school. This must be done even if the child/youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency or other documentation. The enrolling school shall immediately contact the school last attended by the child/youth to obtain relevant academic and other records. If the child/youth needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent/guardian or the unaccompanied homeless youth to the District's liaison for homeless children and youths, who is expected to assist in obtaining the necessary immunization or medical records.
3. The homeless child or youth shall be placed in an appropriate grade level and educational program by the school principal or designee, using the same procedures that are used for placing non-homeless.
4. Once enrolled, homeless children/youths shall have all the rights and privileges of non-homeless children attending school in the District and shall be subject to the same school rules and regulations.

C. School Selection or Enrollment Disputes

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school:

1. The homeless child, youth, parent/guardian shall be referred to the District's liaison for homeless children and youths, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process outlined by the Department of Public Instruction as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute.

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2. The homeless child or youth shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which the enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.

REFERENCES: 420 Rule
ESEA Requirement
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
Title VII McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act