

# **Leake County School District**



## **Procedures Manual For Enrolling Homeless Students**

**2010-2011**

## Leake County School District Procedures for Enrolling Homeless Students 2010-2011

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act assures preschool-aged, school-aged children and unaccompanied youth certain rights.

### **Definition:**

The McKinney-Vento Acts defines "homeless children and youth" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youth who are:
  - o Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason *{sometimes referred to as doubled-up}*;
  - o Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - o Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
  - o Abandoned in hospitals; or
  - o Awaiting foster care placement;
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
- *Unaccompanied youth* includes homeless students not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

### **Requirements:**

The McKinney-Vento Act provides certain rights for homeless students. They include waiving certain requirements such as proof of residency when students are enrolling and allowing categorical eligibility for certain services. The Act also states:

- Homeless students may attend their school of origin or the school where they are temporarily residing.
- Homeless students must be provided a written statement of their rights when they enroll and at least two times per year
- Homeless students may enroll without school, medical, or similar records.
- Homeless students have a right to transportation to school.
- Students must be provided a statement explaining why they are denied any service or enrollment.
- Students must receive services, such as transportation, while disputes are being settled.

### **Procedures for Identifying a Homeless Student**

A student may be considered homeless if:

- The student indicates a homeless status at the time of enrollment
- An affidavit of residency or McKinney-Vento Referral Form indicate that the arrangement is temporary due to necessity (due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason)

### **Procedures for Enrolling a Homeless Student**

The school may not deny, delay, or transfer enrollment solely because a student is homeless, or because a homeless student is unable to produce school, medical, or residency records.

A school enrolling, or about to enroll, a homeless student shall:

- Immediately enroll the student, regardless of the availability of educational and/or immunization records
  - o If a student attempts to register without a parent/guardian, effort should be made to contact the parent/guardian
  - o The homeless student may not be barred from enrollment due to lack of immunization until an effort has been made to obtain records. If records cannot be obtained, assistance should be provided in getting the student properly immunized.
  - o If a birth certificate is not available, the student should be registered. Department of Human Services may be contacted to assist in obtaining a copy of the birth certificate.
  - o The student will be identified as homeless in MSIS.
- Make a reasonable effort to verify that the child is homeless.
- Contact the school last attended to obtain relevant academic and other records
  - o If student records cannot be obtained or records are not available an educational record (cumulative folder) will be developed. In these cases, an academic diagnostic test may be administered to assist in the determination of the student's skill levels and appropriate placement.
  - o Priority shall be given in evaluations of homeless student suspected of having a disability.
- Provide free meals within one school day after the student enrolled. If necessary, assistance will be provided for completion of free and reduced lunch forms.
- Provide access to the same services comparable to those offered to other students in the school which the homeless student attends such as:
  - o transportation services
  - o educational services
  - o school nutrition programs
  - o vocational and technical programs
  - o extra-curricular and enrichment activities
- Coordinate with and/or refer student to other community resources in offering assistance to the homeless student/family
- Contact the district homeless liaison

**It is important that the academic and educational programs for children who are temporarily without a home are no different than those of the general student population.**