

5014 Homeless Students

1. **General Policy.** The District will provide tuition free education for homeless children and youth who are in the district and accord them the educational rights and legal protections provided by state and federal law. Homeless children and youth shall not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and shall have access to the same services offered to other students. It is the intent of this policy to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth in the District.

2. **Homeless Liaison.** The District's homeless liaison is the School Nurse. Students in homeless situations who require assistance should contact the liaison at 308-784-3462 or in person at Cozad Elementary School, 420 E 14th St, Cozad. The liaison's responsibilities include:
 - a. Ensuring homeless children and youth are identified through coordination with the Nebraska Department of Education, community groups, and other school personnel;
 - b. Receiving training regarding state and federal law governing homeless children and youth;
 - c. Ensuring homeless children and youth and their families are referred to appropriate health care, housing, and other relevant service providers and programs available in the community;
 - d. Assisting other District personnel to work with homeless children and youth and their families on regular attendance, participation in programs and activities of the District, and completing academic work to meet academic standards of the District;
 - e. Assisting homeless children and youth and working with other District employees to prepare for and improve college readiness, including assistance with applications, selection, financial aid, and status verification for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and
 - f. Carrying out other aspects of this policy.

3. **Definitions**
 - a. "Homeless children and youth" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes:
 - i. 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 accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
- ii. Children and youths 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;
 - iii. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - iv. Migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).
- b. The term "homeless" or "homeless individual" does not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained by an act of Congress or by state law.
 - c. "Child" and "youth" refers to persons who, if they were children of residents of the District, would be entitled to a free education.
 - d. The term "unaccompanied youth" shall mean a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
 - e. "School of origin" means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.
- 4. School Stability and Enrollment.** Generally, the District presumes that keeping a homeless child or youth in their school of origin is in the child's best interest unless it is contrary to a request of the child's parent, guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth. The District will also consider factors including, but not limited to: the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of the child.
- 5. Strategies to Address Enrollment Delays.** In order to address enrollment delays resulting from homelessness, the school district shall immediately enroll homeless students even if they are unable to produce records normally required for enrollment such as immunization and medical records, residency documents, birth certificates, school records, or other documentation, or guardianship documents. The school district shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain academic and other records. The school district's homeless liaison

shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records.

6. Transportation. Transportation shall be provided to homeless students to the extent required by law and comparable to that provided to students who are not homeless. At the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), transportation shall be provided to and from the school of origin as follows:

- a. If the homeless child or youth continues to live in the area served by the school district, the child's or youth's transportation to and from the school of origin shall be provided or arranged by the school district.
- b. If the homeless child's or youth's living arrangements in the area served by the school district terminate and the child or youth, though continuing his or her education in the school district, begins living in an area served by another school district, the school district and the new school district in which the homeless child or youth is living shall negotiate to agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school district. If the districts are unable to agree, the responsibility and cost for transportation shall be shared equally.

7. Records. The District will maintain and respond to requests for enrollment records for homeless children or youth consistent with its record policies and state and federal record laws. Any information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation shall be treated as a confidential education record and shall not be deemed directory information.

8. Dispute Process. If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school:

- a. The child or youth shall be admitted immediately to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute;
- b. The child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the district's homeless liaison who shall carry out the dispute resolution process within (30) thirty calendar days after receiving notice of the dispute;

- c. The parent or guardian of the child or youth or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth, shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to appeal the decision within (30) thirty calendar days of the time such complaint or dispute is brought.
- d. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought pending resolution of the dispute.

9. Appeal Process

- a. **Nebraska Department of Education.** If the Complainant is not satisfied with the written decision of the District after the dispute resolution process, the Complainant may appeal the decision of the District to the Commissioner of the Nebraska Department of Education within (30) thirty calendar days of receipt of the decision from the District, pursuant to Nebraska Department of Education Rule 19.
- b. **State Board of Education.** If the Complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Commissioner, the Complainant may file a Petition with the State Board of Education within (30) thirty calendar days of the receipt of the decision of the Commissioner pursuant to Nebraska Department of Education Rule 19.

Adopted on: 6/19/2017

Reviewed on: _____

Revised on: _____

Homeless Education Program: Homeless Student Enrollment Information & Placement Request

Child's Name: _____ Birth Date: _____ Grade _____
(Last Name) (First Name) (M.I.)

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Unaccompanied Youth _____
(Last Name) (First Name) (M.I.) ("Yes" or "No")

Current Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____
(If phone # not available, phone number of someone who can be contacted and their relationship, if any).

Information provided on this form is confidential.

Homeless Status

1. Do you live in any of these following situations?
 - _____ sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (example: evicted from home, cannot afford housing, etc.)
 - _____ in a motel, hotel, campground or similar setting due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
 - _____ in emergency or transitional shelters such as domestic violence or homeless shelters or transitional housing shelter or agency
 - _____ have a primary nighttime residence that is a place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans
 - _____ in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
 - _____ None of the above.
2. How long do you anticipate living in current location? _____

School Most Recently Attended

School: _____
(School Name) (City) (State)

Dates of Attendance: _____ to _____

Grade level when last attended: _____

Eligible for any of these educational and school related activities and services?

- Special Education (IDEA) If yes, please identify disability and special education services previously provided:

- English Language Learners (ELL)
- Gifted
- Vocational Education
- Other: _____

Possible Barriers to Education

- No Birth Certificate
- No immunizations or other medical records
- No School Records
- Transportation
- School Selection
- Other issues/barriers _____

Requested Services and Activities to be Provided by Homeless Student Program

- Obtaining or transferring records necessary for enrollment
- Emergency assistance related to school attendance
- Expedited evaluations
- Transportation
- Clothing to meet a school requirement
- School supplies
- Early childhood program
- Tutoring or other instructional support
- Before/after-school, mentoring, summer programs
- Referrals for medical, dental, or other health services
- Referral to other programs/services
- Assistance with participation in school programs
- Parent education related to rights/resources
- Coordination between schools and agencies
- Counseling
- Addressing needs related to domestic violence
- Staff professional development/awareness
- Other _____

Placement

1. School placement requested by parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth:

2. Reason(s) for Request:

3. Name of "School of Origin"

(School of Origin means the school that the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled).

Enrollment Date _____

Has student been withdrawn? _____ If so, what was the withdraw date? _____

4. Distance from:

Residence to the school of origin (miles): _____

Residence to the school requested (if not school of origin): _____

Parent or Guardian or Unaccompanied Youth's signature

Date

Children living in homeless situations have certain rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Please contact the Homeless Coordinator with any questions.

Written Notification of Enrollment/Placement Decision for Homeless Student

Child's Name: _____

In compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the following written notification is provided to:

Parent/Guardian _____ Unaccompanied Youth _____
(Name) (Name)

After reviewing your request to enroll the child, the determinations are as follows:

Homeless student program eligibility:

- Child does not qualify under the homeless student program.
- Child qualifies under the homeless student program. This determination was based upon:

Placement (if enrolled under the homeless student program) was made based on best interest of the student. The placement will be at: _____
(Name)

Explanation for this determination (if not school of origin or the choice of parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, give detail): _____

If you are not satisfied with the determinations, you have the right to use the dispute resolution process. Contact the Homeless Coordinator and complete a Dispute Resolution Form.

Notices:

- The student has the right to be immediately admitted in the school in which enrollment is sought pending resolution of the dispute.
- You may contact the state coordinator:
Education Specialist & Homeless Education / NCLB Programs
Nebraska Department of Education
<http://www.education.ne.gov/federalprograms/Title%20X.html>
Telephone: (402) 471-1419 Facsimile: (402) 742-2371
- You may seek the assistance of advocates or attorneys.

Administrator

Date

Written Notification Form was given to parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth on _____

(Date)

Homeless Education Program: Dispute Resolution Form

This form should be completed when a dispute arises over school enrollment/placement.

Child's Name: _____

Person completing form: _____
(Name) (Relation to Student)

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

I wish to dispute the following decision: _____

The decision I am disputing was wrong because (give detailed information in support of your position and use an attachment if necessary):

Persons who have information to support my position (include contact information):

I request that the following action be taken on this dispute:

Parent or Guardian or Unaccompanied Youth's signature

Date

-----**For School Use**-----

Date received by Homeless Coordinator _____

-----**Determination of Homeless Coordinator**-----

In compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the following written notification is provided to:

Parent/Guardian _____ Unaccompanied Youth _____
(Name) (Name)

After reviewing the information relevant to your dispute my determination is as follows:

Explanation for this determination:

Notice of Right to Appeal:

If you are not satisfied with the determination on this dispute, you have the right to appeal as provided for in the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 19. The appeal is to be filed with the Commissioner of Education within 30 calendar days of receipt of this decision. For information about an appeal you may contact the state coordinator:

Education Specialist & Homeless Education / NCLB Programs
Nebraska Department of Education
<http://www.education.ne.gov/federalprograms/Title%20X.html>
Telephone: (402) 471-1419 Facsimile: (402) 471-0117

Administrator

Date

The Determination of the Homeless Coordinator on this dispute was given to parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth on _____
(Date)