

**STUDENTS
HOMELESS STUDENTS**

5118.1

In accordance with federal law, it is the policy of the Manchester Board of Education to prohibit discrimination against, segregation of, or stigmatization of, homeless children and youth. The Board authorizes the Administration to establish regulations setting forth procedures necessary to implement the requirements of law with respect to homeless children and youth. In the event of conflict between federal and/or state law and these administrative regulations, the provisions of law shall control.

Legal References:

State Law:

10-253(e) School privileges for children in certain placements, non-resident children and children in temporary shelters

Federal Law:

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11431 et seq.

ADOPTED: April 28, 2003

REVISED: April 26, 2010

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES (1)

In accordance with federal law, the Board of Education does not permit discrimination against, segregation of, or stigmatization of, homeless children and youth. The following sets forth the procedures to implement the requirements of law with respect to homeless children and youth. In the event of conflict between federal and/or state law and these regulations with respect to homeless children and youth, the provisions of law shall control.

I. Definitions:

- A. **Enroll and Enrollment:** includes attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

- B. **Homeless Children and Youth:** means children and youth twenty-one (21) years of age and younger who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who:
 - 1. Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
 - 2. Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
 - 3. Are living in emergency or transitional shelters.
 - 4. Are abandoned in hospitals.
 - 5. Are awaiting foster care placement.
 - 6. 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.
 - 7. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
 - 8. Are migratory children living in the above described circumstances.

- C. **School of Origin:** means the school that a homeless child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the homeless child was last enrolled.

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- D. **Unaccompanied Youth:** means a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
- II. Homeless Liaison:
- A. The District's Homeless Liaison is the Director of Pupil Personnel Services.
 - B. The duties of the Homeless Liaison include:
 - 1. Ensuring that homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
 - 2. Ensuring that homeless children and youth enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the District's schools.
 - 3. Ensuring that homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which such families, children and youth are eligible.
 - 4. Ensuring that parents and guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children, and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
 - 5. Ensuring that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth is disseminated in places in which these children and youth receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act.
 - 6. Ensuring that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act.
 - 7. Ensuring that parent(s)/guardian(s) of homeless children and youth or unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing those services.

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8. Assisting homeless children and youth in enrolling in school and accessing school services.
9. Informing parent(s)/guardian(s) of homeless children and youth, school personnel, and others of the rights of such children and youth.
10. Assisting homeless children and youth who do not have immunizations or immunization/medical records to obtain necessary immunizations or immunization/medical records.
11. Assisting unaccompanied youth in placement/enrollment decisions, including considering the youth's wishes in those decisions, and providing notice to the youth of his or her right to appeal such decisions.
12. Ensuring that homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over enrollment or placement.
13. Collaborating and coordinating with State Coordinators for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and community and school personnel responsible for providing education and related support services to homeless children and youth.

III. Enrollment of Homeless Children and Youth:

- A. Enrollment of homeless children and youth may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment. However, administrators shall require the parent/guardian to provide contact information prior to enrollment.
- B. To facilitate enrollment, administrators:
 1. May permit parents/guardians of homeless children and youth to sign affidavits of residency to replace typical proof of residency.
 2. May permit unaccompanied youth to enroll with affidavits to replace typical proof of guardianship.

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3. Shall refer parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth to the Liaison who will assist in obtaining immunizations.
4. Shall contact previous schools for records and assistance with placement decisions.
5. Shall maintain records so that the records are available in a timely fashion when the student enters a new school or school district.

IV. School Selection:

A. Standards for School Selection:

1. The District is required to make a determination as to the best interests of a homeless child or youth in making a determination as to the appropriate school of placement.
2. In making such a determination, the District is required to keep a homeless child or youth in his/her school of origin for the duration of homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or for the remainder of the academic year if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year, to the extent feasible, unless it is against the wishes of the parent or guardian. Otherwise, the homeless child or youth shall be enrolled in a public school that non-homeless students who live in the area where the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

B. Procedures for Review of School Selection Recommendation:

1. The Principal or his/her designee of the school in which enrollment is sought review an enrollment request in accordance with the standards discussed above, and shall make an initial recommendation regarding same. If the Principal or his/her designee's recommendation is to select a placement other than the school desired by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the homeless child or youth or the unaccompanied youth, then the Principal or his/her designee shall refer the matter to the Superintendent or his/her designee for review of the recommendation and the reasons therefore, and shall notify the District's Homeless Liaison of same.

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2. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the matter and consult with the District Homeless Liaison concerning same. If the Superintendent or his/her designee agrees with the recommendation of the Principal or his/her designee, and a dispute remains between the District and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth about a school selection and/or enrollment decision; the Superintendent or his/her designee shall provide the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the District's decision regarding this matter, and the right to appeal such decision to the Board of Education.
- C. Dispute Resolution Process:
1. The District's Homeless Liaison shall be responsible for promoting objective and expeditious dispute resolutions, and adherence to these administrative regulations.
 2. If the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth disputes the school placement decision or enrollment, the District must immediately enroll the homeless child or youth in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The homeless child or youth shall also have the right to all appropriate educational services, including transportation to and from the school in which enrollment is sought, while the dispute is pending.
 3. If necessary, the District Homeless Liaison shall assist parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth with completion of the necessary appeal paperwork required to file for an appeal to the Board of Education, and provide the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth with a copy of Section 10-186(b).
 4. Within ten (10) days of receipt of an appeal to the Board of Education by a parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth, the District shall hold a hearing before the Board of Education concerning such appeal, and such hearing shall be shall be conducted in accordance with Section 10-186(b).

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES (6)

1. If the Board of Education finds in favor of the Superintendent or his/her designee, a parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth or unaccompanied youth may appeal the Board of Education's decision to the State Board of Education within twenty (20) days of receipt of the Board of Education's written decision, in accordance with Section 10-186(b). If necessary, the District Homeless Liaison shall assist a parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth or unaccompanied youth with filing the necessary appeal paperwork to the State Board of Education. The homeless child or youth or unaccompanied youth shall remain in his or her school of origin pending the determination of the appeal.

V. Services:

- A. Homeless children and youth shall be provided with services comparable to those offered other students in the selected school including:
 1. Title I services or similar state or local programs, educational programs for students with disabilities, programs for students with limited English proficiency, and preschool programs.
 2. Transportation services.
 3. Vocational and technical education.
 4. Programs for gifted and talented students.
 5. School nutrition programs.
 6. Before and after school programs.
- B. The District shall coordinate with local social service agencies, other service providers, housing assistance providers and other school districts to ensure that homeless children and youth have access and reasonable proximity to available education and support services.

VI. Transportation:

- A. The District shall provide transportation comparable to that available to other students.

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- B. Transportation shall be provided, at a parent or guardian's request, to and from the school of origin for a homeless child or youth. Transportation shall be provided for the entire time the child or youth is homeless and until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing. Transportation to the school of origin shall also be provided during pending disputes. The Liaison shall request transportation to and from the school of origin for an unaccompanied youth. Parents and unaccompanied youth shall be informed of this right to transportation before they select a school for attendance.
- C. To comply with these requirements:
1. Parents/guardians, schools, and liaisons shall use the district transportation form to process transportation requests.
 2. If the homeless child or youth is living and attending school in this District, the District shall arrange transportation.
 3. If the homeless child or youth is living in this District but attending school in another, or attending school in this District and living in another, the District will follow the inter-district transportation agreement to determine the responsibility and costs for such transportation. If there is no inter-district transportation agreement, the District shall confer with the other school district's Homeless Liaison to determine an apportionment of the responsibility and costs.
 4. If no mutually agreeable arrangement can be reached, then the District shall:
 - (a) arrange transportation immediately;
 - (b) bring the matter to the attention of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth; and
 - (c) shall ensure that such disputes do not interfere with the homeless child or youth attending school.

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES (8)

VII. Contact Information

- A. Local Contact: for further information, contact:

Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street
Manchester, CT 06042
(860) 647-3452

- B. State Contact: for further information or technical assistance, contact:

State Coordinator
Connecticut Department of Education
25 Industrial Park Road
Middletown, CT 06457-1543
(860) 807-2058

Legal References:

State Law:

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Federal Law:

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