

EPHRATA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: HOMELESS STUDENTS

ADOPTED: April 25, 2005

REVISED: April 24, 2017

251. HOMELESS STUDENTS	
<p>1. Authority 24 P.S. 1306 22 PA Code 11.18 42 U.S.C. 11431</p>	<p>The Board recognizes the need to promptly identify homeless children and youth within the District, facilitate their immediate enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.</p>
<p>24 P.S. 1306 22 PA Code 11.18 42 U.S.C. 11431 34 CFR 299.19</p>	<p>The Board shall ensure that homeless children and youth have equal access to the same educational programs and services provided to other District students.</p>
<p>42 U.S.C. 11431</p>	<p>The Board authorizes the Superintendent to waive District policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, transportation, school stability, and success in school of homeless children and youth.</p>
<p>42 U.S.C. 11431, 11432</p>	<p>It is the policy of the Board that no student shall be discriminated against, segregated, or stigmatized based on his/her homeless status.</p>
<p>2. Definitions 42 U.S.C. 11434a</p>	<p>Enroll or Enrollment means attending classes and participating fully in school activities.</p>
<p>42 U.S.C. 11434a 34 CFR 200.30</p>	<p>Homeless children and youth means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children and youth who are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason. b. Living in motels, hotels, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations. c. Living in emergency, transitional, or domestic violence shelters.

	<p>d. Abandoned in hospitals.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. 3. Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings. 4. Migratory children and youth who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above. 5. School-aged parents living in houses for school-aged parents if they have no other available living accommodations.
<p>42 U.S.C. 11432</p>	<p>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, including preschool. When the child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin shall include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.</p>
<p>42 U.S.C. 11434a</p>	<p>Unaccompanied youth means a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes children or youth who have run away from home; been abandoned or forced out of home by a parent, guardian, or other caretaker; or separated from a parent or guardian for any other reason.</p>
<p>3. Delegation of Responsibility 42 U.S.C. 11432</p>	<p>The Board designates the Superintendent or designee to serve as the District's liaison for homeless children and youth.</p>
<p>42 U.S.C. 11432</p>	<p>The District's liaison shall ensure outreach and coordination with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local social service agencies and other entities that provide services to homeless children and youth and families. 2. Other school districts on issues of prompt identification, transfer of records, transportation, and other inter-district activities.
<p>Pol. 103.1, 113</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. District staff responsible for the provision of services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. 4. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

42 U.S.C. 11432	The District's liaison shall ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth is disseminated in locations frequented by parents/guardians of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens. Such notice shall be provided in a manner and form understandable to the parents/guardians of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth.
42 U.S.C. 11432	The District's liaison shall provide reliable, valid, and comprehensive data to the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.
4. Guidelines	<p><u>Enrollment/Placement</u></p> <p><i>Best Interest Determination -</i></p> <p>In determining the best interest of a child or youth, the district shall:</p>
42 U.S.C. 11432	1. Presume that keeping the child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.
42 U.S.C. 11432	2. Consider student-centered factors related to impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety, giving priority to the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.
42 U.S.C. 11432	3. If, after such consideration, the district determines that it is not in the child's or youth's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, the District shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the reasons for its determination. The explanation shall be in a manner and form understandable to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth and shall include information regarding the right to appeal.
42 U.S.C. 11432	<p><i>Placement -</i></p> <p>In accordance with the child's or youth's best interest, the district shall continue to enroll a homeless student in his/her school of origin while s/he remains homeless and through the end of the academic year in which s/he obtains permanent housing.</p>
42 U.S.C. 11432	Parents/Guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living.

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42 U.S.C. 11432	The District's liaison shall assist an unaccompanied youth in placement or enrollment decisions, giving priority to the views of the student in determining where s/he will be enrolled.
42 U.S.C. 11432	The District shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of any District decision related to school selection or placement, including the right to appeal.
	<i>Enrollment -</i>
	The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if:
42 U.S.C. 11431 Pol. 113.4, 200, 201, 203, 204, 209, 216	1. The student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment.
42 U.S.C. 11432 Pol. 200	2. The application or enrollment deadline has passed during any period of homelessness.
42 U.S.C. 11432 Pol. 200, 201, 203, 204, 209, 216	The District's liaison shall immediately contact the school last attended by the child or youth to obtain relevant academic or other records.
42 U.S.C. 11432	The District may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information.
	<i>Assignment -</i>
42 U.S.C. 11432 Pol. 206	If the District is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the District shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's assignment within the school.
	<i>Dispute Resolution -</i>
42 U.S.C. 11432	If a dispute arises over eligibility, enrollment, or school selection:
	1. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the District's liaison, who shall assist in the dispute resolution process.
	2. The student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.

<p>Pol. 113.4, 216</p>	<p>3. The District’s liaison shall issue a written decision of the dispute within twenty (20) business days of being notified of the dispute.</p> <p>A parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may appeal a district's written decision or file a complaint with the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.</p> <p><u>Education Records</u></p> <p>Information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation shall be treated as a student education record subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and shall not be deemed to be directory information.</p> <p><u>Comparable Services</u></p>
<p>24 P.S. 1306 42 U.S.C. 11432 Pol. 146</p>	<p>Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other district students including, but not limited to:</p>
<p>Pol. 810</p>	<p>1. Transportation services.</p>
<p>Pol. 808</p>	<p>2. School nutrition programs.</p>
<p>Pol. 115</p>	<p>3. Career and technical education.</p>
	<p>4. Preschool programs.</p>
	<p>5. Educational programs for which the homeless student meets the eligibility criteria, such as:</p>
<p>Pol. 918</p>	<p>a. Services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs.</p>
<p>Pol. 138</p>	<p>b. Programs for English Language Learners.</p>
<p>Pol. 113</p>	<p>c. Programs for students with disabilities.</p>
<p>Pol. 114</p>	<p>d. Programs for gifted and talented students.</p>
<p>24 P.S. 1306 42 U.S.C. 11432 Pol. 810 42 U.S.C. 11432</p>	<p><u>Transportation</u></p> <p>The District shall provide transportation for homeless students to their school of origin or the school in the attendance area where the child is actually living.</p> <p>If the school of origin is outside District boundaries or homeless students live in another district but will attend their school of origin in this district, the school</p>

	<p>districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.</p> <p><u>Training</u></p> <p>42 U.S.C. 11432 The District's liaison shall participate in professional development programs and other technical assistance activities offered by the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.</p> <p>42 U.S.C. 11432 The District's liaison shall arrange professional development programs for school staff, including office staff.</p> <p>42 U.S.C. 11432 School personnel providing services to homeless children and youth, including school enrollment staff, shall receive professional development and support to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve identification of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth. 2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements for immediate enrollment and transportation. 3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children. <p>Legal References</p> <p>24 P.S. 1306 22 PA Code 11.18 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq 34 CFR 200.30, 299.19 42 U.S.C. 11431, 11432, 11434a Pol. 103.1, 113, 113.4, 114, 115, 138, 146, 200, 201, 203, 204, 206, 209, 216, 808, 810, 918</p>
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