

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: HOMELESS STUDENTS

ADOPTED: September 15, 2003

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# EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

251. HOMELESS STUDENTS	
<p>1. Authority 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431, 11432 SC 1306 Title 22 Sec. 11.18 34 CFR 299.19</p>	<p>The Board recognizes the need to promptly identify homeless students within the district, facilitate their immediate enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.</p> <p>The Board shall ensure that homeless students have equal access to the same educational programs and services provided to other district students.</p> <p>The Board authorizes the Superintendent to waive policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, transportation, school stability and success in school of homeless students.</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 Sec. 11434a 34 CFR 200.30</p>	<p><b>Enroll or Enrollment</b> means attending classes and participating fully in school activities.</p> <p><b>Homeless students</b> are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, which include the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children and youths who are:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;</li> <li>b. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;</li> <li>c. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters; or</li> <li>d. Abandoned in hospitals.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<p>3. Delegation of Responsibility 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432 Pol. 103.1, 113</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. 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;</li><li>3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings;</li><li>4. Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; and</li><li>5. School-aged students who have a child(ren) of their own living in houses for school-aged students with a child(ren) if they have no other available living accommodations.</li></ol> <p><b>School of origin</b> is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled. When the student 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><b>Unaccompanied youth</b> means a homeless student not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes 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 reason.</p> <p>The Board designates the Director of Child Accounting to serve as the school district's liaison for homeless students and families.</p> <p>The school district's liaison shall ensure outreach and coordination with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Local service agencies and other entities that provide services to homeless children and youth and families.</li><li>2. Other school districts on issues of prompt identification, transfer of records, transportation.</li><li>3. District staff responsible for the provision of services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.</li><li>4. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.</li></ol>
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<p>Pol. 906</p> <p>4. Guidelines 42 U.S.C Sec. 11431, 11432</p> <p>Pol. 201, 203, 204, 209, 216</p>	<p>The school district’s liaison shall provide public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family 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 youths, and unaccompanied youths.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>Best Interest Determination -</i></p> <p>In determining the best interest of a child or youth, the district shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Enrollment/Placement</u></b></p> <p>To the extent feasible, and in accordance with the student’s best interest, homeless student shall continue to be enrolled in his/her school of origin while she/he remains homeless or until the end of the academic year in which she/he obtains permanent housing. Parents/Guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living or other schools. If a student is unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, the school district liaison will consider the views of the student in determining where she/he will be enrolled.</p> <p>The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment pursuant to school district policies. However, the school district may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information. The school district liaison may contact the previous school for oral confirmation of immunizations, and the school shall request records from the previous school district, pursuant to Board policy.</p>
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<p>42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432 SC 1306</p> <p>42 U.S.C Sec. 11432 SC 1306</p>	<p><b><u>Assignment</u></b></p> <p>If the school district is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the school district shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's placement.</p> <p><b><u>Dispute Resolution</u></b></p> <p>If a dispute arises over eligibility, enrollment, or school selection,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the district's liaison, who shall assist in the dispute resolution process.</li><li>2. The student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.</li><li>3. The parents/guardians shall be provided with a written explanation of the school district's decision, their right to appeal and the procedures to use for the appeal within twenty (20) business days of being notified of the dispute.</li></ol> <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><b><u>Education Records</u></b></p> <p>Information about a homeless student'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><b><u>Comparable Services</u></b></p> <p>Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other school district students including, but not limited to, transportation services; school nutrition programs; career and technical education; preschool programs; ; and educational services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs for which students meet eligibility criteria; such as programs for English Language Learners; programs for students with disabilities; and programs for gifted and talented students.</p> <p><b><u>Transportation</u></b></p> <p>The school district shall provide transportation for homeless students to their school of origin or the school they choose to attend within the school district.</p>
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If the school of origin is outside school district boundaries or homeless students live in another school district but will attend their school of origin in this school district, the school districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.

**Training**

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.

The district's liaison shall arrange professional development programs for school staff, including office staff.

School personnel providing services to homeless children and youths, including school enrollment staff, shall receive professional development and support to:

1. Improve identification of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths;
2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements for immediate enrollment and transportation; and
3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

**References:**

24 P.S. 1306

22 PA Code Sec. 11.18, 403.1

20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232g, 6301 et seq

42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 et seq, 11432, 11434a

34 CFR Part 99, 200.30, 299.19

67 Fed. Reg. 10698

PA Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan

Board Policy 103.1, 113, 113.4, 114, 115, 138, 146, 200, 201, 203, 204, 206, 209, 216, 808, 810, 918