

The board of trustees of this district recognizes the right of all students residing within the district boundaries, including those who are homeless, to immediately enroll in, and participate in, the district's educational and support programs.

## **DEFINITIONS**

“Homeless students” mean children and youth who are under the age of twenty-one (21), including migratory children and youth, who:

1. Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including those who are:
  - a) sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as *doubled-up*); b) living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or other camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - c) living in emergency or transitional shelter; d) abandoned in hospitals; or e) awaiting foster care placement.
2. 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.
3. Live in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.

“School of origin” means the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

“Unaccompanied youth” means a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS**

Homeless students who are enrolled in this district have the right to:

1. Equal access to all educational programs and services, including transportation and school nutrition programs;
2. Continue to attend school in their school of origin for the duration of homelessness or the current school year, whichever ends first;
3. Attend regular public school with students who are not homeless, unless there exists a legitimate reason for requiring attendance at another school; and
4. Receive all educational services for which they are eligible (i.e., special education, gifted and talented, and LEP).
5. Not be segregated or stigmatized on the basis of their status as a homeless student.

**PLACEMENT DETERMINATIONS**

The district's determinations regarding placement of homeless students must be based on the "best interest" of the student and, to the extent feasible, keeping a homeless student in the school of origin, unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the student's parents or guardian. The placement determination will be student-centered and made on a case-by-case basis. In making its determination, the district will consider the desires of the student's parent/guardian, as well as the student's age, the distance of a commute and the impact that the commute may have on the student's education, and personal safety issues; a student's need for special instruction; the length of anticipated stay in temporary shelter or other temporary location, and the time remaining in the school year.

**DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The schools in this district will develop strategies for meeting the needs of homeless students and eliminating barriers to their attendance at school, including identification, and the provision of appropriate support services.

**LOCAL LIAISON**

The superintendent will appoint a local liaison to be one of the district's primary contacts between homeless families, district personnel, and other service providers. The liaison is responsible for coordinating services to ensure that homeless students enroll in school and have an opportunity to succeed academically.

The liaison shall ensure:

1. Homeless students are identified by school personnel and coordinate identification activities with other entities;
2. Homeless students enroll and have full opportunity to succeed in school;
3. Homeless students receive educational services for which they are eligible, including preschool programs and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services;
4. Parents/guardians of homeless students and unaccompanied youth are informed of educational and related opportunities available to homeless students and provided meaningful opportunities to participate;
5. Parents/guardians of homeless students and unaccompanied youth are informed of all transportation services and assisted in accessing them;
6. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with Idaho State Board of Education rules and this board's policy; and

7. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated to locations where children and youth receive services.

The liaison shall also collaborate and coordinate with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, and community personnel who work with these students and their families.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The district shall provide homeless students with transportation services comparable to those offered to other students at the school of attendance.

If a homeless student moves to a shelter that is in another attendance area within the district, the superintendent or designee shall arrange transportation that enables the student to continue attending the same school, if requested by the parent or guardian.

If a homeless student attending school in this district moves to a shelter in another district, the superintendent or designee shall arrange transportation that enables the student to continue attending the same school in this district, through the services of this district, the new home district, or an outside agency if the parent/guardian requests that the student remain in the school of origin and doing so is determined to be in the best interests of the student.

## **DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

In compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Subtitle B, the No Child Left Behind Act, and Idaho Code Section 33-1404, the following procedures are established to promptly resolve disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless students:

1. A homeless student shall be immediately admitted to the school of choice of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth during the period of dispute resolution, and be allowed to fully participate in all school activities for which the student is otherwise eligible.
2. If the district denies the student's homeless status or determines that the homeless student will attend a school other than the school of origin or other school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, the district will notify the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth of the reasons for its decision. Such notice must be in writing, in a language the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth can understand, and include a statement regarding the appeal process.
3. The district will immediately refer the student's parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth to the district's homeless liaison. The liaison will advise the parent or guardian of the student's rights and assist in the dispute resolution process. The liaison must ensure that the dispute resolution process is followed for unaccompanied students.

4. If the parties cannot reach an agreement, the superintendent will seek a review by a trained individual appointed by the State Department of Education. The reviewer will, within seven (7) business days, review the matter to determine how the student's best interests, to the extent feasible, will be served.
5. The board of trustees will consider the reviewer's written findings, conclusions, and recommendation at their next scheduled meeting and may accept or reject the recommendation. The board's determination is the final resolution of the dispute.

**PROVISION OF COMPARABLE SERVICES**

The district must, at all times, provide services to each homeless student that are comparable to services offered to other students in the school. Such services must include any program for which the student is eligible, including preschool, special education, gifted and talented programs, limited English proficiency, vocational education, before- and after-school programs, school nutrition, and transportation.



**LEGAL REFERENCE:**

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (2001)  
McKinley-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (2001, Section 724(g)), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 42 USC 11431, *et seq.*  
Idaho Code Section 33-1404

**ADOPTED: August 10, 2005**

**AMENDED:**