

Related Entries: (Not identified at this time)

### Homeless Students

The School Board of Lee County shall ensure that homeless children and youth are provided with equal access to free, appropriate educational programs, have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State of Florida academic standards, are not segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and are protected from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.

#### (1) Definitions

The District homeless education liaison shall make a final determination of homeless status on a case-by case basis.

(a) The McKinney-Vento Act Homeless Assistance defines “homeless children and youth” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence including:

1. Students who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason; double-up.
2. Students who are living in motels, hotels, FEMA trailers, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
3. Students who are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; are awaiting foster care placement.
4. Students who have a primary nighttime residence that is not designated for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
5. Students who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings.
6. Migratory students who qualify if they are living in any of the circumstances described above (1-5).

(b) The term “unaccompanied youth” includes a student who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

46 (c) The term “school of origin” means the school that the student attended when  
47 permanently housed or the school where the child or youth was last enrolled.  
48

49 (2) School Selection  
50

51 (a) The District shall, according to the student’s best interest, and by parent,  
52 guardian, or unaccompanied youth request, continue the homeless student’s  
53 education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness, or enroll  
54 the student in a District school in the attendance zone in which the homeless  
55 student is actually living on the same basis as other district students.  
56

57 (b) In determining the best interest of the student, the District shall:  
58

59 1. To the extent feasible, keep a homeless student in the school of  
60 origin, unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the student’s parent  
61 or guardian.  
62

63 2. Provide a written explanation, including a statement regarding the  
64 right to appeal, if the District sends a homeless student to a school  
65 other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or  
66 guardian.  
67

68 3. In the case of an unaccompanied student, ensure that the District  
69 homeless education *liaison* helps in placement or enrollment  
70 decisions, considers the views of the student and provides notice of  
71 the right to appeal placement and enrollment decisions.  
72

73 4. The school of origin means the school that the student attended when  
74 permanently housed, or the school in which the student was last  
75 enrolled. The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of  
76 whether the student lives with the homeless parents or guardian or  
77 has been temporarily placed elsewhere.  
78

79 5. The requirements of the Student Assignment Plan for students moving  
80 their physical residence from one attendance zone to another, to  
81 transfer to a school in the new zone of residence, shall not apply to  
82 homeless students.  
83

84 6. The school selection may be documented through the Student  
85 Assignment waiver process.  
86

87 (3) Enrollment  
88

89 The District will immediately enroll a homeless student, new to the district, in school,  
90 even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment, such as  
91 school records (includes Individualized Education Plan-IEP), medical records or  
92 proof of residency.  
93

- 94 (a) The District will ensure that homeless students are not stigmatized nor  
95 segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. A homeless student will  
96 be assigned to the District school in the attendance zone in which the student  
97 is actually living or to the student's school of origin as requested by the  
98 parent or guardian and in accordance with the student's best interest.  
99
- 100 (b) Homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or to  
101 attend school where they are temporarily residing.  
102
- 103 (c) Homeless students who choose to remain in their school of origin have the  
104 right to remain there until the end of the school year in which they get  
105 permanent housing.  
106
- 107 (d) If a homeless student arrives without records, the assigned school social  
108 worker shall assist the family and contact the previously attended school  
109 system to obtain the required records.  
110
- 111 (e) The District shall immediately enroll the new student in the school assigned  
112 even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for  
113 enrollment; such as academic records, medical records, proof that the  
114 student lives in Lee County, or other documentation.  
115
- 116 (f) The District shall immediately contact the school last attended to obtain  
117 relevant academic and other records.  
118
- 119 (g) The District shall immediately refer the parent or guardian to the district's  
120 school social worker for children and youth in transition, who will help in  
121 obtaining necessary immunizations or records if the student needs to obtain  
122 these records.  
123
- 124 (4) Residency  
125
- 126 A homeless student is considered a resident if the child or youth is personally  
127 somewhere within the district with a purpose to live here temporarily, but not  
128 necessarily to remain permanently.  
129
- 130 (a) The student shall be considered a resident when living with a parent,  
131 guardian, or person in loco parentis not solely for school purposes or for  
132 participation in extracurricular activities.  
133
- 134 (b) Homeless students who do not live with their parents or guardians may enroll  
135 themselves in school.  
136
- 137 (c) The address listed on the enrollment forms becomes proof that the student  
138 lives in Lee County, Florida.  
139

- 140 (5) Guardianship  
141  
142 (a) For purposes of school placement, any parent, guardian or person in loco  
143 parentis who has legal or physical custody of a homeless child or youth shall  
144 enroll that child or youth directly in a District school via the Student  
145 Assignment office or school that registers students on-site, if selected.  
146  
147 (b) The District Guardian Responsibilities form must be completed within a  
148 reasonable period of time for those homeless students who are not  
149 accompanied by a parent or guardian, once a child or youth is enrolled in and  
150 attending a school.  
151
- 152 (6) Disputes  
153  
154 If a dispute arises over school selection, enrollment, or any issue covered in this  
155 policy:  
156  
157 (a) The student shall be immediately admitted to the school of origin or assigned  
158 to a zone school as requested by the parent or guardian, pending resolution  
159 of the dispute.  
160  
161 (b) The parent or guardian of the student shall be provided with a written  
162 explanation of the District's decision regarding school selection, including the  
163 rights of the parent, guardian or student to appeal the decision through the  
164 District's enrollment dispute procedure.  
165  
166 (c) The student, parent or guardian shall be referred to the District Homeless  
167 Education Liaison, who shall ensure the resolution process is carried out as  
168 expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute.  
169  
170 (d) In the case of an unaccompanied student, the District Homeless Education  
171 Liaison shall ensure that the student is immediately enrolled in school  
172 pending the resolution of the dispute.  
173
- 174 (7) Transportation  
175  
176 The District shall ensure at the request of the parent, or in the case of an  
177 unaccompanied youth, the District Homeless Education Liaison, transportation will  
178 be provided for a homeless student to the school or origin as follows:  
179  
180 (a) If the homeless student continues to live in the School District of Lee County,  
181 in which the school of origin is located, transportation will be provided.  
182  
183 (b) If the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though  
184 continuing his or her education at the school of origin, the district of origin  
185 and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to  
186 apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin.  
187

188 (c) If the districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs  
189 must be shared equally.

190

191 (8) Comparable Services

192

193 Homeless students shall be provided services and educational programs  
194 comparable to those offered to other students in the school selected, including the  
195 following:

196

197 (a) Preschool programs

198

199 (b) Transportation services

200

201 (c) Educational Services for which the student meets the eligibility criteria,  
202 Including special education and related services and programs for English  
203 language learners

204

205 (d) Vocational and technical education programs

206

207 (e) Gifted programs

208

209 (f) School nutrition programs

210

211 (g) Title I

212

213 (h) Before and After School programs

214

215 (9) Liaisons

216

217 The Superintendent designates the Coordinator of Student Welfare and Attendance  
218 as the District Homeless Education Liaison.

219

220

221 **STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** 1001.42, 1001.43, and 1003.01 (12) F.S.; 1003.21 F.S, 42  
222 USC Sections 1143a, 11431, 11432

223

224 Adopted: 10/19/10 (formerly 4.31)