

Homeless Students- Enrollment Rights and Services

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide them with equal access to the same free, appropriate public education (including public preschool education) provided to other students. Special attention will be given to the identification, enrollment, and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school, as well as mitigating educational barriers to their academic success. Additionally, the district will take reasonable steps to ensure that homeless students are not stigmatized or segregated in a separate school or in a separate program within a school on the basis of their homeless status.

Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable preschool programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including those students who are:

- A. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- B. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- C. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- D. Abandoned in hospitals;
- E. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation;
- F. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings; or
- G. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The superintendent will designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's McKinney-Vento liaison for homeless students and their families. The liaison may simultaneously serve as a coordinator for other Federal programs, provided that they are able to carry out the duties listed in the procedure that accompanies this policy.

If the district has identified more than ten unaccompanied youth, meaning youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and including youth living on their own in any of the homeless situations described in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, the principal of each middle and high school building will establish a point of contact for such youth. The point of contact is responsible for identifying homeless and unaccompanied youth and connecting them with the district's homeless student liaison. The district's homeless student liaison is responsible for training the building points of contact.

Best interest determination

In making a determination as to which school is in the homeless student's best interest to attend, the district will presume that it is in the student's best interest to remain enrolled in their school of origin unless such enrollment is against the wishes of a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth.

Attendance options will be made available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district, including attendance rights acquired by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, and intra and inter-district choice options.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student will be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian will be informed of the district's decision and the reasons therefor, (or informed if the student does not qualify for McKinney-Vento, if applicable) and their appeal rights in writing and in a language they can understand. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state policy. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school will immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. However, enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including academic records, medical records, proof of residency, mailing address or other documentation, or denied or delayed due to missed application deadlines or fees, fines or absences at a previous school

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student will be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school will be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, and incompliance with the state's Address Confidentiality Program when necessary. However, the district cannot demand emergency contact information in a form or manner that creates a barrier to enrollment and/or attendance at school.

Lynden School District No. 504
BOARD POLICY

No. 3115

Legal References: RCW 28A.225.215 Enrollment of children without legal residences
RCW 28A.320.145 Support for homeless students.
20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq. Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA]
42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq. McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
Chapter 28A.320 RCW Provisions applicable to all districts (new section
created by 3SHB 1682, 2016 legislative session)

Management
Resources: Posters and Other Materials for Community Outreach - OSPI

2016 – November Issue
2016 - July Issue
2014 - December Issue
2004 - October Issue
2002 - October Issue

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