

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

SECTION I

The Jackson Public School District shall provide educational and supportive services to all homeless children and youth, in compliance with the guidelines of the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act*. The Board of Trustees of this district recognizes the right of all students residing within the district boundaries, including those who are homeless, to enroll in, and participate in the district's educational and support programs.

For the purpose of this program, the Mississippi Department of Education has adopted the definition of homelessness developed under the Education for Homeless Children and Youth. The definition is as follows:

"Homelessness" - a homeless individual is one who (A) lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and (B) includes—(i) children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement; (ii) children and youth 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; (iii) children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and (iv) migratory children.

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; or
3. Enroll the child or youth in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend; whichever is in the best interest of the child or youth.

In determining the best interest of the child or youth for purposes of making a school assignment, consideration shall be given to a request made by a parent regarding school selection.

The term “school of origin” shall mean the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

SECTION II

The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth is living with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parents.

SECTION III

Each homeless child shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected according to provisions of Section I, including transportation services, educational services for which the child meets the eligibility criteria, such as compensatory educational programs for the disadvantaged, and educational programs for students with disabilities and for students with limited English proficiency; programs in vocational education; programs for the gifted and talented; and school meal programs.

SECTION IV

Any record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs of each homeless child or youth shall be maintained:

- A. so that records are available, in a timely manner, when a child or youth enters a new school district, and
- B. in a manner consistent with Section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act.

SECTION V

The Jackson Public School District shall coordinate with local social service agencies, and other agencies or programs providing services to such children or youth and their families.

SECTION VI

The superintendent or designee shall ensure the following:

- A. Homeless children and youth are enrolled and provided appropriate educational opportunities in the school of that agency.
- B. Homeless families, children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.

C. State coordinators and local educational agency liaisons shall inform school personnel service providers and advocates working with homeless of the duties of the liaisons.

SECTION VII

The Jackson Public School District shall be governed by Mississippi state laws on providing services to homeless children and youth.

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