

Policy JQN: Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Status: DRAFT

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EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Homeless students in the Holmes County Consolidated School District will have access to the education and other services needed to ensure that an opportunity is available to meet the same academic achievement standards to which all students are held. A liaison for students in homeless situations will be designated by the district to carry out duties as required by law.

The Holmes County Consolidated School District will ensure that homeless students are not stigmatized nor segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. A homeless student will be admitted to the Holmes County Consolidated School District school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living or to the student's school of origin as requested by the parent and in accordance with the student's best interest. Transportation will be provided to and from the student's school of origin at the request of the parent, or in the case of an unaccompanied student, the Holmes County Consolidated School District's liaison for homeless students.

The superintendent or designee will produce written guidelines for distribution to each school that explain the rights of homeless students and the responsibilities of the schools to meet their needs and eliminate barriers to school attendance. This information shall also be disseminated in writing and by other means designed to raise awareness of these rights and responsibilities to staff, homeless families and students, the public, and homeless service providers.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, children are deemed to be homeless under the following conditions:

1. Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(1));
2. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons 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;
3. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(2)(C));
4. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
5. Migratory children (as such term is defined in section 6399 of title 20) who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described in numbers 2-4 above.

An unaccompanied child is a homeless child not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. 42 U.S.C. § 11434a

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

1. It shall be the policy of the Holmes County Consolidated School District, to the extent practicable under

requirements relating to education established by state law, that each eligible child of a homeless individual and each eligible homeless youth will have access to a free appropriate education comparable to the education provided the children of district residents who are non-homeless, without isolation or stigma.

2. The placement of an eligible homeless child or youth will be made according to Policy JBCCA Assignment of Pupils, and will take into consideration the best interests of the homeless child or youth and placement requests made by a parent.
3. The choice of placement in either the "school of origin" or the school serving the "place of abode" will take place regardless of whether the child or youth is living with the homeless parent(s) or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parent(s). The district will accept credit for full or partial coursework completed in a prior school in accordance with district policy regarding transfers.
4. Provided the homeless child or youth meets eligibility criteria, he/she will be provided transportation services; compensatory education programs for the disadvantaged; educational programs for the handicapped and for students with limited English proficiency; programs in vocational education; programs for the gifted and talented; and school meals programs.
5. Any and all records ordinarily kept by the Holmes County Consolidated School District, including immunization records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, evaluations for special services and programs, shall be kept on homeless children and youths and shall be forwarded in a timely fashion should a child or youth enter a new school or school district; and in a manner consistent with Section 1232(g) of Title 20.
6. ~~Should~~ the Holmes County Consolidated School District ~~receive assistance under Section 11432~~, it shall coordinate with local social service agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to such children or youths and their families.
7. ~~Should~~ the Holmes County Consolidated School District ~~receive assistance under Section 11432~~, it shall designate a homelessness liaison to ensure that homeless children and youth enroll in and succeed in the schools of their district; and, 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.
8. The homelessness liaison shall inform school personnel, service providers and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the liaison.
9. The Holmes County Consolidated School District has and will continue to review and revise, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths in schools selected in accordance with paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 above.
10. In reviewing and revising such policies, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, requirements of immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records, or other documentation and guardianship.
11. Disputes which may arise regarding the assignment of a homeless child or youth will be promptly resolved according to the provisions of Policy JBCCA Assignment of Pupils. Other issues or disputes will be directed to the attention of the school/district official responsible for that particular matter for prompt resolution. If this dispute cannot be resolved locally, any aggrieved party may make a written request for a review of the matter to:

Coordinator of the Homeless Program

Mississippi Department of Education

P. O. Box 771

Jackson, MS 39205

