

SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS (ECYEH)

200 South Rolling Road
Springfield, Pennsylvania 19064

TO: All Principals, School Counselors, Social Workers, Secretaries, & Nurses
FROM: Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback, Director of Educational Services / SSD Homeless Liaison
DATE: October 1, 2023
SUBJECT: HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH: MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ACT

The Springfield School District recognizes the challenges most homeless, displaced, and doubled-up families encounter, and understand our responsibility to resolve some of the issues they face. The District also realizes the availability of resources in any emergency may make the difference between success and failure in school. The attached memoranda are designed to help personnel access and share the services provided by the District. Please disseminate the information to all relevant staff.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, also part of the Improving America's Schools Act (Public Law 103-382) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, guarantees a free and appropriate public education for homeless/displaced children and youth. BEC 42 U.S.C. & 11301 outlines procedures for deciding school placement, enrolling students, and determining fiscal responsibility. Federal and state laws make our accountability clear. Although we have a relatively low number of homeless students each year, it becomes more necessary in this instance to remain vigilant and supportive of any students and family that may experience lapses in housing. Please familiarize yourself and your staff, including counselors, nurses, teachers, secretaries, and others with the procedures in the attached memoranda.

- GENERAL PROCEDURAL OUTLINE
- ADMISSION/TRANSFER POLICY FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS
- TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS
- FREE & REDUCED MEALS FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

Contact **Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback**, Director of Educational Services / SSD Homeless Liaison, with any questions/concerns you may have at (610) 938-6016.

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TO: All Principals, School Counselors, Social Workers, Secretaries, & Nurses

FROM: Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback, Director of Educational Services / SSD Homeless Liaison

DATE: October 1, 2023

SUBJECT: GENERAL PROCEDURAL OUTLINE FOR SUPPORT

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, now part of the Improving America's Schools Act (Public Law 103-382) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, guarantees a free and appropriate public education for homeless/displaced children and youth. BEC 42 U.S.C. & 11301 outlines procedures for deciding school placement, enrolling students, and determining fiscal responsibility. Federal and state laws make our accountability clear. Although we have a relatively low number of homeless students each year, it becomes more necessary in this instance to remain vigilant and supportive of any students and family that may experience lapses in housing. Please familiarize yourself and your staff, including counselors, nurses, teachers, secretaries, and others with the procedures in the attached memorandum.

- For any staff member that receives a report of a child being homeless, it is the responsibility of that staff member to notify the school's building administrator immediately and inform him/her of the child's name and what has been reported by the student.
- The building administrator must designate either the child's guidance counselor or school social worker to contact the parent/guardian immediately to confirm the report. If the counselor/social worker is unable to reach a parent/guardian, or if the child is homeless (unaccompanied), contact the district's Homeless Liaison, Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback, at ext. 6016 immediately to discuss options for supporting the student.
- If the parent/guardian is contacted or if any information is received regarding the student's status, then contact the district's Homeless Liaison to confirm and establish that the family qualifies as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. If the family qualifies as homeless per Federal and State law, proceed with the following steps.
 - The counselor/social worker assigned to the case must interview the student and family to establish levels of care and supports that need to be in place to ensure the student's safety as little interruption as possible to his/her education experience.

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- Any new address must be obtained as soon as possible in order to provide transportation and supports. (see TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES)
- The counselor/social worker must notify both Christina Miller, District Registrar, and Nichole Damon, Manager of Information Systems, via email of the change in student status.
- The counselor/social worker will work with family to assist in accessing community-based services.
- The counselor/social worker will contact transportation and keep them updated as to the change in address. The counselor/social worker must continue to serve as the liaison between family and transportation. The family does not work directly with transportation. Please note, it may take up to 3 days to rearrange transportation, so please contact them immediately – Briana Mazzella, BMazzella@ridesta.com / (484) 209 – 0898. (see TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES)
- The counselor/social worker must gather any and all schoolwork for the student if there is any delay in setting up transportation.
- Parents/Guardians should be directed to come to District Office and meet with Christina Miller, District Registrar, to fill out address forms to be updated in E-School System.
- The family must remain on a bi-monthly check-in beyond necessary counseling and services to confirm and update any status or address change, as the district reports homeless status to the state monthly.
- Any additional changes to status must be shared immediately with the district Homeless Liaison

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TO: All Principals, School Counselors, Social Workers, Secretaries, & Nurses

FROM: Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback, Director of Educational Services / SSD Homeless Liaison

DATE: October 1, 2023

SUBJECT: ADMISSION/TRANSFER POLICY FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, now part of the Improving America's Schools Act (Public Law 103-382) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, guarantees a free and appropriate public education for homeless/displaced children and youth. BEC 42 U.S.C. & 11301 outlines procedures for deciding school placement, enrolling students, and determining fiscal responsibility. Federal and state laws make our accountability clear. Although we have a relatively low number of homeless students each year, it becomes more necessary in this instance to remain vigilant and supportive of any students and family that may experience lapses in housing. Please familiarize yourself and your staff, including counselors, nurses, teachers, secretaries, and others with the procedures in the attached memorandum.

- A child whose family becomes homeless may remain in the school he/she was attending prior to becoming homeless for the duration of the school year.
- If feasible, a student may be transferred to a school that is closer to his/her transitional housing.
- A placement in a non-district school may also be in the best interest of the child and is to be determined through a meeting with the family of the child and a building-based team to include an administrator, guidance counselor, school social worker, and the Director of Special Education. If placement in another school is being considered, the meeting must occur within 48 hours of a homeless notification.
- The receiving school may not prevent or delay the enrollment of a homeless child by requiring proof of residency or lack of documentation such as immunization records. The district may seek written confirmation of shelter residency from a shelter director but may not refuse a child admission pending such confirmation. In the case of secondary level schools, it may take up to three days to provide or adjust a schedule that is appropriate for the student.

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- Homeless children living more than one mile from their school will be provided transportation once a safe and secure location can be established for pickup. (see TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURE)

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TO: All Principals, School Counselors, Social Workers, Secretaries, & Nurses
FROM: Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback, Director of Educational Services / SSD Homeless Liaison
DATE: October 1, 2023
SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

The Springfield School District is committed to ensuring educational continuity for all children who do not have fixed permanent homes. We will provide either financial assistance for public transportation or busing from a safe and secure location to students who live in emergency housing, motels, hotels, cars, and other non-permanent housing situations. Students are eligible for the transportation assistance if continuing to attend school and the school is more than one mile from their current residence.

PROCEDURES

- A counselor/social worker will assist each student with transportation services in a timely.
- In the case of families/students that are residing in a Shelter or Transitional housing, the provider must give the student and/or parent a verification of residence letter requesting transportation. This letter must be submitted to the district's Homeless Liaison, Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback, as soon as possible to establish a safe pick-up location.
- Students living in other homeless categories must have written confirmation/notification submitted to our transportation department from the child's counselor/social worker.
- Families may not contact transportation directly and must work their counselor/social worker in obtaining transportation services.
- Emergency/transitional housing providers should notify counselor/social worker when the student moves from the facility. If the student moves between or among emergency or transitional housing and the location is still a mile or more from school, student transportation may be continued throughout the school year. However, a new bus run must be created so notification to the school with supporting documentation must occur as soon as possible so as to not interrupt the child's education.
- Homeless students temporarily residing outside of the Springfield School District boundaries may be eligible for transportation. A required approval from the district's

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Homeless Liaison, Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback, must be received in order to process this type of request. In the case of out of district transportation, this may take up to 5 days to arrange and may require extended travel periods.

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FROM: Dr. Jeffrey Zweiback, Director of Educational Services / Springfield School District
Homeless Liaison

DATE: October 1, 2023

SUBJECT: FREE AND REDUCED MEALS FOR HOMELESS

Categorical Eligibility of Homeless Students for Free Meal Benefits

- Children identified as runaway, homeless, or migrant are categorically eligible for free meals in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. If their school participates in both breakfast and lunch programs, they receive both.
- The definition of homeless children is the same one used in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; that means that children living in doubled-up situations are eligible. The host household's income is not a factor in this eligibility.
- Eligible children may be directly certified based on a list provided by an appropriate person such as the District's Homeless Liaison, a local shelter director, or a runaway and homeless youth service provider.
- Documentation of free meal eligibility must consist of the child's name (or a list of names), the effective date(s), and the person's signature. No application is required. The law's intent is to expedite the process and provide meals as quickly as possible.
- If there is a delay in receiving necessary information from the liaison or provider, the school should determine who best knows the child's situation and have that person provide the documentation stated above.
- A homeless child who is declared eligible for free meals remains eligible for the rest of the school year even if homeless status changes. Thus, no tracking is necessary.

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