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# ***Homeless Education***

**McKinney-Vento**

**Homeless Education Act**

**Title X, Part C**

**No Child Left Behind Act - 2001**

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction



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State Superintendent  
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# *Definition of Homeless*

- Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
- Sharing of housing
- Motels, hotels
- Public or private place not designed for sleeping
- Trailer parks
- Cars, parks, and abandoned buildings



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# *Definition of Homeless*

*Continued...*

- Substandard housing
- Shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Campgrounds
- Unaccompanied youths
- Awaiting foster care placement
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless



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# = *Equal Access* =

- Homeless students have equal access to all programs: GATE, Special Ed., Migrant Ed., ELL programs, Vocational Ed.
- They automatically qualify for Title I, School Meals, and After School Programs
- Homeless Preschoolers may be given priority enrollment
- Unaccompanied youth have the right to enroll without a legal guardian



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# *District Liaison*

- All local educational agencies must have a district liaison
- LEA liaisons must ensure that:
  - Homeless children and youth are identified
  - Homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the LEA
  - Homeless families, children, and youth receive educational services



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# *District Liaison*

*Continued...*

- Parents or guardians are informed of educational opportunities available to their children
- Public notice of the educational rights is disseminated
- Enrollment disputes are mediated
- Liaisons are required to assist unaccompanied youth in placement/enrollment decisions



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# *District Liaison*

*Continued...*

- Liaisons are required to ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school
- Liaisons are required to assist children and youth who do not have immunizations
- Liaisons are required to collaborate with the state coordinator and community and school personnel



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# *Identification Strategies*

- Coordinate with community service agencies, such as shelters, soup kitchens, food banks, street outreach teams, drop-in centers, welfare departments, housing departments, public health departments, and faith-based organizations
- Provide outreach materials and posters where there is a frequent influx of low-income families and youth in high-risk situations, including motels and campgrounds





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# *Identification Strategies*

*Continued...*

- Develop relationships with truancy officials and/or other attendance officers
- Provide awareness activities for school staff (registrars, secretaries, school counselors, school social workers, school nurses, teachers, bus drivers, administrators, etc.)
- Avoid using the word “homeless” in initial contacts with school personnel, families, or youth



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# *School Selection*

- Students have the right to stay in “school of origin” (to the extent feasible)
  - for the duration of homelessness;
  - if in the best interest of student;and,
  - parent requested
- “School of origin” is the school the child attended when permanently housed or last enrolled



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# *School Selection*

*Continued...*

- Students can stay in their school of origin the entire time they are homeless, and until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing
- If a student is sent to a school other than that requested by a parent or guardian, the district must provide a written explanation to the parent or guardian of its decision and their right to appeal



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# *Feasibility*

## *Sample Criteria*

- Continuity of instruction
- Age of the child/youth
- Safety of the student
- Length of stay in shelter
- Student's need for special instructional programs
- Impact of commute on education
- School placement of siblings
- Time remaining in the school year



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# *Immediate Enrollment*

- “Enroll” and “enrollment” are defined to include attending classes and participating fully in school activities
- Homeless children must be immediately enrolled
- No prior records are needed, but should be obtained by the enrolling school as quickly as possible
- This includes birth certificates, social security numbers, immunization records, transcripts, and other records



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# *Enrollment Strategies*

- Train all school enrollment staff, secretaries, school counselors, school social workers and principals on the legal requirements for enrollment
- Review and revise LEA policies, as necessary
- Develop residency forms to replace typical proof of residency
- Accept school records directly from families and youth
- Establish school-based immunization clinics or other opportunities for on-site immunizations



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# *Dispute Resolution*

- Whenever there is a disagreement, the school must:
  - Immediately enroll student in school according to parent's wishes
  - Keep the student until the dispute is settled
  - Provide transportation to the school of origin
  - Explain the decision in writing to parents
  - Contact liaison to assist in settling the dispute with parents, guardian, or youth
  - If dispute is not resolved at the district level, refer case to the county liaison
  - If case is still not resolved, refer to state coordinator



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# *Transportation*

- Must be provided or arranged to and from the school of origin
- School districts that provide transportation to and from the school of origin have documented an increase in attendance and achievement which resulted in an increase in funding to the districts
- For unaccompanied youth, LEA's must provide or arrange transportation to and from the school of origin at the LEA homeless liaison's request





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# *Transportation Strategies*

- Coordinate with local housing authorities and placement agencies to house students near their school of origin
- Re-route school buses (including special education, magnet school and other buses), and ensure that buses travel to shelters, transitional living programs, and motels
- Develop close ties among LEA homeless liaisons, school staff, and pupil transportation staff to arrange and coordinate transportation



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# *Transportation Strategies*

*Continued...*

- Coordinate with local housing authorities, placement agencies, and social services for foster care placement to house students near their school of origin
- If the districts cannot agree on who will pay the costs, the districts must share the costs
- In addition to providing transportation to the school of origin, LEA's must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students



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# *Transportation Strategies*

*Continued...*

- Provide passes for public transportation, including passes for caretakers when necessary
- Take advantage of transportation systems used by public assistance agencies
- Reimburse parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth for gas
- Use approved van or taxi services
- Use local funds for transportation



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# *Title I Requirements*

- Homeless children are by definition automatically eligible for Title I services
- Requires set aside reservation to be placed in Consolidated Application for categorical funding
- This reservation requirement is not formula driven. The amount reserved is to be determined by the LEA, as appropriate
- Requires a description of the Title I services to be placed in the Consolidated Application



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# *Title I Strategies*

- Establish a formula to allocate Title I set-asides for homeless children and youth
- Use Title I funds (including set-aside funds) to support the LEA homeless liaison position and/or to meet basic needs of students experiencing homelessness (clothing, supplies, health)
- Use Title I funds to provide tutoring and/or outreach services to children and youth living in shelters, transitional living programs, motels, and other temporary residences



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# *Title I Strategies*

*Continued...*

- Collect data on students experiencing homelessness as part of the overall district-wide data collection system
- Pool Title I and McKinney-Vento funds to provide a comprehensive program for homeless students, ensuring that specific needs of children experiencing homelessness or high mobility are met
- Ensure coordination between Title I and McKinney-Vento through state and local planning and activities



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# *Resources*

- National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth [www.naehcy.org](http://www.naehcy.org)
- National Center for Homeless Education [www.serve.org/nche](http://www.serve.org/nche)
- National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty [www.nlchp.org](http://www.nlchp.org)
- CDE Homeless Education [www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs)
- National Network for Youth [www.nn4youth.org](http://www.nn4youth.org)



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