GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS

HOMELESS

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

EDUCATION

PROGRAM

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Geneva City Schools Homeless Program

It is the intent of Geneva City Schools (GCS) to comply with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as stated in board policy 6.01.2 (see the following page).

The school system engages in ongoing practices to monitor for homeless children residing in the community. At the present time, the community does not have shelters for provision of services to homeless families or individuals. The school system maintains communication with Department of Human Resources to identify children receiving foster care who may qualify for homeless assistance.

Staff members responsible for student enrollment are notified of policy (see enrollment form below) and trained in the definitions of the qualifying characteristics students and families must meet to be identified as eligible for homeless services. If and when such students are identified, the homeless student services coordinator shall work in conjunction with personnel including building principals and school nurses to coordinate such services as are determined necessary using available community and school resources. Such services will include access to school and state health care services and human resource service providers. If academic needs are identified, resource teachers and skill development classes fully or partially paid for by federal funds may be incorporated into providing instructional assistance.

GCS shall conduct an annual evaluation of its Homeless Education program to determine the effectiveness of the program. The system will adjust practices and procedures as needed to improve the effectiveness of implementation and student achievement.

Geneva City Schools Board Policy

6.01.2 Admission to Schools -

a. *Resident Students* – School-age children who reside within the municipal limits of the City of Geneva, Alabama or the Geneva City school district, may be admitted to Geneva City Schools. For purposes of this policy, the residence of the student will be presumed to be the residence of the custodial parent or legal guardian. No such presumption attaches to temporary transfers of parental powers under Ala Code §26-2A-7. If custody of the child is shared, alternating, or unclear, or if the child does not reside with a custodial parent or legal guardian, the domicile or actual physical residence of the child will control, except when there is evidence that the claimed residence of the child is not his actual residence, or that the claimed residence is fraudulently given as a means of avoiding or violating admission, enrollment, attendance, and residency standards and requirements.

[Ala. Code §§16-28-3; 16-11-16]

b. *Non-resident Students* – The Board may permit students who do not reside within the Geneva School District to attend schools within the school system. The Board may establish criteria for admission of non-resident students, and may require the payment of tuition as a prerequisite for enrollment. The Board will not provide transportation to and from school or homebound instruction outside of the city limits of Geneva.

c. *Admission Policy for Homeless, Migrants, Immigrants, and English Learner Students and Children in Foster Care* – All homeless, migrant, immigrant, and English Learner students and children in foster care will have equal access to the same free appropriate public education, including public preschool education, provided to other children and youth and will be provided the opportunity to meet the same challenging state content and state student performance standards to which all students are held without being stigmatized or isolated.

The enrollment of homeless, migrant, immigrant, and English learner students and children in foster care shall not be denied or delayed due to any barriers that are specifically prohibited by applicable law, which may include the following:

- Lack of birth certificate
- Lack of school records or transcripts
- Lack of immunization or health records
- Lack of proof of residency
- Lack of transportation
- Guardianship or custody requirements
- Lack of social security card

d. *Homeless Students* –

i. *Enrollment*. Homeless students will be permitted to enroll without regard to residency status and will not be denied services offered to other students in the school system. Homeless students may also be entitled to other accommodations under federal law.

Homeless students will continue in the school they attended before becoming homeless for the duration of their homelessness, or for the remainder of the academic year if the student becomes permanently housed during an academic year. Otherwise, a homeless student may be enrolled in any school in the system that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is living are eligible to attend.

ii. *Dispute Resolution*. When a dispute arises regarding school placement, the system will immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, pending resolution of the dispute. The school will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the decision, a statement of the right to appeal, and the procedure for appealing the placement decision. The principal of the school will notify the Board's Homeless Liaison of the dispute.

iii. The Homeless Liaison will expeditiously carry out the system's dispute resolution procedures as detailed in the Board's homeless student plan.

e. *Students in Foster Care* – A student in foster care will enroll or remain in the student's school of origin, unless it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in such student's best interest.

If it is not in a student's best interest to stay in the school of origin, a student in foster care may be enrolled in any school in the system that serves the attendance area in which the student is living, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. The school system will immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain relevant academic and other records.

[Reference: 20 U.S.C. §§6311(g)(1)(E)]

f. *Students Expelled or Suspended from Other School Systems* – Any student who is under suspension or expulsion from another school system or a private, parochial, or other school will not be permitted to enroll until the student has satisfied the conditions for readmission set by the expelling or suspending board or authority in addition to generally applicable admission requirements established by the Board.

g. *Required Documentation* – Students entering the school system for the first time, regardless of grade level, are not required to submit a birth certificate, but may be requested to submit a birth certificate or another form of acceptable documentation to

verify the student's age. A social security number may also be requested, but such request is voluntary and is not a requirement of enrollment.

In addition, students may also be required to submit other registration materials as school officials may reasonably require including, but not limited to, a certificate of immunization or an exemption as prescribed by the Department of Public Health and signed by a private physician or appropriate health department official. The Superintendent may accept alternate forms of evidence or modify otherwise applicable requirements as necessary and appropriate to accommodate migrant, immigrant, English Learner or homeless students.

h. *Placement of Students* – The Board will determine the placement of newly enrolled students in accordance with state law.

GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS
HOMELESS PLAN/PROCEDURES
AND
DISPUTE RESOLUTION

INTRODUCTION

The Geneva City School System will employ practices that increase the awareness of the Homeless Education program. The school/district shall notify parents/guardians of homeless children and youth of available resources and assist them in accessing the resources.

The Geneva City School System shall conduct periodic needs assessments and an annual evaluation **(Appendix F-1, 2)** of its Homeless Education program to determine the effectiveness of the program. The system will adjust practices, procedures, and resources as needed to improve the effectiveness of implementation and student achievement.

Definitions:

For the purpose of identifying homeless children and youth, the Geneva City School System shall use the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless children and youth. The Act defines ***homeless children and youth*** (twenty-one years of age and younger) as:

**Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes children and youth who are:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (sometimes referred to as doubled-up);
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Abandoned in hospitals; or
- Awaiting foster care placement.

**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.

**Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.

**Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

The term ***unaccompanied youth*** includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes youth living in runaway shelters, abandoned buildings, cars, on the streets, or in other inadequate housing and children, youth denied housing by their families (sometimes referred to as "throwaway" children

and youth), and school-age unwed mothers, living in homes for unwed mothers, who have no other housing available.

The ***school of origin*** is the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

HOMELESS EDUCATION PLAN

Purpose of the Program

Homeless children and youth will be provided the opportunity to receive a free and appropriate public education regardless of their residency status. The program will ensure that these students are afforded equal access to academic and other services that will allow them to meet the same challenging state achievement standards as non-homeless students.

The program provides procedural guidelines **to ensure that homeless students are not denied enrollment due to the lack of registration documentation at the time of enrollment. Homeless children and youth, including preschool age children, will be enrolled immediately pending obtainment of the necessary documents**. The school counselor will assist parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth in obtaining the proper documentation.

The homeless education program makes every effort to provide homeless children and youth with a stable school environment by enrolling students in the *school of origin* and providing them with transportation to and from the school of origin. Provisions are made for parents/guardians, or unaccompanied youth to request or decline enrollment in the *school of origin.*

The program provides for a homeless liaison that will ensure program implementation and coordinate efforts to ensure that homeless children and youth, including preschool age children, are provided the opportunity for academic success.

Identification & Registration Procedures

Homeless children and youth are often undetected. The district will conduct awareness training sessions with the appropriate school personnel to inform them of methods of identifying homeless children without using stigmatizing terminology. The district will use a *Residency Questionnaire* and *Roster of Identified Students* **(Appendix C-1, 2)** to facilitate identity of homeless children and youth and preschoolers. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth will complete the *Residency Questionnaire* at the time of registration. The school counselor may provide appropriate assistance to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth in answering the questionnaire if necessary.

A copy of the *Residency Questionnaire* must be submitted to the Geneva City Schools Homeless Liaison on the day of registration for students identified as homeless. The school will maintain the original form in the file separate from the student's permanent record for audit purposes during the year. This file should be housed in

the school counselor's office. Currently enrolled students who may become homeless may be identified through school personnel observation as well as through referrals from outside sources.

The parent or guardian may enroll a homeless child or youth with or without **(Appendix B)** proof of residency, birth certificate, social security number, immunization record, or school records. The school counselor or principal's designee will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth appropriate assistance in obtaining the necessary records and documents for enrollment. Enrollment without the required immunization record will be pending receipt or acquisition of immunization documentation. The existing method of assigning a student number will be employed when a student enrolls without a social security number.

An unaccompanied youth may enroll himself or herself. In this case, the school principal or designee will immediately contact the Geneva City Schools Homeless Liaison to report the enrollment of an unaccompanied youth. The school will provide the youth with proper assistance in a language that the student understands. The Geneva City Schools Homeless Liaison **(Appendix A)** and school personnel will assist the homeless unaccompanied youth in obtaining eligible educational services.

Meal Status

For the 2024-2025 school year, all students in Geneva City Schools will be provided free breakfasts and free lunches due to participating in the Community Eligibility Provision Program. No applications are required for this.

Identification of Homeless Preschoolers

The Geneva City Schools Homeless Liaison will collaborate with local community service agencies (e.g. Head Start, Department of Human Resources, Health Department, faith-based organizations and the court system, etc.) and school personnel to identify homeless preschoolers. The district will also include homeless preschoolers and homeless children in the "Child Find" process as required by the Individual with Disabilities Education Act.

School Placement

The school system will make school placement decisions in the "best interest" of the homeless child or youth. Students will be given the opportunity to continue in the *school of origin* for the duration of the homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or for the remainder of the academic year if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year. Students may enroll in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.

Resources

The school system, through each school, provides helpful information to parents of homeless children. This information is provided to all parents of children who meet the criteria of homeless children based on their responses on the *Residency Questionnaire* at enrollment as well as those who may be identified after they are enrolled. The information provided may include but is not limited to:

-referrals of homeless children and youth for medical, dental, mental health, and other support services.

-students service programs related to violence prevention and behavioral counseling.
-programs addressing the unique needs for homeless children and youth that may arise from domestic violence.
-providing transportation costs associated with keeping students in the *school of origin*.
-paying fees and costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records needed for enrollment of homeless children and youth in school.
-providing school supplies for homeless children.
-providing extraordinary or emergency services to homeless children and youth to enroll and retain such students in school.
-ensuring that homeless children and youth are not stigmatized and/or alienated due to their homeless status.
-collaborating with other agencies to provide and/or improve services for homeless children and youth.

Dispute Resolution

A parent/guardian of a homeless student has the right to enroll his/her student in either the "school of origin," which may be the last school attended by the student when permanently housed (if in the best interest of the homeless student) or the school which serves the location where the student currently resides. The school must provide the parent/guardian, or unaccompanied student, written information regarding school selection or enrollment options available to homeless students under the McKinney-Vento Act.

If a school selection or enrollment dispute develops over the selection or enrollment options available pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, the school must immediately enroll the homeless student to the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent/ guardian, pending resolution of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied student, the district homeless coordinator will ensure that the student is immediately enrolled in the school pending resolution of the dispute.

In order to initiate the dispute resolution process, the Geneva City Schools Dispute Resolution Form must be completed and filed with the principal of the school wherein the student is currently enrolled.

After receipt of the Dispute Resolution Form, the school principal shall meet with the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student in an effort to resolve the school selection or enrollment dispute. If a school selection or enrollment resolution is not reached at the school level, the school principal will notify the Geneva City Schools homeless coordinator of the dispute, and refer the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student to the district homeless coordinator.

The district's homeless coordinator shall meet with the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student in an effort to resolve the school selection or enrollment dispute. Within ten (10) business days of the meeting, the district's homeless coordinator shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student a written decision regarding the school selection or enrollment decision.

If the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student is not satisfied with the decision the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student has the right to file a written complaint with the Alabama State Department of Education. The LEA Homeless Coordinator will assist with this process if requested to do so.

The written complaint can be mailed or delivered to:

Alabama Department of Education
Federal Programs Section
50 North Ripley Street
5348 Gordon Persons Building
Montgomery, Alabama 36104-2101
Attn: Homeless Program Specialist

APPENDIX A
GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS

HOMELESS LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

The homeless liaison shall work to ensure that homeless children and youth, including preschoolers are identified, enrolled in school, and receive all eligible services to facilitate student academic success. The responsibilities listed below are not all-inclusive but shall be primary duties of the liaison. The homeless liaison shall ensure that:

- Homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;

- Homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in the schools of the district;

- Homeless children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including preschool programs administered by the school system, and referrals to health, mental health, dental and other appropriate services;

- Parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children, and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;

- Parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing transportation services;

- Transportation cost disputes between the school system and school system of enrollment are resolved;

- Sensitivity and confidentiality training is provided to appropriate school personnel regarding the needs of homeless children and youth;

- Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act;

- Public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated to locations where children and youth receive services under the Act;

- Required reports concerning the homeless education program are submitted to appropriate agencies and the State Department of Education; and

- Evaluation of the homeless education program is conducted annually and necessary program and implementation adjustments are made in a timely manner.

APPENDIX B
GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS

PROCEDURES FOR ADMITTING HOMELESS STUDENTS

1. Students will be admitted to Geneva City Schools regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, national origin, ethnic group, disability, or other protected status.

2. Homeless students will be admitted within the Geneva City attendance zone regardless of residential status and pending receipt of required records of immunizations. Due to the participation in the Community Eligibility Provision Program, all students receive free breakfasts and lunches.

3. The school office or Attendance Supervisor will provide the address of the Geneva City Health Department and directions to assist in securing the required records of immunizations.

4. The Attendance Supervisor will assign in-coming students a number until required records of immunizations are received.

5. Geneva City Schools will maintain a complete list of all homeless students.

6. The Geneva City Schools' policies and procedures regarding homeless students will be communicated to all school personnel at the beginning of each school year through a memorandum or e-mail.

APPENDIX C-1
GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS
RESIDENCY QUESTIONAIRE

1. Where is the student currently living?

Section A	Section B
____ In a shelter	____ The choices in Section A **do not** apply
____ With more than one family in a house or apartment	
____ In a motel, car, or campsite	
____ With friends or family members (other than parent/guardian)	***If you checked this section, the only thing you need to do***
	is sign near the bottom of the page and s***ubmit the form***
If you checked a box in Section A, CONTINUE to item	**to school personnel.**
Number 2 and complete the remainder of this form.	

2. The Student lives with:
   - ☐ 1 parent
   - ☐ 2 parents
   - ☐ 1 parent and another adult
   - ☐ a relative, friend(s) or other adult(s)
   - ☐ alone with no adult(s)
   - ☐ an adult that is not the parent or the legal guardian

School_____ Grade _____

Name of Student_____

Birth Date _____/_____/_____ Age _____ Social Security _____-_____-_____
Month Day Year

Printed Name of Parent(s) Legal Guardian(s) _____

Current Address _____

_____, _____ _____
City State Zip Code

Telephone Number (_____) _____-_____ Homeroom: _____

Signature of Parent(s) Legal Guardian(s) _____

School Use only – Do Not Write in this Space

Section A Determination:

_____ _____/_____/_____
Principal's Signature **Date**

For Section A choices, fax this form to the Central Office Contact Person

APPENDIX C-2
GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS
HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAM

ROSTER OF IDENTIFIED STUDENTS

(Based on Residency Questionnaire)

_____ _____
School **School Year**

Name	Grade	Base Teacher	*ID Code	Services Needed

*(1) in a shelter; (2) with more than one family in a house or apartment; (3) in a motel, car, or campsite; (4) with friends or family members (other than parent/guardian)

_____
Counselor

APPENDIX D
GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT DISPUTE FORM

School Name: **Mulkey Elementary** **Geneva Middle** **Geneva High**

School Address: _____ Geneva, AL 36340

(_____) _____-_____ **(_____) _____-_____**
School Telephone Number School Fax Number

Student's Name_____

Current Address _____

_____, _____ _____
City ST Zip Code

Current Telephone Number **(_____) _____-_____**

Complainant Information

(Please Print)

Name_____ Relationship to Student_____

Current Address _____

_____, _____ _____
City ST Zip Code

Current Telephone Number **(_____) _____-_____**

Note: Student Information regarding address, telephone number, information protected by Everyday School Records Act can be released only to parent, guardian, the student, or a person specifically designated as a representative of the parent or guardian.

Name of school that complainant chooses student to be immediately enrolled in and/or transported to/from until dispute is resolved:

_____

Is this the *school of origin?* _____

If no, from which school was the student transferred? _____

Reason for the complaint:

_____

_____

_____

_____ **_____/_____/_____**
Complainant signature Date

School Use Only

Principal's Action on the Complaint: Taken within _____school day(s) after receiving notice of the complaint.

Date Central Office contact person was notified of the dispute: _____/_____/_____

Action taken by the Principal to resolve the dispute: _____

_____

Was the dispute resolved? Yes No

Fax this form to the central office contact person on the day of the complaint.

APPENDIX E
GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS

DISTRICT ENROLLMENT DISPUTE FORM

Student's Name_____ SS#: _____

School Name_____Grade_____

District Action on Complaint

Taken within _____school days after receiving notice of the complaint. Was the complaint resolved at the district level? _____yes _____no

If the dispute was resolved at the district level, describe the action taken by the City homeless liaison to resolve the dispute to the satisfaction of the complainant:

If the dispute was not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, did the City homeless liaison convene a meeting of the interested parties to attempt resolution of the dispute? _____ yes _____no
If yes, when and where did the meeting take place? Describe the outcome of the meeting.

If no, will a meeting be held for resolution purposes? When? Where?

If a resolution cannot be derived at the district level, the City homeless liaison should assist the complainant in contacting service organizations to provide technical assistance to the complainant. Did the City homeless liaison assist the complainant in this manner? _____yes _____ no

Name of service organization contacted for assistance

Alabama Department of Education
Federal Programs Section
50 North Ripley Street
5348 Gordon Persons Building
Montgomery, Alabama 36104-2101
Attn: Homeless Program Specialist

Was the dispute resolved? _____ Date?_____
Describe the resolution.

_____ _____
Complainant Signature Homeless Liaison

APPENDIX F-1
GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAM NEEDS ASSESSMENT

_____ _____
School School Year

School level needs identified from information on Homeless Student roster and other sources:

Academic Needs: (tutoring. etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Physical needs: (transportation to school of origin, school supplies, free meals, clothing, etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Health Needs: (medical, dental, mental, etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Social Needs: (violence prevention and behavioral counseling, etc.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Other needs:

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
Principal/Counselor

APPENDIX F-2
GENEVA CITY SCHOOLS

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

_____
School

_____
Date

1. How many homeless children and youth were enrolled during this school year? _____

2. Were there any barriers to enrollment? _____ _____
   Yes No

   If yes, please explain:
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Were there any issues involving providing educational services for eligible students?
   _____ _____
   Yes No

   If yes, please explain:
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Were there any disputes concerning school placement? _____ _____
   Yes No

   If yes, were they resolved? _____ _____
   Yes No

5. Please make suggestions on how to improve the efficiency/effectiveness of program implementation and increase student achievement:
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   Evaluators:
   _____
   _____
   _____