



Pottsville School District

McKinney-Vento Homeless
Guidelines and Procedures
Families in Transition

2022-2023

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STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Pottsville School District believes that all students can and will learn. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Program removes barriers to learning for homeless/displaced children and youth. All homeless/displaced children and youth will be served using all resources available to the district.

DEFINITION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The term “homeless children and youths” as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to economic hardship.

It includes children and youth who

- are temporarily sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- are living in motels, hotels, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals or are awaiting foster care placement;
- have a nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- are living in cars, parks, public places, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or
- are runaway children or children who are abandoned.

Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) will be considered homeless if they meet the above definition.

Homeless/displaced status is determined in cooperation with parents or in the case of unaccompanied youth by the school or district homeless/displaced liaison. The Federal Programs Coordinator serves as the district liaison and building counselors

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serve as the school liaison. Homeless/displaced status may be documented through a direct contact with school staff or the district residency form.

ENROLLMENT

The terms “enroll” and “enrollment” are defined as attending school and participating fully in school activities.

The student is immediately enrolled, even if the student lacks the records normally required for enrollment. Records will be requested from the previous school immediately.

GUARDIANSHIP

Homeless/displaced students who do not live with their parents or guardians may enroll themselves in school. The district liaison will discuss the possibility of completing *in loco parentis* documentation and refer to the director of student services/counselor if necessary.

RESIDENCY

A homeless/displaced child or youth is a resident if the child is personally present somewhere in the district with a purpose to remain but not necessarily to remain permanently.

A homeless/displaced child or youth shall be considered a resident when living with the parent, guardian, or person *in loco parentis* not solely for school purposes or participation in extracurricular activities.

1. Homeless/displaced children, youth, and unaccompanied youth will be enrolled immediately, even if they lack the immunizations and/or records ordinarily required for enrollment. Documents and records that cannot be used to delay enrollment include but are not limited to
 - a. transcripts/school records
 - b. immunization, health, medical records
 - c. birth certificates

- d. proof of residency
- e. proof of guardianship
2. Once the student is enrolled it is the responsibility of the school to request records from the previous school.
3. The school liaison should contact the district liaison as soon as possible to assist the family with supplies and other needs. This district liaison will contact the school liaison if the contact is initiated at the Central Administrative Office.

SCHOOL SELECTION

Placement in a school will be according to the child's best interest.

- Continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of the homelessness/displacement, in any case in which a family becomes homeless/displaced between academic years or during an academic year, or for the duration of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year.
- 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.
- Parents/guardians may request their child attend any school in the Pottsville School District and to the extent feasible the district will try to comply with the request.

In determining the best interests of the child or youth, to the extent feasible the child or youth will be kept in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, for the duration of the homelessness/displacement. School and district liaisons will use the School Selection Checklist in the Appendix with the parent or guardian to guide the decision-making process.

In the case of unaccompanied youth, the district liaison or designee will assist in the placement or enrollment decisions considering the requests of unaccompanied youth.

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.

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

MEAL WAIVER

When a student is identified as homeless/displaced the student is automatically approved for free meals. The district liaison or designee will notify the director of food services in writing.

The free status is in place the entire school year until the student is permanently housed. At that time the paperwork/application for free lunches must be completed.

FEE WAIVER

Student fees include but are not limited to fees for field trips, fees for projects, fees for yearly classes, or fees for courses such as art, music, or technical education. These fees are automatically waived. The fee waiver may be done by the district liaison or building administrator.

To encourage homeless/displaced students to participate in all school activities, payment of all student fees will be waived for students identified as homeless/displaced.

The school liaison will work with community resources to provide reimbursement for out of pocket fee expenses for homeless/displaced students. If no other resources are available, the school liaison will contact the district liaison or designee to identify additional funding sources. The school liaison should complete the Collaboration Form (located in Appendix) to document the collaboration with community resources if possible. If no other community resources are available, the district liaison may approve the use of Title I funding to pay for allowable expenses

as listed in the McKinney-Vento Act (see Appendix for list). This will be decided on a case by case basis by the district liaison and is dependent on a number of factors including availability of funds.

COMPARABLE SERVICES

Each homeless/displaced child or youth shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the selected school such as

- School supplies
- Transportation services
- Educational services for which the child or youth meets eligibility criteria such as ELL or special education programs
- Programs for “at risk” students such as ALE or summer school (if offered)
- Programs for gifted and talented
- School nutrition programs
- Title I services

TRANSPORTATION

At the request of the a homeless/displaced child’s parent or guardian or the district liaison in the case of unaccompanied youth, transportation to the school of origin will be provided to homeless/displaced children and youth for the duration of the homelessness/displacement, following best interest practices as outlined in the McKinney Vento Act. The district/school liaison and parents will use the School Selection Checklist to guide the decision-making process.

- In order to arrange transportation, the school/district liaison will determine with the family the best means of transportation.
- If it is determined that school bussing is the best option, then the school liaison will contact the district liaison or designee immediately.
- The district liaison or designee will contact the transportation department to arrange services. The district liaison or designee will contact the family with information about bus number, pick up and drop off times.

- When permanent housing is secured, the parent or guardian may choose to keep the child or youth in the school of origin until the end of the academic year but then the parent or guardian is responsible for transportation. The parent or guardian may choose to enroll the child in the school in the attendance zone in which they live.
- When the homeless/displaced child's, youth's, or unaccompanied youth's temporary residence and school of origin are in two different school districts, the two districts will collaborate on the method of transportation and cost of transportation will be shared if it is in the best interest of the student to remain in the school of origin and feasible for the districts to provide transportation. The district designee will notify the superintendent.
- Refugee students who are not independently housed may be considered homeless unless families choose not to be considered as such. The homeless liaisons will discuss the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act with families to determine if they meet criteria to be considered homeless/displaced. It will be determined based on where the student resides and where the program is for refugee students if transportation is necessary. If it is deemed too far or unsafe for a non-English speaking homeless/displaced student to walk or arrange for their own transportation, students will be transported following the guidelines for other students identified as homeless.

CONFLICT/DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If a homeless/displaced child or youth is assigned to a school other than the school of origin or the requested school, the school liaison must provide a written explanation of the decision, the right to appeal and the process to appeal at each stage of the process. The resolution process must be carried out as quickly as possible. Forms are located in the Appendix.

- If a parent or guardian disputes the decision, the identified student must be allowed to attend the requested school immediately until the dispute is resolved.

- The district liaison will meet with the parent or guardian and review the School Selection Checklist with the parent or guardian to guide the decision-making process.
- If the parent or guardian and district liaison cannot reach a mutual decision, the parent or guardian will be referred to the district superintendent's office.
- If the parent or guardian disputes the decision of the superintendent's office, the local board of education will review the request using the School Selection Checklist.
- If the parent or guardian disputes the decision of the local school board, the parent or guardian may contact the Arkansas Department of Education Homeless Liaison to begin the state level appeal process as outlined on the Arkansas Department of Education website.

PROCEDURES

Families Enrolling in Pottsville School District

1. If the family is identified as meeting criteria for homeless/displaced status during the enrollment process, the district liaison should be contacted.
2. The district liaison or designee will help the family complete the forms to document homeless/displaced status.
3. The district liaison or designee will explain and provide a written copy of rights provided under the McKinney-Vento Act.
4. The district liaison or designee will notify the school liaison to contact the family and assess needs.
5. The district liaison or designee will coordinate with the transportation department to arrange transportation if needed.
6. The district liaison or designee will send signed copies of the documentation forms to the school liaison.
7. The district liaison or designee will notify the data systems manager and the director of food services in writing of the homeless/displaced status.

Families Currently Enrolled That Become Eligible for Homeless/Displaced Status

1. The school liaison should contact the family to explain and provide a written copy of rights provided under the McKinney-Vento Act.
2. The school liaison will work with the family to complete the appropriate documentation forms.
3. The school liaison will contact the district liaison and send signed copies of the documentation forms.
4. The district liaison will notify the data systems manager and director of food services in writing of the homeless/displaced status of the family.
5. The district liaison or designee will coordinate with the transportation department to arranged transportation if needed.
6. The district liaison will notify the superintendent if the family is living out of district.

Families Identified as Homeless/Displaced

1. The school liaison will monitor the needs of the family through periodic contact or observed needs.
2. The school liaison will connect the family with appropriate services.
3. If the school liaison is unable to connect the family with needed resources from the community, the school liaison may contact the district liaison prior to purchasing needed items on the approved Title 1 list. Receipts must be sent to the Federal Programs Coordinator.
4. When resources are obtained through local resources, the community collaboration form should be completed and a copy sent to the district liaison.
5. The district liaison or designee will maintain a current spreadsheet of all students identified as homeless/displaced. A file of documentation forms will be maintained by the district designee.
6. Prior to the start of each school year, the district liaison or designee will update the status for the upcoming year. If permanent residence has been secured, the family will be removed from homeless/displaced status. If the family continues to meet criteria, then the family will work with the school liaison to complete new documentation forms.

Responsibilities of District Liaison

1. Coordinate with school and local agencies to identify families who meet criteria for homeless/displaced.
2. Maintain/monitor documentation of identified families, collaboration with local resources, specialized transportation, and expenditures for identified families.
3. Coordinate with other districts and the district transportation department to provide transportation to the selected school (if applicable).
4. Order posters or provide signs to post in public places to notify the public of services.
5. Provide professional development for school liaisons.
6. Collaborate and coordinate with the state coordinator and school liaisons to provide educational and related support services to identified families.
7. Update identified families prior to the start of each school year to determine eligibility for the new year.
8. Notify data systems manager, director of food services, and the school liaison when a family meets criteria for homeless/displaced status.
9. Notify families of rights under the McKinney-Vento Act including the process for resolving disputes.
10. Notify the superintendent if an identified family is living out of district.

Responsibilities of School Liaison

1. Collaborate with the district liaison to provide educational and related services to identified families.
2. Help identified families to obtain immunization or medical records.
3. Inform identified families of rights under the McKinney-Vento Act (posted).
4. Connect families to needed resources and services.
5. Coordinate with community groups to provide needed resources and services for identified families.
6. Document collaboration with community groups.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Tara Thompson
Federal Programs Coordinator/
PSD Homeless Liaison
976 Pine Ridge Road
Pottsville, AR 72858
Phone: 479-968-8101
tara.thompson@pottsvilleschools.org

[Jessica Hickman \(ADE\)](#)
Arkansas Department of Education
Office of Accountability
Four Capitol Mall, Mail Slot #26
Little Rock, AR 72201
Phone: 501--683--3439

Building Liaisons

Mark Lee-High School
Emily Roach-Junior High
Taba Thurman-Middle Grades
Jeff Duvall-Elementary

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RESIDENCY FORM

Your answers will help determine if the student meets eligibility requirements for services under the McKinney-Vento Act.

List all children in your family from birth through age 21.

Name of Child	School Program	Age	Grade/ Early Childhood Program	Date of Birth

Parent/Guardian _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

Is this address **Temporary** or **Permanent**? (circle one)

Please choose which of the following situations the student currently resides in (you can choose more than one):

- _____ House or apartment with parent or guardian
- _____ Motel, car, or campsite
- _____ Shelter or other temporary housing
- _____ With friends or family members (other than or in addition to parent/guardian)
- _____ Living with inadequate housing (no heat/water, mold infested, etc.)

If you are living in shared housing, please check all of the following reasons that apply:

- _____ Loss of housing
- _____ Economic situation
- _____ Temporarily waiting for house or apartment
- _____ Provide care for a family member
- _____ Living with boyfriend/girlfriend
- _____ Loss of employment
- _____ Parent/Guardian is deployed
- _____ Other (Please explain)

Are you a student under the age of 18 and living apart from your parents or guardians?

Yes No

Housing and Educational Rights

Students without fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residences have the following rights:

- 1) Immediate enrollment in the school they last attended or the local school where they are currently staying even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations;
- 2) Transportation to the school of origin for the regular school day;
- 3) Access to free meals, Title I and other educational programs, and transportation to extra-curricular activities to the same extent that it is offered to other students.

Any questions about these rights can be directed to the local McKinney-Vento liaison at 501-843-3363 or the State Coordinator at 501-683-5428.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and understand the above rights.

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Unattached Youth

Date

Signature of McKinney-Vento Liaison

Date

Services for McKinney-Vento Identified Students

Student: _____

School: _____

Grade _____

Please check the services needed:

Early Head Start or Head Start

Tutoring

Transportation to the school of origin

After-school programs

Clothing/Uniform

Teen Center

School supplies

Mentoring

Counseling

Special Education

Medical/dental referral

Gifted/talented

Vision referral

Vocational/technical

Medicaid/DSHS services – food stamps

Community resource

Preschool Enrollment records

Prior academic records

Missing enrollment records

LEP/Bilingual program

Birth certificate

Guardianship issues

Immunization/medical records

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Unattached Youth

Date

Signature of McKinney-Vento Liaison

Date

MISSING DOCUMENTS FORM

Student's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Name of Person Completing Form _____

Relationship to Student _____

Location of Birth _____ School _____

Indicate which documents are missing

Birth certificate

Immunization records

Proof of residency

Proof of identity

Proof of guardianship

School records

Other _____

You are asked to answer the following questions because you are unable to provide the enrollment documents checked above required for enrollment. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, states and local districts are required to address barriers to the enrollment of students meeting the definition of homeless. Your completion of this form will facilitate the enrollment of your child (or your own enrollment if you are an unaccompanied homeless youth).

1. If the person completing this form is someone other than the parents or legal guardian, please list the names of the parents or legal guardians.

2. Do you have legal custody imposed by a court order or have you been designated as a court appointed guardian for the student being enrolled? Yes No
If yes, why are you unable to present a copy of the checked items?

3. In order to help the school district locate missing information, please give the following information.

Name of last school attended _____ City _____

State _____

Name of clinic or medical facility where immunizations or medical treatment was received

_____ City _____ State _____

Signature of Person Completing Form/Date _____

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MEAL WAIVER FORM
(A spreadsheet may also be shared indicating this information.)

To: Kathy Cynova

The following student(s) enrolled in Pottsville School District have been identified as homeless/displaced under the McKinney-Vento Act and are eligible for free meals.

Student Name	Grade	School	Date of Entry

Tara Thompson, Federal Programs Coordinator

Date

FEE WAIVER FORM

(A spreadsheet may also be shared with appropriate personnel regarding this information.)

To: _____ Department _____

The following student(s) enrolled in Pottsville School District have been identified as homeless/displaced under the McKinney-Vento Act and is eligible for a fee waiver.

Purpose of fee _____ Amount of fee \$ _____

Student Name	Grade	School	Date of Entry

Tara Thompson, Federal Programs Coordinator

Date

**McKinney VENTO
COMMUNITY COLLABORATION FORM**

(A spreadsheet may also be shared with appropriate personnel regarding this information.)

Name of Collaborating Organization _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Type of Collaboration ___ In-District ___ Outside Organization

List and/or describe the specific services or resources provided to support the McKinney-Vento Program.

Signature and Title of Collaborator

Date

Signature of Liaison

Date

COMMUNITY SERVICES PROVIDED

Student Record

(A spreadsheet may also be shared with appropriate personnel regarding this information.)

Name of Student _____ Grade _____ Year _____
School _____

Check the following services provided to support the student.

___specialized transportation ___free meals

List any services/resources provided under the McKinney-Vento Act to support the student.

Date	Service/Resource	Provider	Estimated Amount	Initials of Provider

CHECKLIST TO DETERMINE SCHOOL PLACEMENT

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The following items should be considered when determining the most appropriate school placement for a student.

	School of Origin	Local School
Continuity of Instruction		
Age and Grade Placement		
Academic Strength		
Social and Emotional Strength		
Distance of Commute and Impact on Learning		
Personal Safety of the Student		
Student's Need for Special Instruction		
Length of Anticipated Stay in Temporary Location		

**WRITTEN ENROLLMENT/TRANSPORTATION/SCHOOL OF ORIGIN DECISION
NOTICE (district)**

To be completed by the DISTRICT when an enrollment request is denied.

Date _____ Name of School _____
Name of Person Completing Form _____
Title _____

In compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the following written notification is provided to

Name of Parent/Guardian _____
Name of Student _____

After reviewing your request to enroll/transport the student listed above, the request is denied. This determination was based on

You have the right to appeal this decision by following the state's dispute resolution process below.

- The student listed above has the right to enroll immediately in the requested school pending the resolution of the dispute.
- You may provide written or verbal communication to support your position regarding the enrollment in the requested school. You may use the attached form.
- Resolution by the Homeless Liaison will be made within 7 business days of receipt of this form. (Teresa Woodruff 501-743-3562)
- If the matter is not resolved at this level, the Superintendent shall issue the District's decision within 10 business days of the second dispute by parent/guardian. (Dr. Tony Thurman 501-843-3363)
- If the matter is not resolved at this level the parent/guardian may appeal this decision by contacting the state coordinator for homeless education. (Dana Davis 501-683-5428)
- You have the right to contact an advocate or attorney.

Signature of Person Completing Form

Date

My signature indicates I have received a copy of this form.

Signature of Person Receiving Form

Date

**WRITTEN ENROLLMENT/TRANSPORTATION/SCHOOL OF ORIGIN DECISION
NOTICE TO APPEAL (parent)**

A parent, guardian, caretaker or unaccompanied youth may complete this form or make a verbal request.

Date _____ Name of Student _____

Person completing form _____ Relation to student _____

I may be contacted at _____ (phone or email)

I wish to appeal the decision to ___deny enrollment ___provide transportation.

The decision was made by _____ Job Title _____

I have been provided with the following (Please initial)

___A written explanation of the school’s decision

___Contact information of the school district’s local homeless education liaison

___Contact information for the state homeless education liaison

___A copy of the state’s dispute resolution process for students experiencing homelessness

___A copy of this completed form

You may include a written explanation in the space below to support your appeal or you may provide your explanation verbally.

Signature of Person Completing Form

Date

This completed form should be returned to the District Homeless Liaison.

Signature of District Homeless Liaison

Date Received

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STATE'S PROCESS FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- The student has the right to enroll immediately in the requested school pending the resolution of the dispute.
- The parent, guardian, caretaker, or unaccompanied youth may provide written or verbal communication to support their position regarding the enrollment in the requested school. The district has forms available on request.
- Resolution by the Homeless Liaison will be made within 7 business days of receipt of the form or verbal notification.
- If the matter is not resolved with the District Homeless Liaison, the Superintendent shall issue the District's decision within 10 business days of the second dispute by parent/guardian.
- If the matter is not resolved with the Superintendent the parent/guardian may appeal this decision by contacting the state coordinator for homeless education.
- The parent, guardian, caretaker, or unaccompanied youth has the right to contact an advocate or attorney.

APPROVED TITLE I EXPENDITURES

Title I Part A funds may be used to *supplement* educational activities provided through the school to meet academic standards to support homeless students. This is not an exhaustive list but are common examples. Title I funds should be used only when community resources are not available or the student's need is immediate. ALL expenditures from Title I funds must be approved by the district liaison PRIOR to purchase.

- Clothing, particularly if necessary to meet a school's dress requirements
- Clothing and shoes necessary to participate in physical education classes
- Student fees necessary to participate in the general education program
- Personal school supplies such as backpacks and notebooks
- Birth certificates necessary to enroll in school
- Immunizations
- Medical or dental services
- Eyeglasses and hearing aids
- Counseling services to address anxiety related to homelessness that impedes learning
- Outreach services to students in shelters, motels, or temporary residences
- Parental involvement specifically oriented to reaching parents of homeless students
- Fees for AP and IB testing
- Fees for SAT/ACT testing