



Book	Policy Manual
Section	(JS) Special Update - Nov.22
Title	HOMELESS STUDENTS
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#### 5111.01 - **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

For purposes of this policy, pursuant to Federal and State law, homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and include those who meet any of the following criteria:

- A. share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
- B. live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- C. live in emergency or transitional shelters;
- D. are abandoned in hospitals or awaiting for foster care placement;
- E. 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; or
- F. live in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting.

Additionally, pursuant to Federal and State law, children or youth who are experiencing homelessness also include migratory children who are living in circumstances described in A-F above.

It is the policy of the School Board that homeless students are afforded the same free appropriate public education as provided to other students and have access to the educational and other services that they need so that they have the opportunity to meet the same challenging Florida academic achievement standards to which all students are held. Homeless preschool-aged children and their families shall have access to the educational services for which they are eligible, including preschool programs administered by the School District.

Homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. The District shall establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.

The District shall remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless students in schools in the District. Homeless students shall be enrolled immediately, even if they do not have the necessary enrollment documentation such as immunization and health records, proof of residency or guardianship, birth certificate, school records, and other documentation.

Further, the Homeless Liaison will assist, to the extent feasible, the homeless students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) or unaccompanied homeless students in their efforts to provide documentation to meet State and local requirements for entry into school. No Board policy, administrative procedure, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless children.

The District will keep homeless students in the school of origin, that is, the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or last enrolled, or will be assigned to the school serving the grade in which the student will be placed in the attendance zone where the child or youth currently resides.

Homeless students will be provided services comparable to other students in the District including:

- B. ~~transportation services (Policy 8600 - Transportation)~~ sets eligibility criteria including services provided under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or similar State and local programs, educational programs for children with disabilities and gifted students (Policy 2460 - *Exceptional Student Education*) , and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency (Policy 5780 - *Student/Parent Rights*);
- C. programs in ~~vocational~~ career and technical education (Policy 2421 - *Career and Technical Education*);
- D. school nutrition programs (Policy 5335.01 - *Diet Modifications*; Policy 8500 - *Food Service Program*; Policy 8510 - *Wellness*; Policy 8531 - *Free and Reduced-Price Meals*); ~~and~~
- E. before- and after-school programs; ~~and-~~
- F. Title I programs (Policy 2261 - *Title I Services*; Policy 2261.01 - *Parent Participation in Title I Programs*; Policy 2261.02 - *Title I - Parents' Right to Know*).

The Board recognizes that homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin and the right to dispute their school assignment, if their assignment is other than their school of origin. The Board requires that these rights and the dispute process be communicated to the parent or guardian of the homeless student or unaccompanied youth. According to the child's or youth's best interest, a homeless student will either remain in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness, or be enrolled in the school in the attendance zone where the student currently resides. The school of origin is the school that student attended when permanently housed or last enrolled.

In determining the best interest of the student, the District shall, to the extent feasible, keep the student in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the homeless student's parent/guardian or the unaccompanied youth. If the student is sent to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent/guardian, a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal, will be provided to the homeless student's parent/guardian or the unaccompanied youth. Each school in the District shall post public notice of educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

At the request of the parent/guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, or the local Homeless Liaison, transportation shall be provided for a homeless student to and from the school of origin as follows:

- A. If the homeless student continues to live in the School District in which the school of origin is located, transportation will be provided.
- B. If the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though continuing his/her education at the school of origin, the district of origin and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. If the districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

The Superintendent will appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children who will perform the duties as required by law, as well as additional duties that may be assigned by the Superintendent. Additionally, the Liaison will coordinate and collaborate with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth as well as with community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youth. **Unaccompanied homeless high school youth will receive counseling to prepare and improve their readiness for postsecondary education.**

Effective 4/9/14

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42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.