

Descriptor Term: Homeless Students	Code: JBC (1)	Issue Date: March, 2008
	Rescinds:	Issued:

**BOARD POLICY FOR EDUCATIONING HOMELESS/UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH STUDENTS
IDENTIFIED UNDER MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS/UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH ASSISTANCE
ACT
COMMERCE CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

The Commerce City School System seeks to ensure that each homeless/unaccompanied youth student has equal access to the same, free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other District students.

RULE:

HOMELESSNESS DEFINED:

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Act), 42 U.S.C. § 11434a (2) et. seq., identifies homeless students as those who:

- Lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence;
- Share the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; live in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- 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;
- Live in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or
- Are migratory and live in the conditions set forth in Items 2, 3, and 4 above.

UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH DEFINED:

Unaccompanied Youth are identified as those youth who:

- Are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian,
- Are in transition as defined above.

IDENTIFICATION:

The Commerce City School System collaborates with DFACS and Jackson County Family Connections to monitor mobility and needs of the homeless population. As students enter the school system, registrars ask a series of questions in conjunction with the Home Language Survey to assess the status of students.

SCHOOL SELECTION:

Homeless students may:

- Enroll in the school where the student resides; or

- Continue enrollment in the school of origin.

The school the child attends shall be whichever is in the student's best interest. In determining the best interests of the student, efforts shall be made, to the extent feasible, to keep the student in his/her school of origin unless doing so is against the wishes of the parent/guardian. (See Enrollment in School of Origin Request Form)

A homeless/unaccompanied youth student who attends his/her school of origin in accordance with Paragraph 1 above may:

- Attend that school for the duration of time as identified as homeless/unaccompanied youth.
- Stay in the school for the remainder of the academic year if the student becomes permanently housed during the academic year.
- Attend their school for the duration of time as defined as homeless/unaccompanied youth if the student becomes homeless/unaccompanied youth between academic years.

TRANSPORTATION:

Transportation will be provided to and from the school of origin if requested by the parent/guardian. (See Procedure for Transportation)

DISPUTE RESOLUTION:

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment:

- The student shall be immediately admitted to the school in which he/she is seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute.
- The parent/guardian shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision, including the right to appeal. The dispute shall be presented to the District's homeless liaison who will then consult with the Assistant Superintendent. If the matter is not resolved at that level, the family may appeal to the Commerce City BOE for a decision.

Once the District's decision has been reached, the parent/guardian shall be provided with a written explanation of the District's decision and the parent/guardian's right to appeal such a decision. (See Written Notification Form and Dispute Resolution Form).

ENROLLMENT OF HOMELESS/UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH STUDENTS:

- The Principal or designee shall notify the homeless liaison when a homeless/unaccompanied youth student is identified. (Student Residency Statement).
- The school shall provide the parent/guardian with information regarding being homeless/unaccompanied youth
- If a homeless/unaccompanied youth student arrives at school without a parent/guardian, the student shall be enrolled and the homeless liaison notified. The homeless liaison shall contact the parent/guardian and complete the enrollment process. Students

- must meet the District's age eligibility criteria for enrollment.
- Homeless/unaccompanied youth students qualify for free breakfast and lunch. (See Free lunch procedures).
- When students enroll without records (i.e., transcripts/grade reports, birth certificate, immunizations/health records) the Principal or designee shall:
 - Contact the former school to request the student's records and discuss immunization information and tentative placement;
 - Create a cumulative record if it is determined that the records are not available;
 - Refer the student to public health and provide follow-up to ensure that the student has been immunized, if there are no immunization records;
- Parents/guardians shall provide the school with contact information.

WITHDRAWAL OF HOMELESS/UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH STUDENTS

Homeless/unaccompanied youth students often leave school without officially withdrawing. If the school is contacted by another district for a homeless/unaccompanied youth student's records, requested information shall be provided and school records sent within 15 days to the receiving school district.

ROLE OF THE HOMELESS/UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH LIAISON:

The role of the District's Homeless Liaison:

- Train school personnel/community agencies in the identification of homeless/unaccompanied youth students;
- Ensure homeless/unaccompanied youth students are enrolled in and have an equal opportunity to succeed in school;
- Ensure homeless/unaccompanied youth students receive educational services for which they are eligible;
- Refer identified families/students to the local community agency in order to receive health and dental care services for which they are eligible;
- Educate and provide homeless/unaccompanied youth parents/guardians/students of their educational services and/or other opportunities available to their children
- Ensure public notices of the educational rights of homeless/unaccompanied youth students are disseminated in schools and in community agencies
- Ensure enrollment disputes are resolved in compliance with State guidelines and, in the event that such a dispute involves an unaccompanied student, that the student is enrolled immediately pending the resolution of the dispute;
- Inform the parent/guardian of the transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin.

