

## TITLE 200 – BOARD OF EDUCATION

### CHAPTER 20 – COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

#### SUBCHAPTER ~~XX 30~~ - NAME (TOPIC) STUDENT SUPPORTS

#### PART ~~XX 5~~ – State Regulations Education of Homeless Children and Youth

##### ~~§5.1~~ Authority Rhode Island McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Regulations Issued Under R.I.G.L. 16-64-2

~~This part is promulgated pursuant to e-Rhode Island Department of Education, in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 16-24-2 and 16-64-2, hereby promulgates the following regulations in order to implement the provisions of the federal Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, (42 U.S.C. §§ 11431 – 11435) as amended by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L. 107-110 and the federal individuals with disabilities education act reauthorization of 2005. For additional information, please contact the state homeless education coordinator at (401) 222-4600, EXT. 2207.~~

##### ~~§5.2~~ Definitions

A. ~~"Hh~~homeless ~~ce~~children and ~~y~~youths" means children and youths "who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.," as per the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, as amended (the "McKinney-Vento Act") at 42 U.S.C. §§ 11434a(2)(A) and (B), i ~~[-42 U.S.C. § 11434a]~~ This definition ~~including~~s:

1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; ~~or are awaiting foster care placement;~~
2. Children and youths 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;
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;

4. Unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian); and
  5. Migratory children (as such term is defined at 30 U.S.C. § 6399) en... who qualify as homeless for the purposes of ~~[the McKinney-Vento Act.]~~ because they are living in circumstances described in clauses ~~(14)~~ through ~~(44)~~ above.
- B. "School of origin" means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.
  - C. "Enroll" and "Enrollment" means attending classes and participating fully in school activities.
  - D. "Comparable services" means ~~s~~Services offered to other students in the school selected including transportation services, educational services, and meals through school nutrition programs.
  - E. "Homeless student" means the same as ~~H~~homeless ~~C~~children and ~~Y~~youths.

### ✖5.3 Stay-put Placement

- A. Stay-put ~~P~~placement. If a student becomes homeless during an academic year, or between academic years, the student's ~~S~~school of ~~O~~origin must—"taking into account the best interests of the student—"to the extent feasible, keep ~~[the student]~~ in the ~~S~~school of ~~O~~origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of ~~[the student's]~~ parent or guardian." 4 as per the McKinney-Vento Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(3)(B). -The student may stay in his or her Sschool of Oorigin "for the remainder of the academic year, [even.] if the [student] becomes permanently housed during an academic year." as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(3)(A) (i)(II).
  1. ~~See: § 722 McKinney Act. The term school of origin means "the school that the [student] attended when permanently housed or the school in which the [student] was last enrolled."~~
- B. Duration of Stay-put Placement and Parental Best Interest Determination. A ~~H~~homeless ~~S~~student has the right, as long as it is in his or her best interest, to remain enrolled in his or her ~~S~~school of ~~O~~origin until he or she has permanent housing somewhere, as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(3)(A). Rhode Island allows the parents of a ~~H~~homeless ~~C~~child to decide, subject to school district challenge, whether it is in the best interest of the student to attend school in the town where the student is now living, or to attend the student's ~~S~~school of ~~O~~origin.
- C. Disputed Best Interest Determination. If a school district disputes a parent's best interest determination, the dispute may be appealed to the commissioner.

- D. Factors Used in Making a Best Interest Determination. The ~~following following~~ factors ~~are are~~ to be considered in making a best interest determination:
1. special needs of the child;
  2. continuity of services;
  3. distance/travel time;
  4. involvement in special activities or sports;
  5. safety; ~~and-~~
  6. other relevant information
- E. Burden of Proof. In an appeal, the burden of proof is on the school district to show that the parent's decision is not in the best interest of the child or youth.
- F. Interim Protective Orders. ~~Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws 16-64-6, T~~The commissioner has authority to issue interim protective orders to ensure that a ~~H~~homeless ~~S~~student is allowed to continue to attend school ~~pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-39-3.2. [R.I.G.L. 16-64-6]~~
- G. General Rights. ~~Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. A. Sec. § 11432(g)(4), H~~Homeless ~~C~~children have the right to receive the same education that other students receive, ~~as per 42 U.S.C. §§ 11432e(3) and (g). 2~~ If a ~~H~~homeless ~~S~~student enrolls in a new school district, the student's records must be forwarded to the new school within ten (10) working days. Each school district must designate an appropriate staff person as the ~~district LEA~~ local educational agency liaison to coordinate the delivery of education to ~~H~~homeless ~~C~~children and ~~Y~~youths, ~~as per Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1143242 U.S.C.A. § 11432(g6)(6), and s~~Schools must also cooperate with social service agencies working with ~~H~~homeless ~~S~~students.<sup>3</sup> Homeless ~~S~~students must not be "isolated or stigmatized," ~~as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(1)(J)(i)."~~
- ~~1. — 42 U.S.C. A. Sec 11432 (g) (4)~~
- ~~2. — 42 U.S.C. A. Sec. 11432 (6)~~
- H. Special Education. ~~Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-24-1(e), li~~In those cases where an individualized education plan has been adopted for a child and the child moves to another town or city, the plan shall remain in effect until a new plan is adopted for the child in the new city or town, ~~as per R.I. Gen Laws § 16-24-1(e). [R.I.G.L. 16-24-1(b)]~~ When an unaccompanied ~~H~~homeless ~~Y~~youth, ~~as defined in these regulations this Part~~ enrolls in a school district, the district shall request the appointment of an Educational Advocate (Surrogate Parent), ~~as per in accordance with [R.I. Gen. Laws § 33-15.1-2 and the federal Individuals with~~

Disabilities Education Act (the "IDEA") at 20 U.S.C. § 1415b(2)(A). and IDEA, Section § 615(b)(2).]

1. All reasonable efforts shall be made to ensure that the appointment of an Educational Advocate takes place within 30 days after the district determines that the Homeless Ythe youth needs an Educational Advocate, as per the IDEA at 20 U.S.C. § 1415b(2)(B).

2. Pursuant to IDEA, § 615(b)(2)(A), AaAny due process complaint notices filed on behalf of a Hhomeless Sstudent shall contain available contact information concerning the Hhomeless Sstudent, as well as the name of the school the Hhomeless Cchild or Yyouth is attending, as per the McKinney-Vento Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11432b(7)(A). [IDEA, Section 615(b)(2)(A)]

I. School districts must provide Hhomeless Cchildren and Yyouths with transportation to and from their Sschool of Oorigin, at the request of a parent or guardian, as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(4)(A).

1. For unaccompanied youths, districts must provide transportation to and from the Sschool of Oorigin at the request of the homeless liaison.

2. If a Homelessthe Sstudent's temporary residence and the Sschool of Oorigin are in the same school district, that school district must provide or arrange transportation.

3. If a Homelessthe Sstudent is temporarily residing outside the district of the School district of Oorigin, the district where the Sstudent is temporarily living and the district of the School of Oorigin must share the cost and responsibility of providing transportation.

4. If the district in which the Hhomeless Sstudent is now living and the district of the Sstudent's School district of Oorigin cannot agree on a way to transport the student back to the original district, the cost of the transportation must be divided between the school districts.4

a. The provision of transportation should not be delayed pending the resolution of an agreement between the district of the School of Oorigin and the district in which the Homeless Studentchild is temporarily residing.

b. Pending an agreement between the two districts, the district of the School of Oorigin shallould assume the responsibility and cost of transportation. In addition, districts must provide students experiencing homelessness with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.

#### **x5.4 Responsibilities of Districts**

- A. Out-Reach Responsibilities. A school district must ensure, "the enrollment and attendance of ~~[H]~~homeless ~~[C]~~children and ~~[Y]~~youths who are not currently attending school." ~~6 as per the McKinney Vento Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(3)(C).~~ Schools must revise their policies so that these policies do not act as a barrier to the enrollment and retention of ~~H~~homeless ~~C~~children. ~~7~~
- B. Comparable Services. ~~Pursuant to 42 U.S.C.S. § 11432, a~~ ~~A S~~school districts shall provide each ~~H~~homeless ~~C~~child and ~~Y~~youth with services comparable to the services offered to other students, ~~as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(4),~~ including transportation services and educational services for which the ~~Homeless C~~child or ~~Y~~youth meets the eligibility criteria, such as pre-school, compensatory education, special education, LEP, vocational education, gifted and talented, school meal programs, and before- and after-school care programs. ~~[42 U.S.C. 11432]~~
- C. Prevention of Isolation and Stigmatization. A school district shall adopt policies and practices to ensure that ~~H~~homeless ~~C~~children and ~~Y~~youth are not isolated or stigmatized, ~~as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(1)(J)(i).~~ Homelessness alone shall not be sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment. Districts may not maintain segregated schools or facilities for ~~H~~homeless ~~C~~children and ~~Y~~youth. A school district may separate ~~H~~homeless ~~S~~students from other students only as necessary for short periods of time to deal with health or safety emergencies, or to provide temporary, special, and supplementary services to meet the unique needs of ~~H~~homeless ~~S~~students.
- D. Opportunity to Meet Challenging Performance Standards. Homeless ~~S~~students shall have access to the education and other services that they need to ensure that they have an equal opportunity to meet the same challenging State student performance standards to which all students are held accountable, ~~as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(4).~~
- E. District Liaisons for Homeless Children and Youth. Every school district will designate a staff person to serve as a liaison for ~~H~~homeless ~~S~~students, ~~as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(6).~~ ~~—~~The liaison will help ensure that ~~H~~homeless ~~S~~students enroll in, and have a full opportunity to succeed in the schools of the district. ~~—~~ The responsibilities of the liaison include ensuring that:
1. Children and youth in homeless situations are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.

2. Homeless Students enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools of the district.
3. Families, Homeless Children, and Youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and pre-school programs administered by the district, Local Education Agency ("LEA"), and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services.
4. The district informs the parents or guardians of Homeless Students of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and provides them with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
5. The district disseminates public notice of the educational rights of Homeless Students in places in which these children receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act.
6. The district properly mediates enrollment disputes, as per 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(3)(E).
7. The district informs the parent or guardian of a Homeless Student, and any unaccompanied youth, of the transportation services that the district must make available, and assists the child or youth in accessing transportation to school.

## **✕5.5 Elimination of Enrollment Barriers**

- A. Elimination of Enrollment Barriers—Records. Pursuant to McKinney-Vento Act § 722(g)(3)(C)(i) and (ii), a A school that a district selects through a best interest determination must immediately enroll the Homeless Student, even if the Student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment (such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation), as per the McKinney Vento Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(3)(E). The enrolling school must immediately contact the school last attended by the child or youth to obtain relevant academic or other records. (Section 722(g)(3)(C)(i) and (ii)). Any record ordinarily kept by a school regarding each Homeless Child or Youth must be maintained so that it is available in a timely fashion when the child enters a new school or school district.
- B. Elimination of Enrollment Barriers—Immunizations and Medical Records. If a Homeless Child or Youth needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school must immediately refer the parent or guardian to the district's local homeless liaison, who must assist in obtaining the immunizations or records.

- C. ~~Elimination of Enrollment Barriers.~~—Legal guardianship issues impacting on school enrollment, which cannot be resolved at the district level, as well as any other unresolved issue relating to school enrollment, shall be referred to the commissioner for decision pursuant to the authority granted by- [R.I. Gen. Laws §-16-64--6.]
- D. Review and Revision. The Rhode Island Department of Education, in conjunction with local school districts and entities fulfilling the role of local school districts, will develop, review and revise policies to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of ~~Hh~~homeless ~~Ce~~children and ~~Yo~~youth in school.

## **✖5.6 Enrollment Disputes - Resolution**

- A. Handling Enrollment Disputes. If a dispute arises between a school district and parents or guardians over school selection or enrollment or other issues, such as transportation, the LEA must immediately enroll the ~~Homeless Ce~~child or ~~Y~~youth in the school in which the parent or guardian seeks enrollment and immediately provide for other services, such as transportation, pending resolution of the dispute by the commissioner, as per the McKinney-Vento Act at 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(3)(E).—The district must provide to the parent or guardian a written statement of the school placement decision and the appeal rights. The district must refer the ~~Ce~~child, ~~Y~~youth, parent, or guardian to the district liaison, who must expeditiously carry out the dispute resolution process by filing an appeal with the commissioner. Similar protections apply to unaccompanied youth.
1. Districts with high student mobility should develop and have in place, inter-district agreements regarding the provision of transportation.

## **✖5.7 Rhode Island Coordinator for Education for Education of Homeless Children and Youth**

Coordinator. ~~The Pursuant to McKinney-Vento Act § 722(f)(6)(4).~~ ~~tThe~~ Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth will, among other things, provide technical assistance to LEA liaisons to ensure that LEAs comply with the legislative requirements, including student enrollment requirements, as per the McKinney-Vento Act at 42 U.S.C. § 11432g(6).—~~(Section 722(f)(6)(4)~~