

Chester County Family Academy Charter School
Board of Trustees

Homeless Students/McKinney-Vento

Authority

The Board recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other charter school students. The Board shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children within the charter school, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.

The Board may waive policies, procedures, and administrative regulations that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation, and success in school of homeless students, based on the recommendation of the CEO.

Definitions

Homeless students are defined as:

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 the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals;
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. *Migratory children* who qualify as homeless under federal law because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses 1. through 3. above. The term **migratory children** means children who are (or whose parent(s) or spouse(s) are) migratory agricultural workers, including migratory dairy workers or migratory fishermen, and who have moved from one school to another in the preceding thirty-six (36) months, in order to obtain (or accompany such parents or spouses in order to obtain) temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural or fishing work; and,
5. *Unaccompanied homeless youth* including any child who is "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." This includes youth who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home, been abandoned by parents or guardians, or separated from their parents for any other reason.

School of origin is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board designates the CEO or his/her designee to serve as the charter school's liaison for homeless students and families.

The charter school's liaison shall coordinate with:

1. Local service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youth and families.
2. Other schools on issues of records transfer and transportation.
3. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

The charter school's liaison shall provide public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens.

Guidelines

Students shall not be discriminated against, segregated nor stigmatized based on their status as homeless.

Enrollment/Placement

To the extent feasible, and in accordance with the student's best interest, a homeless student shall continue to be enrolled in his/her school of origin while s/he remains homeless or until the end of the academic year in which s/he obtains permanent housing. Parents/Guardians of a homeless student may also request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living. If a student is unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, the charter school liaison will consider the views of the student in determining where s/he will be enrolled.

The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment pursuant to charter school's policies. However, the charter school may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information. The charter school's liaison may contact the previous school for oral confirmation of immunizations, and the school shall request records from the previous school.

If the charter school is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the charter school shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's placement.

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending

resolution of the dispute. The parents/guardians shall be provided with a written explanation of the charter school's decision, their right to appeal and the procedures to use for the appeal.

Services

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other charter school students including, but not limited to, transportation services; school nutrition programs; programs for students with limited English proficiency; and educational services for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students.

Transportation

Enrollment, placement and transportation decisions regarding homeless students shall be the responsibility of the member school district, with assistance from the Intermediate Unit where appropriate, in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to continue their education in their current school, and receive transportation or enroll immediately in the school where they are temporarily housed, even if lacking the paperwork normally required.

