

McKinney-Vento Procedures

All districts, including Tupelo Public School District, define homeless students and youth under the guidelines of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, as reauthorized under ESSA. The term "homeless" (designated in our system with the homeless at-risk indicator) refers to:

- (1) individuals who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence; and includes
 - a) children and youths who are sharing housing with others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
 - b) 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...
 - c) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus and train stations, or similar settings.

*A student who is in a home for CPS placement or in Foster Care does not classify as **homeless**. (There are still protections for children in foster care however).*

NOTE: Once a student is classified as homeless they remain classified and are eligible for services for the entire year.

Identification:

There are two ways that students may be identified as being eligible for services under McKinney-Vento. One way is through registration and the other is identification by staff on campus.

1. When parents complete the online student enrollment procedure they may indicate their nighttime residence is not fixed, regular, and adequate. In this case, they are referred to Director of Student Support Services office located at Fillmore Center.
2. If students are enrolling at the school site and cannot provide proofs of residence or otherwise indicate homeless status, they are referred to Student Support Services. Counselors or teachers may also notify liaison or support services during the year if they learn of a change in student's living arrangements that may indicate student has become homeless.

3. A residence questionnaire is used at Support Services to determine homeless status and McKinney-Vento eligibility. Based on this questionnaire (and, if needed, consultation with homeless liaison and/or Federal Programs Director) Support Services Director will send McKinney-Vento packet information to school for immediate enrollment.
4. Support Services also notifies relevant school and district personnel (including food services) by email to ensure student status is coded correctly for enrollment and appropriate services including automatic free lunch eligibility.
5. If there are any questions regarding McKinney-Vento status, refer these to the district homeless liaison. (Contact information provided below).

ENROLLMENT:

- Immediate enrollment means the same day or within 24 hours.
- The school selected (school of origin or attendance zone school) will immediately enroll a homeless child even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment.
- The school will immediately contact the last school attended to obtain relevant academic and other records.
- If the child needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the child's parent or guardian to the District's homeless liaison for assistance.

SCHOOL SELECTION:

The District shall, according to the child's best interest:

- Continue the child's education in the school of origin* if the child's family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; **school of origin also includes the feeder school pattern ("sister school") if applicable*
- Enroll the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child is actually living are eligible to attend.

ENROLLMENT DISPUTES:

- If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child will be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.
- The District will provide the child's parent or guardian with a written explanation of the decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the right to appeal the decision.
- The District will refer the child, parent, or guardian to the homeless

liaison, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible. Documentation is kept to ensure prompt resolution of disputes. **See TPSD McKinney Vento Dispute Resolution Procedure Revised July 2018 for details and related forms for this process.*

TRANSPORTATION

McKinney-Vento students are transported as all other students when living in the attendance zone. If students need transportation to their school of origin, the district transportation director will arrange. This transportation request can come from the parent or the director of support services or the homeless liaison. It is the responsibility of the transportation office to communicate details of pickup etc. with the parent.

COMPARABLE SERVICES:

The District will provide a homeless child with services that are comparable to services offered to other students in the school in which the child is enrolled, including:

- Transportation services;
- Educational services for which the child meets the eligibility criteria;
- Programs in vocational and technical education;
- Programs for gifted and talented students; and
- School nutrition programs. (Homeless students are automatically eligible for free meals.)

COORDINATION OF SERVICES:

- In order to improve education and other outcomes for homeless children and youths, the district will coordinate services (and funding) with programs including Title I, Part A, Title III, and Special Education.
- The District shall also coordinate the provision of services to homeless children with:
 - Local social services agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to homeless children and their families;
 - Other local educational agencies, on inter-district issues such as transportation or transfer of school records

BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT:

- The District shall review and revise any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children. The District shall give consideration to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. The District shall give special attention to ensuring

the enrollment and attendance of homeless children who are not currently attending school.

- In addition, the District shall adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their homeless status.

NOTICE OF RIGHTS:

At enrollment the District shall provide written notice to the parent or guardian of the child (or directly to an unaccompanied youth) of the general rights provided under McKinney-Vento and contact information for the District's homeless liaison. This information will be publicly posted at all schools, on the district website, and in community locations. Also, schools will share homeless information with parents. This may include posting McKinney-Vento information in school newsletters and/or school websites.

SUPPORTING HOMELESS YOUTH:

- **Credit for Full and Partial Coursework**

Accumulating enough credits to graduate can be very difficult for mobile students due to the variety of class offerings/requirements, methods of calculating credits, and graduation requirements across school districts. When students transfer, it is the responsibility of the counselor to ensure that homeless students receive credit for full and partial coursework completed in the prior school. When appropriate, counselors will work with students to ensure access to programs such as credit recovery.

- **College and Career Readiness**

High school counselors will assist homeless students prepare for college including providing counseling related to college selection, completing the application process, and financial aid options. Additionally graduation planning will address career paths and related decision-making.

Homeless/Unaccompanied Youth—Additional Procedures

Enrollment

In addition, in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act, the following provisions specific to (homeless) unaccompanied youth will be allowed:

- The right to immediate enrollment without proof of guardianship
- Assistance from the homeless liaison to:
 - Select a school of attendance, whether the local attendance area school or the school of origin
 - Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if

- requested
- Ensure the prompt and fair resolution of any disputes

If there is any question regarding enrollment or eligibility for services, the homeless liaison should be contacted to provide assistance.

Helping Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Prepare for College

The district liaison will work with school guidance counselors to make certain that students are informed of their options after high school and are college-ready. The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA) of 2007 stipulates that unaccompanied youth determined to be homeless by a local liaison, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funded shelter, HUD program, or college financial aid administrator may apply for federal financial aid as independent students. It will be the responsibility of the homeless liaison to work with counselors to make sure these homeless students have help to complete the FAFSA, including informing them of their status as independent students and providing verification of that status.

Each unaccompanied homeless youth will be informed of the following during his or her senior year:

- Unaccompanied homeless youth can complete the FAFSA without a parent or guardian's signature, and
- the parent or guardian's income is not considered when determining an independent student's need for financial aid.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The District Planning Team conducts a Summary Program Evaluation and planning process at the end of the school year. The program evaluation process utilized by the district Planning Team is guided by the NCHE Needs Assessment Worksheet for LEAs. Evaluation focuses on progress toward achieving program objectives by reviewing student proficiency rates on state assessments, proficiency on STAR early literacy and STAR reading assessments, attendance data, discipline referrals, promotion and retention rates, and graduation rates. Other data used in review of effectiveness includes results of the spring Needs Assessment Survey, review of MSIS data, and review of any complaints, as well as the findings from end of school year planning meetings with shelter representatives and shelter tutors.

Definitions:

ENROLLMENT:

"Enroll" and "enrollment" include attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

HOMELESS CHILDREN OR YOUTH:

"Homeless child" means a child or youth lacking a fixed, adequate, and regular nighttime residence.

SCHOOL OF ORIGIN:

"School of origin" means the school that the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled.

**School of origin also includes the feeder school pattern ("sister school") if applicable.*

UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH

"Unaccompanied youth" includes a child not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." Unaccompanied youth **who meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless** do have the right to enroll in school even without a parent or legal guardian. Not all unaccompanied youth are homeless.

Contact Information

Tupelo Public Schools
Homeless Liaison: Jeni Chandler
jdchandler@tupeloschools.com
662 620-6193

TPSD Federal Programs Director:
Corlis Curry
[ccurry@tupeloschools.com](mailto:c Curry@tupeloschools.com)
662 841-8850

State of Mississippi Homeless
Coordinator:
Tiffany Jones
ttjones@mdek12.org
601 359-3499