

AGENDA REQUEST FORM

Chattooga County Board of Education

Meeting Date
June 16, 2022

Agenda Item Number

C-3

TITLE:		Update Board Policy JBC(1): Homeless Students	
REQUESTED ACTION:		Board consideration of Superintendent's recommendation to update Board Policy JBC(1): School Admissions (policy will lay until the July board meeting, to allow for public input).	
SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND:		<p>-Page 1: remove item '5' (Awaiting foster care placement)</p>	
MAJOR SYSTEM PRIORITY:		Establishing internationally competitive standards	
FINANCIAL IMPACT:		N/A	
EXHIBITS: (List)		See Attachment	
BOARD ACTION:		SOURCE OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
(For Official School Board Records Only)		<div>Michelle Helie</div> <div><u>Chief Academic Officer</u></div> <div>Name</div> <div>(706) 857-3447</div> <div>Phone</div>	

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Approved in Open Board Meeting on:

Date _____

By:

School Board Chairman

Board Policy JBC(1): Homeless Students

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 05/12/2008 | **Last Revised Date:** 03/09/2009

To the extent practical and as required by federal law through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the Chattooga County School System will work with homeless students and families (here after referred to as homeless) to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students and unaccompanied youth will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Chattooga Pre-K programs, Title I, special education, programs for students with limited English proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families. The McKinney-Vento liaison shall be responsible for compiling data collected on children and youth in transition and unaccompanied youth, determining and arranging for needed services, monitoring academic achievement, facilitating enrollment, and settling disputes.

Definition

Homeless students, including unaccompanied youth are defined as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children who are:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Are abandoned in hospitals;
5. ~~Awaiting foster care placement~~;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples; and

Identification

Homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth will be identified through three main sources:

1. School personnel will be trained to inquire about homelessness upon enrollment and withdrawal of students (Student Residency Questionnaire). School personnel will notify the McKinney-Vento liaison of any possible students in transition.
2. School staff will be trained annually on how to identify children in class who may be experiencing homelessness and appropriate procedures to follow.
3. Outreach material will be provided to partner agencies by the McKinney-Vento liaison to provide public notice of homeless children and youth rights.

School Selection

Each homeless child and youth, including unaccompanied youth has the right to remain at his or her school of origin or to attend any school in the attendance area in which they are currently residing. School of origin means the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled. Homeless children and youth, including unaccompanied youth shall remain at the school of origin, to the extent feasible, unless it is against the parents or youth's wishes. These students academic year are eligible to remain in their school of

origin for the duration of their homelessness until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school located in the attendance area where the student is actually living. If the school district determines that it is not feasible for the student to continue in their school of origin or the school requested by the parent, the student shall be assigned or transferred to the school in the attendance area in which the child is actually living. In that case, the school system will provide a written explanation (see Form). Feasibility of remaining at the school of origin shall be centered around the best placement for the student. Issues to be considered include but are not limited to:

- Safety;
- Continuity of instruction;
- Possible location of future housing;
- Remaining time in academic year;
- Anticipated length of stay in temporary residence;
- School placement of siblings; and
- Whether the student has special needs that would render commute difficult.

Enrollment

Students identified as homeless and unaccompanied youth have the right to immediate enrollment in school. If the parent or student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residence or immunization records, the student shall be enrolled and the school shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain the relevant academic and other records. If the student needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the student to the school McKinney-Vento contact or district McKinney-Vento liaison who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations or immunization or medical records. The school will obtain appropriate information sufficient for the McKinney-Vento liaison to contact the parent or guardian of the student. This applies to unaccompanied youth who otherwise qualify as homeless and are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian as well. Under guardianship or custody, unaccompanied youth may enroll themselves or be enrolled by a non-parent caretaker over the age of 18 or the district McKinney-Vento liaison.

Transportation

Homeless students, including unaccompanied youth are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled as discussed under "School Selection". If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally. Transportation services may be provided through district transportation, gas vouchers, or public means. If transportation is requested by parent or guardian, a Transportation Request form should be filled out by school staff and forwarded to the district liaison and Transportation Director.

Disputes

If a dispute arises over any issue related to the rights of children and youth in transition, and unaccompanied youth the child or youth in transition shall be immediately enrolled and provided all services until dispute is resolved in accordance with federal law and state plan. The school must provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal with the district McKinney-Vento liaison contact information (see Dispute Form). The liaison shall ensure enrollment and appropriate services until the dispute is resolved. All records of disputes should be kept. The state level appeals process should also be provided following the district level appeal.

Services

Children and youth in transition, including unaccompanied youth shall be provided comparable services to other students including:

- Transportation;

- Title I;
- Education services where they meet eligibility criteria;
- Vocation and technical education program;
- Gifted and talented program; and
- School Nutrition.

Other services provided to facilitate education include school supplies, school clothes, health services, summer programs, emergency assistance, counseling services and tutoring services.

Upon being identified as homeless and unaccompanied, students automatically qualify for free and reduced lunch. The district McKinney-Vento liaison or designee shall forward necessary information to Nutrition Services to facilitate the free/reduced lunch process.

Title I services should also be made available to all children and youth in transition, including unaccompanied youth regardless of the school of enrollment's Title I status. Appropriate funds should be set aside to provide comparable services to those students. The district Title I plan should coordinate with the McKinney-Vento services through collaboration between Title I Director and the district McKinney-Vento liaison.

Collaboration

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families, including unaccompanied youth, other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students where such students receive services, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens. The district's McKinney-Vento liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.
