Homeless Education Program Guidance

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

• The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth face in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, state educational agencies (SEAs) must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth.

• Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment.
Homeless Education Program Guidance

DEFINITION OF HOMELESS

School personnel often do not understand the nature of homelessness, the poverty that causes it, or the breadth of the federal definition of homelessness. The following definition, as provided in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, must be used by LEAs when identifying and determining the needs these children.

Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes children and youth who are:

7/28/2015
Homeless Education Program Guidance

• Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled up”).
  • *Children in this circumstance and their needs are most effectively identified through consultation with pupil services staff like school social workers, counselors and attendance officers; school staff like principals, teachers, enrollment clerks, bus drivers.*
Homeless Education Program Guidance

- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
  - *Children in these circumstances and their needs are also most effectively identified through consultation with pupil services staff like school social workers, counselors and attendance officers; school staff like principals, teachers, enrollment clerks, bus drivers. In addition, coordination with local motels, hotels can be very effective. There are many areas in Georgia that have “trailer parks” as a part of local communities. These trailer parks are generally intended for and serve as communities for standard (fixed, regular, and adequate), pre-fabricated, permanent housing units for families and individuals and would NOT meet this definition of homeless.*
Homeless Education Program Guidance

- Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
  - *Children in this circumstance are most effectively identified through coordination with local agencies providing such shelters and transitional living accommodations.*

- Abandoned in hospitals.

- Awaiting foster care placement.
  - *Children in these circumstances and their needs are most effectively identified through coordination with local social service agencies like Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) or childcare institutions with which DFCS contracts.*

- Living in 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.
Homeless Education Program Guidance

- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
  - *Children in both these circumstances and their needs are most effectively identified through coordination with local agencies conducting outreach and providing services to homeless individuals, families and children, including faith-based organizations. There are units of housing both inside and outside of trailer park communities, as described above, that do not meet the requirements for standard housing i.e. structurally unsound, lacks working utilities, is in critical disrepair, and other conditions which are harmful to the health of children (toxicity, infestations, etc.) that would meet this definition.*
Homeless Education Program Guidance

• Classified as migratory children or formerly migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
  
  • *Children in this circumstance and their needs are most effectively identified through coordination with regional Migrant Education Agency staff and school staff like social workers, counselors, attendance officers, principals, teachers, enrollment clerks, etc.*
LEA RESPONSIBILITIES

Title I, Part A funding requires that each LEA has a SEA approved plan coordinated with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. **LEAs must:**

- Describe the services provided to homeless children.
- Reserve (set-aside) Title I, Part A funds as necessary to:
  - Provide comparable services for homeless children that attend non-Title I schools.
  - Provide educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where they live.
- Designate an appropriate staff person as the LEA Homeless Liaison.
- Develop, review, and revise LEA policies to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of children and youth in homeless situations.
Other LEA Responsibilities

• Identification
  • Homeless children and youth must be identified by school personnel or through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.

• Collecting data
  • The U.S. Department of Education (US ED) requires that all SEAs and LEAs submit information under Title X, Part C, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as reauthorized as reauthorized in 2001.

• Transportation
  • LEAs must provide students experiencing homelessness with transportation to and from their school of origin, at a parent’s or guardian’s request. In the case of “unaccompanied youth”, the homeless liaison will act on their behalf.
Screven County Homeless Program
Contact Information

**Sandra Brown**
Homeless Liaison
912-451-2000
sbrown@screven.k12.ga.us

**Jim Thompson**
Assistant Superintendent/Director of Federal Programs
912-451-2000
jimthomp@screven.k12.ga.us