

BIG FOOT UNION HIGH SCHOOL



McKINNEY- VENTO HOMELESS PROGRAM Guidelines and Procedures

January 2020

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Guidelines and Procedures

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY:

It is the belief of Big Foot Union High School that all students can and will learn. The McKinney-Vento Homeless program removes barriers to learning for homeless children and youth. All homeless children and youth will be served using all resources available to the district.

DEFINITION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH:

The term 'homeless children and youths' means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to economic hardship. It includes children and youth who:

- are temporarily sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- are living in motels, hotels, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals;
- have a nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- are runaway children or children who are abandoned;

Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) will be considered homeless if they meet the above definition.

Homeless status is determined in cooperation with parents or in the case of unaccompanied youth by the school counselor, principal and/or district program liaison.

ENROLLMENT:

The terms 'enroll' and 'enrollment' are defined to mean attending school and participating fully in school activities.

The school selected shall immediately enroll the child/youth, even if the child or youth lacks records normally required for enrollment. Records will immediately be requested from the previous school.

Homeless students who do not live with their parents or guardians may enroll themselves in school.

GUARDIANSHIP:

For purposes of school placement, any parent, guardian or person in loco parentis who has legal or physical custody of a homeless child or youth shall enroll that child or youth directly into Big Foot Union High School.

RESIDENCY:

A homeless child or youth is a resident if the child is personally present somewhere within the district with a purpose to remain but not necessarily to remain permanently.

The child or youth shall be considered a resident when living with a parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis not solely for school purposes or for participation in extracurricular activities.

1. Homeless children, youth and unaccompanied youth will be enrolled immediately, even if they lack immunizations and/or records ordinarily required for enrollment. Documents and records that can not be used for enrollment delays include but are not limited to:
 - a. transcripts/school records
 - b. immunization, health, medical records

- c. birth certificates
- d. proof of residency
- e. proof of guardianship
2. Once the student is enrolled it is the responsibility of the school to contact the previous school and request records.
3. The building level school counselor and/or principal should be contacted as soon as possible to assist the family with supplies and other needs.

SCHOOL SELECTION:

Placement in a school shall, according to the child’s best interest.

1. The student’s education may continue in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness and/or in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year, or for the duration of the academic year, if the student becomes permanently housed during an academic year.
2. The student may enroll in a school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.

In determining the best interests of the child or youth, to the extent feasible the child or youth will be kept in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child’s or youth’s parent or guardian, for the duration of homelessness.

In the case of unaccompanied youth, the district’s homeless liaison will assist in placement or enrollment decisions considering the requests of such unaccompanied youth.

The 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. The school of origin also includes the designated receiving school at the next level.

The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parents or guardian or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

LUNCH WAIVER:

1. When a student is identified as homeless they are automatically waived with or without paperwork. This is at the INITIAL point of identification.
2. The free status stays with that student the entire school year until the student is "permanently" housed. Then they must complete the paperwork/application.
3. The homeless liaison will send necessary documentation to the Business Director in order to facilitate this process.
4. The Business Director will be responsible for communicating with food service in order to process the waiver.
5. The homeless liaison will notify the school contact to confirm that the free lunch paperwork and waiver has been processed by the food service provider.

FEE WAIVER:

Student fees for the purposes of serving homeless children include but are not limited to: fees for field trips, fees for Art courses/projects, Foods courses, Technical Education courses/projects, and yearly class fees. These fees are to be automatically waived. The waiving of fees will be done directly by the school counselor and/or a building administrator.

To encourage all homeless students to participate in all school activities, payment of all student fees will be waived if the student is identified as homeless.

COMPARABLE SERVICES:

Each homeless child or youth shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, such as

- School supplies
- Transportation services
- Educational services for which the child or youth meets eligibility criteria such as ELL or special education programs
- Programs for “At Risk” students

- Programs for gifted and talented students
- School nutrition programs
- Title I services
- Summer School Programs
- Online Learning
- Extracurricular Activities

TRANSPORTATION:

1. At the request of a homeless child’s parent/guardian or the homeless liaison in the cases of unaccompanied youth, transportation to the school of origin will be provided to homeless children and youth, following best interest provisions (outlined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act under Local Education Agency Requirements).
 - a. In order for transportation to be set up, the homeless liaison will determine with the family the best means of transportation.
 - b. The homeless liaison or business director will arrange for transportation.
 - c. When a student obtains permanent housing, transportation to the school of origin must be provided until the end of the academic year, if it is in the student’s best interest to remain in that school. At this point, parents/guardians can choose to enroll the child in the school in the attendance area in which they live.
2. When the child, youth or unaccompanied homeless student’s temporary residence and school of origin are two different school districts, the districts will collaborate on the method and cost of transportation. The districts will share the cost of transportation.
3. Refugee students who are not independently housed may be considered homeless unless families choose to not be considered so. The homeless liaison/interpreters will discuss McKinney-Vento with families to determine if they are homeless. It will be determined based on where the student resides and where the program is for the refugee students if transportation is necessary. If it is deemed unsafe or too far for a non-English speaking homeless student to walk or arrange for their own transportation, then they will be transported the same as other homeless students. The guidelines listed above will be followed in those situations as well.

COMPLAINT/DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS:

If the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth disputes the school assignment determined by the District, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute (including all available appeals). Disputes shall be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Appeals will go to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the appealed decision regarding school selection/enrollment, including the rights of the parent/guardian, or youth to appeal the decision to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

1. The MKV Program cannot support a student until identified MKV.
2. MKV status is confidential. MKV status is disclosed as needed to school staff.
3. All McKinney-Vento transportation, school fee and lunch fee questions go to Doug Parker, District Administrator (drparker@bigfoot.k12.wi.us OR 262-394-4501

LEGAL REFERENCES:

Wisconsin State Statute 118.13 PI9,
 Wisconsin Administrative Code Title IX,
 Education Amendment of 1972 Title VI,
 Civil Rights Act of 1964 Section 504,
 Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 American with Disabilities Act of 1990
 Individuals with Disabilities Education
 Act Civil Rights Act of 1991
 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act