

## **POLICY 427: Homeless Children**

Children of homeless individuals and unaccompanied homeless youths (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) residing in the District shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths who reside in the District. They shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other children attending District schools, including transportation services, educational services for which the children/youths meet eligibility criteria (e.g., special education, Title I programming, gifted and talented programming), vocational and technical education programs and school nutrition programs. No homeless child or youth shall be required to attend a separate school or program for homeless children and shall not be stigmatized by school personnel.

### **A. District Liaison for Homeless Children & Youth**

The Director of Instruction has been designated as the District's liaison for homeless children and youths and will ensure that:

1. Homeless children and youths residing in the District are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
2. The District's registration procedures (including documentation of the student's age and in-District residency or other status that permits admission to a District school) shall be sufficiently flexible so as to not unlawfully interfere with the prompt admission, school placement and attendance of homeless/unaccompanied youth.
3. Homeless families, children and youths receive educational services for which they are eligible and referrals to other appropriate services (e.g., health care services).
4. The parent or guardian of a homeless child and any unaccompanied homeless youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to them and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of the child/youth.
5. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated where such children and youths receive services such as the schools and family shelters.
6. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with legal requirements.
7. The parent or guardian of a homeless child and any unaccompanied homeless youth are fully informed of transportation services that may be available to them under the law and assist them in accessing such transportation services.

### **B. Admission and Placement of Homeless Child or Youth**

When a homeless child or youth seeks enrollment in the District, these procedures shall be followed:

1. The homeless child's parent or guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth shall be advised of their choice of schools. The homeless child/youth shall be allowed to either continue his/her education in the school of origin for the duration of the homelessness or be placed in the school that similarly-situated non-homeless children/youths living in the District are eligible to attend. School selection decisions shall be made based on the best interest of the homeless child/youth. If the District assigns a homeless child to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian, the District shall provide the child's parent or guardian with a written explanation, including a statement regarding the

right to appeal the school selection decision. An unaccompanied homeless youth shall also be provided notice of his/her right to appeal the school selection decision. School selection disputes shall be handled as outline in Section C below.

2. The homeless child/youth shall be immediately enrolled in the assigned school. This must be done even if the child/youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency or other documentation. The enrolling school shall immediately contact the school last attended by the child/youth to obtain relevant academic and other records. If the child/youth needs immunizations, or immunizations or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth to the District's liaison, who is expected to assist in obtaining the necessary immunization or medical records.
3. The homeless child/youth shall be placed in an appropriate grade level by the building principal or designee, using the same procedures that are used for non-homeless children and youth attending that school. Educational programming and services shall be provided for the child/youth consistent with the legal requirements and established District policies and procedures.
4. Once enrolled, homeless children/youths shall have all the rights and privileges of non-homeless children attending school in the District and shall be subject to the same school rules and regulations.

### **C. School Selection or Enrollment Disputes**

1. If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the District's liaison for homeless children and youths shall be contacted and he/she shall attempt to resolve the dispute as expeditiously as possible. The parent (s) or guardian or homeless youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the District's decision on the dispute and a notice of the right to appeal to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
2. The homeless child or youth shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which the enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.

Adopted:  
March 24, 2015