

## EDUCATION OF THE HOMELESS STUDENTS

### Definitions

This policy defines the following:

- *Enrollment* means attending classes and full participation in school activities.
- *Full participation* means student participation in extracurricular activities, which offers additional opportunities for student engagement and greater motivation for retention. Further, extracurricular participation can open doors to higher education opportunities and scholarships, and build skills and relationships that carry over into students' adult lives.
- *Homeless student or unaccompanied youth* means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason. It includes students and youths (preschool-grade 12) who are:
  - Living in an emergency shelter or transitional housing;
  - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - Living in cars, parks, public or private spaces not designed for humans to live, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus stations, train stations, or similar settings;
  - "Doubled up" by living with friends or family; or
  - Living in unsuitable conditions, such as lack of utilities, mold, infestations, or dangers.

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

Homeless status is determined in cooperation with the parent/guardian, or in the case of unaccompanied youth, the homeless student liaison.

- *Immediate enrollment* means within twenty-four hours of the best interest determination. Enrollment must not be denied or delayed because documents normally required for enrollment have not been provided. The enrolling school must immediately contact a student's school of origin to obtain the relevant records, and the school of origin should immediately transfer those records.
- *School of origin* means the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled, including a preschool.

### Homeless Student Liaison

The Board designates the Coordinator of the West Dakota Parent and Family Resource Center as the homeless student liaison. This individual shall perform all duties required by law to ensure the educational stability of a homeless student.

### **Best Interest Determination**

The District shall comply with the McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Act. The District shall seek to eliminate barriers to school attendance for homeless students as defined by law. When feasible and consistent with a parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth's wishes, the homeless student **must shall** be **immediately** enrolled in **his/her their** school of origin and transportation **must** be provided in accordance with law ~~shall be provided at the district's expense~~.

When not feasible for a homeless student to attend **his/her their** school of origin, as determined by the Superintendent in consultation with the parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth, the student shall be placed in a school that is in the "best interest of the student." The Superintendent shall submit such placement decisions to the parent/guardian in writing along with notice of the right to appeal and a dispute resolution procedure.

### **Dispute Resolution**

~~To the extent feasible and appropriate, when a dispute arises as to the best interest determination, the District must ensure that a homeless student be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent, guardian, or student wishing to file an appeal of a determination, shall notify the Homeless Student Liaison. The liaison shall follow the dispute resolution procedure created in regulation FDB-BR1. The District shall make reasonable efforts to collaborate with aggrieved parties to resolve the dispute at the local level as expeditiously as possible. The District shall comply with all interim measures required by law during the dispute resolution process. Parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth wishing to file an appeal of a determination made through the district-level dispute resolution procedure shall notify the homeless student liaison. The liaison shall follow the dispute resolution procedure created by the state.~~

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#### Complementary Documents

- FDB-BR, Education of the Homeless Dispute Resolution Procedure
- FDB-E, Non-custodial Minor Caregiver Authorization Form
- **FDB-E2, Dickinson Public Schools District-Level Dispute Resolution Form**

**End of Dickinson School District #1 Policy FDB ..... Amended: 02/13/17**