

MIDWAY STAR ACADEMY

HOMELESS INFORMATION

SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

Homeless Student Rights and Enrollment Practices

Providing education and appropriate services to children and youth who are homeless can present unique challenges. Midway Star Academy has the following procedures and practices in place to identify students who are homeless. Proper identification can help assure that students are provided needed services, that the school is providing service in accordance with state and federal requirements and that the District receives any financial resources available in support of educating homeless students.

Homeless Student Definition:

Under McKinney/Vento legislation, homeless children and youth are individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes;

- Children and youth sharing the housing of others persons due to loss of housing (doubled up), economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds; are living in emergency or transitional shelters, are abandoned in hospitals or are awaiting foster care placement
- Children and youths who have 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

- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Enrollment Procedures:

In addition to the Midway Star Academy enrollment practices for all students, parents, students and someone knowledgeable about the student's homeless status, can complete the Homeless Enrollment Form (see link below). This form is required if students meet any of the following criteria:

- Those living in emergency, domestic abuse or transitional shelters
- Those living temporarily with other family members or friends because they do not have a place of their own
- Those living in their car, outside or in a public place
- A child staying in emergency foster care (short term, this does not include foster placement)
- An unaccompanied youth who is not in physical custody of a parent or legal guardian

Student Rights:

Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, students in homeless situations have the right to a free and appropriate public education. Our program ensures homeless students the following educational rights:

- Stay in their school-of-origin (if distance to school is considered reasonable), which is the school attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled;
- Enroll in any school which non-homeless students living in the attendance area are eligible to attend;
- Enroll in a new school without immunization, proof of residential status, school records, proof of guardianship or other documents;
- Receive transportation services to their school of origin to the extent feasible;
- Receive services (including transportation, preschool, meals, special education) comparable to those provided to other students; and
- Have their enrollment disputes expeditiously addressed by the homeless district liaison and have the right to attend their school during the dispute resolution process.

Dispute Resolution Procedures:

Families and youth in homeless situations may be unaware of their right to dispute placement and enrollment decisions. When disputes are raised, too often, students are kept out of school during the dispute resolution process. This interruption in education can severely damage students' academic progress. Midway Star Academy requires that disputes regarding the educational placement of a student in a homeless situation will be expeditiously addressed through a dispute resolution process. Parents or guardians and unaccompanied youth must be informed of the process and in the event of the dispute; the student must be immediately enrolled in the school of choice while the dispute is being resolved.

If a family or youth in homeless situations attending school wants to pursue their right to a dispute or if the district disagrees with a parent, guardian or homeless youth regarding an issue related to the rights of a homeless student, the following steps must be taken:

- The school district must immediately enroll the students and arrange for transportation and other services as appropriate.
- With the involvement of the District Homeless Liaison, attempt to discuss the issues to determine if more information is needed to resolve the issues.
- If the issue cannot be resolved, a letter will be issued the parent/guardian or youth explaining the district's position as to the homelessness-related dispute. In this letter, it is important to include a list of advocates or agencies that may assist.
- Either party may send a written request to the Minnesota Department of Education Homeless State Coordinator asking the State Coordinator to review such decision for compliance with applicable law. Such request must include any documentation related to the dispute resolution proceeding.
- The State Coordinator may request any additional information from either party that he or she deems relevant in resolving the issue.

Transportation Requirements:

Homeless students shall be provided with transportation services comparable to other students in the school district. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(e)(3)(C)(i)(III)(cc) and (g)(4)(A))

Upon request by the student's parent, guardian, or homeless education liaison, the school district shall provide transportation for a homeless student as follows:

- A resident student who becomes homeless and is residing in a public or private shelter location or has other non-shelter living arrangements within the school district shall be provided transportation to and from the student's school of origin and the shelter or other non-shelter location if the shelter or non-shelter location is two or more miles from the school of origin and the student's transportation privileges have not been revoked. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)(I))
- A resident student who becomes homeless and is residing in a public or private shelter location or has other non-shelter living arrangements outside of the school district shall be provided transportation to and from the student's school of origin and the shelter or other non-shelter location if the shelter or non-shelter location is two or more miles from the school of origin and the student's transportation privileges have not been revoked, unless the school district and the school district in which the student is temporarily placed agree that the school district in which the student is temporarily placed shall provide transportation. (Minn. Stat. §125A.51(f); 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)(II))
- If a nonresident student is homeless and is residing in a public or private homeless shelter or has other non-shelter living arrangements within the school district, the school district may provide transportation services between the shelter or non-shelter location and the student's school of origin outside of the school district upon agreement with the school district in which the school of origin is located. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.51(f))

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES:

In order to assure that a student's homeless status is identified and documented, assistance from any staff member who may have such knowledge, including but not limited to administrators,

secretaries, counselors, special education staff and classroom teachers is needed. If you have such knowledge, please check with the school homeless liaison, Rodo Aden at raden@midwaystar.org to determine if student is already reported as homeless. If not, please assist the student or family in completing the Homeless Student Documentation Form which is available at the link below or at the school front office. You may also complete the form on behalf of the family if you know that their living situation meets the homeless criteria. The school homeless liaison will collect the documentation, communicate with the appropriate parties and file it in the student's cumulative file.

SCHOOL SITE IDENTIFICATION FORM
Homeless and Highly Mobile Students

Midway Star Academy

Request Date: _____

School Name: _____

I am requesting that the student(s) listed below be identified as homeless on his/her Discovery student file:

Student Name	ID # or Birthdate
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please Check your best understanding of the student's living situation:

- _____ In a motel, hotel, or weekly rate housing
- _____ Doubled up with friends or relatives because housing cannot be found
- _____ In an abandoned building, other inadequate accommodation, or in a car
- _____ On the street

- _____ In temporary foster care
- _____ With friends or family because the student is an unaccompanied youth
- _____ Lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence

Staff making request: _____

Phone: _____

CODING ON DISCOVERY IS DONE BY SHELTER PROGRAM STAFF ONLY. Notify one of the contacts below by emailing or faxing the School Site Identification form attached. This information is kept confidential.

Email:	raden@midwaystar.org	ymohamed@midwaystar.org
Fax:	651.202.3825	651.202.3825
Phone:	206.307.6089	612.703.7058