

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

What is the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act?

42 USC § 11431 – STATEMENT OF POLICY the following is the policy of the Congress:

- (1) Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.
- (2) In any State that has a compulsory residency requirement as a component of the State's compulsory school attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths, the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.
- (3) Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.
- (4) Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

Eligibility under McKinney-Vento

Children or youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Awaiting foster care placement **
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances
- Unaccompanied youth living in the above circumstances

Parent/Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Rights

Unaccompanied homeless youth are ensured the same educational rights that the McKinney-Vento Act provides for other homeless students, which include the right to:

- Enroll immediately, even if they do not currently have paperwork normally required for enrollment
- Attend either the local attendance area school or the school of origin, with the placement decision based on the student's best interest
- Remain in the school of origin for the duration of the homelessness or until the end of the school year in which the student becomes permanently housed
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin
- Receive educational services, such as free school meals, Title I services; and participate in gifted and talented programs, vocational education, alternative education, and any other services comparable to what housed students receive

- Not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless

In addition to the provisions that apply to all homeless students, the McKinney-Vento Act includes the following provisions specifically for unaccompanied homeless youth:

- Unaccompanied homeless youth shall be immediately enrolled without proof of guardianship
- During a dispute over school selection or enrollment, unaccompanied homeless youth shall receive a written statement explaining the school's decision, the youth's right to appeal the decision, and a referral to the local liaison.

Local liaisons shall assist unaccompanied homeless youth in:

- Selecting a school of attendance and enrolling in school
- Requesting transportation to and from the school of origin
- Enrolling in school immediately while disputes are resolved

Bear Grass Charter School is committed to meeting the needs of all students. If you have or know of a child who could benefit from such a program, please contact Bear Grass Charter School's McKinney-Vento Liaison, Ashley Buck at abuck@beargrasscharter.org or call (252) 789-1010.

[North Carolina Homeless Education Program Website](#)

Parent Rights

[Parent Rights Brochure \(English\)](#)

[Parent Rights \(Spanish\)](#)

Student Rights

[Student Rights Poster \(English and Spanish\)](#)

State Contact:

Lisa Phillips, State Coordinator for Homeless Education

lphillips@serve.org