



SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: HOMELESS STUDENTS

ADOPTED: DECEMBER 9, 2013

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HOMELESS STUDENTS	
<p>1. Authority            SC 1306            Title 22            Sec 11.18            42 U.S.C.            Sec 11431</p>	<p>The Board recognizes need to promptly identify homeless children and youth within the Charter School, facilitate their immediate enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.</p> <p>The Board shall ensure that homeless children and youths have equal access to the same educational programs and services provided to other Charter School students.</p> <p>The Board, authorizes the CEO to waive Charter School policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, transportation, school stability and success in school of homeless children and youth.</p> <p>It is the policy of the Board that no student shall be discriminated against, segregated or stigmatized based on his/her homeless status.</p>
<p>2. Definitions            42 U.S.C.            Sec. 11434a</p>	<p><b>Enroll or enrollment</b> means attending classes and participating fully in school activities</p> <p><b>Homeless children and youth</b> are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, which include the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing,</li> </ol>

<p>3. Delegation of Responsibility</p> <p>42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432</p>	<p>economic hardship, or similar reason.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.</li> <li>3. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters.</li> <li>4. Abandoned in hospitals.</li> <li>5. Awaiting foster care placement.</li> <li>6. Living in public or private places not designated for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.</li> <li>7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings.</li> <li>8. Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.</li> <li>9. Living as a run-away children, abandoned or forced out of homes by parents/guardians or caretakers, or separated from parents/guardians for any other reason.</li> <li>10. Living as school age parents/guardians in houses for school age parents/guardians if they have no other living accommodations.</li> </ol> <p><b>School of origin</b> is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled.</p> <p><b>Unaccompanied youth</b> means a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes youth who have run away from home; been abandoned or forced out of home by a parent, guardian or other caretaker; or separated from a parent or guardian for any other reason.</p> <p>The Board designates the Chief Executive Officer or designee to serve as the charter schools liaison for homeless students and families.</p> <p>The charter school's liaison shall coordinate with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Local service agencies and other entities that provide services to homeless children and youth and families.</li> <li>2. Other school districts and agencies on issues of prompt identification, transfer of records, transportation and other inter-district activities.</li> <li>3. Charter school staff responsible for the provision of services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Act.</li> <li>4. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.</li> </ol>
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<p>4. Guidelines 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432</p> <p>42 U.S.C. Sec 11432</p>	<p>The charter school’s liaison shall provide public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents/guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens. Such notice shall be provided in a manner and form understandable to the parents/guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths.</p> <p>The charter school’s liaison shall provide reliable, valid and comprehensive data to the Coordinator of Pennsylvania’s Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.</p> <p><u>Enrollment/Placement</u> Best Interest Determination--</p> <p>In determining the best interest of a child or youth, the charter school shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presume that keeping the child or youth in the school of origin is in the child’s or youth’s best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.</li> <li>2. Consider learner-centered factors related to impact of mobility on achievement, education, health and safety, giving priority to the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.</li> <li>3. If, after such consideration, the charter school determines that it is not in the child’s or youth’s best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, the charter school shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the reasons for its determination. The explanation shall be in a manner and form understandable to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth and shall include information regarding the right to appeal.</li> </ol> <p>Placement—</p> <p>In accordance with the child’s or youth’s best interest, the charter school shall continue to enroll a homeless student in his/her school of origin while s/he remains homeless and through the end of the academic year in which s/he obtains permanent housing. Parent/guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the</p>
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school in the attendance are where the student is actually living or other schools.

The charter school's liaison shall assist an unaccompanied youth in placement or enrollment decisions, giving priority to the views of the student in determining where s/he will be enrolled.

The charter school shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of any charter school decision related to school selection or placement, including the right to appeal.

#### Enrollment—

The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if:

1. The student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment.
2. The application or enrollment deadline has passed during any period of homelessness.

The charter school's liaison shall immediately contact the school last attended by the child or youth to obtain relevant academic or other records.

The charter school may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information.

#### Assignment—

If the charter school is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the charter school shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's assignment within the school.

#### Dispute Resolution—

If a dispute arises over eligibility, enrollment or school selection:

1. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the district's liaison, who shall assist in the dispute resolution process.
2. The student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute including all available appeals.
3. The charter school's liaison shall issue a written decision within twenty (20) business days of being notified of the dispute.

A parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may appeal a district's

SC 1306  
42 U.S.C.  
Sec. 11432

written decision or file a complaint with the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.

#### Education Records

Information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation shall be treated as a student education record subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and shall not be deemed to be directory information.

#### Comparable Services

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other charter school students including, but limited to:

1. Transportation services
2. School nutrition programs
3. Education programs for which the homeless student meets the eligibility criteria, such as:
  - a. Services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs.
  - b. Programs for English Language Learners
  - c. Programs for students with disabilities

#### Transportation

The charter school will coordinate transportation services with the sending school districts.

#### Training

The charter school's liaison shall participated in professional development programs and other technical assistance activities offered by the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.

The Charter School liaison shall arrange professional development programs for school staff, including office staff.

School personnel providing services to homeless children and youths, including school enrollment staff, shall receive professional development and support to:

1. Improve identification of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths;
2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements

- for immediate enrollment and transportation; and
3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

**References:**

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec 1306  
22 PA Code Sec. 11.18, Sec. 403.1

State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 11.18, 403.1.

Education For Homeless Children – 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 et seq.  
20 U.S.C 1232g

Family Educational Rights and Privacy, Title 34, Code of Federal  
Regulations – 34 CFR Part 99, 34 CFR 200.30, 299.19

Guidelines for Enrollment of Homeless Children – Federal Register, 67  
Fed. Reg. 10698

PA Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan