

## **501.16 Homeless Children and Youth**

The board shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children and youth of school age within the district, encourage their enrollment and eliminate existing barriers to their receiving education which may exist in district policies or practices.

A homeless child is defined as a child or youth between the ages of 5 and 21 who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes a child or youth who is living on the street, in a car, tent, or abandoned building or some other form of shelter not designed as a permanent home; who is living in a community shelter facility; or who is living with non-nuclear family members or with friends, who may or may not have legal guardianship over the child or youth of school age.

So that enrollment of homeless children and youth of school age may be facilitated, the following policy areas shall be modified as follows:

School Records: For students transferring out of the district, records may be provided directly to the student or the student's parents. In addition, students transferring into the district may provide cumulative records directly to the district. The district shall not require that such records be forwarded from another district before that student may enroll. The school shall then request the official records from the sending school.

Immunization Requirements: Homeless students shall not be denied enrollment for lack of immunization records if:

1. They have a statement signed by a physician stating that immunization would be injurious to the

child;

2. They provide an affidavit stating such immunization would conflict with their religious beliefs;

3. They are in the process of being immunized; or

4. They are a transfer student from another school.

The district shall make a reasonable effort to locate immunization records from the information provided or shall arrange for the student to receive immunizations.

Waiver of Fees and Charges: Fees and charges which may present a barrier to the enrollment or transfer of a homeless child or youth may be waived in the discretion of the superintendent.

Enrollment Requirements/Placement: Enrollment requirements which may constitute a barrier to the education of the homeless child or youth may be waived in the discretion of the superintendent. If the district is unable to determine the grade level of the student because of missing or incomplete records, the district shall administer tests or utilize other reasonable means to determine the appropriate grade level for the child.

Residency: For purposes of a homeless child or youth, residence for the purpose of attending school shall be where the child actually resides or the child's district of origin. A child's district of origin is the school district where the child was last enrolled. The deciding factor shall be the welfare of the child. As much as possible, the child will not be required to change attendance centers within the district every time the child changes residence unless that change results in the child no longer being classified as homeless.

Transportation: Policies or practices regarding transportation of students which might cause a barrier to the attendance of a homeless child or youth may be waived by the superintendent.

Special Services: All services which are available to resident students shall be made available to homeless children or youths enrolled in the district. Services include special education, talented and gifted programs, vocational education, English as a second language programs, health services and food and nutrition programs.

The contents of this policy shall supersede any and all conflicting provisions in district policies dealing with the seven policy areas discussed above.