



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM
Department of Specialized Services
5225 W. Vliet Street, Room 138
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 475-8911

Dear Parent/Guardian/Adult Caretaker/Unaccompanied Youth:

This letter explains your rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B-Education for Homeless Children and Youth). The information provided is intended to assist in making decisions that are in the best interest of the student. If you have questions or concerns regarding any of the information contained in this letter, please discuss them with the School Social Worker or School Administrator. If you require further assistance, call the Homeless Education Program (HEP) office at **(414) 475-8911**.

Sincerely,

Milwaukee Public Schools

Who is Homeless?

Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, you are considered homeless if you are:

- sharing housing (doubled up) with family or friends due to economic or other hardship reasons
- staying in a shelter, transitional living program, hotel/motel, or campground
- living on the street, in a car, in an abandoned building or other inadequate accommodations

Rights of Students Experiencing Homelessness:

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act ensures that all students experiencing homelessness, school-age and preschool-age, have the right to a free appropriate public education without barriers. In particular, students experiencing homelessness have the right to:

- attend school, regardless of where they live (i.e. shelter, hotel)
- remain at the school they attended before they lost housing (school of origin) when it is in the student's best interest and when it is the choice of the parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth. If their choice is not honored, they must be notified, in writing, of this decision and the reason for the decision. An appeal can be made if the decision is against their wishes.
- receive transportation to the school of origin or the school last attended before they lost housing, if it is in the student's best interest
- enroll in school without delay, even without documents normally required for enrollment, such as school transcripts, medical records, immunization records or parent permission for unaccompanied homeless youth
- enroll in school without providing proof of address or residency
- enroll in and attend the school of choice, even during the dispute resolution or appeal process
- attend school and participate in school activities and programs the same as their housed peers
- students experiencing homelessness must not be segregated
- receive the same access to special programs (Special Education, At-Risk, Gifted and Talented, etc.) as their housed peers

Services Available to Students Experiencing Homelessness:

To remove barriers to education, a number of services are available to students experiencing homelessness. Depending on each student's individual needs, these services may include:

- transportation to the student's school of origin
- school nutrition programs
- school supplies and fees
- before and after school programs
- tutorial programs
- enrollment assistance
- preschool/early education services
- ESL services
- translation services
- school health services
- Title-I services and programs
- special education/programs for students with disabilities
- vocational and technical programs
- alternative and at-risk Programs
- gifted and talented programs
- referral to community resources

Student Placement Dispute Process:

When a dispute arises over school placement, the parent/caregiver or unaccompanied youth, should complete an online Dispute Resolution Form at

<https://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/en/Families/Family-Services/Dispute-Resolution-Form.htm#form> .

The Division of Customer Service staff can assist you in completing the online form or can speak with you before you complete the online complaint form. The complaint will be routed to the appropriate area and you will be contacted regarding your concerns. The Homeless Liaison will make a determination based on the information and send the disputant a copy of the determination. The student has the right to attend the school of choice until the dispute is resolved. Appeals may be filed by contacting the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth at the Department of Public Instruction (contact info is below). For disputes not related to homelessness, please refer to the MPS *Parent/Student Handbook on Rights, Responsibilities and Discipline*.

Resources and Information

IMPACT 2-1-1

Online resource directory & live chat: www.211wisconsin.communityos.org

Phone: 211 ♦ (414) 773-0211 ♦ Toll free: 1-866-211-3380

Text: Text zip code to TXT-211 (898211)

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

Website: www.naehcy.org ♦ Phone: (612) 430-6995 ♦ Email: info@naehcy.org

National Center for Homeless Education

Website: www.nche.ed.gov ♦ Phone: 1-800-308-2145 ♦ Email: homeless@serve.org

SchoolHouse Connection

Website: www.schoolhouseconnection.org

Phone: (202) 364-7392 ♦ Email: info@schoolhouseconnection.org

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

Website: www.dpi.wi.gov/homeless ♦ Phone: (608) 267-1284