



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM
Department of Student Services
5225 W. Vliet Street, Room 133
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 475-8911

Dear Parent/Guardian/Adult Caretaker/Unaccompanied Youth:

This letter is about 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 homeless contact or principal. 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 Homeless Children and Youth:

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

- attend school, regardless of where they live (i.e. shelter, hotel).
- remain at the school they attended before becoming homeless (school of origin) when it is in the student's best interest and when it is the choice of the parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian's choice is not honored, they must be notified, in writing, of this decision and the reason for the decision. Parent/guardians have the right to appeal a decision that is against their wishes.
- receive transportation to the school of origin or the school last attended before becoming homeless, if requested by parent/guardian and in the student's best interest.
- enroll in school without delay, even without documents normally required for enrollment, such as school transcripts, medical records, and immunization records, or parent permission for unaccompanied homeless youth.
- enroll in school without providing a permanent address and without proof of residency.
- enroll in and attend the school of choice, even during the dispute resolution or appeal process.
- attend a school and participate in school activities and programs with children and youth who are not homeless. Homeless children and youth must not be segregated.
- receive the same access to special programs (Special Education, At-Risk, Gifted and Talented, etc.) as non-homeless children and youth.

Services Available to Homeless Children and Youth:

In order to remove barriers to education, a number of services are available to homeless children and youth. Depending on each student's individual needs, these services may include:

- transportation
- 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/programs for students with disabilities
- vocational and technical programs
- alternative and At-risk Programs
- gifted and talented programs
- referral to social services agencies that can assist homeless families with basic needs.

Student Placement Dispute Process

When a dispute arises over school placement, the Homeless Coordinator, in consultation with the parent/caregiver or unaccompanied youth, will complete a *Student Placement Dispute* form. A Homeless Coordinator can be contacted at (414) 475-8911. The Homeless Coordinator will submit the dispute form to the Homeless Liaison who will make a determination and send the disputant a copy of the *Written Notification of Dispute Resolution* form. 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 (address and phone number below). For disputes not related to homelessness, please refer to the *MPS Parent/Student Handbook on Rights, Responsibilities and Discipline*.

Resources and Information on Homelessness

IMPACT
Resources Hotline for Families
(414) 773-0211 or 211
Toll free: 1-866-211-3380
Website: www.impactinc.org

Department of Public Instruction
State Coordinator for the Education
of Homeless Children and Youth
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
Phone: (608) 267-1284
Fax: (608) 267-0364

National Association for the Education
of Homeless Children and Youth
P.O. Box 26274
Minneapolis, MN 55426
Phone: (866) 862-2562
Fax: (763) 545-9499
E-mail: info@naehcy.org
Website: www.naehcy.org

National Center for Homeless
Education
P.O. Box 5367
Greensboro, NC 27435
helpline: 1-800-308-2145
website: www.serve.org/nche
e-mail: homeless@serve.org