



KIRTLAND LOCAL SCHOOLS

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EHCY) Program was designed to ensure all homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education as youth who are not homeless. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) amended the McKinney-Vento Act. Thus, State and local educational agencies are required to review and revise policies and practices to remove barriers to school enrollment, attendance and success for homeless children and youth. Also, Local educational agencies must provide homeless children and youth with the opportunity to meet the same challenging state academic content and student achievement standards to which all students are held.

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth:

Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act¹⁰ defines “homeless children and youths” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youths who are:
 - sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled-up”);
 - living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
 - abandoned in hospitals;
- Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Should your child, currently or in the future, meet the qualification as “homeless children or youth,” there are numerous rights and protections the McKinney-Vento Act provides.

Specifically, your child has the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there;
- Remain in the school that he or she was attending before becoming homeless or the school he or she last attended, if that is in the child’s best interest;
- Transportation to and from the school of origin;
- Enroll in a new school immediately (if in the child’s best interest), even if you do not have all the paperwork, such as your child’s school or medical records;

- Access the same special programs and services that are provided to other children, such as special education, migrant education and vocational education; and
- Receive the same public education that is provided to other children including preschool (Your child cannot be separated from mainstream school environment, including segregation into separate school, separate programs, or separate setting because he or she is homeless).

In addition, you and your child have the right to dispute an eligibility, school selection, or enrollment decision. If your child is assigned to a school not of your choosing, the school district must explain its decision in writing. You have the right to appeal the district's decision regarding the school to which your child has been assigned. Your child has the right to go to the school of your choice while the dispute is being resolved.

Please also keep in mind that you can help your child by:

- Making sure your child attends school every day;
- Reading to your child; even a few minutes a day makes a difference;
- Making education a family priority;
- Helping your child develop good study habits; and
- Meeting with your child's teachers and other school personnel.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Becky Rowell-Malinas
Director of Pupil Services
McKinney-Vento Liaison
Kirtland Local Schools