

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOUSING INSTABILITY/S.I.T. (STUDENTS IN TRANSITION)/STUDENTS WHO QUALIFY FOR MCKINNEY-VENTO SERVICES

Students experiencing housing instability will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as lacking housing stability and will be assigned to the school serving non-homeless students residing in the area in which the student who is experiencing housing instability is actually living. The District shall establish safeguards that protect students who experience housing instability from discrimination on the basis of housing instability.

Students experiencing housing instability are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Are abandoned in hospitals;
5. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings; or
7. Are migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

Enrollment

To the extent practical and as required by law, MSD of Wayne Township will work with students experiencing housing instability and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of students experiencing housing instability not currently attending school. The District shall remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of students experiencing housing instability in schools in the District. Students experiencing housing instability shall be enrolled immediately, even if the student do not have the necessary enrollment documentation such as immunization and health records, proof of residency or guardianship, birth certificate, school records, and other documentation. No student experiencing housing instability shall be denied enrollment due to

outstanding fees or fines, or absences. Moreover, the District shall ensure that students experiencing housing instability who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities including summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, or online learning.

The District shall work with the families in transition (or unaccompanied youth) to determine which school the student will attend based on the best interest of the student. School of Origin is defined as the school that the child attended when permanently housed, the school in which the child was last enrolled, including a preschool, or the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools when the child has completed the final grade served by the school of origin. In determining the best interest of the student, the District shall presume the School of Origin is in the best interest of the student experiencing housing instability except when contrary to the request of the parent or guardian, or unaccompanied youth. The District shall also consider student centered factors consistent with federal law in determining the best interest of the student.

If the student is sent to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian, a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal, will be provided to the parent or guardian of the student experiencing housing instability or the unaccompanied youth. The District requires that these rights and the dispute process be communicated to the parent or guardian of the student experiencing housing instability or unaccompanied youth.

In addition to notifying the parent or guardian of the student experiencing housing instability student or unaccompanied youth of the rights described above, the District shall post public notice of educational rights of children and youth experiencing housing instability in each school, and at locations frequented by parents or guardians and unaccompanied youths, in a manner and form that is understandable.

Student assignment procedures or intra-district choice options are available to families in transition on the same terms as families who reside in the District. If there is an enrollment dispute, the student will be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth will be informed of the District's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The District's liaison will carry out the dispute resolution as provided by state law.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school will immediately enroll the student pursuant to District policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student will be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the District liaison is directed to assist in this process. Records from the student's previous school will be requested from the previous school pursuant to District policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with District policies.

Services

Preschool-aged children and the children's families experiencing housing instability shall be provided equal access to the educational services for which preschool-aged children and the children's families are eligible, including preschool programs administered by the District.

Students experiencing housing instability will be provided services comparable to other students in the District, including:

- Transportation services
- Education services for which students are eligible, including Head Start, Title I, special education, bilingual education and programs for students with limited English proficiency, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs, and before-and-after care programs.

At the request of the parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the local McKinney-Vento liaison, transportation shall be provided for a student experiencing housing instability to and from the school of origin as follows:

- A. If the student experiencing housing instability continues to live in the District in which the school of origin is located, transportation will be provided in accordance with District policy/administrative guidelines.
- B. If the student experiencing housing instability moves to an area served by another District, though continuing the student's education at the school of origin, the District of origin and the District in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. If the Districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

All records for students experiencing housing instability shall be maintained so that they are available in a timely fashion and can be transferred promptly as necessary. All records regarding a student experiencing housing instability shall be treated as a student education record consistent with policy. Further, a student experiencing housing instability living situation shall not be deemed directory information.

Liaison

The District's Liaison for McKinney-Vento performs the duties as assigned by the Superintendent and proscribed by law. The Liaison will participate in professional development and other technical assistance activities as determined appropriate by the State Coordinator. The Liaison will ensure that:

- A. Student experiencing housing instability and youth are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- B. Student experiencing housing instability and youth are enrolled in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed within the District;
- C. School personnel providing McKinney-Vento services receive sufficient professional development and other support;
- D. Families in transition and students experiencing housing instability and youth receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
- E. Families in transition and youth have access to and receive educational services for which families in transition and youth are eligible including through the Head Start Act,

early intervention services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and other preschool programs.

- C. That school personnel, service providers, advocates working with homeless families, parents, guardians and student experiencing housing instability and youths are informed of the duties of the liaison.
- D. Parents and guardians of students experiencing housing instability are informed of educational and related opportunities and are provided meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
- E. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act.
- F. Parents and guardians of students experiencing housing instability and youths and unaccompanied youths are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin and are assisted in accessing transportation services.
- G. Unaccompanied youths are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same state academic standards as established for other children and youths, are informed of the status of unaccompanied youths as independent students - under section 40 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20U.S.C. 1087vv), and the rights of unaccompanied youths to receive verification of this status from the local liaison.

The McKinney-Vento liaison will assist, to the extent feasible, the students experiencing housing instability and their parent(s) or guardian(s) or unaccompanied student experiencing housing instability in the efforts to provide documentation to meet State and local requirements for entry into school.

No District policy, administrative procedure, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or school success of students experiencing housing instability.

42 U.S.C. Section 11431

I.C. 20-50-1-3

MSD of Wayne Township, Marion County, Indiana

Adopted: June 2, 2014

Revised: May 13, 2019

Revised: September 9, 2019

Revised: August 8, 2022

Revised: August 7, 2023