



## **HOMELESS EDUCATION POLICY**

Taylion High Desert Academy ensures that homeless students are provided equal access to the same free, appropriate public education provided to other children and youth. Homeless students will be given access to the education and other services that such students need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. Homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated in a separate school or program based on the student's status as homeless.

Information regarding this policy, including the educational rights of children and youth identified as homeless as well as an overview of the relevant laws, will be distributed to students upon enrollment to Taylion High Desert Academy. This policy is also available at [www.taylion.com](http://www.taylion.com).

Taylion High Desert Academy has designated its counselor, Veronica Prado, as the liaison for homeless children and youths. She may be reached at [veronica.prado@taylion.com](mailto:veronica.prado@taylion.com) or 760-843-6622. THDA's liaison shall provide the following:

- Ensure that homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- Ensure that homeless children and youths enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in the School;
- Ensure that homeless children and youths have access to and receive educational services for which such families, children, and youth are eligible, and [if applicable] early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services and other appropriate services;
- Ensure that the parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- Ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the dispute resolution process;

- Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians, including schools, family shelters, public libraries and soup kitchens, in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths;
- Ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless student, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school;
- Ensure that school personnel providing services participate in professional development and other technical support as determined appropriate by the State Coordinator. This will include PD on understanding the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, establishing procedures to address problems related to school enrollment and selection, establishing procedures to ensure homeless children and youth receive full and partial credit for work completed, etc.
- Ensure that unaccompanied youths 1) are enrolled in school; 2) have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as the State establishes for other children and youth, including implementation of procedures to identify and remove barriers that prevent youths from receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school; and 3) are informed of their status as independent students and that the youths may obtain assistance from the liaison to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

### **Definition of the term “homeless children and youths”**

Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act<sup>10</sup> 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.

## **Enrollment**

Enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including:

- Proof of residency
- Transcripts/school records (THDA must contact the student's previous school to obtain school records. Initial placement of students whose records are not immediately available can be made based on the student's age and information gathered from the student, parent, and previous schools or teachers.)
- Immunizations or immunization/health/medical/physical records (If necessary, the school must refer students to the local liaison to assist with obtaining immunizations and/or immunization and other medical records.)
- Proof of guardianship
- Birth certificate
- Unpaid school fees
- Lack of clothing that conforms to dress code
- Any factor related to the student's living situation unaccompanied youth must be enrolled immediately in school. They may either enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling, or local liaison.