

ADMISSION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN

The Albemarle County School Board is committed to educating homeless children and youth. Homeless children and youth shall not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. The school division will coordinate the identification and provision of services to such students with relevant local social services agencies and other agencies and programs providing services to such students, and with other school divisions as may be necessary to resolve interdivisional issues.

The Albemarle County Public School District will serve each homeless student according to the student's best interest and will:

- Continue the student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness
- If the student becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or
- For the remainder of the academic year, if the student becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- Enroll the student in any public school that nonhomeless who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.

In determining the best interest of a homeless student, the Albemarle County School Board shall:

- To the extent feasible, keep the student in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the student's parent or guardian;
- Provide a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal as described below, to the homeless student's parent or guardian, if the division sends the student to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian; and
- In the case of an unaccompanied youth, ensure that the district's homeless liaison assists in placement or enrollment decisions regarding the student, considers the views of such unaccompanied youth, and provides notice to such youth of the right to appeal described below.

Enrollment

The school selected in accordance with this policy shall immediately enroll the homeless student, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, birth records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation.

The enrolling school shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain relevant academic and other records.

If the student needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization, birth, -or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the student to the district's homeless liaison, who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records.

If the documentation regarding the comprehensive physical examination required by Policy JHCA cannot be furnished for a homeless child or youth, and the person seeking to enroll the pupil furnishes to the school division an affidavit stating that the documentation cannot be provided because of the homelessness of the child or youth and also indicating that, to the best of his or her knowledge, such pupil is in good health and free from any communicable or contagious disease, the school division shall immediately refer the student to the local school division homeless liaison who shall, as soon as practicable, assist in obtaining the necessary physical examination by the county or city health department or other clinic or physician's office and shall immediately admit the pupil to school.

The decision regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the student lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

Enrollment Disputes

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school:

- The homeless student shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute;
- The parent or guardian of the student shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or student to appeal the decision;
- The student, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the district's homeless liaison who shall carry out the appeal process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute; and
- In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

Comparable Services

Each homeless student shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school attended by the homeless student including the following:

- Transportation services;
- Educational services for which the student meets the eligibility criteria, such as services provided under Title I, educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency;
- Programs in vocational and technical education;
- Programs for gifted and talented students; and
- School nutrition programs.

Definitions

The term "homeless student" means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes:

- Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of

housing, economic hardship, or [other causes; a similar reason](#), are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;

- 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 for the purposes of this policy because the children are living in circumstances described above.

The term “migratory child” means a child who is, or whose parent or spouse is, a migratory agricultural worker, including a migratory dairy worker, or a migratory fisher, and who, in the preceding 36 months, has moved from one school district to another in order to obtain, or accompany such parent or spouse in order to obtain, temporary or seasonal employment in agriculture or fishing.

The term “school of origin” means the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

The term “unaccompanied youth” includes a youth not in the physical custody of parent or guardian.

Adopted: November 20, 2003

Legal Refs.: 20 U.S.C. [Section §6399](#)
42 U.S.C. [Sections §§11302, 11431 et. seq.](#)

Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended, [sections §§ 22.1-3, 22.1-70, 22.1-78, 22.1253.13:1, \(D\)-\(8\), 6., 22.1-270](#)

[Superintendent’s Memo No. 64 \(Dec. 5, 2003\).](#)

Cross Refs.: JEC School Admission