

McKinney-Vento Homeless and Foster Care Education

The McKinney - Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures immediate enrollment and educational stability for homeless children and youth. McKinney - Vento provides federal funding to states for the purpose of supporting district programs that serve homeless students. The McKinney- Vento Act defines homeless children as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence."

Michigan Great Lakes Virtual Academy has a responsibility to ensure that school district personnel and community members, including those eligible for services under the McKinney -Vento Homeless Assistance Act are aware of the Act and its provisions. An important component of awareness is the ability to recognize the signs of homelessness. Please click on the link below to obtain more detailed information regarding this Act.

National Center for Homeless Education and Know Your Rights

Any student being identified as homeless or foster care should be enrolled immediately, even if they lack normally required documents, such as immunization records or proof of residence. The student should then be reported to school's homeless liaison to

ensure all needs are being met including but not limited to, access to a computer, internet access and transportation to and from state testing.

Process

1. Student is identified as homeless and is reported the Student Support Liaison. To help assist with identification the Homeless Liaison uses the Child Find Report and follows up with the family to fill out the McKinney - Vento form.
2. Liaison contacts the family within 24 hours to confirm the family does indeed need McKinney - Vento Homeless Education Assistance and to ensure all needs are being met. If successful contact was not made during the initial call, the Liaison will follow up with the family within 72 hours of the initial call. If a second follow up is needed this will be done within one week of receiving the paperwork or within 72 hours of the previous follow up call. Student needs are addressed on a case by case basis. Once contact is made Operations Manager is made aware of the needs of the student and notes on shared doc.
 - a. Students may need transportation and/or internet provided. Liaison updates Operations Manager of student's needs.

- b. Operations Manager then works with Liaison and family to fill needs.
3. Operations Manager reports student to District State Reporter to have note made in state site.
4. If there is a dispute both parties (school and family) follow the dispute resolution policy.

Staff Training:

Once a year the MGLVA Homeless Liaison provides training to the entire staff. This training generally occurs towards the beginning of each school year. The topics covered are:

- ESSA basics, including key implementation dates
- Changes to the definition of "school of origin"
- Changes related to determining the best interest of the child or youth in terms of school selection
- Changes related to the provision of transportation to currently homeless students and formerly homeless students who have become permanently housed
- Changes to the McKinney-Vento dispute resolution process, including disputes about school enrollment and selection

Dispute Resolution

Homeless families and youths have the right to challenge placement and enrollment decisions. If a dispute arises between a school and a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment of a homeless student, the Academy must follow its dispute resolution procedures, consistent with the State's procedures. If such a dispute occurs, the Academy will immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought pending final resolution of the dispute, including all appeals. The student will receive all services for which they are eligible until all disputes and appeals are resolved.

Pursuant to State, Academy and Board of Directors policies, the Academy will provide the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of all decisions regarding school selection and enrollment made by the Academy or State, along with a written explanation of appeal rights.

The Academy's notice and written explanation about the reason for its decision will include, at a minimum, an explanation of how the school reached its decision regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment, including 1) a description of the proposed or refused action by the school, 2) an explanation of why the action is proposed or refused, 3) a description of other options the school considered and why those options were rejected, 4) a description of any other relevant factors to the school's decision and information related to the eligibility or best interest determination such as the facts, witnesses, and evidence relied upon and their sources, and 5) an appropriate timeline to ensure deadlines are not missed. The Academy must also include contact information for the Liaison and the State Coordinator, and a brief description of their roles. The Academy will also refer the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth to the Liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution process.

The Academy ensures that all decisions and notices are drafted in a language and format appropriate for low-literacy, limited vision readers, and individuals with disabilities. For children and youth and/or parents or guardians who are English learners or whose dominant language is not English, the Academy will provide translation and interpretation services in

connection with all phases of the dispute resolution process pursuant to federal laws. The Academy will also provide electronic notices via email if the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth has access to email followed by a written notice provided in person or sent by mail.

Rochelle Jefferson rojjefferson@mglva.org (MGLVA Homeless Liaison)
Phone #: 231-794-5999 ext 3220
1309 Madison Rd
Manistee MI 49660

- MGLVA Homeless Liaison conducts training
- MGLVA documents training and staff that received training.

MGLVA McKinney-Vento Transportation Policy

MGLVA, through the efforts of the Family Resource Coordinator (FRC); Homeless Liaison (HL) and or designated staff, is responsible for providing transportation for verified McKinney-Vento Act families in the following situations:

1. To attend mandatory testing
2. To attend graduation
3. To attend field trips

1. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act, MGLVA will provide transportation to state testing for homeless families.
 - FRC/HL will collaborate with the testing coordinators to assist in identifying the families who need assistance.
 - Once a family is identified as needing transportation assistance, the best mode of assistance will be identified by the family, site coordinator, and FRC.
 - Typical types of assistance include, but are not limited to gas cards, Uber rides, taxi rides, or bus passes.
2. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act, MGLVA will provide transportation to graduation for homeless families.
 - FRC/HL will collaborate with the testing coordinators to assist in identifying the families who need assistance.
 - Once a family is identified as needing transportation assistance, the best mode of assistance will be identified by the family, site coordinator, and FRC.
 - Typical types of assistance include, but are not limited to gas cards, Uber rides, taxi rides, or bus passes.
3. In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act, MGLVA will provide transportation to field trips for homeless families.
 - FRC/HL will collaborate with the testing coordinators to assist in identifying the families who need assistance.
 - Once a family is identified as needing transportation assistance, the best mode of assistance will be identified by the family, site coordinator, and FRC.
 - Typical types of assistance include, but are not limited to gas cards, Uber rides, taxi rides, or bus passes.

Foster Care

Students involved in the foster care system comprise a diverse and vulnerable group of learners with complex educational needs. Experiencing foster care is associated with academic struggles such as high school mobility, lower academic achievement, heightened experiences of exclusionary school discipline, and decreased school completion and access to postsecondary education.

- Students involved in foster care are more mobile: out-of-home placements increase the frequency of mid-year school transitions and decreased the number of days students spend in school during the academic year.
- Students involved in foster care meet state standards in math, science, and English/language arts at less than half the rate of their same-grade peers.
- Students involved in foster care are less likely to graduate from high school on time

The Every Student Achieves Act (ESSA) provides all children and youth in foster care with core protections for school stability and school access through a statutory vehicle that is separate from the McKinney-Vento Act, and that outlines clear, distinct and appropriate responsibilities for both the education and child welfare agencies.

<https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.148/0va.b42.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ESSARulesAnnounceFINAL.pdf>

Process

1. Child Find Coordinator reviews the Child Find Report for students marked as Foster Care.
2. Child Find Coordinator follows up with Enrollment Coordinator to ensure all enrollment barriers are removed.
3. Child Find Coordinator updates Foster Care Liasson to update student Foster Care status.
 - a. Foster Care Liasson follows up with family to determine foster care status and needs of the student.
4. All foster care records will be stored in Laserfiche.