

Moosabec CSD
Notice of Educational Rights of Children and Youth that are Homeless

The purpose of this notice is to provide information regarding the rights of children, youths, or unaccompanied youths that are homeless. These students have the right to attend a public school or public charter school. This notice will also provide information about what the classification of homeless includes, as well as what services are available. If you need an interpreter or help to understand this letter, please contact Mike Kelley at 497-5454 or mike.kelley@union103.org

Our school serves youths who are homeless. If you are homeless or know a youth who is homeless, please reach out to our District Homeless Liaison for assistance. **Our District Homeless Liaison is Steve Peer and he can be reached at 497-2154, steve.peer@union103.org or 127 Snare Creek Lane, Jonesport, ME 04649.**

Who is “homeless”? Youths are considered homeless if they do not have a fixed, regular, and sufficient nighttime residence. This includes children of migrant workers. A residence is considered fixed if it is connected to the ground and not easily moved. Regular means that the youths have consistency about where they sleep every night, not shuffled from place to place. For a residence to be sufficient, it must meet the modern standards of living.

When are youths considered homeless?

- If they are staying with someone because their home has been lost or the family cannot afford a home.
- If they are living in a motel, hotel, camper, camp ground, or an emergency or transitional shelter.
- If a youth has been abandoned in a hospital.
- When youths typically sleep in an area not considered a regular place to sleep. Such places would include cars, parks, public places, abandoned buildings, housing that does not meet modern standards of living, bus or train stations, etc.

Please contact the District Homeless Liaison, if you are unsure about whether you or someone you know would be considered homeless.

What are the educational rights of children who are homeless? Moosabec CSD provides the same services to students regardless of living situation. However, there are some additional rights to assist students who are homeless.

- Students have the right to continue to attend their “school of origin” or to enroll in the public school in the area they currently live in. This decision is to be made based on what is best of the student.
- The right to receive services, including but not limited to transportation and meal services, without delay.
- Students who are homeless have the right to the same access as other students to appropriate services and programs, such as gifted and talented, special education, English learner services, career and technical education, and preschool. This also includes opportunities to participate in athletics, fine arts, or any other extracurricular activity.
- Support through the district’s Title I program, which is federally funded. A student who is homeless does not have to be attending a Title I school to receive Title I services.
- Opportunities for parents or guardians to be involved in school activities.
- Students have the right to the same treatment by school personnel as students who are not homeless.

What is the “school of origin”? The school of origin is the school the youth attended most recently or the school the youth attended before becoming homeless. When the student completes the last grade level offered at that school, the school of origin becomes the school students typically go to next. Decisions about which school a youth will attend are to be made based on what is in the best interest of the youth. It is a requirement that there is an option for the youth to be placed at the school of origin unless that is against the wishes of the parent / guardian / unaccompanied youth or it is not what is best for the youth.

What if there is a disagreement about school placement? If the district makes a decision to place a youth in a school that is not the school of origin or not the school requested by the family or individual, then the family or individual can appeal the decision. While the appeal is being processed, the student would be enrolled in the school the family or individual requested. The district homeless liaison will inform and guide the family or individual in the appeal process.

Access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education is a Right for ALL Youths

Union 103

Notices of Duties of District Homeless Liaison

Union 103 enrolls and serves children and youth that are homeless. According to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, our district is required to have a District Homeless Liaison. This notice serves to make you aware of the responsibilities of this individual.

If you need assistance reading this letter or need an interpreter, please let us know and we will make that available.

Duties of the District Homeless Liaison:

- Ensure that students who are homeless are identified by school personnel and connected to entities and agencies for assistance
- Ensure school enrollment for children and youths who are homeless. It is necessary for them to have an equal opportunity to do well in school.
- Connect and provide access for families to services they are eligible for, such as Head Start (under the Head Start Act 42 U.S.C 9831 et seq.), early intervention services (through Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.), and any other district preschool program.
- Make sure families / individuals receive referrals for services such as health care, housing, dental care, mental health care, substance abuse services, etc.
- Inform families of educational opportunities available for their children and regarding opportunities for meaningful involvement in this by the parent / guardian.
- Post publicly, in an easily understandable format, the educational rights of children and youths who are homeless. This should be posted in areas where families / individuals would be likely to see them.
- Monitor compliance to the McKinney-Vento Act, Section 9102(g)(3)(E) in any enrollment disagreements
- Fully inform families / individuals of all available transportation services and assist them in accessing said services. According to the McKinney-Vento Act, Section 9102(g)(1)(A), this is based on what is best for the child and can include transportation to the school of origin.
- Ensure training and support are received by school personnel acting under the McKinney-Vento Act.
- In regards to unaccompanied youths who are homeless
 - Ensure they are enrolled in school
 - Guarantee they have the same educational opportunities as other students, including challenging academic standards. This may include removing barriers for receiving credit for partially completed courses at a prior school.
 - Make sure they are aware of their status as independent students based on Section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C 1087vv) and that this status can be verified through the liaison for the local educational agency for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) according to Section 483 of the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1090)

The Homeless Liaison for our District is: Steve Peer

Email: steve.peer@union103.org Phone: (207) 497-2154