

LNSU Procedures – Finding and Serving Homeless Students

September 2009

Legal Authority – McKinney Vento Act

School enrollment will be based on the best interest of the student and the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth. To the extent feasible the student will be enrolled in the school of origin, which may be:

1. The school last attended by the student when permanently housed
2. The last school in which the child was enrolled

The LNSU will fulfill the obligation of the law by appointing a Homeless Liaison that will be housed in the Supervisory Union Office. The Homeless Liaison will work with parents, unaccompanied students and administrators of the involved public schools to make a decision regarding the homeless status of a youth and the school that will be in the best interest of the youth to attend. Decisions made by the Homeless Liaison can be appealed by the parent to the school board where the student currently resides. School board decisions may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education within five days of the school board's decision.

The following steps will be followed.

Enrollment and Notice to the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">*Informational posters will be displayed in every LNSU school in areas where community members and students frequent. Call 1-800-308-2145 to order posters.*Enrollment forms will include language to help identify homeless or unaccompanied youth.*The LNSU Homeless Referral Form will be completed and submitted to the LNSU Homeless Liaison as soon as the principal of a school suspects a student may meet the criteria.*The student will be allowed to enroll in the school they are attempting to attend immediately to provide time for the homeless determination to be completed.
Homeless or Unaccompanied Youth Determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">*The LNSU Homeless Liaison will contact the parent or unaccompanied youth to further investigate the situation and residency details. Principals will be contacted as part of this process and asked to verify actual residency.

	<p>*The Homeless Liaison <u>for the town where the student is currently living</u> will make a determination of residency and school attendance that will be in the best interest of the student. The decision will be communicated in writing to the parent/unaccompanied youth and school administrators involved. The LNSU Homeless Liaison will collaborate with other Homeless Coordinators in this process.</p> <p>*Evidence of residency may be requested such as: signed lease/rental agreement, current tax bill nor mortgage papers/closing statement, notarized letter from the owner of the current temporary housing site indicating temporary residency status, utility bills, camp ground payment records, etc.</p>
<p>Transportation Needs of the Student</p>	<p>*The transportation needs of the student to the school they will attend will be determined by the Homeless Liaison serving the town where the student lives in conjunction with the parent/unaccompanied youth, Homeless Liaison for the school or origin and the involved school administrators.</p> <p>*Costs for transportation to the school of origin, that is not also the school of current residency, will be shared by the school of origin and the school of current residency.</p> <p>*Parents who choose to drive their child to school and unaccompanied youth who drive themselves to the school of origin can be reimbursed for the mileage at the current approved school rate. Mileage reimbursement forms must be completed and submitted for processing every two weeks. Contact the Homeless Liaison to determine the method to be used to process the payment.</p> <p><u>*Once the family/youth secures fixed housing they must pay the transportation costs to the school of origin for the remainder of the school year.</u></p>
<p>Counting of Average Daily Membership (ADM)</p>	<p>ADM will be counted by the school the student attends.</p>
<p>The Decision</p>	<p>*The decision regarding homeless or unaccompanied youth status will be put in writing to the family/youth and school administrators involved in the case by the Homeless Liaison serving the town where the student is currently living. The letter will include information for the</p>

	<p>family/youth how to contact the Regional Homeless and Unaccompanied Youth Liaison/Advocate if they disagree with the decision or need referrals to resources.</p> <p>*Information from the VT DOE regarding the Dispute Resolution Process will be included with the decision.</p>
Support for Homeless and Unaccompanied Youth	<p>*Funds are available to assist the youth with education related expenses. The process and forms to complete to access these funds are attached and can be found on the LNSU web site.</p> <p>*The LNSU Homeless Liaison must approve the expenses before funding can be accessed. Plans for expenses will be discussed and approved with the Homeless Liaison and then submitted directly to the LNSU Grants Manager. Once the LNSU Grants Manager approves the planned expenditures typical documentation for expenses must be followed which includes the submission of all receipts.</p>
Determination of the Length of the Anticipated Homeless Status	<p>*The anticipated length of homeless status will be discussed with the family/youth.</p> <p>*The student has a legal right to attend the school of origin for the duration of the school year in which they became homeless.</p> <p>*In the event the homeless status is resolved in the early days of the school year, the Homeless Liaison will work with the family to determine the long term enrollment needs that will be in the best interest of the student over the long term.</p>
School of Attendance When Fixed Housing is Secured	<p>*The student will attend the school that serves the town of residence or <u>once the family/youth secures fixed housing they must pay the transportation costs to the school of origin for the remainder of the school year.</u></p>