



DR. J. DARRELL COOPER  
SUPERINTENDENT

# ALEXANDER CITY SCHOOLS

375 LEE STREET • ALEXANDER CITY, ALABAMA 35010 • 256-234-5074

## Alexander City School System

The Alexander City School System will employ practices that increase the awareness of the Homeless Education program. The district shall notify parents/guardians of homeless children and youth of available resources and assist them in accessing the resources.

The Alexander City School System shall conduct an annual evaluation of its Homeless Education program to determine the effectiveness of the program. The system will adjust practices and procedures as needed to improve the effectiveness of implementation and student achievement.

### DEFINITION:

The 2015 reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act ensured the educational rights and protections of homeless children and youth so that they may enroll in school, attend regularly, and succeed in educational opportunities. For the purpose of identifying homeless children and youth, the Alexander City School System shall use the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless children and youth. The act defines homeless children and youth (twenty-one years of age and younger) as a child who:

- lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
- who are sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardships; or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, camping grounds (sometimes referred to as doubled up)
- due to the lack of alternative accommodations;
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals;
- are awaiting foster placement;
- including a child or youth who is living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings.
- who is living with non-nuclear family members or with friends.
- 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/
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

The term unaccompanied youth includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes youth living in runaway shelters, abandoned buildings, cars, on the streets, or in other inadequate housing and children/youth denied housing by their families (sometimes referred to as "throwaway" children and youth), and school-age unwed mothers, living in homes for unwed mothers, who have no other housing available.

The school of origin is the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

### PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

Homeless children and youth will be provided the opportunity to receive a free and appropriate public education regardless of their residency status. The program will ensure that these students are afforded equal access to academic and other services that will allow them to meet the same challenging state achievement standards as non-homeless students.

The program provides procedural guidelines to ensure that homeless students are not denied enrollment due to the lack of registration documentation at the time of enrollment. Homeless children and youth, including preschool age children, will be enrolled immediately pending obtainment of the necessary documents. The school counselor will assist parents guardians, or unaccompanied youth in obtaining the proper documentation.

The homeless education program makes every effort to provide homeless children and youth with a stable school environment by enrolling students in the school of origin and providing them with transportation to and from the school of origin.

The program provides for a homeless liaison that will ensure program implementation and coordinate efforts to ensure that homeless children and youth, including preschool age children, are provided the opportunity for academic success.

## **IDENTIFICATION & REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

Homeless children and youth are often undetected. The school district will conduct training sessions with the appropriate school personnel to inform them of methods of identifying homeless children without using stigmatizing terminology. The district will use a *Residency Questionnaire* (Appendix A) to facilitate identity of homeless children and youth and preschoolers. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth will complete the residency Questionnaire at the time of registration. The school counselor may provide appropriate assistance to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth in answering the questionnaire if necessary.

A copy of the *Residency Questionnaire* must be submitted to the Alexander City Homeless Liaison on the day of registration. The school will maintain the original form in a file separate from the student's permanent record for audit purposes during the year. This file should be housed in the school counselor's office.

The school shall enroll a homeless child even if the child is unable to produce proof of residency, birth certificate, social security number, immunization record, or school records. The school shall immediately contact the last school attended to obtain relevant academic and other records. If the child needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school counselor or principal's designee will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth appropriate assistance in obtaining the necessary records and documents for enrollment. Enrollment without the required immunization record will be pending receipt or acquisition of immunization documentation. The existing method of assigning a student number will be employed when a student enrolls without a social security number.

An unaccompanied youth may enroll himself or herself. In this case, the school principal or designee will immediately contact the Alexander City Homeless Liaison to report the enrollment of an unaccompanied youth. The school will provide the youth with proper assistance in language that the student understands. The Alexander City Homeless Liaison will assist the homeless unaccompanied youth in obtaining eligible educational services.

The application process for free and reduced price meals can be expedited for homeless children and youth. The determination for free meals may be made without completing the full application process source: U.S. Department of Agriculture:

<http://www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/Homeless%20Students%20and%20the%20School%20Lunch%20Program%20Fact%20Sheet1.pdf>

[http://www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/Basic%20McKinney-Vento%20Booklet%20\(2011\).pdf](http://www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/Basic%20McKinney-Vento%20Booklet%20(2011).pdf)

## **IDENTIFICATION OF HOMELESS PRESCHOOLERS**

The Alexander City Homeless Liaison will collaborate with local community service agencies (ex. Department of Human Resources, Health Department, faith-based organizations and the court system etc.) and school personnel to identify homeless preschoolers. The district will also include homeless preschoolers and homeless children in the "Child find" process as required by the Individual with Disabilities Education Act.

## **SCHOOL PLACEMENT**

The District may not segregate homeless children. The district shall make the choice regarding placement without regard to whether the child lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere. All homeless students shall be provided with services that are comparable to services offered to other students in the school in which the child is enrolled, including:

1. Transportation services;
2. Educational services for which the child meets the eligibility criteria;
3. Programs in vocational and technical educational;
4. Programs for gifted and talented students; and
5. School nutrition programs.

The school system will make school placement decisions in the "best interest" of the homeless child or youth. Students will continue in the *school of origin* for the duration of homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or for the remainder of the academic year. Students may enroll in any public school attended by non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.

If the school enrollment decision is contrary to the wishes of the child or youth or youth's parent/guardian, the school will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the decision. The complainant must file a School Enrollment Dispute (Appendix A) with the school in which the student is presently enrolled. The principal of this school will notify the Alexander City Homeless Liaison of the dispute and take steps to resolve the dispute.

When a dispute arises regarding school placement, the system will immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, pending resolution of the dispute. The Alexander City Homeless Liaison will expeditiously take steps to resolve the dispute (See Appendix B). If the dispute cannot be settled by the homeless liaison, the liaison will assist the complainant in seeking technical assistance from an appropriate service agency.

The District may require the parent or guardian of a homeless child to submit contact information.

The Alexander City School System shall coordinate the provision of services to homeless children with:

1. Local social service agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to homeless children and their families;
2. Other local educational agencies, on inter district issues such as transportation or transfer of school records; and
3. As applicable, state and local housing agencies.

Funding for the support of homeless students in Title I schools will be provided through the Title I program at the school. Funding for the support of homeless students in non-Title I schools will be provided through Title I set-aside funds. These funds may be used to purchase instructional supplies, provide health and medical assistance, purchase clothing and hygiene items, and any other purchases requested by the Problem Solving Team that can assist the homeless students in remaining in school and succeeding in the academic program.

Parents of Homeless students are encouraged to:

- Become actively involved in making suggestions in the planning and operations of the Title I program.
- Attend all informational meetings concerning Title I programs.
- Attend an annual public meeting to discuss the programs and activities that are carried out with Title I funds, to inform the parents of their right to consult in the design and implementation of projects, to solicit parents' input, and to provide parents with the mechanism for maintaining ongoing communication among parents, teachers, and agency officials.
- Consult with teachers on an on-going basis and attend parent/teacher conferences, if at all possible.
- Provide information and ideas on the effectiveness of the assistance that the student has received.
- Parents of homeless students may contact the state coordinator if further help is needed:  
Ladonna Rudolph, State Coordinator for Homeless Education Alabama Department of Education  
Office: (334) 242-8199  
FAX: (334) 242-0496

This plan will be reviewed and revised as necessary.

**Alexander City School district  
McKinney –Vento Act  
Student Residency Questionnaire**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the questions below concerning your residency. The information you provide is confidential. The purpose of this information is to ensure the rights of your child and youth under the McKinney-Vento Law (42 US code 11431 and Title X under ESEA/NCLB).**

- |   |                              |                             |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Is your address a temporary living arrangement?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Is your living arrangement due to loss of housing or economic hardship | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

**If you answered YES to either of the above questions, please complete the remainder of this form. If you answered No to both questions, you may stop here**

---

Where is the student currently living? Please check one)

- ☐ In a motel/hotel
- ☐ In a shelter
- ☐ With another family in a house or apartment due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- ☐ In a car, park, campground, street, or abandoned building
- ☐ Moving from place to place
- ☐ Temporary or emergency foster care
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Last school attended:

School: _____	District: _____
City: _____	State: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian(s)

Name: _____	Signature: _____
Name: _____	Signature: _____

**OR**

Student (unaccompanied homeless youth):

Name: _____	Signature: _____
Address: _____	
Home Number: _____	Work Number: _____ Cell Number: _____

If the student is NOT living in permanent housing, proof of residency and other documents normally needed for enrollment are not required and the student is to be enrolled immediately.

Return this form to the Federal Programs Coordinator, if applicable

## **APPENDIX B**

The homeless liaison shall work to ensure that homeless children and youth, including preschoolers are identified, enrolled in school, and receive all eligible services to facilitate student academic success. The responsibilities listed below are not all inclusive but shall be primary duties of the liaison. The homeless liaison shall ensure that:

- Homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- Homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the district;
- Homeless children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, and preschool programs administered by the school system, and referrals to health, mental health, dental and other appropriate services;
- Parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children, and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- Parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing transportation services;
- Transportation cost disputes between the school system and school system of enrollment are resolved;
- Sensitivity and confidentiality training is provided to transportation and school personnel regarding the needs of homeless children and youth;
- Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act;
- Public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated to locations where children and youth receive services under the Act;
- Required reports concerning the homeless education program are submitted to appropriate agencies and the State Department of Education;
- Evaluation of the homeless education program is conducted annually and necessary program and implementation adjustments are made in a timely manner.



DR. J. DARRELL COOPER  
SUPERINTENDENT

# ALEXANDER CITY SCHOOLS

375 LEE STREET • ALEXANDER CITY, ALABAMA 35010 • 256-234-5074

## APPENDIX C School Homeless or Foster Care STUDENT ENROLLMENT DISPUTE FORM

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Fax Number

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN/SN \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-911 Address (Street Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code

Current Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

### Complainant Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Student \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number

*Note: Student information regarding address, telephone number, information protected by Everyday School Records Act can be released only to parent, guardian, the student, or a person specifically designated as a representative of the parent or guardian.*

Name of school that complainant chooses student to be immediately enrolled in and/or transported to/from until dispute is resolved: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this the school of origin? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, from which school was the student transferred? \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Complaint \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Complainant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*You may contact the state coordinator if further help is needed:*

*Ladonna Rudolph, State Coordinator for Homeless Education*

*Julie Turner, State Coordinator Foster Care*

*Alabama Department of Education*

*Office: (334) 242-8199*

*FAX: (334) 242-0496*

### School Use Only

Principal's Action on the Complaint

Taken within \_\_\_\_\_ school day(s) after receiving notice of the complaint.

Date central office contact person was notified of the dispute: \_\_\_\_\_

Action taken by the principal to resolve the dispute: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the dispute resolved? \_\_\_\_\_



DR. J. DARRELL COOPER  
SUPERINTENDENT

# ALEXANDER CITY SCHOOLS

375 LEE STREET • ALEXANDER CITY, ALABAMA 35010 • 256-234-5074

## APPENDIX D DISTRICT ENROLLMENT DISPUTE FORM

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN/SN \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

### District Action on Complaint

Taken within \_\_\_\_\_ school days after receiving notice of the complaint. Was the complaint resolved at the district level?  
\_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

If the dispute was resolved at the district level, describe the action taken by the county homeless liaison to resolve the dispute to the satisfaction of the complainant:

If the dispute was not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, did the county homeless liaison convene a meeting of the interested parties to attempt resolution of the dispute? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no. If yes, when and where did the meeting take place? Describe the outcome of the meeting.

If no, will a meeting be held for resolution purposes? When? Where?

If a resolution cannot be derived at the district level, the state homeless liaison should assist the complainant in contacting service organizations to provide technical assistance to the complainant. Did the state homeless liaison assist the complainant in this manner? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

Name of service organization contacted for assistance \_\_\_\_\_

Was the dispute resolved? \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the resolution.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Complainant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Homeless Liaison

*You may contact the state coordinator if further help is needed:  
Ladonna Rudolph, State Coordinator for Homeless Education  
Julie Turner, State Coordinator Foster Care  
Alabama Department of Education  
Office: (334) 242-8199  
FAX: (334) 242-0496*

## APPENDIX E

### EVALUATION STANDARDS AND INDICATORS

STANDARD		EVIDENCE
1	Within one (1) full day of an attempt to enroll in school, homeless or foster children and youth will be in attendance.	
2	Homeless or foster pre-k to 12 children and youth will have stability in school.	
2.1	Attendance rates will be at or above the relevant district average.	
2.2	Students will remain in the school of origin for the period of homelessness or foster care, if permanently housed, for the remainder of the school year, unless parents or unaccompanied youth requested transfer to another school	
3	Homeless or foster children and youth will receive specialized services when eligible.	
3.1	Eligible homeless or foster preschool children can participate in public preschool (Head Start, state pre-k, preschool programs for children with disabilities under IDEA, meals, programs for children with limited English proficiency, and Title I pre-school programs).	
3.2	Eligible homeless or foster children and youth can receive special education and related services under IDEA, educational and related aids and services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency.	
3.3	Homeless or foster children and youth will receive appropriate services, based on assessment of individual needs, through a combination of resources, including, but not limited to Title I, McKinney-Vento, and other federally funded programs.	
4	Parents or persons acting as parents of homeless foster children and youth will participate meaningfully in their children's education.	
4.1	Parents or persons acting as parents will have a face-to-face conference with the teacher, guidance counselor, or social worker within 30 days of enrollment.	
4.2	Parents or persons acting as parents will be provided with individual student reports informing them of their child's specific academic needs and achievement on academic assessments aligned with state academic achievement standards.	
4.3	Parents or persons acting as parents will report monitoring or facilitating homework assignments.	
4.4	Parents or persons acting as parents will share reading time with their children (i.e., parent reads to child or listens to child read).	
4.5	Parents who would like parent skills training will attend available programs.	
4.6	Parents or guardians will demonstrate	



	awareness of McKinney rights.	
5	Unaccompanied youth will demonstrate awareness of McKinney-Vento rights.	
5.1	Homeless or foster children and youth in grades 3-12 will meet their state's academic standards.	
5.2	Rates of promotion to the next grade level will be at or above the district average.	
5.3	Rates of high school graduation or equivalent will be at or above the district average.	
PROGRAM COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS		