

STDNT3.3 - Admissions: Homeless and Foster Students

S - Student

FDC

ADMISSIONS: HOMELESS AND FOSTER CARE STUDENTS

LOCAL

HOMELESS STUDENTS

As a condition of receiving funds under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act), a district serving children who are homeless shall, according to the child's best interest:

1. Continue the child's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness:
 - a. If the child's family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; and
 - b. For the remainder of the academic year, if the child becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
2. Enroll the child in any school where nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child is actually living are eligible to attend.

The school selected by the homeless student shall immediately admit the homeless student, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic 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 medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian to the liaison for homeless students, who shall assist in obtaining the necessary immunizations or medical records.

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

STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

The school selected by the child in foster care shall immediately admit the child, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documentation; but the school may require the student to provide their Notice to Provider's document.

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 or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the Child Welfare Agency Point of Contact to the District Point of Contact (POC) for children in foster care, who shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records.

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

The student shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute;

the Child Welfare Agency Point of Contact shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of appeal;

the Child Welfare Agency Point of Contact and student shall be referred to the school's Point of Contact, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute; and

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

School District POCs should seek the Best Interest Determination ("BID") form from DCS.

The state education association (SEA), District, and child welfare agencies have flexibility in determining which factors should be considered when evaluating the appropriateness of the current educational setting and any additional factors that pertain to a child's best interest.

Though the specific factors may vary depending on context, in order to make a holistic and well-informed determination, a variety of student-centered factors should be considered.

Transportation costs should not be considered when determining a child's best interest, which is consistent with the program instruction released by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) subsequent to the passage of the Fostering Connections Act.

The Arizona Department of Education, Office of Indian Education, has issued guidance on best interest determinations for children in the custody of Tribal Social Services. The BID form provided by DCS may differ with tribal agencies.