

POLICY.. <b>McKinney-Vento Education Program</b>		
ADOPTION EFFECTIVE May 9, 2005	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED January 17, 2025	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED
POLICY,PROCEDURE MANUAL CATEGORY  STUDENTS		

## I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the Board’s commitment to implement federal and state laws to ensure that each child and youth experiencing homelessness has equal access to the same free appropriate public education, including a public preschool education and school-related activities, as provided to other children and youth.

This policy also memorializes the Board’s commitment to procedures for the identification and enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness living in Harford County that are consistent with this policy, and which remove any barrier to enrollment, attendance, and/or success of children and youth experiencing homelessness in school.

## II. Definitions

- A. “Child” and “youth” means an individual who is eligible to attend public school or educational program in Maryland, including:
1. Prekindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade
  2. Special Education, including Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (Child Find)
  3. Judy Center
  4. Other programs
- B. Dispute Resolution – A process for addressing disagreements regarding enrollment, school selection, or services for children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- C. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – A federal law codified at 20 U.S. Code §6301 et sq. whose stated purpose is to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps.
- D. McKinney-Vento Education Liaison – Individual identified by the school district to ensure that the rights of students who are experiencing homelessness, in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act (hereinafter known as the McKinney-Vento Act), are protected.

- E. Student experiencing homelessness means – A student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, whether the temporary housing is in Harford County, including:
1. Children and youth, who share the housing of other people due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons. Also, those living in motels, hotels, transitional housing, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations, living in emergency or transitional shelter, abandoned in hospitals, are runaways living in shelters or other inadequate accommodations.
  2. Children and youth who have a primary night-time residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
  3. Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
  4. Children and youth living with parents/guardians who are migratory agricultural workers in one of the circumstances described above.
  5. Unaccompanied child or youth, who is a student experiencing homelessness not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian.
- F. McKinney-Vento Act – A federal law that describes the educational rights of children and youth who are experiencing homelessness
- G. “Parent” or “guardian” means – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
1. Biological parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  2. Adoptive parent – A person who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  3. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  4. Guardian – A person who had been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  5. Unaccompanied youth is 18 years or older and no parent/guardian is available.
  6. Caregiver – An adult resident of Harford County who exercises care, custody, or control over the student, but is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian.
  7. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a state agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by the Family Law Article §5-507.
- H. “School of origin” means the school or prekindergarten the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled. When a

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student completes the final grade at the school of origin, the school of origin includes the designated receiving/feeder school.

### III. Guidelines

The rights of all children and youth experiencing homelessness and eligible for enrollment in Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) will be protected in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act.

1. Children and youth experiencing homelessness are eligible for services described under Title I, Part A of the Elementary Students Education Act (ESEA), as amended by Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA), whether the students reside in a Title I school attendance area or meet the academic standards required of other children for eligibility.
2. Students experiencing homelessness will be immediately enrolled once information is received that the student is homeless.
3. Students experiencing homelessness and becoming permanently housed during the school year will retain McKinney-Vento protection for the remainder of that school year.
4. Students experiencing homelessness will be provided with services comparable to those offered to other students in the school in which the student experiencing homelessness is enrolled.
5. Students experiencing homelessness and meeting eligibility criteria are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics.
6. Food and nutrition services will be provided immediately upon the identification or enrollment of a student experiencing homelessness.
7. Harford County Public Schools will designate a McKinney-Vento Education Liaison for students experiencing homelessness.
8. The dispute resolution process will be used to resolve all disputes concerning enrollment, school selection, and services for students experiencing homelessness.
9. Disciplinary procedures and actions will consider a student's homeless status.
10. Students experiencing homelessness can remain in the school of origin, (a school student attended while permanently being housed before becoming homeless or at the last school enrolled) if it is in the best interest of the student.
11. Transfer to the school closest to the current temporary location.
12. Receive transportation to and from the school of origin.

### IV. Responsibilities

1. The Superintendent will ensure that the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act are followed.
2. In furtherance of the above commitment the Board directs the Superintendent to:
  - a. Appoint a liaison for the education of the students experiencing homelessness who shall ensure that students experiencing homelessness are

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identified and served in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act; COMAR 13A.05.09, and any other pertinent law or regulation.

- b. Adopt procedures to implement this policy.
3. LEA liaison for Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) will participate in professional development provided by the State Coordinator.
4. Pupil Personnel Workers, in collaboration with the McKinney-Vento Education Liaison, will identify all school-aged children and youth who are experiencing homelessness in Harford County, including those who have self-identified.
5. McKinney-Vento Education Liaison will support children participating in Early Childhood Programs, such as the Judy Centers and Early Intervention Programs.
6. Pupil Personnel Workers, Principals, and McKinney-Vento Education Liaison will ensure the immediate enrollment of students who have been identified as experiencing homelessness.
7. Principals, Pupil Personnel Workers, and McKinney-Vento Education Liaison will ensure that students experiencing homelessness are provided with comparable services offered to other students.
8. The McKinney-Vento Education Liaison and the Title I Supervisor will ensure that all children and youth who are experiencing homelessness receive services comparable to Title I services and supports and that the local Title I plan describes the services and support provided.
9. The Director of Transportation, in collaboration with Pupil Personnel Workers and McKinney-Vento Education Liaison, will coordinate the transportation of students who are experiencing homelessness attending Harford County Public Schools.
10. The Supervisor of Food and Nutrition, in collaboration with the Pupil Personnel Worker, will immediately coordinate the food and nutrition services as soon as the student experiencing homelessness is enrolled or identified.
11. The McKinney-Vento Education Liaison will ensure that the dispute resolution process is used to resolve all disputes regarding enrollment, school selections, and services as soon as the student experiencing homelessness is identified or enrolled.

### **V. Delegation of Authority**

The Superintendent is authorized to adopt appropriate procedures to implement this policy.

1. Appoint a liaison for the education of students experiencing homelessness who shall ensure that students are identified and served in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act; COMAR 13A.05.09, and any other pertinent law or regulation.

### **VI. Related Sources**

1. McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title IX, Part A of Every Student Succeeds Act, Reauthorized 2015
2. COMAR 13.A.05.09
3. Family Law Article 5-507

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4. Title X, Part C, Subtitle B, of the No Child Left Behind Act, Education for Homeless Children and Youth
5. Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended through P.L. 114-95, enacted December 10, 2015

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**Board Approval Acknowledged By:**

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Sean W. Bulson, Ed. D  
Superintendent

Policy Action Dates					
ACTION	DATE	ACTION	DATE	ACTION	DATE
Adopted	7/9/1990	Amended	8/23/1999	Amended	1/17/2025
Amended	8/20/1990	Amended	5/30/2002		
Amended	7/8/1991	Amended	5/14/2018		
Amended	6/12/1995	Amended	11/18/2019		

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References	
LAST EDITOR/REVISIONS	JOB POSITION (if LAST EDITOR IS AFTER)
Mr. Bernard Hennigan	Executive Director of Student Support Services
PERSON RESPONSIBLE	JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE
DESIGN NAME	JOB POSITION OF DESIGNER
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005:	

### **LEGAL REFERENCES<sup>1</sup>**

All references are set forth in the Policy.

<sup>1</sup> All references are to specific federal or Maryland statutes or regulations. References are provided for convenience and informational purposes only and are not to be considered as exhaustive or as precluding Harford County Public Schools from relying upon any other statutes or regulations in support of a policy.