



Homeless Education Policy and Procedures

Revised Homeless Education Policy and Procedures for Paideia Academy FY2025

Policy

It is the policy of Paideia Academy to ensure that homeless children and youth are provided with equal access to our educational programs, have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State of Arizona and national Common Core academic standards, are not segregated based on their status as homeless, and to establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination due to their homelessness.

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth

The term "homeless children and youth" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to economic hardship. This includes:

- Temporarily sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons.
- Living in motels, hotels, or campgrounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Living in emergency shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals or awaiting foster care placement.
- Residing in places not designed for regular sleeping accommodation, such as cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, or substandard housing.
- Runaway children or children who are abandoned.

Migratory children and unaccompanied youth meeting the above criteria are also considered homeless. Homeless status is determined in cooperation with parents or, in the case of unaccompanied youth, with Paideia's homeless liaison. Documentation may include forms such as the AZ State/Shared Residency Form, Paideia Enrollment Form, or NSLP free/reduced meal application form.

Procedure

1. School Selection Placement in Paideia Academy shall occur based on the child's best interest. To the extent feasible, the child or youth will be kept in Paideia Academy unless contrary to the wishes of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth. The liaison or designee will assist in placement decisions, prioritizing the student's best interest.

2. Enrollment Paideia Academy shall immediately enroll any homeless child or youth, even if required documents are missing. Enrollment is defined as attending school and participating fully in school activities. Records will be requested from the previous school without delay.

3. Comparable Services Homeless children and youth will be provided with services comparable to those offered to other students, such as:

- Transportation services.
- Educational services for eligibility-based programs, such as ELL, gifted, or special education programs.
- At-risk student programs.
- School nutrition programs.
- Title I services.
- After-school programs.

4. Transportation At the request of the parent or unaccompanied youth, transportation will be provided to and from Paideia Academy for the duration of homelessness. If permanent housing is found, the family may choose to continue at Paideia Academy, with transportation provided for a reasonable time (not extending beyond the current school year).

Inter-district and shared transportation coordination will be arranged as necessary to ensure the students' needs are met.

5. Local Educational Agency Liaison The School Social Worker will serve as the Homeless Liaison for Paideia Academy. The liaison shall:

- Ensure homeless children and youth are identified through school personnel and coordination with other entities.
- Facilitate immediate enrollment and ensure full participation in school activities.
- Provide referrals to services and ensure that families and students are informed of educational and related opportunities.
- Disseminate public notice of educational rights in accessible locations and languages.
- Coordinate services with local and federal programs.
- Mediate disputes and ensure compliance with policies.
- Actively participate in Title I-A decision-making processes to allocate set-aside funds for homeless students.

6. Staff Training Annual professional development will be provided for staff to:

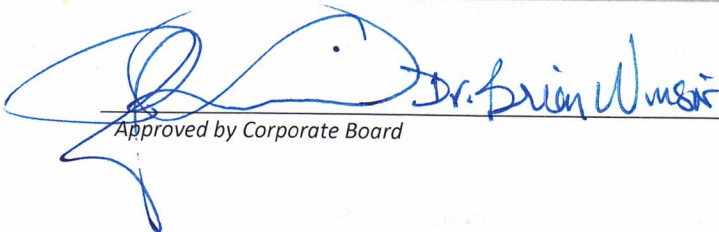
- Understand McKinney-Vento requirements.
- Recognize signs of homelessness.
- Implement policies for enrollment, attendance, and academic success of homeless students.

7. Disputes If a dispute arises over enrollment or placement, the child or youth shall be admitted to the school of their choice pending resolution. The liaison will resolve disputes expediently and provide written explanations of decisions, including rights to appeal to the State Coordinator.

8. Policy Review and Revision This policy will be reviewed and revised annually to ensure compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act and effectiveness in supporting homeless students.

Required Evidence

- Contact information for the McKinney-Vento Liaison will be updated on the State of Arizona's contact list annually.
- Public notice of educational rights will be disseminated in multiple languages at accessible locations.
- Data collection and reporting systems will be maintained to ensure compliance.
- Transportation procedures for inter-district and shared coordination will be documented.
- Annual staff training records and agendas will be kept on file.



Approved by Corporate Board

Date

3/3/2025