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Date: June 13, 2013

To: Board of Education
Dr. Mary B. Pfeiffer

From: Timothy Gantz, Director of Pupil Services
Steve Dregger, Assistant District Administrator of Learning & Leadership

RE: Homeless Policy

Attached is a proposed policy for our Homeless program. We went through an audit of our Homeless, or McKinney-Vento, program this year. We came through that okay, with the only exception being the lack of a published policy. We are recommending this policy be approved within the 2012-13 school year so it can be considered as part of our audit; and a citation for noncompliance can be avoided.

REVISED POLICY - VOL. 20, NO. 1

HOMELESS STUDENTS

Children and youth, including unaccompanied youth who meet the Federal definition of "homeless" will be provided a free and appropriate public education in the same manner as all other students of the District. **To that end, students who are homeless and will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and will be assigned to the school serving those non-homeless students residing in the area in which the homeless child is actually living.** The District shall establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness. ~~No homeless student will be denied enrollment based on a lack of proof of residency. No Board policy, administrative guideline, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless children.~~

Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and include those who meet any of the following criteria:

- A. share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason**
- B. live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations**
- C. live in emergency or transitional shelters**
- D. are abandoned in hospitals**
- E. are awaiting foster care placement**
- F. 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, or**
- G. live in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting**

Additionally, pursuant to Federal law, migratory children who are living in circumstances described in A-G above are also considered homeless.

Children, youth and their families who are homeless shall be provided equal access to the educational services for which they are eligible, including preschool programs administered by the School District.

The District shall remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of students who are homeless in schools in the District. Students who are homeless shall be enrolled immediately, even if they do not have the necessary enrollment documentation such as immunization and health records, proof of residency or guardianship, birth certificate, school records, and other documentation.

Students who are hHomeless students--will be provided services comparable to other students in the District including:

- A. transportation services;
- B. educational services for which the homeless student meets eligibility criteria including services provided under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or similar State ~~and~~ or local programs, educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency;
- C. programs in vocational and technical education;
- D. programs for gifted and talented students; and
- E. school nutrition programs;
- F. before and after school programs.

Students who are homeless have the right to remain in their school of origin or the local attendance area school, according to the child's best interest. The school of origin is the school that the student attended when permanently housed or last enrolled. The local attendance area school is any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the student is actually living are eligible to attend.

Students who are homeless have the right to dispute their school assignment, if their assignment is other than their school of origin. In determining the best interest of the student, the District shall, to the extent feasible, keep the student in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the homeless student's parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth. If the student is sent to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian, a written explanation, including a statement regarding the right to appeal, will be provided to the homeless student's parent or guardian or the unaccompanied youth.

① The Board of Education requires that these rights and the dispute process be communicated to the parent or guardian of the homeless student or unaccompanied youth.

In addition to notifying the parent or guardian of the homeless student or unaccompanied youth of the rights described above, the District shall post public notice of educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness in each school.

At the request of the parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the local homeless liaison, transportation shall be provided for a homeless student to and from the school or origin as follows:

- A. If the homeless student continues to live in the School District in which the school of origin is located, transportation will be provided in accordance with District policy/administrative guidelines and federal requirements.
- B. If the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though continuing his/her education at the school of origin, the district of origin and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. If the districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

① **INSERT:**

To dispute the school assignment made, the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth are to submit their dispute in writing to the Director of Pupil Services (410 S. Commercial St., Neenah, WI), stating: 1-the reason why they dispute the placement offer; and 2-identify the placement site or sites that are preferred. In consultation with the Assistant Superintendent of Learning and Leadership, a final decision will be made and the complainant notified within 20 work days.

The parent/caregiver or unaccompanied youth may appeal the district's final decision by filing a complaint with the state superintendent of Public Instruction, in accordance with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Complaint Resolution and Appeals Process.

policy

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| The District Administrator will appoint ~~a~~ **Homeless Liaison for Homeless-Children** who will perform the duties as assigned by the District Administrator. Additionally, the Liaison will coordinate and collaborate with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth as well as with community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and ~~related~~ **basic needs** services to ~~homeless~~ children and youths **who are homeless**.

| http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/youthposeter_eng_color.pdf

 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.

The district will continue to comply with the legal requirements of the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.