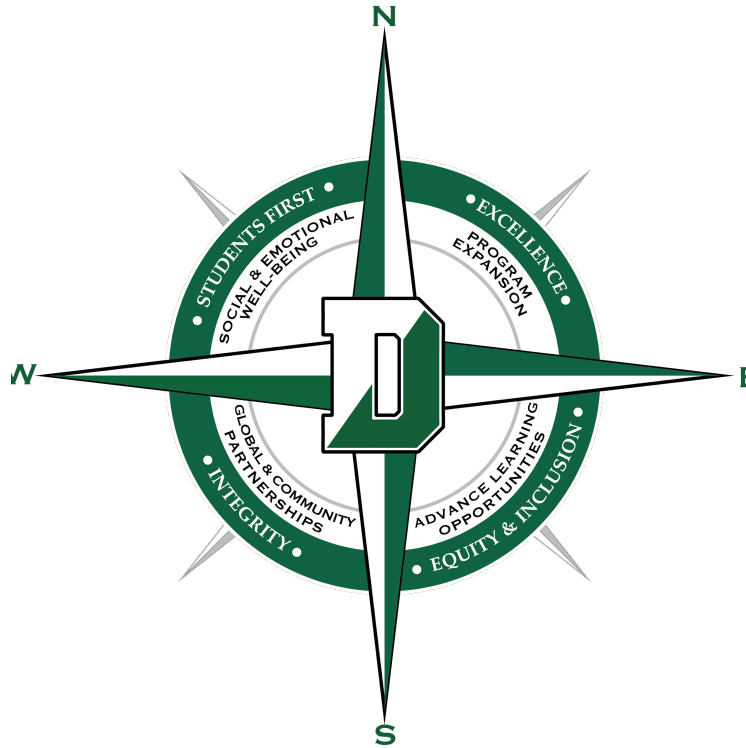


Homeless Manual & Resource Guide



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Overview

Homelessness in Legislation and Education

Homelessness impacts over 23,000 students in Massachusetts as of the 2017-2019 school year. (site USICH) Homeless is a journey and not an overnight event and it has an enormous impact on children and their education. We know that homeless impacts the family, school attendance, the student's ability to learn and focus, can create educational gaps due to high mobility, and has a behavioral impact. Homelessness is often accompanied with food insecurity; lack of medical, dental, and mental health services; and loss of connection to family, friends, and community. Homelessness also impacts the teacher, classmates and the others in the school.

While legislation surrounding homelessness has its origins in housing, it persists today and is now codified in the Every Child Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). Mostly commonly referred to as "McKinney-Vento" for the name of the act that initially referenced homelessness in education, we now know that homelessness is a barrier to student success and that students and families impacted by homelessness require assistance from their school district.

Legal History

- 1987 Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance
- 1990 Amended to remove barriers to education
- 1994 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance
- 2002 No Child Left Behind (NCLB)
- 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Students in Foster Care

Students in foster care were previously considered homeless. However, in December 2016, and pursuant to ESSA, new provisions and guidelines were developed by DESE. These students are no longer considered homeless. Students in foster care do experience instability much like students who are homeless. This impacts their home, schooling, and families. DESE has asserted that providing educational stability to these students can promote academic progress, on-time graduation from high school, and provide continuity in peer and adult relationships.

Language And Definitions

Who is Homeless?

Anyone who lacks fixed regular and adequate nighttime residence.

This includes individuals living in:

- Shelters and motels
- On the street: cars, parks, ...
- Doubling up due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- Preschool-age children
- Unaccompanied youth
- Migrant children in these living arrangements

School of origin

Means the school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including preschool.

When the child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin..., the term “school of origin” shall include the designated receiving school at the next level; for all feeder schools.

Educational Rights of Students Who Are Homeless

I. Immediate Enrollment Locally

- With or without documentation
- Academic records, health records
- Residency/shelter
- Special education records
- Discipline
- Guardianship

*This includes unaccompanied youth including out of school youth.

*Homeless living arrangements are NOT Directory Information.

II. School Selection & Enrollment

- School of Origin
- School last attended
- School attended when student became homeless
- Designated receiving school for all feeder schools
- Enrolled means enrolled and attending
- Transportation if needed
- Shared responsibility and reimbursement
- Special education transportation
- State lines

III. Right to appeal a district's decision

- Dispute Resolution System

IV. Equal Access & Comparable Services

- School courses, events, extracurricular activities, summer programming
 - Credit accrual for partially completed work, college and career counseling, assistance with FAFSA and verification of homelessness
- Student support services
- EL, Special Education

- Preschool, Alternative Education
- Charter schools, vocational schools, school choice

V. Nutrition

- Free lunch and breakfast
- Liaison verification

VI. Title I

- School-wide & targeted programs
- Addressing the unique needs of homeless students
- Liaison
- Transportation

Resources for Educators and Families on Homelessness

National Center for Homeless Education

- NCHE, serve.org

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

- naehcy.org/ National

Runaway Safeline

- 1800runaway.org

Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless

- Mahomeless.org

DESE Websites <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mv/>

DESE Advisories

- Homeless guidance and advisories:
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mv/haa/McKinney-Vento.pdf>
- Foster Care guidance: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=24160>

DESE Contacts

Sarah Slutterback, State Coordinator

781-338-6330

sslutterback@doe.mass.edu

Julie Mador, Regional Homeless Education Liaison

508-997-4511 ext. 3424

jmador@newbedfordschools.org

Duxbury Public Schools' Statement of Non-discrimination

The Duxbury Public Schools does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities on the basis of race, hair traits associated with race, color, sex, national origin, disability, age, homelessness, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Ample handicapped parking is clearly identified. Handicapped bathrooms are located on each floor. Individuals in wheelchairs are easily accommodated throughout the building and for transportation needs.

All educational programs and services are advertised and open to all individuals, students, staff, and parents/guardians. Program offerings seek to eliminate bias and encourage full opportunities for all. Program modifications allow for the participation of students with disabilities. Pregnant students are provided access to regular education classes and activities during their pregnancy. All co-curricular activities are offered in a non-discriminatory manner. All scholarships, prizes and awards are free from bias and discrimination.

HOMELESS PROCESS

1.0 Identification and Communication

Students and families can be identified as homeless by any number of school personnel. This includes any person conducting the enrollment process, any administrator, the Food Services Director, the Foster Care Point of Contact, the Assistant Superintendent (homeless liaison). The homeless liaison provides the final determination as to a student's homeless status.

If a family is suspected of being homeless, they should be referred to an administrator for confirmation and continued communication.

Any student or family identified as homeless should be immediately communicated to the Assistant Superintendent's office, specifically to the homeless liaison and their administrative assistant. The information should include the student's name, parent or guardian's name, student's grade, assigned school, SASID, and type of dwelling, physical address, and contact phone number.

2.0 Enrollment in Free/Reduced Lunch

Once the student is identified as homeless, the assistant to the Assistant Superintendent will contact the Director of Food Services for immediate enrollment in free/reduced lunch program. For enrollment purposes, the Assistant Superintendent's office needs the names, address, and contact phone number for any individual identified as homeless.

3.0 Enrollment in ESE Portal

The homeless liaison will immediately enroll the identified student into the ESE portal. Annually in June of each year, the homeless liaison will check and certify the list of students enrolled via portal and submit a final report to DESE.

4.0 Provision of Transportation

Any student who is homeless is entitled to transportation provided by the district. Families should be directed to contact the assistant to the Assistant Superintendent to establish transportation to school and any other needed events, such as extra curricular activities, sports, clubs, or other school sponsored events.

Homeless Contacts

Duxbury Public Schools

Homeless Liaison

Elizabeth Wilcox, Assistant Superintendent, 781.934.7600 ext. 2909

Elizabeth Burns, Manager, Curriculum & Instruction Optimization, 781.934.7600 ext. 2910

Homelessness Intake Form

[McKinney-Vento Homeless Intake Form](#)