

# **Brockton Public Schools School Committee Policy**

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## **HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES**

To the extent practical and as required by law, the school system will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided school system services for which they are eligible, including pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the school system's liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or in other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-school system choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families who are resident in the school system.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed in writing of the school system's decision and their appeal rights. The school system's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to school system policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the school system liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to school system policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with school system policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different school system, or a homeless student is living in another school system but will attend his or her school of origin in this school system, the school systems will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

The school system's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school systems on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and soup kitchens.

The school system's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to school system policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

LEGAL REFS.: Title I, Part C  
No Child Left Behind Act, 2002