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**South Tippah School District**

**Homeless and Unaccompanied Youth Policy**

**B**oard Approval Date: June 20, 2023

Implementation Date: July 1, 2023

Superintendent: Tony Elliott

School Board President: Kerry Cockrell

Federal Programs Director: Kelly Gates

Homeless and Unaccompanied Youth Liaison: Kelly Gates

Education for Homeless Children and Youth – South Tippah School Board Policy JQN

Homeless students and unaccompanied youth in the district will have access to the education and other services needed to ensure that an opportunity is available to meet the same academic achievement standards to which all students are held. A liaison for students in homeless situations will be designated by the South Tippah school district to carry out duties as required by law.

The district will ensure that homeless students are not stigmatized nor segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. A homeless student or unaccompanied youth will be admitted to the district school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living or to the student’s school of origin as requested by the parent and in accordance with the student’s best interest. Transportation will be provided to and from the student’s school of origin at the request of the parent, or in the case of an unaccompanied student, the district’s liaison for homeless students.

The superintendent or designee will produce written guidelines for distribution to each school that explains the rights of homeless students and unaccompanied youth and the responsibilities of the schools to meet their needs and eliminate barriers to school attendance. This information shall also be disseminated in writing and by other means designated to raise awareness of these rights and responsibilities to staff, homeless families and students, unaccompanied youth, the public and homeless service providers.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, children are deemed to be homeless under the following conditions:

1. A child who is lacking a fixed regular and adequate nighttime residence and who has a primary nighttime residence that is a publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations, a temporary residence prior to being placed in accommodation for human beings.
2. A child who is living in a transitional or emergency shelter.
3. A child who is temporarily living in a trailer park or camping area due to lack of adequate living accommodations.
4. A child who is living in doubled-up accommodations due to loss of housing or other similar situation.
5. A migratory child who is staying in accommodations not fit for human habitation.
6. A child who has run away from home and lives in a runaway shelter, abandoned building, the street, or other inadequate accommodations.
7. A child who is placed in a state institution because she/he has no other place to live.
8. A child who has been abandoned by his/her family and is staying in a hospital.
9. A child whose parents or guardian will not permit him/her to live at home and who lives on the street, or other inadequate accommodations.
10. School-age unwed mothers or expectant mothers who are living in homes for unwed mothers because they have no other available living accommodations.

SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

1. Pursuant to and in compliance with the requirements of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1990, 42USC11431, it shall be the policy of the South Tippah School District, to the extent practicable under requirements relating to education established by state law, that each eligible child of a homeless individual and each eligible homeless or unaccompanied youth will have access to a free appropriate education comparable to the education provided the children of district residents who are non-homeless, without isolation or stigma.
2. The placement of an eligible homeless child or youth will be made according to Policy JBCCA C Assignment of Pupils, and will take into consideration the best interests of the homeless child or youth and placement requests made by a parent.
3. The choice of placement in either the “school of origin” or the school serving the “place of abode” will take place regardless of whether the child or youth is living with the homeless parent(s) or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parent(s).
4. Provided the homeless child or unaccompanied youth meets eligibility criteria, he/she will be provided transportation services; compensatory education programs for the disadvantaged; educational programs for the handicapped and for students with limited English proficiency; programs in vocational education; programs for the gifted and talented; and school meals programs.
5. Any and all records ordinarily kept by the South Tippah school district, including immunization records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, evaluations for special services and programs shall be kept on homeless children and unaccompanied youth and shall be forwarded in a timely fashion should a child or youth enter a new school or school district; and in a manner consistent with S1232g of Title 20.
6. Should the South Tippah School District receive assistance under S11432 of the Act, it shall coordinate with local social service agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to such children or unaccompanied youth and their families.
7. Should the South Tippah School District receive assistance under S11432 of the Act, it shall designate a homelessness liaison to insure that homeless children and unaccompanied youth enroll in and succeed in the schools of their district and, homeless families, children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services.
8. The homelessness liaison shall inform school personnel, service providers and advocates working with homeless families of the duties of the liaison.
9. The South Tippah School District has and will continue to review and revise, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and unaccompanied youth in schools selected in accordance with paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 above.
10. In reviewing and revising such policies, to the extent practicable under the requirements relating to education established by state law, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, requirements of immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records, or other documentation and guardianship.
11. Disputes which may arise regarding the assignment of a homeless child or youth will be promptly resolved according to the provisions of Policy JBCCA C Assignment of Pupils. Other issues or disputes will be directed to the attention of the school official responsible for that particular matter for prompt resolution. If this dispute cannot be resolved locally, any aggrieved party may make written request for a review of the matter to:

Coordinator of the Homeless Program

Mississippi Department of Education

P. O. Box 771

Jackson, MS 39205

LEGAL REFERENCE: McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001

CROSS REFERENCE: Policies JAA Equal Educational Opportunities, JBCCA Assignment of Pupils, IB Instructional Goals

Original Adopted Date: 1/9/2017 Status: Adopted

**South Tippah School District**

**Homeless and Unaccompanied Youth Plan**

1. The South Tippah School District shall appoint and retain a homeless liaison.
2. The South Tippah School District shall annually conduct professional development for secretaries and counselors who are involved with enrolling new students. This training will include:
   1. The McKinney-Vento definition of homeless children and unaccompanied youth.
   2. The requirement that students be enrolled in school immediately, even if they lack required documents.
   3. Homeless students’ automatic eligibility for Title I, including the law’s requirement that students enrolled in non-Title I schools.
   4. FERPA rules governing who may, and who may not, receive copies of student records or personally identifiable information, and when parental consent is required.
   5. The requirement that students have access to all school programs available to all students, and the prohibition on segregating or stigmatizing students in any way.
   6. How to put homeless families in touch with the district’s homeless liaison for assistance in accessing other services.
   7. Steps that are to be taken when a student is suspected of being homeless.
3. The South Tippah School District shall annually conduct professional development training for all faculty members that includes:
   1. The McKinney-Vento definition of homeless children and unaccompanied youth.
   2. The signs of homelessness.
   3. The steps to take when it is suspected that a child is or is becoming homeless.
   4. The need to avoid isolation or stigma of a homeless student, family or unaccompanied youth.
4. All schools in the district shall adhere to the following procedure when homelessness is suspected and when a student attempts to enroll who is determined to be homeless or unaccompanied:
   1. When a teacher, assistant, administrator, school nurse, or secretary suspects that a student is or is becoming homeless, that person will fill out the Suspicion of Homelessness form (see Appendix A), fax a copy to the homelessness liaison and give the form to the school Guidance Counselor.
   2. The guidance counselor shall meet with the student or the parent of the student and shall determine homelessness using the Homelessness Eligibility Guide (Appendix B).
   3. If the student is determined to be homeless the guidance counselor shall:
      1. Ensure that the homeless “at risk” factor is noted on MSIS
      2. Inform the Homeless Liaison of the status of the student
      3. Immediately enroll the homeless child or unaccompanied youth (if the student is new to the district) even if the child or youth is unable to produce the records normally required for enrollment such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, or birth certificates.
   4. The Homeless Liaison shall:
      1. Inform the Food Services Director of the student’s status so the Director will know to change the student’s eating status to “Free.”
      2. Send a Homeless Entrance Letter to the parents or guardians of the student. Parents will be provided a written explanation of the district’s decision to send that child to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian, together with a statement regarding the right to appeal the placement decision.
      3. Request a meeting with the parent, teacher and guidance counselor of the student. During that meeting, school placement and transportation and student rights will be discussed.
      4. Ensure that the child or unaccompanied youth’s education continue in the students school of origin for the duration of homelessness or during the remainder of the academic year unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child or youth’s parent or guardian.
      5. Ensure that the student is enrolled in any tutorial or remedial program that is available.
      6. Refer parents to appropriate health care services, dental services, mental health services and other appropriate community services that may offer the family assistance.
      7. Resolve any disputes which may arise regarding the assignment of a homeless child or unaccompanied youth.
      8. Ensure that there are no barriers that would prevent the student from participating in all educational services and programs that the student is eligible for including services for students with disabilities, programs for students with limited English Proficiency, vocational education, programs for gifted and talented students, before and after school programs, school nutrition programs and transportation (Appendix C).
      9. Provide basic school supplies when necessary.

**Appendix A**

# South Tippah School District

Suspicion of Homelessness

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person filling out form \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position (teacher, nurse, librarian, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please explain in the space below why you suspect that this student is or is becoming homeless:

Fax a copy of this form to Kelly Gates at 662-837-1362

Give form to the Guidance Counselor at your school

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Guidance Counselor Date

**Appendix B**

# South Tippah School District

Determination of Homelessness

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adult being interviewed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to the student \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homeless children and youths as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.”**

Fixed – A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent and not subject to change

1. Is this a permanent arrangement or just temporary? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Are you looking for another place to live? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why are you staying in your current place? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Where were you living right before this place? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why did you leave \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. Where would you go if you couldn’t stay where you are? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. Are you staying with friends / relatives just for a little while? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
8. Did you and your friends / relatives decide to move in together and share a home and expenses for the long term? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
9. Or is this a temporary situation for you? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
10. Could your friends / relatives ask you to leave if they wanted to? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
11. Are you all sharing the home equally, or are you more like guests in the home? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Regular – A regular residence is one that is used on a regular (i.e., nightly) basis**

1. Do you stay in the same place every night? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you have a key to the place where you are living? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you move around a lot? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. How long have you been at the place you are living in now? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. How long do you plan to stay? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. How long did you live in your last place? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B – Continued**

**Adequate – An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments**

1. How many people are living in the home? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. How many bedrooms / bathrooms does it have? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you and your children sharing a room? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. How many people are staying in one room? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Are you and your children sleeping in a bedroom, or public area? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. Does the home have heat? \_\_\_\_\_ electricity? ­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ running water? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. What condition is the home in? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Does it keep out rain and wind? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Is it safe? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Is it warm and dry? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Do the windows have glass panes? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
8. Can you come and go as you please?

Notes:

# Appendix C

# Initial Homeless Form

South Tippah School District

School \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Counselor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student’s First Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial\_\_\_\_ Last Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ MSIS Number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date that student was enrolled in MSIS as homeless \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Give a brief description of the student’s situation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Services Provided | Au | Se | Oc | No | De | Ja | Fe | Ma | Ap | Ma |
| Addressing needs related to domestic violence |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assistance with participation in school programs |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Before, after-school, mentoring, summer programs |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Clothing to meet a school requirement |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coordination between schools and agencies |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Counseling |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Early Childhood Programs |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Emergency assistance related to school attendance |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Expedited evaluations |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Obtaining or transferring records necessary for enrollment |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Parent education related to rights and resources for children |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Referrals for medical, dental, and other health services |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Referral to other programs and services |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School supplies |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Staff professional development and awareness |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Transportation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tutoring or other instructional support |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Comments: