



## The McKinney-Vento Act Basics: Educational Rights of Homeless Children and Youth

If you lost your housing and now live in:

- A shelter, motel, vehicle, camping ground, or temporary trailer; on the street;
- Doubled-up with family or friends; or in another type of temporary or inadequate housing your child might be able to receive help through a federal law called the McKinney-Vento Act.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, children in homeless situations have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there.
- Attend either the local school or the school of origin, if this is in their best interest; the school of origin is the school the child attended when he/she was permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if missing records and documents normally required for enrollment, such as a birth certificate, proof of residence, previous school records, or immunization/medical records.
- Enroll, attend classes, and participate fully in all school activities while the school gathers records.
- Have access to the same programs and services that are available to all other students, including transportation and supplemental educational services.
- Attend school with children not experiencing homelessness; a school cannot segregate a student because he or she is homeless.

Local Homeless Education Liaison: Kim Pluhar 770-887-2461 ext. 312716 or  
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## Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When I move, should I keep my child in the school of origin or transfer my child to the local school?

A: Moving from one school to another can be very upsetting for children. They have to leave the friends and teachers they know and get used to new friends, teachers, and classes. Because of this, it is usually best for your child to stay in his/ her same school (the school of origin), even if you move to a different area.

Here are some questions to think about when deciding whether your child should stay in the same school or move to the new school where you're living:

- How old is your child?
- How permanent is your current living arrangement? Do you plan to move back close to the school of origin or do you think you'll stay near your current living arrangement?
- Is your child attached to his/her school of origin? An older child who feels very connected to his/her school of origin and/or is about to graduate might have a harder time changing schools.
- How anxious is your child because you had to move? Would changing schools be overwhelming?
- Would changing schools cause your child to fall behind in school and receive bad grades?
- Is this a good time of year for your child to change schools, such as at the end of a semester or school year, after testing, or after an event that is important to your child?
- How much time would your child have to spend going back and forth to the school of origin? A long ride might have a negative impact on your child's schoolwork.
- Are there safety issues to think about in choosing which school your child should attend?

Q: What if the school and I disagree on where my child should go to school?

A: If you and the school disagree, the school district has to tell you in writing why it thinks your child should go to a different school than the one you want. The district also has to tell you in writing how you can appeal this decision. Your child can still enroll in, attend, and participate fully in the school you think is best for him or her while the disagreement is being settled.