

NATCHITOCHEES PARISH POLICY ON HOMELESS STUDENTS

HOMELESS STUDENTS

The Natchitoches Parish School Board shall provide a free appropriate public education to any homeless child or youth within the jurisdiction of the School Board.

Homeless children and youth shall be placed in school immediately, even if requested registration documents are unavailable. Any school document that is needed should be requested and received after the student has been enrolled. There shall be no barriers to homeless children and youth entering school.

For the purpose of this policy, the term *homeless* includes an individual who lacks a fixed, regular or adequate residence; or has a primary nighttime residence in a shelter, an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; or is sharing the housing of other persons. The term does not include any individual imprisoned or adjudicated.

In addition to the above, the Natchitoches Parish School Board shall:

- Continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the remainder of the academic year, or for the following academic year if the family becomes homeless between academic years, or shall enroll the child or youth in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend -- whichever is in the child's or youth's best interest.
- Keep and have immediately available, any records ordinarily kept by the school - including immunization records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs - of each homeless child or youth. Additionally, a homeless child or youth will not be denied entry into a school due to the lack of records or documentation normally required for entry into a school. The child or youth will be immediately enrolled and the homeless liaison will assist in obtaining the necessary records or documentation.
- Make placement choices regardless of whether the child or youth resides with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parents.
- Provide services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including transportation services, educational services for which the child or youth meets the eligibility criteria (Title I, special education, limited English proficiency), programs in vocational education, programs for the gifted and talented, and school meals programs.
- Designate a central office official who will serve as a homeless advocate to coordinate services and ensure that there are no barriers to the enrollment, transportation, attendance, and success in school for homeless children and youth. Additionally, the homeless advocate will promptly solve disputes regarding educational placement.