

## CHAPTER 4.00 - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

### ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

4.27

#### 1. Residency Requirements (Definition of Homelessness)

Homelessness is a sensitive issue. In some cases, a student's homelessness will be apparent during registration, i.e. residing at a homeless shelter or "doubled-up" with a relative or friend. In other cases, the registrants may be reluctant to discuss their homelessness. School personnel should be alert and sensitive to the issue. However, Putnam County District Schools needs to identify and track its homeless student population. School personnel should make a determination of the student's homelessness based upon the following criteria:

- A. Lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate residence; or
- B. Sleeps in a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (abandoned cars and buildings, parks, and streets); or
- C. Has a primary nighttime residence that is supervised publicly or privately-operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, emergency shelters, and transitional housing); or
- D. Is living in "doubled-up" accommodations, that is, sharing housing with other families or individuals. Students are considered homeless if they are doubled-up because of loss of housing or other similar situations. (Families living in doubled-up accommodations voluntarily to save money generally should not be considered homeless).

#### II. School Registration of Homeless Students

- A. At the time of registration, the principal or the principal's designee should discuss with the parent guardian, and/or the student the school enrollment that is in the best interest of the student with reference to such factors as stability of school placement, transportation, special programs, and family plans. Among the options for school registration are the following:
  - ◆ The homeless student may maintain the status of a registered student in the school attended before the homeless situation developed, or

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- ◆ The homeless student may be registered in the zoned school serving his/her current address.
- A. Subsequent to being registered, the homeless student should be immediately referred to the project coordinator who will assist the student, parents, and school personnel in areas of need.

#### III. Custody/Guardianship Requirements

- A. All students, including homeless, must be registered by their parent or legal guardian. If the parent/legal guardian is not available, every effort should be made by the principal or principal's designee to contact the parent or guardian to complete the registration process. If local school personnel are unable to contact the parent or legal guardian, the student should be referred to the school social worker or contact in the Student Services Department. Written documentation should be maintained of all written and verbal communication, home visits, and efforts to contact the parent or guardian.
- B. In unusual situations in which no parent or legal guardian can be contacted, a referral should be made to the Student Services Department for Putnam County Schools to report a homeless student as a child in need of services.

#### IV. Health Records and Birth Certificate Requirements

- A. If a homeless student seeks to register without a record of immunization, the principal or the principal's designee should contact the student's former school by telephone to request the student's records and to discuss immunization and other enrollment/placement issues. If information is given that satisfies compliance with immunization requirements, the student should be enrolled. If information is not available to satisfy immunization compliance, this requirement should be temporarily waived (up to thirty (30) days extension) and the student enrolled pending efforts to obtain the medical records. In the interim, the school should collaborate with the Public Health Department for an appointment for proper immunization. The student should be allowed to attend classes while the process of immunization is completed. Assistance in this matter is available through the project coordinator for Project PRAISE.

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- B. If a birth certificate is not available, the student should be registered and subsequent appropriate steps should be taken to resolve this issue.
- V. Education Records and Transfer
- A. Educational information needed for proper placement should initially be obtained through a telephone contact with the student's former school. If educational records or educational information are not available, the student should be registered and an educational record developed in accordance with the Putnam County School Board policies and guidelines. In these cases, an academic diagnostic test may be administered to assist in the determination of the student's skill levels and appropriate placement.
  - B. If a homeless student seeks to register without having appropriate transfer forms, the receiving school should register the student, telephone the former school for transfer information, and request that the education record be forwarded. The sending school should provide requested information during the telephone contact and forward education records promptly.

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:**

**1001.41, 1001.42, 1003.21, F.S.**

**LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED:**

**1001.43, 1003.01, 1003.21, 1003.22, F.S.**

**NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001. P.L. 107-110**

**HISTORY:**

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