



**Orange County Department of Education  
Homeless Outreach Promoting Educational Success  
(HOPES) Collaboration [www.ocde.us/mv](http://www.ocde.us/mv)**

## **The Educational Rights of Students in Homeless Situations: What Service Providers Should Know**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act protects the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness. It provides grants and legal protections so children and youth in homeless situations can enroll in, attend, and succeed in school and preschool programs. The Act defines homelessness as: lacks a regular, fixed and adequate nighttime residence (substandard housing), sharing housing due to economic struggles (doubled up) living in a shelter, hotel or motel or living in a public place not designated for sleeping (cars, parks).

### **Students in homeless situations have the right to:**

- ☐ Go to school while living in transitional living situation
- ☐ Get help enrolling and succeeding in school from the school district's liaison for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. Every school district must have a liaison. Liaisons have a special responsibility to help youth who are on their own
- ☐ Stay in the school they went to before becoming homeless or whatever school they were enrolled in last (called "school of origin"), even if they move out of the district, if that is feasible. Students can stay in their school of origin the entire time they are homeless
- ☐ If applicable, get transportation to their school of origin, provided or arranged by the school district, or a joint effort among school districts
- ☐ Go to the local school in the area where they are living. The school must immediately let students enroll, attend classes, and participate fully in school activities, even if students do not have a parent or guardian with them or documents such as proof of residency, immunization records, other medical records, school records, or other documents. Once students are enrolled, the school must get records from the last school, and the liaison must help students get immunizations or immunization and medical records
- ☐ If applicable, get preschool services, free or reduced school meals, services for English language learners, special education, Title I services, vocational/technical education, gifted and talented services, and before- and after-school care, as needed
- ☐ Go to school with children who are not homeless. Students cannot be separated from the regular school program because they are homeless.

For more information, please contact:  
Local School District Homeless Liaison  
(See attached listing)  
Or contact Jeanne Awrey  
Homeless Outreach Promoting Educational Success  
Phone: 714.966.4093 • Email: [jawrey@ocde.us](mailto:jawrey@ocde.us)  
[www.ocde.us/mv](http://www.ocde.us/mv)