

**McKinney-Vento
Questions and Answers
Socorro ISD**

1. Can a school refuse to enroll a child or youth who is experiencing homelessness because they lack proof of residency or school records?

NO – A school cannot refuse to enroll a child or youth experiencing homelessness. They must be enrolled immediately even if they lack proof of residency, immunizations, or school records, if they meet the criteria for homelessness.

2. What documentation is required by Socorro ISD Schools before a child or youth experiencing homelessness can enroll in a school?

*NONE – However, the SISD schools require that parents/guardians/unaccompanied youth complete the district wide **Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ)** to attest to their status. If a caregiver is present at the time of enrollment for unaccompanied youth, have the caregiver complete the **SRQ**. No proof of legal guardianship is necessary from the caregiver.*

3. How is the Student Residency Questionnaire obtained and where are the completed forms sent?

*Each campus should have copies of the form in the registrar’s office. Original forms will be kept on file at each school, while copies of preliminary qualifying forms are sent via **fax 915-851-7499** or through **district mail to the District Service Center, Department of State and Federal Programs, Attn. Lorena Cartagena, Homeless Liaison.***

4. When are the school records obtained, and whose responsibility is it to obtain the school records if a child or youth experiencing homelessness does not have them?

It is the responsibility of the enrolling school to obtain the records from the school the child or youth previously attended, as soon as possible, after the child is enrolled.

5. If a child or youth experiencing homelessness moves to another school attendance zone, do they have to attend the new school?

NO – The child or youth who is experiencing homelessness has the right to stay at the “school of origin” if this is the parents/guardians wishes and it is in the best interest of the child.

6. What is considered a “school of origin?”

A “school of origin” is defined as the school the child or youth attended when they were permanently housed, or the school in which the child was last enrolled.

7. How long can the child or youth remain at the school of origin?

As long as the child or youth qualifies as homeless and it is in the best interest of the child. If the child becomes permanently housed during the academic year, the child or youth will be able to remain at the school of origin until the end of the academic year.

8. If a child or youth moves as a result of being homeless but chooses to remain at the “school of origin”, is the school system responsible for transportation?

YES – At the parent or guardian’s request, homeless students must be provided transportation to and from their school of origin.

9. How is transportation arranged for students experiencing homelessness?

*When a parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth completes the **Student Residency Questionnaire** and there is a need for transportation, the request for transportation is submitted by the district’s homeless liaison to the transportation department. The transportation coordinators will make the arrangements and contact the family or youth once the schedule and bus number(s) are established. There is a three-day turn around to process requests.*

10. If the homeless student moves to a neighboring district, will they still have the opportunity to remain in the “school of origin”?

YES – The child or youth experiencing homelessness maintains the right to continue at the “school of origin” even if they obtain housing in a neighboring school district if that is the parent’s or guardian’s wishes.

11. Who is responsible for providing transportation for a child or youth who continues to be homeless and remains at the “school of origin”, but has moved to another district’s attendance area?

If a student experiencing homelessness remains at the school of origin but has moved to another district, the two districts must determine how to divide the responsibility and the cost of providing the transportation. The SISD Transportation Department makes those arrangements.

12. If a child who was previously homeless, but is now in stable housing, elects to remain at the “school of origin” through the end of the year, who is responsible for the transportation?

If transportation was provided at the time of homelessness, transportation will continue for the remainder of the academic year to the “school of origin”.

13. Are children or youth experiencing homelessness eligible for free breakfast and lunch?

YES – If there is a need, student’s who are defined as homeless will receive free meals at school. The SISD Homeless Liaison provides the Food Services Department with updates and rosters of children who qualify as homeless.

14. Can a homeless student be placed in a separate school or class based on their status as homeless?

NO – Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from others in the mainstream school environment.

15. Are unaccompanied homeless youth (youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian) afforded the same rights as other children and youth experiencing homelessness?

YES – The school district liaison must help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school.

16. Can parents refuse to complete the *Student Residency Questionnaire*?

YES – Parents are not required to identify themselves as “homeless” and are not required to complete the SRQ.

17. What are some ways to discuss with a parent or youth their housing situation without mentioning “homeless”?

Terms like, “transitional” living circumstances or “temporary displacement”, are far better than using the stigmatized term “homeless”.