



Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	WEAPONS
Code	po5772
Status	
Legal	F.S. 790.001, 790.06, 790.115, 790.251, 1001.43(1)(a), 1006.07 18 U.S.C. 922, 20 U.S.C. 7151
Adopted	September 4, 2012

5772 - WEAPONS

Pursuant to State law, the School Board prohibits students from openly carrying a handgun or carrying, possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon or concealed firearm, in a school safety zone, in any elementary school or secondary school facility, any administrative building, as well as into any Board meeting, and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the District Board for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the District Board including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Board, a school-sponsored event, a school bus, a school bus stop, or in a Board-owned vehicle.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. "Administration building" is any Board-owned or leased facility where one (1) or more administrative employees are assigned.
- B. "School property" means the property of any preschool, elementary school, middle school, junior high school, secondary school, career center, or postsecondary school, whether public or nonpublic.
- C. "Weapons and firearms" as defined in F.S. 790.001 and include, but are not limited to, and weapon which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, firearms, guns of any type, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, or other deadly weapons, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives. For purposes of this policy, the term "Weapon" also means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons.

This policy shall also encompass such actions as look-alike items, false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.

Exceptions

The only exceptions to the prohibitions set forth hereinabove include the following:

- A. A student may carry a firearm in a case to a firearms program, class, or function which has been approved in advance by the Principal or site administrator as a program or class to which firearms could be carried.
- B. A student may carry a firearm in a case to a career center having a firearms training range.
- C. A student enrolled in a Junior ROTC Program may possess a firearm or weapon while under the direct supervision of District staff members. The Superintendent will promulgate an administrative procedure to outline the use of a firearm or weapon for Junior ROTC Programs.

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~~Students shall report knowledge of dangerous weapons and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the site administrator. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.~~

The Superintendent ~~will refer~~ ~~shall require that~~ any student ~~who violates this policy to the student's parents or guardians and to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system.~~ ~~possessing a weapon or other device designed to inflict serious bodily harm, including a concealed weapon, is reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency. As well,~~ ~~the student may also~~ ~~shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion,~~ ~~consistent with law and due process.~~

~~A weapon may be brought on District property for educational purposes under controlled circumstances when authorized by the Superintendent.~~

~~The Board directs the Superintendent to post notices prohibiting the carrying and possession of concealed weapons in a school safety zone, including schools and school buildings, on school premises and school buses, and at school activities.~~

The Superintendent shall ~~conspicuously~~ post such notices at each entrance of a school and/or school building and in areas inside the building where visitors are required to report ~~regarding the prohibitions of openly carrying a handgun or carrying a concealed firearm. Such notices shall also be posted at each entrance leading into a school activity (particularly those activities held outside of the school building) and school campuses~~ ~~parcel of land~~. Further, notices shall be posted in each school bus and other Board-owned vehicle, including a school van.

Pursuant to F.S. 790.115(2)(a)3, for the purpose of campus parking privileges, this prohibition shall include any firearm or weapon even if securely encased in a vehicle or other private conveyance regardless of licensure or permit. The District will post appropriate signage at all properties.

Effective 9/5/12

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Book	Policy Manual
Section	7000 Property
Title	WEAPONS
Code	po7217
Status	
Legal	F.S. 790.001, 790.06, 790.115, 790.251, 1001.43 (1)(a), 1006.07 18 U.S.C. 922
Adopted	September 4, 2012

7217 - WEAPONS

But for the exceptions specified below, pursuant to State law, the School Board prohibits any visitor and District employees from openly carrying a handgun or carrying, possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon or concealed firearm, in a school safety zone, or any elementary or secondary school facility, any administrative building, as well as into any Board meeting, and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the District Board for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the District Board including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Board, a school-sponsored event, a school bus, a school bus stop, or in a Board-owned vehicle.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. "Administration building" is any Board-owned or leased facility where one (1) or more administrative employees are assigned.
- B. "School property" means the property of any preschool, elementary school, middle school, junior high school, secondary school, career center, or postsecondary school, whether public or nonpublic.
- C. "Weapons and firearms" as defined in F.S. 790.001 and include, but are not limited to, any weapon which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, firearms, guns of any type, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, or other deadly weapon, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives. For purposes of this policy, the term "Weapon" also means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons.

Exceptions

The only exceptions to the prohibitions set forth hereinabove include the following:

- A. Police or other licensed law enforcement officers, as well as other persons approved by the school or District on a case-by-case basis, may possess a firearm or weapon.
- B. A person may carry a firearm in a case to a firearms program, class or function which has been approved in advance by the Principal or site administrator as a program or class to which firearms could be carried.
- C. A person may carry a firearm in a case to a career center having a firearms training range.

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All District employees shall immediately report knowledge of firearms, weapons, and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the District Security Center. Failure to report such knowledge may subject District employees to discipline.

The Superintendent shall require that any District employee possessing a firearm, weapon, or other device designed to inflict serious bodily harm, including a concealed firearm or weapon, in violation of this policy and State law, is reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency, regardless of whether such District employee possesses a valid concealed weapon license. As well, the staff member shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, consistent with law, due process, and the terms of any negotiated agreement.

The Superintendent shall refer a require that any visitor who violates this policy to possessing a weapon or other device designed to inflict serious bodily harm, including a concealed weapon, is reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement officials and may take any necessary steps to exclude the visitor from District property and District-sponsored events agency, regardless of whether such visitor possesses a valid concealed weapon license.

~~A weapon may be brought on District property for educational purposes under controlled circumstances when authorized by the Superintendent.~~

~~The Board directs the Superintendent to post notices prohibiting the carrying and possession of concealed weapons in a school safety zone, including schools and school buildings, on school premises and school buses, and at school activities.~~

The Superintendent shall conspicuously post such notices at each entrance of a school and/or school building and in areas inside the building where visitors are required to report regarding the prohibitions of openly carrying a handgun or carrying a concealed weapon or concealed firearm. Such notices shall also be posted at each entrance leading into a school activity (particularly those activities held outside of the school building) and school campuses parcel of land. Further, notices shall be posted in each school bus and other Board-owned vehicle, including a school van.

Pursuant to F.S. 790.115(2)(a)3, for the purpose of campus parking privileges, this prohibition shall include any firearm or weapon even if securely encased in a vehicle or other private conveyance regardless of licensure or permit. This District will post appropriate signage at all properties.

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Book Policy Manual

Section 1000 Administration

Title WEAPONS

Code po1217

Status

Legal F.S. 790.001, 790.115, 1001.43
18 U.S.C. 922

Adopted September 4, 2012

~~1217~~ WEAPONS

~~The School Board prohibits administrative staff members from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon, in a school safety zone and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Board for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the Board including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Board, a school sponsored event, or in a Board-owned vehicle.~~

~~Weapons and firearms as defined in F.S. 790.001 and include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives.~~

~~For purposes of this policy, the term "weapon" also means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons.~~

~~Staff members shall report knowledge of dangerous weapons and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the site administrator. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the staff member to discipline.~~

~~The Superintendent shall require that any staff member possessing a weapon or other device designed to inflict serious bodily harm, including a concealed weapon, is reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency, regardless of whether such staff member possesses a valid concealed weapon license. As well, the staff member shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, consistent with law, due process, and the terms of any negotiated agreement.~~

~~A weapon may be brought on District property for educational purposes under controlled circumstances when authorized by the Superintendent.~~

~~The Board directs the Superintendent to post notices prohibiting the carrying and possession of concealed weapons in a school safety zone, including schools and school buildings, on school premises and school buses, and at school activities.~~

~~The Superintendent shall conspicuously post such notices at each entrance of a school and/or school building and in areas inside the building where visitors are required to report. Notices shall also be posted at each entrance leading into a school activity (particularly those activities held outside of the school building) and parcel of land. Further, notices shall be posted in each school bus and other Board-owned vehicle, including a school van.~~

~~Pursuant to F.S. 790.115(2)(a)3, for the purpose of campus parking privileges, this prohibition shall include any firearm or weapon even if securely encased in a vehicle or other private conveyance regardless of licensure or permit. The District will post appropriate signage at all properties.~~

~~Effective 9/5/12~~

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Book Policy Manual

Section 3000 Instructional Staff

Title WEAPONS

Code po3217

Status

Legal F.S. 790.001, 790.115, 1001.43
18 U.S.C. 922

Adopted September 4, 2012

~~3217~~ **WEAPONS**

~~The School Board prohibits instructional staff members from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon, in a school safety zone and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Board for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the Board including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Board, a school sponsored event, or in a Board-owned vehicle.~~

~~Weapons and firearms as defined in F.S. 790.001 and include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives.~~

~~For purposes of this policy, the term "weapon" also means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons.~~

~~Staff members shall report knowledge of dangerous weapons and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the site administrator. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the staff member to discipline.~~

~~The Superintendent shall require that any staff member possessing a weapon or other device designed to inflict serious bodily harm, including a concealed weapon, is reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency, regardless of whether such staff member possesses a valid concealed weapon license. As well, the staff member shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, consistent with law, due process, and the terms of any negotiated agreement.~~

~~A weapon may be brought on District property for educational purposes under controlled circumstances when authorized by the Superintendent.~~

~~The Board directs the Superintendent to post notices prohibiting the carrying and possession of concealed weapons in a school safety zone, including schools and school buildings, on school premises and school buses, and at school activities.~~

~~The Superintendent shall conspicuously post such notices at each entrance of a school and/or school building and in areas inside the building where visitors are required to report. Notices shall also be posted at each entrance leading into a school activity (particularly those activities held outside of the school building) and parcel of land. Further, notices shall be posted in each school bus and other Board-owned vehicle, including a school van.~~

~~Pursuant to F.S. 790.115(2)(a)3, for the purpose of campus parking privileges, this prohibition shall include any firearm or weapon even if securely encased in a vehicle or other private conveyance regardless of licensure or permit. The District will post appropriate signage at all properties.~~



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Book Policy Manual

Section 4000 Support Staff

Title WEAPONS

Code po4217

Status

Legal F.S. 790.001, 790.115, 1001.43
18 U.S.C. 922

Adopted September 4, 2012

~~4217~~ **WEAPONS**

~~The School Board prohibits support staff members from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon, in a school safety zone and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Board for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the Board including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Board, a school sponsored event, or in a Board-owned vehicle.~~

~~Weapons and firearms as defined in F.S. 790.001 and include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives.~~

~~For purposes of this policy, the term "weapon" also means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons.~~

~~Staff members shall report knowledge of dangerous weapons and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the site administrator. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the staff member to discipline.~~

~~The Superintendent shall require that any staff member possessing a weapon or other device designed to inflict serious bodily harm, including a concealed weapon, is reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency, regardless of whether such staff member possesses a valid concealed weapon license. As well, the staff member shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, consistent with law, due process, and the terms of any negotiated agreement.~~

~~A weapon may be brought on District property for educational purposes under controlled circumstances when authorized by the Superintendent.~~

~~The Board directs the Superintendent to post notices prohibiting the carrying and possession of concealed weapons in a school safety zone, including schools and school buildings, on school premises and school buses, and at school activities.~~

~~The Superintendent shall conspicuously post such notices at each entrance of a school and/or school building and in areas inside the building where visitors are required to report. Notices shall also be posted at each entrance leading into a school activity (particularly those activities held outside of the school building) and parcel of land. Further, notices shall be posted in each school bus and other Board-owned vehicle, including a school van.~~

~~Pursuant to F.S. 790.115(2)(a)3, for the purpose of campus parking privileges, this prohibition shall include any firearm or weapon even if securely encased in a vehicle or other private conveyance regardless of licensure or permit. The District will post appropriate signage at all properties.~~

Effective 9/5/12

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Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
Code	po5200
Status	
Legal	F.A.C. 6A-1.044, Pupil Attendance Records F.S. 984.151 F.S. 1002.20 F.S. 1003.02, 1003.21 F.S. 1003.23 F.S. 1003.24 F.S. 1003.26 F.S. 1003.27 F.A.C. 6A-1.09512, Equivalent Minimum School Term for Compulsory Attendance Purposes F.A.C. 6A-1.09513, Parents' Responsibility for School Attendance F.A.C. 6A-1.09514, Excused Absences for Religious Instruction or Holiday
Adopted	September 4, 2012
Last Revised	September 8, 2020

5200 - ATTENDANCE

The educational program offered by this District is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the schools during the days and hours that the school is in session. School attendance is the responsibility of parents and students. Absences shall be reported to the school attendance office by the parent or adult student as soon as practicable.

In accordance with statute, the Superintendent shall require, from the parent of each student of compulsory school age or from an adult student who has been absent from school or from class for any reason, a statement of the cause for such absence. The School Board reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each single absence.

In addition, educators have the responsibility to encourage regular attendance of students, maintain accurate attendance records, and follow reporting procedures prescribed by the Superintendent. Schools will record absent and tardy students in the automated student attendance recordkeeping system.

Provision shall be made for promoting school attendance through adjustment of personal problems, education of parents, and enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws and related child-welfare legislation. Accordingly:

- A. absences must be reported to the school by the parent or adult student as soon as practicable;

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Failure to report and explain the absence(s) shall result in unexcused absence(s). The final authority for determining acceptability of the reason for the absence(s) shall rest with the principal.

- B. upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the principal shall contact the student's parent to determine the reason for the absence;
- C. teachers shall record absentees each period of the school day and report absences, excused and unexcused, as required by the school;
- D. insofar as possible, parents should be contacted each time their child has an unexcused absence or an absence for which the reason is unknown, to prevent the development of patterns of nonattendance;
- E. when a student has at least five (5) unexcused absences or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month, or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a ninety (90) calendar day period, the teacher shall report to the Principal that the child may be exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance. Unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of nonattendance, the Principal will refer to the case to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, a meeting with the parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies. If the problem is not resolved, the child study team will implement interventions set forth in, and act in accordance with, the requirements in F.S. 1003.26.
 - 1. If a parent refuses to participate in the remedial strategies determined by the child study team because s/he believes that the strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent may appeal to the Board.
 - 2. The appeal will be heard by a hearing officer who will make recommendations for final action to the Board.
 - 3. If the Board's final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate, and the parent still refuses to participate or cooperate, the superintendent may seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.

If the parent of a child who has been identified as exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance enrolls the child in a home education program pursuant to F.S. Chapter 1002, the superintendent shall provide the parent a copy of F.S. 1002.41 and the accountability requirements set forth in F.S. 1003.26. The superintendent shall also refer the parent to a home education review committee composed of the District contact for home education programs and at least two (2) home educators selected by the parent from a District list of all home educators who have conducted a home education program for at least three (3) years and who have indicated a willingness to serve on the committee. The home education review committee shall review the portfolio of the student, as defined by F.S. 1002.41, every thirty (30) days during the District's regular school terms until the committee is satisfied that the home education program is in compliance with F.S. 1002.41(1)(d). The first portfolio review must occur within the first thirty (30) calendar days of the establishment of the program. The following provisions shall also occur if the committee does not determine that the home education program is in compliance with F.S. 1002.41(1)(d):

- A. If the parent fails to provide a portfolio to the committee, the committee shall notify the superintendent.
- B. The superintendent shall then terminate the home education program and require the parent to enroll the child in an attendance option that meets the definition of "regular school attendance" under F.S. 1003.01(13)(a), (b), (c), or (e) within three (3) days.
- C. Upon termination of a home education program pursuant to this subparagraph, the parent shall not be eligible to reenroll the child in a home education program for 180 calendar days.
- D. Failure of a parent to enroll the child in an attendance option as required by this subparagraph after termination of the home education program pursuant to this subparagraph shall constitute noncompliance with the compulsory attendance requirements of F.S. 1003.21 and may result in criminal prosecution under F.S. 1003.27(2).
- E. Nothing contained herein shall restrict the ability of the superintendent to review the portfolio pursuant to F.S. 1002.41(1)(e).

If a student subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the parent or the superintendent shall refer the case to the case staffing committee pursuant to F.S. 984.12 and the superintendent may file a truancy petition pursuant to the procedures in F.S. 984.151.

Under the direction of the superintendent, the Principal shall give written notice that requires enrollment or attendance within three (3) days after the date of notice, in person or by return-receipt mail, to the parent when no valid reason is found for a student's nonenrollment in school.

- A. If the notice and requirement are ignored, the Principal shall report the case to the superintendent, who may refer the case to the child study team at the school the student would be assigned according to attendance area policies or to the case staffing committee, established pursuant to F.S. 984.12.
- B. The child study team shall diligently facilitate intervention services and shall report the case back to the superintendent only when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonenrollment behavior are exhausted.
- C. If the parent still refuses to cooperate or enroll the child in school, the superintendent shall take such steps as are necessary to bring criminal prosecution against the parent. Subsequently, the superintendent shall give written

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notice in person or by return-receipt mail to the parent that criminal prosecution is being sought for nonattendance. The superintendent may file a truancy petition, as defined in F.S. 984.03, following the procedures outlined in F.S. 984.151.

Each school should also establish procedures to ensure good attendance consistent with this policy.

Make-Up for Absences

For excused absences, the student shall have a reasonable amount of time, up to ten (10) school days, to complete make-up work. Principals may grant extensions to the make-up time limit for extenuating circumstances.

For unexcused absences, each principal shall establish site-specific policies that encourage both regular attendance and high academic achievement, and shall review and modify these policies from time-to-time as required to maintain and improve their effectiveness.

Excused Absences

The Board considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed at school:

- A. Personal illness of the student (medical evidence may be required by the principal or designee for absences exceeding five (5) consecutive days).
- B. Court appearance of the student.
- C. Medical appointment of the student.
- D. Pregnancy related issues (see also Policy 5751).
- E. Approved school activity.
- F. Insurmountable conditions. Insurmountable conditions are extreme weather conditions, communicable disease outbreaks, and local conditions determined by the School District which, after taking into account the material circumstances, would render impracticable a student's attendance at school. (F.A.C. 6A-1.09513)
- G. Other absences with prior approval of the principal or designee.
- H. Attendance at a center under Children and Families Services supervision.
- I. Significant community events with prior permission of the Principal.
- J. Religious instruction or religious holiday.
- K. Death in the immediate family.
- L. Appointments for a therapy service provided by a licensed health care practitioner or behavior analyst certified pursuant to Florida law for the treatment of autism spectrum disorder including, but not limited to, applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.

Absences not included in excused absences listed above shall be unexcused.

Students may not be given excused absences to remain out of school for the purpose of working unless the job is an integral part of the student's instructional program.

Discipline

No student will be suspended for unexcused tardiness, lateness, absence, or truancy but the student may be assigned to detention or placed in existing alternative programs.

Any student who fails to attend any regularly scheduled class and has no excuse for absence should be referred to the appropriate administrator. Disciplinary action should include notification to parents or guardians.

A student's grade in any course is based on his/her performance in the instructional setting and shall not be reduced for reasons of conduct. If a student violates the attendance or other rules of the school, s/he should be disciplined appropriately for the misconduct, but his/her grades should be based upon what the student can demonstrate s/he has learned.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative procedures that:

- A. provide the student and his/her parents the opportunity to challenge the attendance record prior to notification and that such notification complies with applicable Board rules;
- B. require a school session that is in conformity with the rules of the State Board;
- C. govern the keeping of attendance records in accordance with the rules of the State Board;
- D. identify the habitual truant, investigate the cause(s) of his/her behavior, and consider modification of his/her educational program to meet particular needs and interests;

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- E. require that students whose absence has been excused have an opportunity to make up work they missed and receive credit for the work if completed;
- F. require that any student who, due to a specifically identifiable physical or mental impairment, exceeds or may exceed the District's limit on excused absence is referred for evaluation for eligibility either under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or other appropriate accommodation.

Habitual Truancy

Whenever any student has a total of fifteen (15) unexcused absences from school within ninety (90) calendar days, with or without the knowledge or consent of the parent, s/he will be considered habitually truant. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to inform the student and his/her parents of the record of excessive absences as well as the District's intent to notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, if appropriate. The Superintendent is authorized to file a truancy petition under F.S. 984.151 if a student has accrued at least five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown within a ninety (90) calendar day period or has had more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a ninety (90) calendar day period.

5200—COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The headings in the administrative procedure are for convenience or reference only and will not govern the interpretation of the provisions.

I. SCOPE

- A. Florida law requires all children from six (6) to sixteen (16) years of age to attend school regularly during the entire school term. Public school students who have attained the age of sixteen (16) years and who have not graduated are subject to compulsory school attendance until the student, or parent of a student who is less than eighteen (18) years of age, files with the School Board a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment.
- B. One of the strongest foundations for school success is regular school attendance. Without regular and consistent attendance, the student misses vital instruction in regard to subject matter introduction, concept formation, and sequential learning which can cause many students to fall behind in their understanding and comprehension. This, in turn, can cause their grades to be lower and lessens the prospect of school being a positive place. The habitual absence of a child from school is considered sufficient to show that this law has been violated. The student must be physically present at the school to which he or she has been assigned or physically present at an educational activity that constitutes part of the approved school program for that student.

II. NON-ENROLLMENT

After the opening of the school year, the Principal, with the assistance of appropriate support staff, will compile a list of all students who are scheduled to attend the school and who are not in attendance.

- A. Step 1: Once it has been determined that a student resides in the District and is not attending school as required by state law, the school will attempt to cause the child to be enrolled through efforts of the school staff, District staff, and District approved provider. If these attempts do not result in compliance, then Step 2 is required.
- B. Step 2: The Superintendent will initiate a registered letter pursuant to State law requiring the parent to comply with Florida law within three (3) days from the date of the notice. The letter will advise the parent or legal guardian of the next steps that will be taken.
- C. Step 3
 1. If the parent/legal guardian complies, the Principal shall monitor the student's attendance.
 2. If the parent/legal guardian does not comply, the Principal shall report the case to the Superintendent, who may refer the case to the staff and District approved provider. Pursuant to State law, the Superintendent shall take such steps as are necessary to obtain the student's compliance with the compulsory school attendance, including filing a truancy petition or bringing a criminal prosecution against the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), or other person(s) in control of the child.

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III. ATTENDANCE

A. Parent Responsibility

1. ~~State law clearly defines the responsibility of parents for the attendance of their child at school and requires them to provide an explanation for any absence from school. It is the intent of the District to hold parents responsible for their child's attendance to the extent provided by law.~~
2. ~~Failure to report and explain the absence(s) shall result in an unexcused absence(s). The final authority for determining an acceptability of the reason for the absence(s) shall rest with the Principal.~~
3. ~~If during the course of the school year, a student has unauthorized absences sufficient enough to jeopardize academic progress, the Principal shall comply with the procedures detailed in State law.~~
4. ~~Learn Fare recipients with school age children shall be required to attend a documented school conference during each semester to assure parent involvement. The conference shall address acceptable student attendance, grades, and behavior and shall be documented by the school and reported to the Department of Children and Families.~~

B. Home Education

1. ~~Home education is a program whereby parents may teach their children at home in lieu of public school attendance. Parents wishing to enroll their children in a Home Education Program shall do so through the District's Department of Teaching and Learning. Home education may not be used as an option to avoid student or parent consequences for nonattendance or truancy.~~
2. ~~Students entering or re-entering the District from a Home Education Program will follow the same enrollment procedures as students entering from a non-accredited school.~~

C. Virtual Instruction Program

1. ~~Students are expected to show attendance in the course based on the completion of weekly assignments due unless they have an excused absence.~~
 - a. ~~Requests for an excused absence must be emailed to the school administrator, otherwise, the absence is unexcused.~~
 - b. ~~Ten (10) or more unexcused absences will require an Attendance Intervention Team (AIT) meeting to implement an academic success plan and/or possible withdrawal to a neighborhood school.~~
 - c. ~~Failure to attend an AIT meeting will result in a referral to Intervention Services, possible withdrawal to a neighborhood school, and possible reporting to the State Attorney's Office.~~
2. ~~Students shall be responsible for making up all assignments missed during an excused absence. Two (2) days are allowed for each day of absence.~~
 - a. ~~Missed work shall be made up for all absences, including suspension.~~
 - b. ~~Students shall receive appropriate grades for the make up work to replace the zero (0).~~

D. Excused and Unexcused Absences

1. ~~It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school regarding the reason for a student's absence in a timely fashion.~~
 - a. ~~Absence is defined as nonattendance of a student at school or in an approved educational activity/field trip or program on days school is in session.~~
 - b. ~~A student who is not physically present at school, not otherwise present in a virtual class, or not participating in an approved school activity shall be counted absent and shall not be recorded as in attendance on that day.~~
2. ~~The law allows absences for illness or medical care (medical evidence may be required by the Principal for absences exceeding five (5) consecutive days), death in the family, religious holidays, prearranged absences for educational purposes approved by an administrator, financial and certain other special circumstances or insurmountable conditions. Under these circumstances, Board policy regards these~~

~~absences as excused absences. A student with an excused absence is not subject to any disciplinary or academic penalties.~~

3. ~~The Board considers the following to be reasonable excuses for time missed at school:~~
 - a. ~~Personal illness of the student (medical evidence may be required by the principal or designee for absences exceeding five (5) consecutive days).~~
 - b. ~~The court appearance of the student.~~
 - c. ~~Medical appointment of the student.~~
 - d. ~~Pregnancy related issues (see also Policy 5751).~~
 - e. ~~Approved school activity (absences recorded but not reported).~~
 - f. ~~Insurmountable conditions.~~
 1. ~~Insurmountable conditions are extreme weather conditions, communicable disease outbreaks, and local conditions determined by the Superintendent which, after taking into account the material circumstances, would render impracticable a student's attendance at school, (F.A.C. 6A 1.09513).~~
 2. ~~Where insurmountable conditions are present, the Superintendent may temporarily reassign a student's school site to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff.~~
 - g. ~~Other absences with prior approval of the Principal.~~
 - h. ~~Attendance at a center under the supervision of the Department of Children and Families.~~
 - i. ~~Significant community events with the prior permission of the Principal.~~
 - j. ~~Religious instruction or religious holiday.~~
 - k. ~~Death in the immediate family.~~
4. ~~Any student who, due to a specifically identifiable physical or mental impairment, exceeds or may exceed the District's limit on excused absence shall be referred for evaluation for eligibility either under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or other appropriate accommodation.~~
5. ~~Absences not allowed by law or included in excused absences listed above shall be unexcused.~~
6. ~~An unexcused absence takes place any time a child is out of school for reasons not recognized in the law. In these cases, the child may be subject to academic penalties.~~
 - a. ~~Determination of whether an absence is excused or unexcused is the responsibility of the Principal.~~
 - b. ~~Unexcused absences shall not be grounds for suspension from school but may result in detention.~~
7. ~~Unexcused absenteeism sufficient enough to jeopardize academic progress at the elementary and middle school levels is defined as a student being absent without an acceptable reason five (5) times in a calendar month or ten (10) times in a ninety (90) calendar day period.~~
8. ~~Whenever any student has a total of fifteen (15) days of unexcused absences from school during any semester, s/he will be considered habitually absent. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to inform the student and his/her parents of the record of excessive absences as well as the District's intent to notify the Department of Motor Vehicles, if appropriate.~~
9. ~~Students may not be given excused absences to remain out of school for the purpose of working unless the job is an integral part of the student's instructional program.~~

E. Tardiness/Partial Day Attendance

1. For the purposes of this policy, the Board annually sets the length of the school day, with the student year being set at 180 days. All students are expected to be in school on time each day school is in session and remain until dismissal unless a valid reason exists for leaving early.
2. Tardiness and leaving early without an acceptable excuse, for the purpose of this policy, are seen as a violation of State law. Tardiness is defined as any arrival at school without an approved excuse after the tardy signal has sounded. Unless the reason for leaving early or late arrival is covered under State law or the list of approved absences above, elementary and middle school students who are chronically tardy or leave early without an acceptable excuse more than five (5) times in a calendar month or ten (10) times in a ninety (90) calendar day period will be subjected to action as dictated by State law.
3. If it is determined that the parent is responsible for the cause of the chronic tardiness or leaving early without an acceptable excuse, then F.S. 1003.27(2) shall be used to gain compliance.

F. Truancy

1. It is the responsibility of the student's parents to notify the school when their child will not be in attendance.
 - a. While a student is enrolled in elementary school, the school shall be notified the day the student returns to school from an absence of one (1), two (2) or three (3) days. If an absence extends beyond three (3) days, the school shall be notified by the third day.
 - b. While a student is enrolled in middle or high school, the school shall be notified of an absence the morning the student is absent, or within twenty four (24) hours. The Principal shall contact the parent/guardian to determine the reason for each absence for which the reason is unknown. After two (2) documented attempts to contact the parent/guardian and the failure of the parent/guardian to respond or justify the absence, the absence shall be considered unexcused.
 - c. In all cases of absences, the school should be notified as soon as the absence occurs.
2. For the purpose of these regulations, a "truant" is one who is not in attendance, with or without the approval of the parent or other person having charge of the student, and who has an unapproved absence.
3. A habitual truant is a student who has fifteen (15) unexcused absences within ninety (90) calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student's parent or legal guardian.
4. A student's primary teacher shall report to the Principal if the student is exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance and is a potential habitual truant because of at least five (5) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month or ten (10) unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a ninety (90) calendar day period.
5. Upon each unexcused absence, or absence for which the reason is unknown, the Principal shall attempt to contact the student's parent/guardian to determine the reason for the absence. If the absence is an excused absence, as defined by Board policy, the school shall provide opportunities for the student to make up assigned work and not receive an academic penalty unless the work is not made up within a reasonable time.
6. Unless there is clear evidence that the absences are not a pattern of non attendance, the Principal shall refer the case to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing.
 - a. If the child study team finds that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or unexcused, a meeting with the parent or guardian shall be scheduled to identify remedies or attempts documented if the parent or guardian fails to respond.
 - b. The Principal shall notify the Superintendent that the referred student is exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance.
7. If an initial meeting does not resolve the problem, the child study team shall implement the following:
 - a. frequent attempts at communication between the teacher and the family;

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- b. ~~evaluation for alternative education programs; and/or~~
 - c. ~~attendance contracts.~~
8. ~~The child study team may, but is not required to, implement other interventions, including referral to other agencies for family services or recommend for filing a truancy petition pursuant to F.S. 984.151.~~
 9. ~~The child study team shall be diligent in facilitating intervention services and shall report the case to the Superintendent only when all reasonable efforts to resolve the nonattendance behavior are exhausted.~~

G. Truancy Intervention Processes

1. ~~If the parent/guardian or other person in charge of the child refuses to participate in the remedial strategies because s/he believes that those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent/guardian, or other person in charge of the child may appeal to the Board.~~
 - a. ~~The Board may provide a hearing officer and the hearing officer shall make a recommendation for final action to the Board.~~
 - b. ~~If the Board's final determination is that the strategies of the child study team are appropriate, and the parent/guardian or other person in charge of the child still refuses to participate or cooperate, the Superintendent may file a truancy petition or seek criminal prosecution for noncompliance with compulsory school attendance.~~
2. ~~If the parent/guardian of a child who has been identified as exhibiting a pattern of nonattendance enrolls the child in a home education program pursuant to F.S. 1002.41, the Superintendent shall provide the parent a copy of F.S. 1002.41 and the accountability requirements of this paragraph. The Superintendent shall also refer the parent to a home education review committee composed of the District contact for home education programs and at least two (2) home educators selected by the parent from a District list of all home educators who have conducted a home education program for at least three (3) years and who have indicated a willingness to serve on the committee. The home education review committee shall review the portfolio of the student, as defined by the statute, every thirty (30) days during the District's regular school terms until the committee is satisfied that the home education program is in compliance with the statute. The first portfolio review must occur within the first thirty (30) calendar days of the establishment of the program.~~
 - a. ~~If the parent fails to provide a portfolio to the committee, the committee shall notify the Superintendent.~~
 - b. ~~The Superintendent shall then terminate the home education program and require the parent to enroll the child in an attendance option provided under F.S. 1003.01(13)(a), (b), (d), or (e) within three (3) days. Upon termination of a home education program pursuant to this subparagraph, the parent or guardian shall not be eligible to re-enroll the child in a home education program for 180 calendar days.~~
 - c. ~~Failure of a parent/guardian to enroll the child in an attendance option provided under F.S. 1003.01(13)(a), (b), (d), or (e), after the termination of the home education program pursuant to this subparagraph, shall constitute noncompliance with the compulsory attendance requirements of F.S. 1003.21 and may result in a truancy proceeding under F.S. 984.151 or criminal prosecution under F.S. 1003.27(2).~~
 - d. ~~Nothing contained herein shall restrict the ability of the Superintendent to review the portfolio pursuant to F.S. 1002.41.~~
3. ~~If a child subject to compulsory school attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the parent/guardian, or the Superintendent shall refer the case to the District staff and District approved provider committee pursuant to F.S. 984.12. If the child has had more than fifteen (15) unexcused absences in a ninety (90) calendar day period, the Superintendent may file a truancy petition pursuant to the procedures in F.S. 984.151. The petition must contain the following:~~
 - a. ~~the name, age, and address of the student;~~
 - b. ~~the name and address of the student's parent/guardian;~~
 - c. ~~the school where the student is enrolled;~~

- d. ~~the efforts the school has made to get the student to attend school;~~
- e. ~~the number of out of school contacts between the school system and student's parent/guardian;~~
- f. ~~the number of days and dates of days the student has missed school; and,~~
- g. ~~the petition shall be sworn to by the Superintendent.~~

H. Leaving School Grounds Before the End of the School Day

1. All students leaving school prior to the end of the school day must sign out through the Attendance Office;
2. ~~No student shall be sent from the campus during school hours to perform errands or act as a messenger except with the knowledge and approval of the Principal, and then only for necessary and urgent school business.~~
3. ~~No student shall be permitted to leave school, for the remainder of the day prior to dismissal, in the custody of a person other than the student's parents/guardian unless that person has the verified authorization (written or verbal) of one of the parents/guardians.~~
4. ~~Subject to the above restrictions, the Superintendent shall establish administrative procedures that set forth the criteria and provisions by which any eleventh or twelfth grade student may earn, or have revoked, off campus privileges during the student's lunch period. Such criteria and provisions shall contain, at a minimum, the requirements of parental consent and the Principal's approval for the granting of off campus privileges.~~

I. Makeup Work

~~Students who have been absent and are excused are given the privilege of making up work. The length of time within which work may be made up shall be determined by the extent and nature of the absence. It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete all makeup work.~~

J. Prolonged Absence

~~Parents/Guardians shall notify the school administration as soon as they become aware of the possibility of excessive absenteeism due to illness (more than fifteen (15) school days) that is not caused by an insurmountable condition(s) in order to provide homebound services. A physician's statement is necessary for homebound services.~~

K. Unexcused Elementary and Middle School Absences: Penalties

1. ~~There are no "free" unexcused absences. For any unexcused absence, tardy or leaving early or "skipped" class without an excuse, the student shall receive an "F" in that class for that day. Detention shall be served or other appropriate consequence(s) applied for middle school students.~~
2. ~~The Principal shall contact the parent/guardian after an unexcused absence to determine the cause for the absence and to explore remedial action if needed. However, by the occurrence of a fourth unexcused absence, tardy or leaving early or "skipped" class, the Principal shall meet with the student and parent/guardian to develop a mutually agreeable educational program designed to eliminate future unexcused absences or missed classes.~~

~~The educational program shall include, at a minimum, the following:~~

- a. ~~A scheduled conference with the student, the parent or parent's designee, the Principal, and other appropriate school personnel.~~
- b. ~~A listing of those reasons or circumstances asserted by the student as contributing to or causing the unexcused absences, tardy or leaving early or "skipped" classes, and a statement outlining procedures to overcome these reasons or circumstances including curriculum or other changes in the educational placement.~~
- c. ~~A written statement of what steps will be taken should other unexcused absences, tardy or leaving early or "skipped" class, occur or the student not live up to the agreed upon~~

educational program. These steps may include a failing grade for the grading period in the course or courses or subjects involved should an additional unexcused absence, tardy or leaving early or "skipped" class occur.

3. Academic failure may be imposed only when the student fails to comply with the previously agreed-upon educational program or a refusal to participate in a meeting to design such an educational program.
4. If an agreement is not reached following a conference, a fifth unexcused absence, tardy or leaving early, or "skipped" classes shall result in the student failing for the grading period, the subject course, or courses involved.
5. Parents/Guardians may appeal the assessment of academic failure under Policy 5710—Student/Parent/Guardian Grievance and Complaint Procedure if there are circumstances that were not considered by school officials when unexcused absences occurred.

IV. HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

A. Scope

1. In addition to the provisions set forth above, all students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) are expected to be in school for 180 days. In order to be eligible to receive credit, a student must meet course requirements. The student must be present 135 hours for a year course (67.5 hours for a semester course) and demonstrate mastery of the course performance standards for each course.
2. However, students with ten (10) or more unexcused absences per semester must earn a passing grade on the semester exam in order to be eligible to receive credit in that class. The student's course grade is dependent on the student's performance on all classroom assessments as determined by the instructor's grading policy.

B. Parent Contact

Every attempt shall be made by the school to notify parents/guardians on a daily basis after each unexcused absence to request an explanation for the absence. For each absence it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide written documentation for all excused absences by the next school day or upon the student's return.

1. On the third absence, the school shall send a letter to the last known address of the parent/guardian to inform him/her of the absences.
2. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any change of telephone number and/or address.
3. Parents/Guardians shall contact the attendance office either prior to or immediately following any absence. If a fourth and/or subsequent absence(s) occurs in a class for the nine (9) week grading period, an attendance conference may be held for all absences to be designated as excused for that grading period.
4. Unexcused absences are absences that are not used for legitimate purposes as described in Excused and Unexcused Absences above. For each class in which the student has four (4) or more unexcused absence(s) a grade of "F" shall be assigned for that nine (9) week grading period.
5. Students who arrive more than ten (10) minutes after the start of a class without a valid excuse shall be recorded as late and given an "F" for the class for the purpose of the daily grade.

C. Attendance Conference

An attendance committee shall be established at each school to review reason(s) for absence(s) beyond three in a nine week grading period. The attendance committee shall include an administrator or administrative designee and two (2) teachers. Both the parent and the student must attend the conference. Written documentation may be accepted in lieu of an attendance conference provided all absences are included and are excusable. Guidelines for the conference are:

1. Only absences beyond three (3) in a nine (9) week grading period may require an attendance conference.

2. ~~Parents/guardians may request an attendance conference for an anticipated absence beyond the three (3) absences in a grading period.~~
3. ~~A parent/guardian must request an attendance conference within ten (10) school days of the day the student returns to school. A conference must be scheduled no later than the day the student returns to school if the absence occurs on the last day of the semester.~~
4. ~~All absences in excess of three (3) per nine (9) weeks shall be unexcused unless appropriately documented or will require an attendance conference in order for the absence(s) to be designated excused. If the attendance committee determines that all absences will be classified excused, the student shall receive the earned grade. The attendance committee shall evaluate the following criteria:~~
 - a. ~~reasons for the first three (3) absences;~~
 - b. ~~reasons for the absence(s) beyond the first three (3); and~~
 - c. ~~the student's attitude and conduct.~~
5. ~~The school shall document attempts to contact the parents when unexcused absences occur. However, failure to successfully notify parents shall not negate the attendance policy.~~
6. ~~The current attendance reporting system and the teacher's grade book shall be the final authority in determining the number of absences for each student. However, it is the right of the Principal to excuse any student from any consequence arising from recorded absences, tardies or late arrivals.~~

D. Tardiness

1. ~~A student who arrives unexcused to class up to ten (10) minutes after the scheduled beginning time shall be recorded tardy. Four (4) tardies shall equal one (1) late.~~
2. ~~A student who arrives unexcused to class over ten (10) minutes after the scheduled beginning time shall be recorded as late.~~
3. ~~A late is considered an absence.~~
4. ~~Appropriate consequences shall be applied to repeated tardiness to include warning, detention, in-school detention or Saturday school.~~
5. ~~A student with four (4) tardies may be required to attend in-school detention or Saturday school.~~
6. ~~For each class, a student with four (4) or more unexcused absences and/or late arrivals shall be assigned a grade of "F" for that nine (9) week marking period.~~
7. ~~The current attendance reporting system and the teacher's grade book shall be the final authority in determining the number of tardies for each student. However, it is the right of the Principal to excuse any student from any consequence arising from recorded tardies.~~

E. Adult Students

~~Students eighteen (18) or older shall be responsible for notifying the school of their absence. It shall not be the responsibility of the school to notify the adult student's parents of absences or class cutting.~~

F. Other Considerations

1. ~~Students between the ages of fourteen (14) and eighteen (18) may become ineligible for driving privileges if they fail to satisfy attendance requirements. The School District shall notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles pursuant to State law. Failure to satisfy attendance requirements occurs when a student:~~
 - a. ~~accumulates fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences in a single class within ninety (90) school days; or~~
 - b. ~~has fifteen (15) or more unexcused absences within ninety (90) school days. For purposes of this section an absence constitutes four (4) or more periods missed in a single school day.~~

2. Students attending a curriculum related educational field trip sponsored by the home school and chaperoned by school personnel, or a function as an administratively recognized representative of the school, shall be considered in legal school attendance.
3. Students who are absent for an "educationally valuable experience" other than a field trip or school sponsored function or activity may receive an excused absence if the following criteria are met:
 - a. A written request, identifying the educational benefits, must be submitted by the parent/guardian.
 - b. The absence must be pre-approved at least one (1) week in advance by the principal or attendance administrator.
 - c. Students are responsible for work missed during this absence. See Makeup Work above.
4. Students who are suspended or prohibited from attending school due to failure to meet immunization requirements shall be considered administratively absent and not subject to fail as a result of their absences due to the suspension or prohibition.
5. Students who are absent due to recognized religious holidays shall obtain administrative pre-approval prior to the absences occurring. A religious holiday(s)/observance(s) exemption form (Form 5225 F1) should be completed by the parent/guardian and filed with the school at the beginning of each year or upon registration.
6. College recruitment trips are to be scheduled when school is not in session. An administrative exception may be granted for a planned program scheduled for a specific day or if the student has a pre-planned appointment, with a specific college administrator, verified in writing.
7. Any student with fifteen (15) or more absences due to a physical or mental condition that confines the student to a home or a hospital may be placed on Hospital Homebound or Intermittent Hospital Homebound status. If placed in the Hospital Homebound program, attendance records shall become the responsibility of the Hospital Homebound program.
8. Any student sixteen (16) years of age or older who accumulates ten (10) unexcused absences in any one (1) semester for any course may fail such course for the semester and may receive a recommendation to withdraw from class or school for the remainder of the semester.
9. At or after the date a student attains the age of sixteen (16), s/he may file a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment (Form 5130 F4). The declaration shall be on a form that requires the student and parent to acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce his/her potential earning power.

G. Exit Interview

School personnel must attempt to conduct an exit interview with students who file a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment (Form 5130 F4) with the Board, to determine the reason(s) for the student's decision to terminate school enrollment and to determine actions that could be taken to keep the student in school. Unsuccessful attempts must be documented.

V. PROCEDURES

The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement procedures to address, among other things, daily attendance tracking, tardies, and lates; excused and unexcused absences; and adjustments deemed necessary to address insurmountable conditions.

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5111.01 - HOMELESS STUDENTS

Definitions

Children and youth who are identified as meeting the Federal definition of "homeless" will be provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) (including a public preschool education) in the same manner as all other students of the District and other services needed to provide equal opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held. To that end, homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. The District shall establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness. The District shall regularly review and revise its policies, including school discipline policies that impact homeless students, including those who may be a member of any of the protected classes (Policy 2260 - *Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity*).

This policy is designed to identify students experiencing homelessness and to refer such students and their families for services available through the McKinney-Vento Act and services provided by local community social service entities.

Definitions

"Students experiencing homelessness" pursuant to State law means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (as defined in 42 U.S.C. Section 11432) and include children and youth who meet any of the following criteria:

- A. children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
- B. children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- C. children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- D. migratory children who are living in circumstances described in A through C above.

"Unaccompanied homeless youth" means a child or youth whose living arrangement qualifies as homeless under the definitions above and who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

According to non-regulatory guidance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), standards for adequate housing may vary by locality. Please see *Education for Homeless Children and Youth Programs, Non-Regulatory Guidance*, U.S.

Department of Education (ED), for factors to consider when determining whether the setting in which the family, child, or youth is living lacks one (1) of the fundamental utilities such as water, electricity, or heat; is infested with vermin or mold; lacks a basic functional part such as a working kitchen or a working toilet; or may present unreasonable dangers to adults, children, or persons with disabilities.

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, an unaccompanied youth includes a homeless child or youth and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Under State law an unaccompanied homeless youth who is sixteen (16) years of age or older and found to be an unaccompanied homeless youth eligible for services under Federal law shall be issued a certificate by the District's McKinney-Vento Liaison on District letterhead documenting their status which is to be accepted by medical providers and the courts.

Additionally, pursuant to Federal and State law, children or youth who are experiencing homelessness also include migratory children who are living in circumstances described in A-D above.

Questionnaire(s)

The District shall create and utilize a student housing questionnaire(s) to be used in all public schools, including charter schools, to identify students who are experiencing homelessness and who may be eligible for services under the McKinney-Vento Act. The following requirements apply:

- A. A student housing questionnaire must be provided to parents, guardians, and unaccompanied homeless youth at least once annually and whenever there is evidence that a student may be experiencing homelessness throughout the school year.
- B. A student housing questionnaire must be included in the annual school enrollment packet.
- C. A student housing questionnaire may be distributed or returned electronically, but it must be available in hard copy, if requested.

Beginning July 1, 2024, any student housing questionnaire will prominently explain that the purpose of the form is to identify students and families who may be eligible for services in the school or local community. In addition, the questionnaire will request the following information:

- A. student's name (first name, middle initial, last name);
- B. student's birth date;
- C. student's school and grade;
- D. names, birthdates, school, and grade for each additional child or youth in the household;
- E. parent's or guardian's name;
- F. street address;
- G. length of time at current address;
- H. former address;
- I. parent's, guardian's, or unaccompanied homeless youth's phone number;
- J. parent's, guardian's, or unaccompanied homeless youth's signature and date of signature;
- K. selection of nighttime residence type, using the residences defined in the "Homeless Student, PK-12" data element in F.A.C. 6A-1.0014;
- L. selection if the student is an unaccompanied homeless youth, as defined in 42 U.S.C. Section 11434(a)(6);
- M. selection of homelessness cause, using the causes defined in the "Homelessness Cause" data element in F.A.C. 6A-1.0014.

Services to Homeless Children and Youth

The District will provide services to homeless students that are comparable to other students in the District, including:

- A. transportation services (Policy 8600 - *Transportation*);
- B. public preschool programs and other educational programs and services for which the homeless student meets eligibility criteria including:
 1. programs for children with disabilities (Policy 2460 - *Exceptional Student Education*);
 2. programs for English learners (ELs) (i.e., students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)) (Policy 5780 - *Student/Parent Rights*);
 3. programs in career and technical education (Policy 2421 - *Lively Technical Center*);
 4. programs for gifted and talented students (Policy 2460 - *Exceptional Student Education*; Policy 5780 - *Student/Parent Rights*);
 5. school nutrition programs (Policy 5335.01 - *Food Allergies*; Policy 8500 - *Food Service Program*; Policy 8510 - *Wellness*; Policy 8531 - *Free and Reduced-Price Meals*);
 6. before - and after-school programs; and
 7. Title I programs (Policy 2261 - *Title I Services*; Policy 2261.01 - *Parent Participation in Title I Programs*; Policy 2261.02 - *Title I - Parents' Right to Know*).

The Superintendent will appoint a McKinney-Vento Liaison who will perform the duties as assigned by the Superintendent, including those required under F.A.C. 6A-10.088. Additionally, the Liaison will:

- A. coordinate District programs;
- B. collaborate with other school districts, community services providers, and organizations, including:
 1. local social services and other community agencies to provide support to homeless students and their families;
 2. other school districts regarding homeless student-related transportation, transfer of school records, and other inter-District activities as needed; and

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3. housing authorities.
- C. collaborate with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths, including exceptional student education needs.

Unaccompanied homeless high school youth will receive counseling to prepare and improve their readiness for postsecondary education.

School Stability

Maintaining a stable school environment is crucial to a homeless student's success in school. An "eligible school" is the school of origin, the school zoned for the address where the student is temporarily residing, or another school which students residing in that attendance zone are eligible to attend. To ensure stability, the District must make school placement determinations based on the "best interest" of the homeless child or youth based on student-centered factors. The District must:

- A. continue the student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; and for the remainder of the academic year even if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year and continued to receive all McKinney-Vento Act benefits; or
- B. enroll the student in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth, or the family of the child or youth, is actually living are eligible to attend.

When determining a child or youth's best interest, the District must assume that keeping the homeless student in the school of origin is in that student's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the student's parent or guardian, or the student if they are an unaccompanied youth. The school of origin is the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school at which the student was last enrolled, including a public preschool. The school of origin also includes the designated receiving school at the next level for feeder school patterns, when the student completes the final grade level at the school of origin.

When determining the student's best interest, the District must also consider student-centered factors, including the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless students and give priority to the request of the student's parent or guardian, or youth (if an unaccompanied youth). The District also considers the school placement of siblings when making this determination.

If the District finds that it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or guardian, or unaccompanied youth, the District must provide the individual with a written explanation and reason for the determination in a manner and form understandable to the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth. This written explanation will include appeal rights and be provided in a timely manner.

Immediate Enrollment

The District has an obligation to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless students. Enroll and enrollment include attending classes and participating fully in school activities. If a school other than the student's school of origin is chosen on the basis of a best interest determination, the homeless student must be immediately enrolled, even if the student does not have the documentation typically necessary for enrollment, such as immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, proof of guardianship, birth certificate, or previous academic records. The homeless student must also be enrolled immediately regardless of whether the student missed application or enrollment deadlines during the period of homelessness, fails to meet uniform or dress code requirements, or has outstanding fines or fees. Students must be provided appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed by homeless children and youth while attending a prior school.

The enrolling school must immediately contact the school last attended by the homeless student to obtain relevant academic or other records. If the student needs immunization or other health records, the enrolling school must immediately refer the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth to the Liaison, who will help obtain the immunizations, screenings or other required health records. Records usually maintained by the school must be kept so that they are available in a timely fashion if the child enters a new school or district. These records include immunization or other required health records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs. Procedures for inter-State records transfer between schools should be taken into account in order to facilitate immediate enrollment.

In addition, it shall be the District's responsibility to make sure that, once identified for services, the homeless student is attending classes and not facing barriers to accessing academic and extra-curricular activities for which they meet relevant eligibility criteria, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs (if available).

Transportation

The District shall promptly provide homeless students with transportation services that are comparable to those available to non-homeless students. At the request of the parent or guardian, or the liaison in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the District shall provide, or arrange for, transportation to and from the student's school of origin.

- A. If the homeless student continues to live in the District, transportation shall be provided, or the District shall arrange for the student's transportation, to/from their school of origin.
- B. If the homeless student resides in another school district, but the best interest determination is that the student should continue their education at the school of origin in the District, the District and the school district in which the

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student now resides shall agree upon a method to equitably apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin.

If there is not agreement, the District shall assume responsibility to transport the student from the district of residence to the school of origin in the District. Since Federal law requires that the responsibility and costs to be shared equally, the district of residence shall be invoiced for their share of the cost for transportation.

- C. If the homeless student resides in the District, but the best interest determination is that the student should continue their education at the school of origin in another district, the District and the school district in which the student's school of origin is located shall agree upon a method to equitably apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin.

If there is no agreement, the District shall assume responsibility to transport the student to the school of origin in the other district. Since Federal law requires the responsibility and costs for transportation services to be shared equally, the district in which the school of origin is located shall be invoiced for their share of the cost for transportation.

- D. When the student obtains permanent housing, transportation shall be provided to and from the school of origin until the end of the school year.

The mode of transportation shall be determined in consultation with the parent or guardian and shall be based on the best interest of the student.

In accordance with Federal law, the above transportation requirements still apply during the resolution of any dispute. The District will work with the State to resolve transportation disputes with other districts. Until the Districts reach agreement, the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally costs for transportation are to be shared equally.

If the disputing district is in another State, the District will turn to the State for assistance as Federal guidance says that both states should try to arrange an agreement for the districts.

Dispute Resolution

Homeless families and youths have the right to challenge placement and enrollment decisions. If a dispute arises between a school and a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment of a homeless student, the District must follow its dispute resolution procedures, consistent with the State's procedures. If such a dispute occurs, the District will immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought pending final resolution of the dispute, including all appeals. The student will receive all services for which they are eligible until all disputes and appeals are resolved.

Pursuant to Federal and State law, State Board rule, and this policy, the District will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of all decisions regarding school selection and enrollment made by the District, along with a written explanation of appeal rights.

The District's notice and written explanation about the reason for its decision will include, at a minimum, an explanation of how the school reached its decision regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment, including the following:

- A. a description of the proposed or refused action by the school;
- B. an explanation of why the action is proposed or refused;
- C. a description of other options the school considered and why those options were rejected;
- D. a description of any other relevant factors to the school's decision and information related to the eligibility or best interest determination such as the facts, witnesses, and evidence relied upon and their sources; and
- E. an appropriate timeline to ensure deadlines are not missed.

The District's notice and written explanation shall include contact information for the Liaison and the State Coordinator, and a brief description of the roles of each. The District's notice and written explanation shall also inform the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth that the Liaison is responsible for providing information describing the State-level dispute resolution process and distributing the appropriate forms to all parties wanting to file an appeal.

To initiate the State-level appeals process, within ten (10) working days after receiving written notification of the District-level or inter-district decision, the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth may file an appeal with the Liaison, who must provide it to FLDOE. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Liaison is required to notify FLDOE of the State-level appeal and provide that appeal to the FLDOE. The local liaison also must log incidents of State-level appeals in the FLDOE Online Dispute Resolution Tracking System.

The FLDOE and the Commissioner of Education will render a decision on any appeal and provide a copy of such decision to the parties.

All decisions and notices shall be drafted in a language and format appropriate for low-literacy, limited vision readers, and individuals with disabilities.

For children and youth and/or parents or guardians who are English learners or whose dominate language is not English, the District will provide translation and interpretation services in connection with all phases of the dispute resolution process pursuant to Federal laws.

The District will also provide electronic notices via email if the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth has access to email followed by a written notice provided in person or sent by mail.

Homeless Children in Preschool

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Homeless preschool-aged children and their families shall be provided equal access to the educational services for which they are eligible, including preschool programs, including Head Start programs, administered by the District. Additionally, the homeless child must remain in the public preschool of origin, unless a determination is made that it is not in the child's best interest. When making such a decision on the student's best interest, the District takes into account the same factors as it does for any student, regardless of age. It also considers pre-school age specific factors, such as 1) the child's attachment to preschool teachers and staff; 2) the impact of school climate on the child, including school safety; the quality and availability of services to meet the child's needs, including health, developmental, and social-emotional needs; and 3) travel time to and from school.

The District must also provide transportation services to the school of origin for a homeless child attending preschool. It is the District's responsibility to provide the child with transportation to the school of origin even if the homeless preschooler who is enrolled in a public preschool in the District moves to another district that does not provide widely available or universal preschool.

Public Notice

In addition to notifying the parent or guardian of the homeless student or the unaccompanied youth of the applicable rights described above, the District shall post public notice of educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness in each school. In addition, the District shall post public notice of the McKinney-Vento rights in places that homeless populations frequent, such as shelters, soup kitchens, and libraries in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians and unaccompanied youths.

Records

The local liaison will assist the homeless students and their parent(s) or guardian(s) or unaccompanied homeless students in their efforts to provide documentation to meet State and local requirements for entry into school.

All records for homeless students shall be maintained, subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Policy 8330, and in such a manner so that they are available in a timely fashion and can be transferred promptly to the appropriate parties, as required. Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, information regarding a homeless student's living situation is not considered directory information, is held confidential, and must be provided the same protections as other non-directory personally identifiable information (PII) contained in student education records under FERPA. The District shall incorporate practices to protect student privacy as described in AP 8330, and in accordance with the provisions of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA).

No Board policy, administrative procedure, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless children.

Annual and Other Reporting Requirements

By August 1st of each year, the District will submit the Florida McKinney-Vento Program District Contact Directory and Listserve Update utilizing the appropriate FLDOE form. The District will also report information on students experiencing homelessness to the FLDOE during the survey periods and use the elements set forth in F.A.C. 6A-1.0014.

The School District will notify the Florida McKinney-Vento Program within ten (10) school days of a change in assignment of or contact information for the District liaison.

Introduction

~~The District is committed to ensuring that homeless children and youth living in Leon County have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education and comparable services as provided to other children and youth, including preschool-aged children; are given a full opportunity to meet State and local achievement standards; and are included in Statewide assessments and accountability systems. The School District shall remove barriers that affect the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth in the District. Homeless children and youth enrolled in the District shall not be stigmatized or segregated, separated, or isolated into other educational programs on the basis of their status as homeless.~~

Definitions

~~A. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) defines a homeless child or youth as one who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes children and youth who:~~

- ~~1. are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;~~
- ~~2. are living in motels, hotels, travel trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;~~
- ~~3. are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;~~

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4. are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
 5. are abandoned in hospitals;
 6. have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; and/or
 7. are migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.
- B. Non-regulatory guidance from the United States Department of Education assists in clarifying which children and youth are considered homeless and includes:
1. runaway/throwaway children, whether living in a runaway shelter, on the streets, or with other children and youth without adequate adult supervision;
 2. school-aged unwed mothers or mothers-to-be who reside in a home for unwed mothers, who, in general, have not other available accommodations; and/or
 3. children residing in domestic violence crisis shelters that provide temporary living arrangements for victims of domestic violence.
- C. Unaccompanied youth means a student who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian living in circumstances described above. Additionally, pursuant to State law, an unaccompanied homeless youth is an individual who is sixteen (16) years of age or older and is found by the District's Liaison for Homeless Children to be an unaccompanied homeless youth eligible for services under Federal law.
- D. School of origin means the school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school where the student was last enrolled.

Designation of District Homeless Liaison

The District shall designate a District homeless liaison to ensure that homeless students enroll and succeed in school; receive comparable educational services; and receive referrals to health care, dental, mental health, and other appropriate services. Such duties include, but are not limited to, providing written certification documenting that an individual meets the definition set forth in State law of "unaccompanied homeless youth". The written certification shall be issued on official District letterhead stationery of the Homeless Liaison and shall include the date of the finding, a citation to F.S. 743.067(2), and the Homeless Liaison's signature.

Determining the Status of Students

District and school personnel, particularly those involved in the initial registration and enrollment of students, shall be aware of the definitions of homelessness to make accurate determinations concerning the status of enrolling students. To assist in this process, the Student Residency Form shall be completed as part of the initial registration and enrollment of all students. For homeless students, a copy of this completed form will be sent to the District homeless liaison.

- A. For adult students, students accompanied by parents/guardians, or unaccompanied youth without proof of residence, school personnel shall attempt to determine:
1. the nature of the current housing situation (i.e., whether the housing situation is one (1) of those listed above);
 2. the reason(s) for the current housing situation (e.g., whether it is subsequent to a loss of housing due to eviction from the former place of residence, condemnation or inhabitability of the former place of residence, natural disaster, or the need to escape from a domestic violence situation);
 3. whether the current housing situation is anticipated to be temporary;
 4. whether the family has had to move frequently, staying for short periods of time in different places;
 5. whether the current place of residence has utilities;
 6. if the family is sharing the housing of other persons, whether the sharing arrangement is due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons, and/or whether it is anticipated to be temporary; and/or

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7. whether the student and/or the student's family lacks the resources to establish a residence;

B. For students who are not accompanied by parents/guardians, school personnel shall attempt to determine:

1. in whose home the student is residing, how long the student has been residing there, and how long the student anticipates being there;
2. whether the living arrangement is due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons;
3. the location of the student's parent/guardian;
4. whether the student's parent/guardian knows where the student is;
5. whether the student's parent/guardian is attempting to have the student return to the parent's/guardian's home; and
6. whether there may be an adult in Leon County who is willing to file for guardianship or temporary custody by extended family.

To assist in collecting information for unaccompanied youth, the Caregiver Authorization Form may be completed by the person accompanying the student. A copy of this completed form shall be sent to the District homeless liaison. This form is for informational purposes only and is not legally binding.

School Enrollment

Special allowance shall be made to allow the homeless student to enroll in and attend school immediately regardless of immunization, guardianship, or program eligibility status. In no case shall enrollment be delayed pending receipt of documentation or previous school records.

- A. Proof of Residence: The District shall accept a letter from a shelter or service provider agency as proof of residence. If a homeless student is residing temporarily in a private home that is not that student's family home, the District shall accept a signed statement from the parent/guardian and/or the person in whose home the student or family is residing that documents that the student is residing in that private home.
- B. Proof of Birth: The District shall accept alternative proofs of birth as allowed by Florida statute for the homeless student.
- C. Eligibility for Programs: The assigned school shall determine the homeless student's most appropriate educational program based on information available at the time of enrollment.
- D. Documentation and Records: A "grace period" of thirty (30) school days from the date of enrollment shall be granted to the homeless student to provide all required documentation and records.

School Assignment

The best interest of the homeless student shall be considered when determining school assignment.

- A. A student enrolled in a District school who becomes homeless during a school year shall be allowed to continue attendance and complete the school year in the school of origin.
- B. A student who becomes homeless between school years shall be allowed to continue attendance and complete the subsequent school year in the school of origin.
- C. A student who has been temporarily placed elsewhere by homeless parents shall be allowed to continue attendance and complete the school year or subsequent school year, as appropriate, in the school of origin.
- D. A student who enrolls in the District initially as a homeless student shall have the right to attend the school of origin, if feasible and in the best interest of the student, or be assigned on the basis of the school zone in which that student is currently residing.
- E. An unaccompanied homeless student shall have the right to attend the school of origin, if feasible and in the best interest of the student, or be assigned on the basis of the school zone in which that student is currently residing. The District homeless liaison shall work with that student to resolve custody and other documentation issues.

- F.** ~~The District shall comply, if feasible and in the best interest of the student, with the request regarding school selection made by the parent/guardian of a homeless student regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parent/guardian or has been temporarily placed elsewhere by the parent/guardian.~~

Dispute Resolution

~~When a dispute occurs, the student shall be enrolled immediately, receive an enrollment decision in writing, and be referred to the District's Homeless Liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution per the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(3)(E)).~~

Transportation

~~The homeless student shall be provided transportation to and from the school of origin at the request of the parent/guardian. If the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though continuing his/her education at the school of origin in Leon County, the District and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method of apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. If the districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.~~

Notification of District Homeless Liaison

~~School personnel shall notify the District homeless liaison of the enrollment of a homeless student. School personnel shall contact the District homeless liaison if assistance is needed to make a determination of the homeless status of the student, to provide the homeless student and/or the student's family the required assistance with obtaining critical documentation, or the student appears to have special needs that the school lacks the resources to meet.~~

Notification of Rights

~~The homeless student and/or family shall be notified of rights afforded to homeless students verbally or through written materials. In particular, the student and/or student's parent/guardian and/or adult acting on behalf of the student shall be notified of the rights of homeless students to remain in their school of origin and their right to dispute school selection, if other than the school of origin. Additionally, the student and/or student's parent/guardian and/or adult acting on behalf of the student shall be notified that there is a "grace period" of thirty (30) school days to provide critical documentation such as the student's birth certificate, health and immunization records, or previous school records and transcripts, and that it is the School District's and/or the District homeless liaison's responsibility to assist with the process of obtaining such documentation.~~

Comparable Services

~~The homeless student shall be provided services comparable to services offered other students in the school of attendance, including, but not limited to, transportation services; educational services for which the student is eligible, including special education and related services and programs for English language learners; vocational education programs; programs for gifted and talented students; before and after school programs; and school meal programs.~~

Preschool-Aged Children

~~The District shall assure that homeless school aged children and their families have access to educational services for which they are eligible, including preschool programs administered by the District.~~

Title I Services

~~A homeless student is automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services, whether or not the homeless student lives within a Title I school attendance area, attends a Title I school, or meets the academic standards required of other children for eligibility. The District shall reserve funds under Section 1113(e)(3)(A) of the Title I law to provide comparable services to a homeless student attending a school that does not receive Title I funds.~~

Expedited Evaluations

~~A homeless student may receive an expedited evaluation in order to determine program eligibility or appropriate grade placement.~~

Records

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~~Any record ordinarily kept by the school, including health and immunization records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs of a homeless student shall be maintained so that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when the student enters a new school district.~~

Fee-Waiver

~~A homeless student shall not be charged tuition or fees, including those assessed by vocational or adult and community education programs.~~

Coordination of Services

~~The Superintendent or his/her designee shall coordinate with local social services agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to homeless children and youth and their families.~~

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