

*Riverside County Office of Education*  
*Board Policy 6173 Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness*

---

**INSTRUCTION**

**SUBJECT: Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness**

The County Board of Education (County Board) desires to ensure that students experiencing homelessness have access to the same free and appropriate public education provided to other students within the County Office of Education (County Office). The County Office shall provide students experiencing homelessness with access to education and other services necessary for them to meet the same challenging academic standards as other students. (cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

The County Superintendent or designee (County Superintendent) shall review and recommend updates to County Office policies at least once every three years to ensure removal of any barriers to the education of students experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youth. Any such review shall address identification, enrollment, and retention of such students, including those barriers that are due to absences or outstanding fees or fines. (42 USC 11432) (cf. 3250 - Transportation Fees) (cf. 5113.1 - Chronic Absence and Truancy)

When there are at least 15 students experiencing homelessness in the County Office or a County Office school, the County Office's local control and accountability plan (LCAP) shall include goals and specific actions to improve student achievement and other outcomes of students experiencing homelessness. (Education Code 52052, 52060) (cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

The County Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to serve as a liaison for students experiencing homelessness. The County Office liaison shall fulfill the duties specified in 42 USC 11432 to assist in identifying and supporting students experiencing homelessness to succeed in school.

The County Superintendent shall ensure that each County Office school identifies all experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youths enrolled at the school. (Education Code 48851)

To ensure easy identification of students experiencing homelessness, the County Superintendent shall annually administer a housing questionnaire developed by the California Department of Education (CDE) to all parents/guardians of students and all unaccompanied youths. (Education Code 48851)

If the primary language of a student's parent/guardian or an unaccompanied youth is not English, either the housing questionnaire shall be made available in the primary language of the student's parent/guardian or the unaccompanied youth pursuant to Education Code 48985, or an appropriate translation of the housing questionnaire shall be provided upon request of a student's parent/guardian or an unaccompanied youth. (Education Code 48851)

In addition, the County Superintendent shall ensure that the County Office liaison's contact information and other information on homelessness, including, but not limited to, information

***Riverside County Office of Education***  
***Board Policy 6173 Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness***

---

regarding the educational rights and resources available to persons experiencing homelessness, are posted on the County Office and school web sites as specified in the accompanying administrative regulation. (Education Code 48852.6)

In order to identify County Office students who are homeless, the County Superintendent may provide school staff with professional development on the definition and signs of homelessness, and contact appropriate local agencies to coordinate referrals for homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth. (cf. 1113 - County Office of Education and School Web Sites) (cf. 4131 - Staff Development) (cf. 4231 - Staff Development) (cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Information about the living situation of a student experiencing homelessness shall be considered part of a student's educational record, subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and shall not be deemed to be directory information as defined in 20 USC 1232g. (42 USC 11432) (cf. 5125 - Student Records) (cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

The County Superintendent shall ensure that placement decisions for students experiencing homelessness are based on the student's best interest as defined in law and administrative regulation.

Students experiencing homelessness shall be provided services that are comparable to services offered to other students in the school, including, but not limited to, transportation, educational programs for which the student meets the eligibility criteria (such as federal Title I services or similar state or local programs, programs for students with disabilities, and educational programs for English learners), career and technical education programs, programs for gifted and talented students, and school nutrition programs. (42 USC 11432) (cf. 3550 - Food Service/Child Nutrition Program) (cf. 3553 - Free and Reduced Price Meals) (cf. 5148.2 - Before/After School Programs) (cf. 5148.3 - Preschool/Early Childhood Education) (cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program) (cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services) (cf. 6171 - Title I Programs) (cf. 6172 - Gifted and Talented Student Program) (cf. 6174 - Education for English Learners)(cf. 6177 - Summer Learning Programs) (cf. 6178 - Career and Technical Education) (cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)

Students experiencing homelessness shall not be segregated into a separate school or program based on their status as homeless and shall not be stigmatized in any way. However, the County Superintendent may separate students experiencing homelessness on school grounds as necessary for short periods of time for health and safety emergencies or to provide temporary, special, and supplementary services to meet the unique needs of students experiencing homelessness. (42 USC 11432, 11433) (cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in County Office of Education Programs and Activities) (cf. 3553 - Free and Reduced Price Meals)

The County Superintendent shall ensure that information and/or materials for students experiencing homelessness are provided in a manner and form understandable to the parents/guardians of students experiencing homelessness and to unaccompanied youths.

The County Superintendent shall coordinate with other agencies and entities to ensure that

***Riverside County Office of Education  
Board Policy 6173 Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness***

---

students experiencing homelessness are promptly identified, have access to and are in reasonable proximity to available education and related support services, and raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness. Toward these ends, the County Superintendent shall collaborate with local social services agencies, other agencies or entities providing services to homeless children and youth, and, if applicable, transitional housing facilities. In addition, the County Superintendent shall coordinate transportation, transfer of school records, and other County Office activities with other local educational agencies. As necessary, the County Superintendent shall coordinate, within the County Office and with other involved local educational agencies, services for students experiencing homelessness and services for students with disabilities. (42 USC 11432) (cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

At least annually, County Office liaisons and other appropriate staff shall participate in professional development and other technical assistance activities to assist them in identifying and meeting the needs of students experiencing homelessness. Such professional development and technical assistance shall include, but are not limited to, training on the definitions of terms related to homelessness, the signs of homelessness, the steps that should be taken once a potentially homeless student is identified, and how to connect students experiencing homelessness with appropriate housing and service providers. (Education Code 48852.5; 42 USC 11432)

The County Superintendent shall report to CDE the number of students experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youths enrolled in the County as identified from the housing questionnaire described above. (Education Code 48851)

Additionally, the number of students experiencing homelessness graduating from the fourth or fifth year of high school who, for the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from County Office established graduation requirements that are in addition to statewide coursework requirements shall be annually reported to CDE, in accordance with Education Code 51225.1.

At least annually, the County Superintendent shall report to the County Board on the identification of and outcomes for students experiencing homelessness, which may include, but are not limited to, the housing questionnaire responses, school attendance, student achievement test results, promotion and retention rates by grade level, graduation rates, suspension/expulsion rates, and other outcomes related to any goals and specific actions identified in the LCAP. Based on the evaluation data, the County Office shall revise its strategies as needed to better support the education of students experiencing homelessness. (cf. 0500 - Accountability) (cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests) (cf. 6190 - Evaluation of the Instructional Program)

**LEGAL REFERENCE:**

**EDUCATION CODE**

39807.5 Payment of transportation costs by parents

48850 Educational rights of homeless and foster youth

48852.5 Notice of educational rights of students experiencing homelessness

48852.7 Enrollment of students experiencing homelessness

***Riverside County Office of Education***  
***Board Policy 6173 Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness***

---

48915.5 Recommended expulsion, homeless student with disabilities  
48918.1 Notice of recommended expulsion  
51225.1-51225.3 Graduation requirements  
52052 Accountability; numerically significant student subgroups  
52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan  
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5  
4600-4670 Uniform complaint procedures  
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20  
1087vv Free Application for Federal Student Aid; definitions  
1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act  
6311 Title I state plan; state and local educational agency report cards  
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42  
11431-11435 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act  
12705 Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act; state and local strategies

MANAGEMENT RESOURCES:

CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL PUBLICATIONS

Partial Credit Model Policy and Practice Recommendations

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Homeless Education Dispute Resolution Process, January 30, 2007

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Homeless Liaison Toolkit, 2013

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GUIDANCE

Dear Colleague Letter, July 27, 2016

Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program, Non-Regulatory Guidance, July 2016

WEB SITES

California Child Welfare Council: <http://www.chhs.ca.gov/Pages/CAChildWelfareCouncil.aspx>

California Department of Education, Homeless Children and Youth Education:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/cy>

National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE: <http://www.serve.org/nche>

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty: <http://www.nlchp.org>

U.S. Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/index.htm>