

Administrative Regulation

Homeless Students, Enrollment of

Specific guidelines are designed to facilitate the enrollment of homeless students in the Garden Grove Unified School District. School personnel are notified annually regarding the procedures and are encouraged to work closely with homeless students to encourage their success.

A district staff member is designated as a liaison for homeless students. The liaison is responsible to ensure that homeless students are identified by school personnel and that school personnel providing services to homeless students receive professional development and other support, coordinate with other agencies/school personnel, inform parents of their rights, mediate enrollment disputes, and coordinate transportation needs. Specific information on homelessness, including, but not limited to, information regarding the educational rights and resources available to persons experiencing homelessness and the contact information for the district liaison will be included on the district website.

The specific guidelines used to enroll students at a district school are as follows:

- A. The homeless student must be enrolled immediately at the school and be allowed to attend class, even if he/she does not have the required documents for enrollment, such as previous academic records, proof of residency, and records of immunization and other required health records.
- B. Homeless students are to be provided with comparable services immediately upon enrollment.
- C. The school personnel must assist the child in obtaining the required documents.
- D. Students may remain at their “school of origin” (school the child attended when permanently housed) the entire time they are homeless, and/or until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing, unless it is against the parent’s wishes.
 1. If the student is transitioning between grade levels, he/she shall be allowed to continue in the same attendance area.
 2. If the student is transitioning to a middle school or high school, and the school designated for matriculation is in another school district, he/she shall be allowed to continue to the school designated for matriculation in that district.

If the student's status changes before the end of the school year so that he/she is no longer homeless, he/she shall be allowed to stay in the school of origin: (Education Code 48852.7)

1. Through the duration of the school year if he/she is in grades K-8
2. Through graduation if he/she is in high school

E. Should a dispute arise over student eligibility, school selection, or enrollment in a particular school, the matter shall be referred to the district liaison, who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.

The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of any decisions related to eligibility, school selection, or enrollment and of the rights of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth to appeal such decisions.

The district liaison may use an informal process as an alternative to formal dispute resolution procedures, provided that the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth have access to the more formal process if informal resolution is not successful in resolving the matter.

In working with a student's parents/guardians or unaccompanied youth to formally resolve an enrollment dispute, the district liaison shall:

1. Inform them that they may provide written and/or oral documentation to support their position
2. Inform them that they may seek the assistance of social services, advocates, and/or service providers in having the dispute resolved
3. Provide them a dispute form that they may use and turn in to the school to initiate the dispute resolution process
4. Provide them a copy of the dispute form they submit for their records
5. Provide them the outcome of the dispute for their records

If a parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the liaison's enrollment decision, he/she may appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall make a determination within five working days.

If the parent/guardian chooses to appeal the district's placement decision, the district liaison shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the homeless liaison at the county office of education.

Pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought and shall be allowed to attend classes and participate fully in school activities.

- F. Transportation assistance is provided to homeless students upon request.
- G. A homeless student who enrolls in any district school shall be immediately deemed to meet all residency requirements for participation in interscholastic sports or other extracurricular activities.

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Ref: EC Sections 1980-1986, 2558.2, 39807.5
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