

**SAN LORENZO
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD POLICY**

Student

BP 5111.13 (a)

HOMELESS EDUCATION

It is the policy of the Board to ensure that homeless children and youth are provided with equal access to its educational programs, have an opportunity to meet the same challenging San Lorenzo Unified School District academic standards, are not segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and to establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.

Board adopted: May 18, 2004

**SAN LORENZO
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

Student

AR 5111.13 (a)

DEFINITION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The term "homeless children and youths" is defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

It includes children and youths who:

- are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- are living in motels, trailer parks, hotels, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- are living in emergency shelters
- are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement
- 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
- are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings

Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition.

Homeless status is determined on a case-by-case basis in cooperation with parents, or in the case of unaccompanied youth, with the local educational agency liaison.

PROCEDURE

School Selection

Placement in a school shall be in accordance with the student's best interest as follows:

- Continue the student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness to the extent possible.

AR 5111.13 (b)

- Enroll the student in any school in the District that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the homeless student is actually living are eligible to attend.
- Parents/guardians may request their child attend any school in the San Lorenzo Unified School District and to the extent feasible the District will attempt to comply with these requests.

In determining the best interests of the student to the extent feasible, the student will be kept in the school of origin as long as is practicable for the duration of homelessness except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the student's parent or guardian.

In the case of unaccompanied youth, the local educational agency liaison or designee will assist in placement or enrollment decisions considering the requests of such unaccompanied youth.

The school of origin is defined as the school that the student attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

A homeless student may continue in the school of origin if the student becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year, or

- If the student becomes homeless between academic years or
- The student becomes homeless during the academic year or
- For the remainder of the academic year if the student becomes permanently housed during an academic year.

Enrollment

The school selected shall immediately enroll the student even if the student lacks records normally required for enrollment. Records will immediately be requested from the previous school.

The terms "enroll" and "enrollment" are defined to mean attending school and participating fully in school activities.

Residency

A homeless child or youth is a resident if the child is personally present somewhere within the district with a purpose to remain but not necessarily to remain permanently.

Homeless students who do not live with their parents or guardians may enroll themselves in school.

The address listed on the enrollment forms becomes proof of residency.

Guardianship

For purposes of school placement, any parent, guardian or person in loco parentis who has legal or physical custody of a homeless child or youth or has completed a caregiver affidavit shall enroll that child or youth directly in a San Lorenzo Unified School.

Comparable Services

Each homeless student shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, such as

- Preschool programs
- Transportation services
- Educational services for which the student meets eligibility criteria such as ESL or special education programs
- Programs for "At Risk" students
- Programs for gifted and talented students
- School nutrition programs
- Title I services
- After School programs
- Vocational and technical education programs

Transportation

At the request of the parent, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the local agency liaison or designee, transportation will be provided for homeless children to the school of origin, school of attendance area or school requested, for the duration of the school year.

Once permanent housing is found the family has a choice to stay in the school they are attending for the remainder of the school year or attend the school where they have found housing. If a family chooses to stay in the school of origin transportation will be provided in the form of regional transportation bus tickets. For a kindergarten through fifth grade student, for school transportation purposes, bus tickets can be provided to both a parent/guardian and child or youth.

Permanent housing is defined as any signed lease or long-term approved living situation. Self-paying day to day in a motel is not considered permanent housing.

If a homeless student's living arrangements change to an area served by another school district, and if the student chooses to remain in the school of origin for the remainder of the

school year, then the San Lorenzo Unified School District and the other district will arrange for the student's transportation.

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Local Educational Agency Liaison

The Director of Planning/Assessment or designee will be the Local Educational Agency Liaison for homeless children and youths.

The Local Educational Agency Liaison or designee shall ensure that:

- homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination with other entities and agencies
- homeless children and youth enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in schools in the district.
- homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which they are eligible and referrals to other appropriate services.
- the parents or guardians of homeless children and youths are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to them and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of the child/youth.
- public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth is disseminated in such places as schools, meal sites, shelters and other locations where the homeless receive services.
- enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the dispute resolution process described below.
- the parents or guardians of a homeless child or youth, and unaccompanied youth, are informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin or to the school that is selected and are assisted in accessing transportation to school.
- coordination of services between SLZUSD and other homeless family service providers, and federal, state, and local programs.
- assistance is provided to children and youth who do not have immunizations, or immunization or medical records, to obtain necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records.
- in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison assists in placement or enrollment decisions, considers the views of such unaccompanied youth, and provides notice to such youth of the right to appeal under the dispute resolution process described below.

Enrollment Disputes

1. If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.

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2. The parent/guardian of the child or youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including their right to appeal.
3. The Local Educational Liaison shall carry out the dispute process as expeditiously as possible after receiving the notice of the dispute. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison shall ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.
4. Appeals of the school's decision will go to the Administrator of Alternative Programs. If not satisfied with the resolution, a final appeal may be made to the Associate Superintendent of Educational Services. The parent or guardian of the child or youth, or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the appealed decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision.

HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM

The mission of San Lorenzo Unified School District is to provide homeless children and youth equitable access to educational opportunities afforded other children. The goal is to have all homeless students meet the high academic, behavioral and attendance expectations of the San Lorenzo Unified School District. Emphasis is placed on overcoming all barriers that prevent homeless children from being successful.

References:

USC 42 § 11434 a (2)