

The State Department of Education's Summer  
Professional Development Conference

# VISION

## 2020

### FOCUS **ED**



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**

[WWW.OK.GOV/SDE](http://WWW.OK.GOV/SDE)



# Who is Homeless?

Children who lack:

- Fixed
- Regular
- Adequate nighttime residence

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# Fixed, Regular, Adequate Defined:

- A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.
- A regular residence is one which is used on a predictable or routine basis.
- An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

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# Homeless Students:

- Homeless students are automatically eligible for free school meals. Parents or Guardians of homeless students do not have to fill out the free and reduced lunch form.
- Homeless students are to be enrolled immediately
- Homeless students are to be provided transportation within 72 hours

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# Eligibility—Who is Covered?

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters or abandoned in hospitals

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# Eligibility— Who is Covered? (cont.)

- Children awaiting foster care placement
- Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, etc.
- Migrant children living in housing that is not fixed regular or adequate

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# Barriers to Education:

- Enrollment requirements: school records, immunizations, proof of residence and guardianship
- Lack of transportation, school supplies, clothing, etc.
- Poor health, hunger
- Prejudice and misunderstanding
- High mobility resulting in lack of school stability

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# Local Homeless Education Liaisons

- Every LEA must designate a liaison for students in homeless situations
- Liaison ensures that children and youth in homeless situations are identified and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in school
- Liaison is the link with educational services, including preschool and health services

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# Homeless Liaisons Duties (cont.)

- Inform parents, guardians, or youth of educational services, parental involvement opportunities, and transportation services, including to the school of origin
- Post public notice of educational rights
- Resolve disputes

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# Identification Strategies

- Provide professional development to school staff (registrars, secretaries, counselors, social workers, nurses, teachers, bus drivers, administrators, etc.)
- Coordinate with community services agencies, such as shelters, drop-in centers, welfare and housing agencies, and public health departments

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# Identification Strategies (cont.)

- Provide materials and posters where there is a frequent influx of low-income families and youth in high-risk situations, like motels and campgrounds
- Educate school staff about “warning signs” that may indicate an enrolled child or youth may be homeless
- Make special efforts to identify preschool children

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# Identification Strategies (cont.)

- Develop relationships with truancy officials and/or other attendance officers
- Use enrollment and withdrawal forms to inquire about living situations
- Avoid using the word "homeless" in initial contacts with school personnel, families, or youth

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# School Stability - Key Provisions

- School of origin or enroll in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend, according to best interest of child
- School of origin—school attended when permanently housed or in which last enrolled
- Best interest—keep homeless students in their schools of origin, to the extent feasible, unless this is against the parents' or guardians' wishes

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# Feasibility of School Determination

- Continuity of instruction
- Age of the child or youth
- Safety of the child or youth
- Length of stay at the shelter
- where family might find permanent housing
- Student's need for special instruction
- Impact of commute on education
- School placement of siblings
- Time remaining in the school year

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# Enrollment—Key Provisions

- Children and youth have the right to enroll in school immediately, even if they do not have required documents, such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documents
- If a student does not have immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the liaison must immediately assist in obtaining them, and the student must be enrolled in the interim

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# Enrollment—Key Provisions (cont.)

- Enrolling schools must obtain school records from the previous school, and students must be enrolled in school while records are obtained
- Schools must maintain records for students who are homeless so they are available quickly
- Federal law supercedes state and local laws where there is a conflict [U.S. Constitution, Article VI]

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# Resolution of Disputes—Key Provision

- Each state and LEA must establish dispute resolution procedures
- When a dispute over enrollment arises, the student must be admitted immediately to the school of choice while the dispute is being resolved
- Liaisons must ensure unaccompanied youth are enrolled immediately while the dispute is being resolved

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# Homeless Unaccompanied Youth

- Definition - youth who is homeless and is not in the physical custody of parent or guardian
- Liaisons must help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school, and inform the youth of his or her appeal rights
- School personnel must be made aware of the specific needs of runaway and homeless youth.

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# Unaccompanied Youth—Strategies

- Develop caretaker forms
- Self-enrollment forms for unaccompanied youth
- Other forms to replace typical proof of guardianship
- Forms should be crafted carefully so they do not create further barriers or delay enrollment
- Coordinate with other agencies to ensure policies do not create educational barriers

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# Unaccompanied Youth—Strategies

- Provide unaccompanied youth the opportunity to enroll in diversified learning opportunities, such as vocational education, credit-for-work programs
- Provide a “safe place” and trained mentor at school for unaccompanied youth to access as needed
- Permit exceptions to school policies on class schedules, tardiness, absences and credits to accommodate the needs of unaccompanied youth
- Assist with credit accrual and recovery

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# Preschool-Aged Children

- Liaisons must ensure that families and children have access to Head Start and other public preschool programs administered by the LEA
- Head Start grantees should collaborate and adjust their programs to serve homeless children

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# Preschool—Strategies

- Keep slots open for homeless students
- Provide awareness training for preschool providers
- Collaborate with preschools not operated by the LEA or SEA (including Head Start)
- Ask parents about preschool-aged children when they enroll their school-aged children in school
- Coordinate with IDEA Child Find

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# Access to Services

- Homeless students must have access to educational services for which they are eligible, including special education, programs for English learners, gifted and talented programs, voc./tech. programs
- Undocumented children and youth have the same right to attend public school as U.S. citizens and are covered by the McKinney-Vento Act to the same extent as other children and youth (Plyler v. Doe)

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# Segregation

- States are prohibited from segregating homeless students in separate schools, separate programs within schools, or separate settings within schools
- SEAs and LEAs must adopt policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youth are not segregated or stigmatized on the basis of their status as homeless

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# Title I and Homelessness

- A child or youth who is homeless and is attending any school in the district is automatically eligible for Title IA services
- LEAs must reserve (or set aside 1-5%) funds to serve homeless children who do not attend Title IA schools, including providing educational support services to children in shelters and other locations where homeless children may live.

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The logo for VISION2020 is displayed in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a red rectangular background. The word "VISION" is followed by a stylized "2020" where the zeros are represented by a grid of small squares. The background of the red bar also features a faint, larger-scale grid of squares.

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National Association for the Education of  
Homeless Children and Youth  
<http://www.naehcy.org>

National Center on Homeless Education  
<http://www.serve.org/nche>

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

National Network for Youth  
<http://www.nn4youth.org>

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Information in this Power Point  
came from NCHE  
National Center on Homeless Education

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