



## **Heading Home Ramsey Policy on Ensuring Access to Educational Services**

Recipients and sub-recipients of CoC funds serving families with children and/or young adults 18-24 are responsible for policy below, which is intended to help providers comply with requirements established under federal law, by HUD through the annual CoC project application. All projects receiving CoC funds that are serving families with children and/or young adults 18-24 are required to have similar policies. Projects may opt to adapt this sample policy or to adopt a different policy that fulfills the requirements.

### **Purpose**

To ensure that participants in Heading Home Ramsey are helped to understand their educational rights established under Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; To ensure that children and young adults are immediately enrolled in school, as required by federal and State law, & to ensure that they are connected to transportation and educational services to help them succeed in school.

### **Policy**

The Program Director and/or his/her designee is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that all families with children and young adults participating in this project are informed about their educational rights and their eligibility for educational services at intake and as necessary thereafter.
2. Ensuring that no matter where they live, how long they have lived there, or how long they plan to stay, all children and young adults participating in the project are enrolled in school immediately, even if they lack the paperwork normally required (e.g., school records, records of immunization, and other required health records, proof of residency, guardianship, and other documents), are unable to pay fines or fees, or have missed application or enrollment deadlines. Students have the right to enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents. Enrollment shall occur as quickly as possible and within no more than 2 business days of project entry. Children and young adults who are not required by State law to enroll in school shall be encouraged and assisted but not required to enroll. Families shall be encouraged and assisted to enroll children in early childhood education programs. Enrollment includes attending classes and participating fully in school activities and applies to youth without a parent or guardian.
3. Assisting unaccompanied youth to choose and enroll in a school, giving priority to his/her wishes and assisting to exercise his/her right to appeal.
4. Advocating as necessary to ensure that homeless students are able to continue to attend their school of origin (i.e., where they went before becoming homeless or the school in which they were last enrolled) the entire time they are homeless and until the end of the academic year during which they find permanent housing. This includes pre-schools and the designated receiving school at the next grade level when a student completes the final

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grade level served by the school of origin. Remaining in the school of origin should be presumed to be in the best interest of the student unless contrary to the request of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth.

5. Assisting, as necessary, to ensure that the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth is provided with the required written explanation of decisions made by school districts/charter schools and how to appeal them, and that they are referred to the local school district's homeless liaison, who must carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.
6. Advocating, as necessary, to secure the transportation services to which students are entitled (i.e., to and from the school or preschool of origin, including until the end of the year when the student obtains permanent housing). Assisting, as necessary, to secure temporary transportation services through other means, if possible, when school districts/charter schools are unable to immediately provide such required services.
7. Advocating as necessary to ensure that homeless students who meet the relevant eligibility criteria do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet and charter schools, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and athletic programs.
8. Advocating, as necessary, to ensure that students receive appropriate full or partial credit for coursework, including consulting with the prior school about partial coursework completed, evaluating students' mastery of partly completed courses, and offering credit recovery.
9. Advocating as necessary to ensure that all homeless youth receive information and individualized counseling regarding college readiness, college selection, the application process, financial aid, and the availability of on-campus supports; and that unaccompanied homeless youths are informed of their status as independent students for the purposes of Federal financial aid for postsecondary education and assisted in receiving verification of such status.
10. Advocating on behalf of homeless students as necessary to ensure that they receive the services for which they are eligible according to their needs and comparable to those provided to other students, including assistance from the local school district's homeless liaison, Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities, Head Start, other preschool programs, services for disabled students, free school meals, services for English language learners, gifted and talented services, before and after school care, career and technical education, summer learning, online learning, and referrals to health, mental health, dental and other services.
11. Helping homeless students to succeed in school and to get help from the local homeless education liaison, as necessary.
12. Ensuring that no policies, procedures, or practices that are inconsistent or interfere with the educational rights established under federal law are adopted by the project.