**Nittany Valley Charter School**

**Administrative Procedures for Policy 251: Students Experiencing Homelessness**

**Addition to our Original Homelessness Policy, updated 10/25/18**

**Training**

The School’s Homeless Liaison shall participate in professional development programs and

other technical assistance activities offered by the Regional Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education

for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.

The School’s Homeless Liaison shall arrange professional development programs for school staff,

including office staff, at a minimum, annually.

School personnel providing services to students experiencing homelessness and youths, including

school enrollment staff, shall receive, at a minimum, annually, professional development and

support to:

1. Improve identification of a student experiencing homelessness and youths and unaccompanied youths;

2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements for immediate enrollment and transportation to be arranged with the school district; and

3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

**Enrollment**

Our school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction if there are openings, even if:

1. The student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment

2. The application or enrollment deadline has passed during any period of homelessness.

1. School staff questions the validity of the parent’s homeless claim. The Dispute Resolution procedure, referenced in this policy, should be used in these cases after the student has been enrolled. Only in cases where the school is at or over its chartered capacity will the student be assigned to the wait-list or referred to the next closest school with space.

 4. The School’s Homeless Liaison shall immediately contact the school last attended by the child or youth to obtain relevant academic and/ or other records.

 5. The School may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information.

 6. If the School is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the district shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's assignment within the school.

**Comparable Services**

Students experiencing homelessness shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other Nittany Valley Charter School students.

**Enrollment Dispute Resolution**

Disagreements and disputes are to be settled as close to the point of conflict as possible. Each local homeless education liaison shall assist the family and school to ensure compliance with federal and state legislation and policy governing the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. The liaison shall work with appropriate local school division representatives to address any policies or procedures that are identified as barriers in the access to and success within a free appropriate public education. The Office of the State Coordinator of Homeless Education may be consulted at any time for technical assistance.

**Dispute Resolution Process for School Selection or Enrollment**

If a school chooses to send a child or youth to a school other than the school of origin or the school selected by the family or youth, the school shall consult with the local homeless education liaison prior to making a final placement determination. If the school’s denial of enrollment is supported by a review of feasibility and best interest, the school shall provide the parent or guardian of the child or youth with a written explanation of the school’s decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision. If an appeal is requested either in writing or verbally, the school shall:

* Immediately admit the student to the school in which enrollment is sought and provide all services for which the student is eligible, pending resolution of the dispute; and
* Refer the child, youth, parent, or guardian to the designated local homeless education liaison who shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute.

**Review Procedure**

If disputes or complaints of non-compliance arise regarding the education for homeless children and youth, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) recommends that:

1. The person having the complaint first contact the school or school district (i.e., the local school district contact person for homeless students, the principal, or superintendent) to present their concerns to the people closest to the situation and most likely to be able to resolve it quickly;
2. If Step A is not successful or is not possible under the circumstances, contact should be made with the Homeless Project Educational Liaison (if a site exists), or, PDE will accept complaints directly through the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program at phone number (717) 772-2066;
3. Individual cases may be referred to the PDE’s Office of Chief Counsel and the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education as needed by the State Homeless Coordinator; and,
4. PDE will deliver a response within 15 business days of the receipt of the complaint. The complaint may arrive in the form of a copy of the school/district letter or on the Dispute Letter Form if given directly to a Liaison of the Homeless Children’s Initiative.

**PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS NOTICE OF DENIAL OF ENROLLMENT**

To be completed by a school whenever an enrollment or school selection request of a

student experiencing homelessness is denied:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of School Employee Completing Form:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Requested School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

School District: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(This may be the school the child was attending when they became homeless, the school the

child is currently attending or the school where the child is now living)

In compliance with Section 722(g)(3)(E) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, the

following written notification is provided to:

Parent or Guardian or Youth: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

After receiving your request for enrollment or school selection for the student(s) listed above, we

hereby provide notice that the request is denied. The reason for this determination is the

following:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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The school district hereby notifies the parent or guardian of the student or the unaccompanied

youth of the following rights:

• The student has the right to enroll immediately in the requested or preferred school

pending full resolution of the dispute.

• If the student(s) want to remain in the same school they were attending or the school they

attended when they first became homeless, the student is entitled to transportation back

to the prior school pending full resolution of the dispute if the placement (including any

transportation involved) is feasible, reasonable and in the best interest of the student.

• You have the right to appeal this decision. You may do so by completing the second

page of this notice (Complaint Form) or by contacting Pennsylvania’s McKinney-Vento

Homeless state coordinator by phone at (717) 783-6468.

• The family/unaccompanied youth can challenge the school district’s decision by

providing additional written material or by discussing the matter with the school, school

district personnel, McKinney-Vento school district liaison or McKinney-Vento regional

or site coordinator.

• The McKinney-Vento school district liaison can assist the family or youth in appealing

the school district’s decision. A copy of Pennsylvania’s Homeless Children’s Initiative

Complaint Form is attached.

• The family/youth can have an advocate or attorney handle the matter.

• You may also ask for help from the Commonwealth’s Office of General Counsel’s

• Dispute Resolution Program. This is a voluntary informal mediation process through

which a trained impartial mediator helps parties reach a mutually acceptable resolution.

Using mediation does not waive a family/youth’s right to file a lawsuit before or after the

mediation. For more information go to:

<http://www.ogc.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/dispute_resolution/4415>.

Name of school district’s homeless liaison involved in the decision:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of McKinney/Vento regional coordinator consulted in making this determination:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby confirm that I received this notice:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature of parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth)