ADMISSION OF HOMELESS STUDENTS

To the extent practical and as required by law, the Salem School District will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible including special education and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including students who are:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Abandoned in hospitals;
5. 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;
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
7. Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Annually, the Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Alternatively, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living.

If a dispute should arise, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The Salem School District liaison, shall inform the parent or guardian of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing as noted below. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies.

Each homeless student shall have access to and shall be provided education services for which the student is eligible comparable to services provided to other students in the school, including career and technical education programs, gifted education programs, and school nutrition programs. Transportation services for homeless students shall be provided in accordance with applicable law and as generally described below.
Enrollment of a homeless student shall be immediate even if the homeless student lacks records routinely required prior to enrollment or has missed application or enrollment deadlines (academic, immunization, etc.). The District shall make arrangements to obtain any necessary records and to have the student receive any necessary immunizations. When feasible, the District shall seek immunization through no- or low-cost health care providers. If an expense is incurred, the District shall seek reimbursement through Medicaid if possible.

If a homeless student becomes permanently housed during the school year, the student shall no longer be considered homeless and may only continue enrollment in the District for the remainder of that school year.

If the District seeks to place a homeless child in a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the parent, or the District has determined that the living situation does not qualify as homeless (“eligibility decision”), the District shall inform the parent or the unaccompanied youth of the right to appeal. The District shall provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with written notice including:

a. A succinct explanation of the child’s placement/eligibility decision and contact information for the District Homeless Liaison, as well as the NHDOE State Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth;

b. Notification of the parent’s right to appeal(s);

c. Notification of the right to enroll in the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute;

d. A description of the dispute resolution process including a petition/appeal form that can be returned to the school to initiate the process and timelines; and

e. A summary of the McKinney-Vento Act.

Appeal to the District Homeless Liaison – Level I.

a. If the parent or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the District’s placement decision, he/she/they may appeal by filing a written request for dispute resolution/appeal with the school, the District Homeless Liaison, or Superintendent. The request for dispute resolution should be submitted within fifteen business days of receiving notification of the District’s placement.

b. The District Homeless Liaison shall log the complaint including a brief description of the situation and reason for the dispute and the date and time of the appeal was filed. Upon receipt, the District Homeless Liaison will forward a copy of the appeal document to the Superintendent.

c. Within five business days of the receiving the appeal, the Homeless Liaison shall provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written decision and notification of the parent’s right to further appeal, with a copy to the Superintendent. The Liaison will provide to the parent or unaccompanied youth a copy of the written decision, a copy of
the original appeal document, and copies of any additional materials provided to the
Homeless Liaison by the parent or unaccompanied youth.

The parent or unaccompanied youth may appeal the Level I decision to the Superintendent or the
Superintendent’s designee.

   a. The Superintendent/designee will arrange for a conference to be held with the parent or
      unaccompanied youth within five business days of receiving the Level I appeal. (Upon
      request of the parent or unaccompanied youth, this conference may be held
      telephonically).

   b. Within five business days of the conference with the parent or unaccompanied youth, the
      Superintendent/designee will provide that individual with a written decision with
      supporting evidence and notification of their right to appeal to NHDOE.

   c. The Superintendent/designee shall provide a copy of the decision to the District’s
      Homeless Liaison, as well as the NHDOE State Coordinator for Education of Homeless
      Children and Youth.

The District shall maintain copies of all written decisions, appeals and notifications concerning
eligibility or enrollment requests made under this policy for the same period as it does for Title I
records.