

Support Services for Homeless & Highly Mobile Students

Services provided to students and families:

- ▶ Immediate school placement and assistance with registration
- ▶ Records retrieval from previous school
- ▶ Initial English Language Learners and Special Education screening when appropriate
- ▶ School supplies, materials and books
- ▶ Refer families to early childhood services
- ▶ Inform parents and students about school attendance policies
- ▶ Refer families to community services
- ▶ Monitor student progress and advocate for students when necessary
- ▶ Help families and schools build strong relationships

Services we provide to schools:

- ▶ Information and training for staff about homeless students' needs, rights and resources
- ▶ Work with school social workers, teachers and other school staff on behalf of individual students with high needs or issues through the Building Bridges Project

12 Things Principals and Teachers Can Do to Help Homeless & Highly Mobile Students:

1. Welcome students! Give them a sense of belonging.
2. Routinely review student expectations and classroom rules.
3. Keep students' living situation confidential.
4. Meet with parents soon after students begin school to share strengths.
5. Assign students a buddy to show them around and to foster peer relationships.
6. Problem solve with the students ways to complete homework and provide them with the necessary supplies.
7. Provide a place for students to keep their possessions safe.
8. Be aware of basic needs of students (i.e. clothing, food, health, hygiene) and work to meet these needs through the school or shelter.
9. Be in contact with the shelter staff for on-site homework assistance.
10. Ensure equal access to educational services, field trips and after-school activities.
11. Communicate with the health office about illnesses that may be related to stress and trauma.
12. Be in touch with the school social worker about resources to address social emotional issues of students.



How to Reach Staff

At the shelters:

Margo Hurrle MPS Shelter Services Coordinator	612.277.0210
Tina O'Shaughnessy Clerical Tech	612.277.0211
Elena Shaw High School Support	612.290.0362
TBN Extended Day Project Coordinator	612.668.5435

District Liaison for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students:

Elizabeth Hinz 612.668.5480

Support Services for Homeless & Highly Mobile Students
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Our mission: *To ensure that all students learn. We support their growth into knowledgeable, skilled and confident citizens capable of succeeding in their work, personal and family lives into the 21st century.*

Some Facts About Homeless & Highly Mobile Students

- ▶ Although homeless students often demonstrate low performance skills, research demonstrates no difference in cognitive functioning between homeless students and children with stable housing.
- ▶ Families with young children are the fastest growing part of the homeless population. Today, homeless children outnumber Minnesota's entire homeless population twenty years ago.
- ▶ There is no single cause to homelessness. The core of the problem is the lack of livable wage jobs and the shortage of affordable housing for families with low incomes.

Let's welcome all our students and help them learn and grow!

Homeless & Highly Mobile Students Live in any of these conditions:

- ▶ In a shelter (family shelter, domestic violence shelter, youth shelter or temporary housing program)
- ▶ In a motel, hotel or weekly rate housing
- ▶ Doubled up with friends or relatives because they cannot find or afford housing
- ▶ In an abandoned building, other inadequate accommodation or in a car
- ▶ On the street
- ▶ In temporary foster care
- ▶ With friends or family because they are an unaccompanied youth

The federal McKinney Vento law ensures that

Homeless & Highly Mobile Students have the Rights to:

- ▶ immediate enrollment
- ▶ continue at the same school if transportation is feasible
- ▶ attend special programs and services available to all other students
- ▶ and more.... (see MPS Policy 5291 and accompanying regulations)

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