

Carolina Achieve Charter School

Dispute Resolution Process for Students Experiencing Homelessness

Purpose

Carolina Achieve Charter School is committed to ensuring that children and youth experiencing homelessness are promptly identified, enrolled, and provided equal access to a free, appropriate public education in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and North Carolina law.

When a disagreement arises regarding a student's eligibility for services under McKinney-Vento, school selection, or enrollment, the school will resolve the matter promptly while protecting the student's educational rights.

Immediate Enrollment

Pending the resolution of any dispute, the student shall:

- Be immediately enrolled in the school requested by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth;
- Attend classes without delay;
- Participate fully in all school activities; and
- Receive all educational services for which the student is eligible, including transportation when required under McKinney-Vento.

Initiating a Dispute

A parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth who disagrees with a determination regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment may initiate the dispute resolution process by notifying the school's McKinney-Vento Liaison, either orally or in writing.

Any school employee who becomes aware of such a dispute shall immediately refer the individual to the McKinney-Vento Liaison.

Responsibilities of the McKinney-Vento Liaison

The McKinney-Vento Liaison shall:

- Explain the dispute resolution process and the rights of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth;
- Provide written notice of the school's decision and information regarding appeal rights;

- Assist the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth in completing appeal forms if requested;
- Ensure the student remains enrolled and receives all required services while the dispute is pending; and
- Coordinate the resolution process with school administration and the North Carolina State Coordinator for Homeless Education when appropriate.

School-Level Resolution

The Principal (or designee) shall review all available information and issue the school's final written decision as quickly as practicable and no later than **15 school business days or 30 calendar days, whichever is less**, after the dispute is initiated.

The written decision shall include:

- The reason for the decision;
- Notice of the right to appeal;
- Contact information for the McKinney-Vento Liaison;
- Contact information for the North Carolina State Coordinator for Homeless Education; and
- Information explaining that the student remains enrolled during the appeal process.

State Appeal

If the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the school's final decision, an appeal may be filed with the North Carolina State Coordinator for Homeless Education within **three (3) school business days** of the school's final decision, consistent with North Carolina's State Appeal Process.

The school shall cooperate fully with the State Coordinator by providing all records and documentation requested.

Forms

Carolina Achieve Charter School shall use the current North Carolina McKinney-Vento dispute resolution forms, including the **Written Notification of Decision** and any appeal forms required by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Legal References

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11431–11435
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- G.S. 115C-366
- 16 NCAC 06H .0114-.0116
- North Carolina State Board of Education Policy SBOP-020

