

HOMELESS BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION FORM



McKinney-Vento

Best Interest Determination (BID) for School Placement

The McKinney-Vento Act requires schools to consider the school of origin as the first option in school enrollment. Parents may choose the school of origin or the school in the residency area where the child is currently living. Individuals who may be consulted when determining what placement is in the child's or youth's best interest include:

- the child or youth experiencing homelessness,
- the parents or caretakers of the child or youth,
- school division homeless liaisons,
- school principals/administrators,
- the student's teacher(s),
- homeless shelter personnel,
- school social workers,
- school counselors, and
- the student's attorney.

It is the school district's responsibility to determine the school of origin and residency, and to resolve any conflict concerning the school placement focusing on the best interest of the student. Whenever possible, the school district should comply with the parents'/guardians'/unaccompanied homeless youth's wishes. If the school district and parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth do not agree on the appropriate placement, the district's Enrollment Dispute Resolution Process must be followed. The student should be enrolled in the school that the parent or unaccompanied homeless youth have chosen until the resolution process has been completed. If the school of origin is determined to be the best placement, the local homeless education liaisons from both divisions must work together to arrange transportation.

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that a child or youth experiencing homelessness attend:

- ❖ *The school of origin*: the school that the child or youth last attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled, including preschool (administered by the district) and feeder schools; or
- ❖ *The school of residency*: the school identified by the attendance zone in which the student is currently physically staying. (IF students in the attendance area have additional options, the student may enroll in such an option IF there is room in the program and student meets any eligibility criteria).

Whether the child or youth will attend the school of origin or the school of residency, enrollment should take place immediately.

The following form documents the determination for school placement that is in a student's best interest. It is recommended that the liaison use these listed considerations to discuss the school enrollment options with the parent/youth. If the new residence is in another school district, the liaison from the new district should be included in the conversation, as a best practice, to ensure smooth transitions or the provision of transportation that may be shared. The information collected documents agreement about school enrollment OR provides the input needed to craft the justification for a written explanation should the parent/youth disagree. Liaisons should maintain this form with their case notes.



**McKINNEY-VENTO
BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION FORM
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT OF STUDENT IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT**

A copy of this document shall be kept in the student's education record.

Student's Name: _____
 Student State Testing Number (STN): _____ DOB: _____
 Current School: _____ Grade: _____
 Previous School(s): _____
 Date of Best Interest Determination Meeting: _____

Best Interest Determination: A Checklist for Decision Making

Use the following checklist as a guide to assist with making the determination of what is in the best interest of the child or youth. Place a check in the box for each area of consideration that applies, either in the Remaining in the School of Origin column or Transferring to a New School. If needed, write notes on additional pages and attach to this form.

Remaining in the School of Origin Considerations

- Social/emotional considerations – the student's social and emotional wellbeing will be negatively affected if transferred to a new school (considerations include age of the student, location of siblings, etc.)
- Length of anticipated stay in an out-of-home placement location – in light of the anticipated short duration of the stay, the student would benefit from the continuity offered by remaining at the school of origin where meaningful relationships exist.
- Continuity of instruction – the student has experienced frequent school changes or has attended the school of origin for an extended period of time, and would be best served by remaining at the school of origin (considerations include credits necessary for graduation and preparation for future instruction).
- Academic performance – the transfer will significantly and adversely affect the student's academic performance.
- Unique educational needs or academic and extracurricular interests – the student's special educational needs (IEP or 504 Plan) or unique academic and extracurricular interests cannot be met at the potential receiving school.
- Safety of the student – the school of origin is a safe environment for the student.
- Transportation considerations – the advantages of remaining in the school of origin outweigh any potential disadvantages presented by the length of the commute.

Transferring to a New School Considerations

- Social/emotional considerations – the student's social and emotional wellbeing will be positively affected or will be substantially affected if transferred to the potential receiving school (considerations include age of the student, location of siblings, etc.)
- Length of anticipated stay in an out-of-home placement location – the student's current living situation appears to be stable and unlikely to change suddenly, so the student will benefit from establishing new relationships with school peers in the potential receiving school.
- Continuity of instruction – the student has not attended the school of origin for very long and will be best served at the potential receiving school (considerations include credits necessary for graduation and preparation for future instruction).
- Academic performance – the transfer will not significantly and adversely affect the student's academic performance.
- Unique educational needs or academic and extracurricular interests – the student's special educational needs (IEP or 504 Plan) or unique academic and extracurricular interests can be met at the potential receiving school.
- Safety of the student – the new school will be a safer environment for the student.
- Transportation considerations – the length of the commute to the school of origin is excessive and may adversely affect the student's concentration, attitude, or readiness for school.

Attach all documents relevant to the student's best interest determination. Check any that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Report Cards/Progress Reports | <input type="checkbox"/> IEP Plan or 504 Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement Data (test scores) | <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence from individuals consulted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance Data | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Best Interest Determination Meeting Participants

In reaching the best interests determination, the Homeless Liaison should make all reasonable efforts to include or consult individuals with knowledge of the student (student’s attorney, parent, parent surrogate, and legal guardian) in addition to representatives of the LEA and any other person with information relevant to the best interest determination, including the student, if appropriate. The following individuals provided input in determining the school placement.

Relationship to Student	Name	Contact Information

Best Interest Determination

- It is not in the student’s best interest to remain enrolled in the school of origin. The student will be enrolled in the school serving the current residence.
Name of School: _____

NOTE: If a change in enrollment is in the student’s best interest, enrollment should take place immediately at the new school. To enroll the student in the new school, all that is needed is documentation showing that the student is in out-of-home placement, the address of the out-of-placement, proof of authorization to enroll the student in school, and identification of the person enrolling the student. All other educational records will be provided to the new school promptly and in accordance with state and federal law.

- It is in the student’s best interest to remain enrolled in the school of origin.
Name of School: _____

Interim Transportation Plan

Complete only if the student will remain in the school of origin.

While the LEA works to develop and establish a Transportation Plan for the student to attend the school of origin from the out-of-home placement, a period of time that could be up to five (5) school days, the student will transported to the school of origin in the following manner:

Considerations for the LEA in Establishing a Transportation Plan for the Student

Complete only if the student will remain in the school of origin.

In developing a Transportation Plan, the LEA should consider the following needs of the student (add additional sheets if needed):

Homeless Liaison Name

Homeless Liaison Signature

Date

