



**Subject:** Education of Homeless Children and Youth Policy

**Effective Date:** February 8, 2018

**Revised Date:** February 8, 2024

**Approved By:** Board of Directors

**Policy:** 5025.1

The Governing Board of Empire Springs Charter School (ESCS) desires to ensure that homeless students have access to the same free and appropriate public education provided to other students within the school. ESCS shall provide homeless students with access to education and other services necessary for them to meet the same challenging academic standards as other students.

Further, the Governing Board of Empire Springs Charter School (ESCS) desires to ensure compliance with Federal and State requirements for schools serving homeless students. As such, the Board affirms the following:

The Superintendent or designee shall identify and remove any barriers to the identification and enrollment of homeless students and to the retention of homeless students due to absences or outstanding fees or fines, school uniforms, or ability to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, proof of residency, and medical records, including, but not limited to, records or other proof of immunization history. This is to include participation in interscholastic sports or other extracurricular activities by students who are homeless.

When there are at least 15 homeless students in the school, the school's local control and accountability plan (LCAP) shall include goals and specific actions to improve student achievement and other outcomes of homeless students.

The Superintendent or designee shall designate an appropriate staff person to serve as a liaison for homeless youth. The Empire Springs Charter School Community Outreach Coordinator Mary McDaniel acts as the Empire Springs Homeless Youth Liaison. The liaison shall fulfill the duties specified in 42 USC 11432 to assist in identifying and supporting homeless students to succeed in school. The Community Outreach Coordinator Mary McDaniel can be reached at 951-225-7749 or by emailing [mary.mcdaniel@springscs.org](mailto:mary.mcdaniel@springscs.org)

In order to identify students who are homeless, Springs Charter Schools gives a housing questionnaire to all parents/guardians during school registration, makes referral forms readily available, includes the Homeless Youth liaison's contact information on the school website, provides materials in a language easily understood by families and students, provides school staff with professional development on the definition and signs of homelessness, and contacts appropriate local agencies to coordinate referrals for homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth.

Information about a homeless student's living situation shall be considered part of a student's educational record, subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and shall not be deemed to be directory information as defined in 20 USC 1232g. (42 USC 11432)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that placement decisions for homeless students are based on the student's best interest as defined in law and administrative regulation

Each homeless student shall be provided services that are comparable to services offered to other students in the school, including, but not limited to, transportation, educational programs for which the student meets the eligibility criteria (such as federal Title I services or similar state or local programs, programs for students with disabilities, and educational programs for English learners), career and technical education programs, programs for gifted and talented students, and school nutrition programs. (42 USC 11432)

Homeless students shall not be segregated into a separate school or program based on their status as homeless and shall not be stigmatized in any way. However, the Superintendent or designee may separate homeless students on school grounds as necessary for short periods of time for health and safety emergencies or to provide temporary, special, and supplementary services to meet the unique needs of homeless students. (42 USC 11432, 11433)

The Superintendent or designee shall coordinate with other agencies and entities to ensure that homeless children and youth are promptly identified, ensure that homeless students have access to and are in reasonable proximity to available education and related support services, and raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness. Towards these ends, the Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with local social services agencies, other agencies or entities providing services to homeless children and youth, and, if applicable, transitional housing facilities. In addition, the Community Outreach Coordinator shall coordinate

transportation, transfer of school records, and other collaborative activities with other local educational agencies. As necessary, the Superintendent or designee shall coordinate, within the school and with other involved local educational agencies, services for homeless students and services for students with disabilities. (42 USC 11432)

The Homeless Youth Liaison and other appropriate staff shall participate in professional development and other technical assistance activities determined appropriate by the State Coordinator to assist them in identifying and meeting the needs of homeless students and to provide training on the definitions of terms related to homelessness.

At least annually, the Superintendent or designee shall report to the Board on outcomes for homeless students, which may include, but are not limited to, student achievement test results, promotion and retention rates by grade level, graduation rates, suspension/expulsion rates, and other outcomes related to any goals and specific actions identified in the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). Based on the evaluation data, the school shall revise its strategies as needed to better support the education of homeless students.