

# **South Dakota State Plan**

**for the implementation of**

**Title X Part C of ESEA  
McKinney-Vento  
Homeless Education Assistance  
Improvements Act of 2001  
(42 U.S.C. 11431)**

The South Dakota Department of Education has developed a multi-year plan to ensure the implementation of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 (Title X, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act amendments to Subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) (42 U.S.C. 11431). The South Dakota Department of Education and South Dakota public Schools will under take policies, programs and actions to implement the following mandates of Section 721.

- ◆ The South Dakota Department of Education will ensure that each child of an individual experiencing homelessness and each youth experiencing homelessness has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youth.
- ◆ The South Dakota Department of Education shall ensure that the Department and no public school district or public school will implement compulsory school attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of children and youth experiencing homelessness. The South Dakota Department of Education will review and under take steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that children and youths experiencing homelessness are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth.
- ◆ The South Dakota Department of Education will ensure that each public school district and each public school will provide students and youth experiencing homelessness a mainstream school experience and will not separate a student based on homelessness alone.
- ◆ The South Dakota Department of Education will ensure that all public school districts and public schools shall provide children and youths experiencing homelessness with access to the education and other services that such children and youth need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging standards to which all students are held.

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## Implementation of the Plan

**The South Dakota Department of Education works with the local public school districts to ensure that all children and youth experiencing homelessness are given every opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic achievement standards as those expected of all students in the state.**

- The Department has established and implemented in all public schools the Dakota Academic Content Standards for all core content subjects including math, reading/language arts, and science.
- The Department has implemented a system of statewide student identification that makes it possible to accurately track student information across public schools and districts in the state, and supports the inclusion of every student in the state's school and district accountability system.
- The Department has established the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook for State Grants under Title IX, Part C, Section 9302 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Public Law 107-110) Approved by USDOE on May 25, 2010. According to Critical Element 2.3 - How does the State Accountability System determine which students have attended the same public school and/or LEA for a full academic year? A student is placed in the accountability formula as follows:
  - at the school level if she/he is enrolled for the full academic year, or
  - at the district level if she/he has been enrolled in two or more schools operated by the district for the full academic year, or
  - at the state level if she/he has been enrolled in public schools in the state but not consecutively enrolled at any one school or district.

The statewide student information management system will track student enrollment from one public school to another, and will be used to determine which students meet the definition of a full academic year.

- During testing window, all students will be required to test at their current school. However, if a student moves during the testing period and has not been previously tested, the receiving school is obligated to test the student. Students who have tested at their previous attendance center and have moved to a new school are not required to re-test.
  - Students moving into a district that do not meet the full year academic definition are required to be tested but scores will not be counted in the district adequate yearly progress.
- The Department collects data from all districts including those with McKinney-Vento subgrants on the number of children and youth experiencing homelessness

who take the state assessment and who are performing at proficiency level in reading and math.

**The Department will use procedures to identify children and youths experiencing homelessness in South Dakota and assess their special needs.**

Current Practice

- The Department promotes collaboration of the Office of Title I and the State Coordinator in the following ways to ensure that school districts also promote the collaboration of the Title I department and the local liaisons.
  - The Department provides training and professional development for Title I staff and local liaisons at Title I conferences, workshops, and internet trainings.
  - The Department requires collaboration between Title I and the local liaison in the districts on the consolidated plan for federal funds.
  - The Department requires collaboration of the State Coordinator and State Title I Director in the implementation of the State Consolidated Plan.
  - The Department has widely disseminated information on district-wide policies, procedures, and guidelines to identify and serve eligible students.
  - State Coordinator makes reports to and seeks input from the State Committee of Practitioners.

Future Work Required

- The Department will continue the collaboration between the Office of Title I and State Coordinator by providing more training for the Title I team members to better provide technical assistance to the districts. Also, the State Coordinator will provide more information, such as the local liaison handbook, for the Title team members.
- The Department will investigate ways to share data and information within and across districts on the needs of children and youth in homeless situations.
- The Department will seek ways to initiate district efforts to make organizational accommodations for eligible students in the areas of transportation, remaining in the school of origin, records transfer, class scheduling, and special education to help them enroll, attend, and succeed in school.
- The Department will continue to provide technical assistance to districts in the incorporation of the needs of highly mobile students into the district's needs assessment in preparing the consolidated application for Title funds, schoolwide plans, and school improvement plans.

- The Department will consider the representation of a district liaison on the State Committee of Practitioners.

#### Current Practice

- The Department is composed of four collaborating entities, the Office of Special Education – Part B, the Office of Birth to Three – Part C of IDEA, and the Office of Head Start, and the Office of Title I/Education of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness. The four entities collaborate in the following ways.
  - The State Coordinator of Education of Homeless Children and Youth is appointed by the Governor to the State Special Education Advisory Board.
  - The State Coordinator of Education of Homeless Children and Youth is a member of the Birth to 3 State Coordinating Council.
  - The State Coordinator has met with the Head Start State Roundtable for discussions on identification of children experiencing homelessness.
  - The State Coordinator has collaborated with the Office of Head Start in dissemination of information to Head Start regional offices and to school districts. A webinar was conducted for Head Start regional office and school districts on the new guidelines for collaboration under the Head Start reauthorization.
  - The State Coordinator represents the program at regularly scheduled meetings of the intra-office Early Childhood Programs.
- The Department participates in the Governor’s Interagency Council on Homelessness.
  - The Secretary of Education is an appointed member of this Council.
  - The State Coordinator is a representative of the Department to a sub-group of the Council.
- The Department participates in the South Dakota Homeless Coalition. Among many other functions, this Coalition prepares the statewide HUD Continuum of Care application for housing of homeless families and individuals.
  - The State Coordinator represents the Department at the quarterly state meetings.
  - The State Coordinator represents the Department at the annual Statewide Conference on Homelessness.

- The State Coordinator makes a presentation on the district requirements under Title X Part C at the annual Statewide Conference on Homelessness.
- The State Coordinator and regional district liaisons participate in the local Project Connects events designed to bring many service providers together in one location so that highly mobile families have immediate access and food.

**The Department has a procedure in place for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youths.**

- The Department has required each public school district to adopt a policy and procedure to handle disputes regarding the educational placement and needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Each school district should have had the policy in place by the end of 2008-2009. The district policies state that disputes may be appealed and forwarded by the parents/unaccompanied youth to the Department for final resolution.

Districts were provided with the following language to incorporate into their existing policies and procedures.

Disputes addressing the enrollment, transportation (including inter-district disputes), and other barriers to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness are also addressed under this procedure. Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth may initiate the dispute resolution process directly at the school they choose, as well as at the district or district's homeless liaison's office. The parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision. Students should be provided with all services for which they are eligible while disputes are resolved.

After initial steps....

-If the issue is not resolved with the superintendent, the complaint will be forwarded to the district's Board of Education for further review. The parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the district's decision including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision.

-Unresolved complaints may be forwarded by the stakeholder to the South Dakota Department of Education for review. (Consult SD Department of Education Complaint Procedure)

- The Department has a complaint/dispute resolution policy and procedure in place. This policy is displayed on the Department website and each district liaison and

superintendent is aware that parents are to be informed that parents may send disputes to the Department and provide them with a copy of the policy. Portions of the policy are provided below.

A formal complaint is a signed written statement by parents, teachers, or other concerned individual or organization. The statement must include an allegation that a requirement applicable to an ESEA program has been violated and a statement of facts that support the allegation.

Disputes addressing the enrollment, transportation (including inter-district disputes), and other barriers to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness are also addressed under this procedure. Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth may initiate the dispute resolution process directly at the school they choose, as well as at the district or LEA homeless liaison's office. The parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision. Students should be provided with all services for which they are eligible while disputes are resolved.

After initial steps....

- The state Coordinator will issue the necessary directives to the LEA administration to resolve the complaint and to prepare a response to the SEA within fifteen (15) days indicating corrective action implemented. The parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be provided with a written explanation of the SEA's decision and directives to the LEA.
- All decisions of the SEA are final.

**The Department implements programs for school personnel (including principals, attendance officers, teachers, enrollment personnel, and pupil services personnel) to heighten the awareness of such personnel of the specific needs of runaway and homeless youths.**

- The Department has established regular communication with the districts.
  - Electronic listserv newsletter to the public school districts educational liaisons.
  - Direct mailings such as the Liaison Packet sent each August.
  - Website posting information.
  - Providing information and resources from NCHE including the Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit.
  - Provide definition of homelessness.
  - U.S. Department of Education guidance.
  - Articles in the Department's Title I Update newsletter.
  - A brochure entitled "Know Your Rights" was created in 2008 and is used extensively by the districts when identifying students.

- The Department implements workshops and trainings for school personnel.
  - The State Coordinator has/will provide training to district staff upon request.
  - The State Coordinator has/will provide training for district liaisons at the Title I Conference.
  - The State Coordinator continues to provide information to district liaisons about the webinar trainings provided by NCHE.
  - The State Coordinator conducted a Live Meeting training for liaisons during the Spring of 2010 with the assistance of NCHE staff.
  
- The Department through the Office of the Coordinator will provide technical assistance to the district liaisons through phone calls and emails as needed.
  
- The Coordinator will collaborate with the Department Title I staff in assisting the districts in establishing Title I set-aside funds for homeless students and in informing the districts of the allowable uses of the set-side funds.

**The Department has implemented procedures that ensure that children and youths experiencing homelessness who meet the relevant eligibility criteria are able to participate in Federal, State, or local food programs.**

- The Department acknowledges that children and youth experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for free meals and not required to submit an application as defined by the Child Nutrition and WIC Act of 2004.
  
- The Department's Office of Child and Adult Nutrition Services (CANS) is responsible for administering the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) and Food Distribution Division programs. The Office provides the following services to the districts.
  - Collaborates with the State Coordinator in providing information and answering questions from the district.
  - Provides information on eligibility of children and youths experiencing homelessness to each public school district through an annual letter.
  - Provides technical assistance to the district food service staff on the proper recording of children and youths experiencing homelessness.
  - Conducts annual workshops for food service personnel.
  - Provides the districts with the following documents. USDA - *Categorical Eligibility for Free Lunches and Breakfasts of Runaway, Homeless, and Migrant Youth: Reauthorization 2004 Implementation Memo SP 4:USDA Special Nutrition Programs* Provides memoranda of April 6, 1992, *Documentation of Free and Reduce Price Meal Eligibility for Homeless Children*; and USDA memo of April 4, 2002, *Updated Guidance for Homeless Children in the School Nutrition Programs*, on documentation for homeless children and youth under McKinney-Vento.

- The Department's State Coordinator provides a letter to each school district's liaison describing the eligibility of children and youths experiencing homelessness for free food service. The applicable Federal memo – USDA SP-4 is attached to the letter.
- The Department has provided information to districts on the South Dakota Food Stamp Program operated under the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The district liaisons may need to refer families for these services and most urgently may have unaccompanied youth who may qualify for food stamps.
- The Department encourages local districts to collaborate with local food banks, community banquets, and other food distribution locations including faith-based organizations to make referrals of families or unaccompanied youth who need food.
- The Department encourages local districts to collaborate with local agencies and groups to maximize the accessibility to food during times when school is not in session such as weekends and summer to ensure the district's parents can provide for their children at all times.

**The Department has in place procedures that ensure that children experiencing homelessness have equal access to the same public preschool programs, administered by the State agency, as provided to other children in the State.**

- The Department is organized in such a way that the Head Start Collaboration Director/Even Start Coordinator position is within the same administrative office and physical location as the State Coordinator and Title I. This enables the State Coordinator under this program to work directly with the state coordinator of these programs on a routine basis. Collaboration occurs in the following ways:
  - The State Coordinator met with the Head Start Collaboration Director to discuss the increased requirements pertaining to children experiencing homelessness in the newly reauthorized Head Start legislation.
  - The State Coordinator and the Head Start Collaboration Director collaborated on news articles published in the Title I Update, a quarterly newsletter of the Department.
  - The State Coordinator met with the Head Start Roundtable consisting of representatives from Head Starts across the State.
  - The State Coordinator and Head Start Collaboration Director provided information to local Head Start program staff through mailings, website, emails, and phone calls.
- The Department will continue to work in the area of equal access to public preschool programs in the following way:
  - A training session was provided to all school districts in Fall 2008 on the transition and coordination plans required of all the districts. 1) At this training, the districts were informed and re-emphasized that

children experiencing homelessness should be provided with immediate access to public preschool through the district as an at-risk population. 2) The districts were informed that children experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Head Start and must be placed at the earliest possible date. 3) The Department emphasized the need for a strong relationship between the district and the area Head Start program and the development of inter-agency agreements. 4) The districts were encouraged to include local shelters in these agreements to help clarify coordination concerns over enrollment, transportation and records transfer thus increasing access and reducing frustration for families. With agreements in place, programs can explore creative ways to pool their resources and enhance the quality of services that they can provide together.

- The Department will monitor the implementation of the public preschools in Title I schools/districts through the consolidated application and through district monitoring.

**The Department identifies and accords equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services to youth within the public schools and youths separated from the public schools.**

- The Department will continue to review State Administrative Rules that may be barriers to homeless unaccompanied youth in enrolling and succeeding in school. These barriers include school attendance policies, credit accrual, and legal guardianship requirements.
- The Department will require school districts to review district policies that may serve as barriers. These barriers include school attendance policies, credit accrual, and legal guardianship requirements. The school districts must establish district policies to address who may sign permission for unaccompanied youth to participate in field trips or extracurricular activities and work with district legal staff to eliminate any fears about potential liability.
- The Department recognizes that the best educational opportunity for an unaccompanied homeless youth is an education in the mainstream school environment and includes extra curricular activities. The Department will encourage districts to ensure the right to a mainstream education with consideration of GED and alternative programs as a last resort. The Department will also encourage diversified learning opportunities, when appropriate, including vocational education, credit-for-work programs, and flexible school hours
- The Department will continue to encourage district liaisons to advocate for the rights of unaccompanied youth.

- The Department recognizes that under Federal Regulations youth must be enrolled in school even when lacking proof of guardianship. The Department will assist districts in establishing policies to meet this mandate such as permitting the youth to enroll him/ herself; the local liaison handles the enrollment; or the school district may use a caregiver form to allow adult caregivers to enroll the youth.
- The Department encourages districts to work with local agencies in efforts to find unaccompanied youth who are no longer in the school system. School district will be encouraged to find every avenue for collaboration with other agencies in the districts to locate these youth.
- The Department continues efforts in instructing, informing, providing technical assistance to districts in the identification of homeless youth and providing every effort to ensure the student stays in school and is academically successful. The Department expects districts to do the following:
  - The district through the liaison must help unaccompanied youth select and enroll in a school, after considering the youth’s wishes.
  - The district liaison must provide unaccompanied youth with notice of their appeal rights in a language they can understand or in an accessible format.
  - The district must inform the youth of their right to transportation to and from the school of origin, and assisting unaccompanied youth in accessing transportation.
  - The district must ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending the resolution of disputes.
  - The district liaisons should provide information to other school personnel in how to identify students who may be homeless. School personnel should know the possible indicators of homelessness – frequent absences, declines in academic achievement, disengagement, stress. Personnel should look to ways to communicate and build relationships with these youth.
  - The district must collaborate with other agencies outside the district in an effort to make identification and to provide services.
  - School personnel must respect the privacy and dignity of youth living in shelters, doubled-up, in cars, on the streets, etc.
  - The district must ensure that unaccompanied youth have the opportunity to enroll in diversified learning opportunities such as vocational education, credit-for-work programs, and flexible school hours, yet ensure that they are integrated with the mainstream school environment, including extracurricular activities.
  - The district liaison must maintain a listing of available surrogate parents to assist unaccompanied youth with their special education needs.
  - The district must develop strategies to continue educating students who have been suspended or expelled from school.
  - School personnel should provide a “safe place” at school that includes trained mentors, school counselors, or social works that unaccompanied youth can access as needed.

- The district liaison should contact social service agencies and gather information, pamphlets, and applications concerning valuable services such as food stamps and make these materials available to unaccompanied youth.
- The district liaison should work with local interagency coordinating councils to develop policies and procedures to facilitate an unaccompanied youth's access to services and treatment with sensitivity, urgency, and confidentiality.
- The district liaison should develop a list of referrals that includes shelters, youth hotlines, and other youth services providers.
- The district liaison should help unaccompanied youth go to college by assisting them to obtain independent student status on their financial aid applications (FAFSA).

#### Future Work Required

- The Department will consider creating a task force that includes district representatives, social services, child welfare, juvenile justice, law enforcement, youth shelters, etc. to review and revise policies and to establish agreed upon procedures pertaining to unaccompanied youth and youth awaiting foster care.

#### **The Department ensures that children and youths experiencing homelessness who meet the relevant eligibility are able to participate in Federal, State, or local before-and after-school care programs.**

- The Office of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Programs within the SD Department of Education is also located within the same building as the Coordinator of programs for Homeless Children and Youth. The two coordinators are easily able to collaborate to ensure that homeless students may participate in before-and after-school care programs.
  - The two coordinators are investigating ways the two programs overlap in missions and populations to collectively serve homeless children and youth.
  - The two coordinators are reviewing the legislative requirements for these programs and their references to serving homeless students.
  - The State Coordinator will inform districts of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Programs in the local communities. Districts will be encouraged to participate and work towards enabling the students experiencing homelessness to participate.
  - The State Coordinator will work with the South Dakota State Title I Director in efforts to encourage district Title I directors to use before-and after-school educational programs to deliver Title I tutoring.

**The Department has developed strategies for addressing problems set forth in its FY2000 report provided to the US ED under subsection 722(f)(3) of the Act. The problems pertain to the collection and transmission to US ED, at such time and in such manner as the US ED may require, a report containing such information as US ED determines is necessary to assess the educational needs of children and youths experiencing homelessness within the State.**

Current Practice

- The Department requires school districts to provide all of the US ED annually required data.
- The Department requires that each school district use a statewide database for recording student information. Each student in the State is indicated with a universally identifiable number.
- The Department has provided districts with training and information on the identification of homeless students. Each district is required to identify the individual student in the statewide database and to leave the designation in the system for the entire school year to ensure that the proper data is collected for US ED data requirements.

Future Work Required

- The Department will continue to work on the database to ensure that students moving from district to district are identified as homeless, that the designation stays in the database until the end of the year, and that the State can properly determine the number of students taking the state assessment and the results of the assessment.

**The Department has strategies for addressing problems with respect to the education of children and youths experiencing homelessness, including problems resulting from enrollment delays that are caused by immunization and medical records requirements; residency requirements; lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documentation; guardianship issues; or uniform or dress code requirements.**

Current Practice

- The Districts have been informed that the lack of immunization and medical records requirements can not be a barrier to the immediate enrollment of students. The following information is provided to each district.

The South Dakota Department of Health -- "On the back of the Certificate of Immunization that is filled out for all children entering a SD school for the first time, there is a section called "Instructions to School Administrator". This section informs the school that children transferring in (at any grade level), who have not met requirements, must be informed of the necessary requirements and then be

given 45 days to show compliance. If the child is homeless and has no insurance, he or she can go to any provider utilizing state-supplied vaccine and receive the vaccinations free of charge. Providers are allowed to charge a small administration fee, but if the client is unable to pay, then providers are asked to waive the fee."

Your district must enroll and admit to the classroom a homeless child whether or not there is proof of immunization. Your role as the Homeless Education Coordinator, in the best interest of the child, is to work with the parent to get the proof of immunization or begin the process of immunization. According to the Department of Health, "there are minimum intervals of time that must occur between immunizations, so if the student can show the school that they are in progress; then the child should not be excluded."

In addition, according to SDCL 13-28-7.1, as an alternative to the requirement for a physician's certification, the pupil may present:

(1) Certification from a licensed physician stating the physical condition of the child would be such that a test or immunization would endanger the child's life or health; or

(2) A written statement signed by one parent or guardian that the child is an adherent to a religious doctrine whose teachings are opposed to such test and immunization.

- School Districts may not condition enrollment on the presence of a guardian [42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(7)]. Schools may not condition school enrollment upon the receipt of proof of legal guardianship by caregivers of homeless, unaccompanied youth and they can not require caregivers to become legal guardians within a certain period of time after the child enrolls in school.

#### Further Work Needed

- The Department needs to implement administrative rules to further ensure the rights of children and youths experiencing homelessness including immediate enrollment, residency, records, guardianship, etc.
- The Department is in the process of requiring each district to implement a policy to ensure the rights of children and youths experiencing homelessness. The goal was to have all districts adopt a policy by the end of 2008-2009. Progress on this goal is determined through district monitoring in conjunction with the Title I monitoring cycle.
- The Department needs to provide more information to districts on open enrollment and eliminate the confusion and distinguish homeless, highly mobile students, from students seeking open enrollment under State Administrative Rules.

- The Department needs to revise certain administrative rules pertaining to the assignment of students to schools in the district and the admission of nonresident students and school residency for free school privileges to avoid any confusion in the consideration of students experiencing homelessness.
- The Department needs to provide more information to the districts about the immediate enrollment of students whether or not proof of legal guardianship by the caregiver has been established. Inability to identify a care giver is not a prerequisite to enrollment.
- The Department will continue to train the local liaisons and other personnel in strategies to build a school record and determine proper academic placement of students.
  - Gather all available information from students and parents including any academic records, report cards, test, homework, immunization or other medical records, IEPs or special education referrals, evaluations, meeting notes, or any other school papers the parents or child may have.
  - Use standardized testing or other achievement data from state or local database systems.
  - Remind districts that FERPA, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, does allow transferring records and informal conversations between schools without parental consent when a child is changing schools.
  - Inform personnel that McKinney-Vento Act requires the receiving school to contact the previous school immediately for school records. In the case of disasters in which the previous school was destroyed or closed, receiving schools should contact the school district office or State Coordinator for Homeless Education to see what records may be available in electronic or other form. For those students whose records might be damaged, destroyed, or otherwise unavailable, it is incumbent upon the receiving schools to begin to build new student records immediately based on information gathered from parents, students, local district or state-level student databases, and any other reliable sources of student information.
  - Inform personnel that while waiting for official records, if phone/e-mail contact information is available; it may be helpful to talk with previous teachers, school counselors, and others for informal assistance with placement decisions. Likewise, talking with physicians and/or nurses on behalf of those students who have prescribed medications or those whose Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) require classroom accommodations may also be advantageous.
  - Inform the personnel that although schools should continue to seek existing records from all available sources, there may be times when no student records will be available; in these instances, a quick, valid, and reliable assessment of student academic placement needs is critical.

**The Department and all public schools districts in the State are developing, and shall review and revise, policies to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of children and youths experiencing homelessness in schools in the State.**

- The Department is in the process of requiring each district to adopt a policy addressing barriers to enrollment, school of origin, and transportation. Each district was provided with a sample. Progress on this goal is determined through district monitoring in conjunction with the Title I monitoring cycle.
- The Department will continue to work with each district to ensure that a review of the district's current policies will be completed. The districts will be instructed to look for policies or practices that could result in unintended barriers to immediate enrollment, best interest, school of origin, and transportation issues.
- The Department has/will conduct trainings for district liaisons and superintendents where the topic of policies and procedures will be discussed to ensure appropriate policies, procedures and practices are in place to eliminate barriers and ensure the rights of children and youth and parents experiencing homelessness.
- The Department will continue to scrutinize the consolidated applications from each district to ensure that the districts are not implementing any policies or procedures that would serve as barriers for the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

**The Department gives assurance that public school districts will comply with the requirements of paragraphs in Section 772(g)(3) through (g)(7) of the Act.**

- The Department will ensure that the school districts in South Dakota (1) will be aware of the basic rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness (2) that districts will work to eliminate policy, procedures and practices that would serve as barriers to the basic rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness; (3) that each district will implement policies including a policy to ensure the rights and a policy/procedure to resolve disputes arising from parents of children and youth experiencing homelessness. The Department will provide technical assistance to the districts and will monitor the districts through the consolidated application and through on-site and desk monitoring.
  - ✓ School of Origin
  - ✓ Enrollment in same school as a non-homeless child would be enrolled
  - ✓ Best Interest
  - ✓ Immediate Enrollment
  - ✓ Enrollment when not all required documents are secured
  - ✓ Enrollment Disputes

✓ Placement Choice

- The Department will ensure that each school district will have an assigned liaison who is a district staff person. The district liaison will function according to the duties outlined in the statute and regulations. The Department will provide technical assistance through all means possible and will monitor the districts through the consolidated application and through on-site and desk monitoring. The district liaison will be responsible for the:
  - ✓ Duties of the District Educational Agency Liaison (from Federal Regulations)
  - ✓ Coordination within the district of training for district staff, services, disputes, identification, etc.
  - ✓ Review and revision of policies to eliminate barriers
  - ✓ Ensure comparable services – educational, nutritional, specialized programs, transportation
  - ✓ Coordination with other agencies
  - ✓ Housing assistance, if applicable
  - ✓ Local and State coordination
  - ✓ Special attention to children and youth experiencing homelessness who are not currently attending school.

**The Department will provide technical assistance to the public school district and will coordinate its compliance efforts with the local educational agency liaisons designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii) in Section 722.**

- The State coordinator will provide technical assistance to public school district's through the local district liaison and superintendent primarily and other staff as required to provide technical assistance.
  - Each district liaison and/or superintendent will be provided with informational materials prior to the beginning of each school year.
  - Each district liaison will be provided information through the listserv on eligibility, identification, services, elimination of barriers, etc.
  - District personnel may contact the State Coordinator through mail, phone, and email to ask questions and receive technical assistance.
  - Each district liaison will be made aware of the National Center for Homeless Education website, web trainings, and HelpLine.
  - Each district liaison will be made aware of the National Association of Education of Homeless Children and Youth newsletter and annual conference.

- The State Coordinator monitors school districts for compliance through on-site visits of McKinney-Vento Programs.
  - The McKinney-Vento Programs are monitored at least each three years. The Standards and Indicators developed by the National Center for Homeless Education are used to monitor the McKinney-Vento Programs.
- Title I staff will do on-site visits and desk reviews of non-funded school districts to determine compliance through the consolidated application process.
  - The districts are monitored as to compliance in identification, protecting the rights of students, services including services provided through Title I set-aside funds, transportation, school of origin, collaboration, etc.
  - The districts are in the process of adopting a policy to ensure the rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
  - The districts will be informed of ways to evaluate district policies to ensure that no existing policy infringes or serves as a barrier to the education of homeless students.

**The Department will use funds received under the Section 723 program to carry out State-level activities and to make subgrants to public school districts.**

- The Department’s State Coordinator is primarily responsible for the development and implementation of the State Plan. The State Coordinator will carry out the following state-level activities.
  - Determine what barriers may exist on the state level that may hinder school choice and placement, enrollment policies, enrollment disputes, school records, and the review and revision of policies at the district level.
  - Ascertain the problems, progress, and success of programs in allowing homeless children and youth to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school.
  - Coordinate the competitive application process, selection, and awarding of funds under McKinney-Vento.
  - Provide technical assistance to districts and district liaisons to ensure that the districts comply with the statute. The coordinator provides this assistance through guidance letters, conferences, trainings, State website, listserv, and newsletters. The types of technical assistance provided includes:
    - Helping districts understand the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act
    - Helping districts establish procedures to address problems related to enrollment and school selection.
    - Helping districts resolve transportation disputes, including inter-district disputes.

- Helping districts determine the needs of their students and develop a service plan.
  - Helping districts raise awareness within the districts and in the communities of the needs of eligible students.
  - Helping the districts in identifying State and local resources.
  - Helping the districts in the identification of homeless children and youth
  - Helping the districts in data collection.
  - Helping the districts enhance their parental involvement activities
  - Helping the districts identify strategies for improving academic achievement
- Collect and report all State and district required data to the U. S. Department of Education.
  - Facilitate the coordination of the Department with the Department of Social Services, the Department of Health, and the Department of Human Services to provide services to homeless children and youth and their families.
  - Coordinate and collaborate with educators including child development and preschool program personnel, and service providers such as Birth to 3, Special Education, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Programs, and Head Start.
  - Coordinate services with local liaisons and community organizations and groups representing homeless children and youth and families.
  - Collaborate with South Dakota Homeless Consortium in planning the HUD South Dakota Continuum of Care Application to build housing for homeless families.
  - Involvement in the Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness.

Program Effectiveness:

- The State Coordinator will investigate approaches to build a more effective State and local program. The Coordinator will use tools prepared by the National Center for Homeless Education in determining program effectiveness through a needs assessment process. Areas to study include policies/procedures, identification/enrollment access, student success, awareness within department staff and within state government, collaboration internally and externally, resources/capacity, and guidance/monitoring.

# Appendix

Definition

Rights

Eligibility Determination

State Dispute Policy

LEA Dispute Example

LEA Rights Policy Example

Liaison Duties

McKinney-Vento Application

Data Collection

McKinney-Vento Monitoring

McKinney-Vento Yearly Report

Authorized Activities of Subgrantees

State Coordinator Duties

Collaborative Groups