



Educating Homeless Children and Youth: Dispute Resolution Guidelines

(A summary of ISBE Homeless Student Dispute Procedures, effective 12-15-05)

Disputes may arise between a school district and a homeless student or homeless parent/guardian regarding, among other things, enrollment or transportation. At such a time, the school district liaison immediately becomes involved, and the district must follow a procedure that includes these steps:

District Level:

- Immediately enroll the student(s), even without records, and arrange for transportation and other appropriate services.
- With the liaison's help, have a discussion with the parent/guardian or youth to see if more information can clear up the issues. If not:
- Send the parent/guardian or youth a letter clearly explaining the district's position, making referrals to free/reduced cost legal help, and outlining the dispute resolution procedure.
- Also send a copy of the letter to the ROE Superintendent and the State Coordinator.
- Refer the family or youth to the ombudsperson appointed by your ROE.

ROE Level:

- The ombudsperson shall
 - Be fair and impartial;
 - Be familiar with the educational rights and needs of homeless children;
 - Promptly schedule a meeting within five school days, if possible, and inform all parties.
- The meeting must allow for a complete presentation of all relevant facts by all parties.
- The family or youth should be allowed to be assisted by a knowledgeable legal representative
- Promptly after the meeting, the ombudsperson shall give the parties the decision in writing and inform them that they can have the State Coordinator review compliance with McKinney-Vento and the Illinois Homeless Education Act.

ISBE Level:

- Either party may send such a request to the State Coordinator within five school days, including any documentation related to the proceeding.
- No later than 10 days after receiving the request, the State Coordinator shall make a recommendation to the State Superintendent of Education regarding the ombudsperson's decision.
- Within 10 days of receiving the above recommendation, the State Superintendent of Education or designee shall inform all parties of the final determination.

Opening Doors – Statewide Access to Education for Homeless Children and Youth

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