

## Sylvan Heights Science Charter School

### 251. HOMELESS STUDENTS

**Board Approved: February 2, 2016**

Sylvan Heights Science Charter School (“School”) recognizes the right of all enrolled students, including those who are homeless, to have the opportunity to participate in the School’s educational programs. The School shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children enrolled in the school, encourage their ongoing enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.

#### **Definitions**

**Homeless students** are defined as children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and/or youth who are:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled-up”);
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency, transitional, or domestic violence shelters;
4. Living in abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar setting;
8. Living as migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.
9. Living as run-away children and children who have been abandoned or forced out of homes by parents/guardians or caretakers.

#### **Student Rights**

Homeless students who are enrolled in the School have the right to:

1. Equal access to all educational programs and services, including transportation and school nutrition programs;
  - The School shall ensure that homeless students have transportation services comparable to those offered to other enrolled students at the School through coordination with both the student’s current district of residence and the district of origin prior to student’s displacement.
2. Continue to attend the School for the duration of homelessness and/or until the end of the school year, unless:
  - There exists a legitimate reason for requiring attendance at another school, or
  - The student finds permanent housing during a school year, in which case the student may choose to remain at the School for the remainder of the academic year.

Students shall not be discriminated against, segregated, nor stigmatized based on their status as homeless.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Board designates the Principal/CAO to serve as the School’s liaison for homeless students and families and shall coordinate with:

1. Local service agencies that provide services to homeless children, youth and families.
2. Local school districts on issues of records transfer and transportation.
3. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

The Principal/CAO will develop strategies for meeting the needs of homeless students and eliminating barriers to their attendance at the School, including identification, and the provision of appropriate support services. Such strategies may require a waiver of policies, procedures and administrative regulations.

### **References**

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 1306

State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 11.18, 403.1

No Child Left Behind Act – 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.

Education For Homeless Children – 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11431 et seq.

Guidelines for Enrollment of Homeless Children – Federal Register, 67 Fed. Reg. 10698

PA Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan