

Homelessness and Community Support at BA

The McKinney-Vento Act is a federal law passed over 25 years ago to help people experiencing homelessness. Part of the law protects the rights of children and youth who are homeless, enabling them to go to school. According to the McKinney-Vento Act the term "homeless children and youth" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and also includes:

- Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, scholars who fit this definition of homeless are eligible for specific educational rights. At Butler Academy, eligibility is determined through the following steps:

STEP 1: Self-Identification

Families can self-identify as homeless on our enrollment form specifically ask them to do so.

STEP 2: Analyzing the Facts

Based on additional information that is provided on the enrollment form or through conversation with our director of enrollment (such as living arrangement, provided addresses that correspond to hotels, etc.) our staff may determine that a family's situation aligns with the McKinney-Vento Act definition and classify them accordingly.

STEP 3: Seek Additional Input, As Needed

If, after gathering and analyzing available information, our staff still is not sure if a scholar should be considered McKinney-Vento eligible, we will consult with the district liaison for assistance.

Here are some ways that BA will support the education of our homeless scholars:

- assisting the family with obtaining records for enrollment;
- assessing the children's academic needs and provide tutoring or other support to ensure that they will be successful during the stressful time of experiencing homelessness;
- ensuring the children have needed school supplies;
- providing time and space for a child who does not have a proper study environment outside of school to complete homework or work on school projects;
- ensuring that a homeless child is not punished for behavior related to his or her homelessness, such as tardiness or not completing homework, and providing support to address the behaviors;
- waiving fees and removing barriers to students' participation in extracurricular activities, including uniform scholarships;
- discussing needs the family, children, or youth have, and linking them with community services;
- maintaining the family's, children's, or youth's confidentiality related to their living situation.

Butler Academy is a gateway to better tomorrows for all scholars. Our McKinney-Vento scholars and families are no exception. For more information, please contact our McKinney-Vento/Homeless liaison, [Venesa Reyes](#).