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Adopted/Ratified: 09/18

Revision Date: 06/23



SAN DIEGO COOPERATIVE CHARTER SCHOOL

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY

The San Diego Cooperative Charter Schools Governing Board of Directors (“SDCCS” or the “Charter School”) desires to ensure that homeless children and youth are provided with equal access to its educational program, have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards, are provided a free and appropriate public education, are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless, and to establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth

The term “*homeless children and youth*” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youth who (42 U.S.C. § 11434a):

1. Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
2. Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
3. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and/or
4. Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition of “homeless.”

Homeless status is determined in cooperation with the parent or guardian. In the case of unaccompanied youth, status is determined by the Charter School Liaison.

Charter School Liaison

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The Executive Director/Principal designates the following staff as the Charter School's Liaison for homeless students (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)):

School Counselor
7260 Linda Vista Rd
858-496-1613
counselinglv@sdccs.org

The Charter School Liaison shall ensure that the following requirements are fulfilled by the Charter School (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)):

1. Homeless students are identified by Charter School personnel, through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies, and through the annual housing questionnaire administered by the Charter School.
2. Homeless students enroll in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed at SDCCS.
3. Homeless students and families receive educational services for which they are eligible, including: services through Head Start programs (including Early Head Start programs) under the Head Start Act; early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"); any other preschool programs administered by SDCCS, if any; and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services .
4. Parents/guardians are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
5. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children is disseminated at places frequented by parents or guardians of such youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, and in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless youth and unaccompanied youth.
6. Enrollment/admissions disputes are mediated in accordance with law, SDCCS charter, and Board policy.
7. Parents/guardians and any unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, as applicable.
8. Charter School personnel providing services receive professional development and other support.

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9. The Charter School Liaison collaborates with State coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths.

10. Unaccompanied youth are enrolled in school have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as the State establishes for other children and youth, and are informed of their status as independent students and that the youths may obtain assistance from the Charter School Liaison to receive verification of such status for the purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

The California Department of Education (“CDE”) publishes a list of the contact information for the Homeless Education Liaisons in the state, which is available at: [https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/\[A6\]](https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/[A6])

Enrollment

SDCCS shall immediately admit/enroll the student for which the Charter School is a School of Origin . “School of Origin” means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

SDCCS shall also immediately enroll a homeless youth who seeks to enroll in the Charter School, if the youth would otherwise be eligible to attend and subject to the Charter School’s capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the SDCCS charter and Board policy. A homeless youth who is enrolled will have the right to attend classes and participate fully in school activities, including extracurricular activities.

The youth shall be immediately enrolled even if the student lacks records normally required for enrollment (such as previous academic records, records of immunizations, other required health records, proof of residency) or has missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness. Records will immediately be requested from the previous school. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C); Education Code Section 48850(a)(3)(A).)

Suppose the student needs to obtain immunizations or does not possess immunization or other medical records. In that case, the Executive Director/Principal or designee shall refer the parent/guardian to the Charter School Liaison. The Charter School Liaison shall assist the parent/guardian in obtaining the necessary immunizations or records for the student. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C).)

A homeless youth may remain in the student’s school of origin for the entire period for which the youth is homeless. If a youth obtains permanent housing during an academic year, the youth will be permitted to remain in the school of origin through the end of the academic year.

Enrollment Disputes

Suppose a dispute arises over admissions/enrollment. In that case, the student shall be immediately admitted (subject to Charter School’s capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Charter School charter and Board policy), pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals. The

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parent/guardian shall be provided with a written explanation of the admission/enrollment decision, including an explanation of the parent/guardian's right to appeal the decision. The parent/guardian shall also be referred to the Charter School Liaison. The Charter School Liaison shall carry out the Board-adopted dispute resolution and complaint process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E).)

Housing Questionnaire

SDCCS shall administer a housing questionnaire for purposes of identifying homeless children and youth. SDCCS shall ensure that the housing questionnaire is based on the best practices developed by the CDE. SDCCS shall annually provide the housing questionnaire to all parents/guardians of students and to all unaccompanied youths at SDCCS. The housing questionnaire shall include an explanation of the rights and protections a student has as a homeless child or youth or as an unaccompanied youth. The housing questionnaire shall be available in paper form. The housing questionnaire shall be available in the primary language other than English spoken by fifteen (15) percent or more of the students enrolled at SDCCS and shall be translated into other languages upon request of a student's parent/guardian or an unaccompanied youth. SDCCS shall collect the completed housing questionnaires and annually report to the CDE the number of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths enrolled. (Education Code Section 48851.)

Comparable Services

Each homeless child or youth shall promptly be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in SDCCS such as (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(4)):

- Educational services for which the child or youth meets eligibility criteria, such as educational programs for students with disabilities and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency
- Charter School nutrition programs

Transportation

In the event that SDCCS provides transportation services to all SDCCS students, SDCCS shall provide comparable transportation services to each homeless child or youth attending SDCCS, as noted above. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(4).)

Suppose the SDCCS does not otherwise provide transportation services to all SDCCS students. In that case, SDCCS shall ensure that transportation is provided for homeless students to and from SDCCS, at the request of the parent or guardian (or Charter School Liaison), if SDCCS is the student's school of origin. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J).) Transportation provided by SDCCS will be adequate and appropriate for the Student's situation, but SDCCS does not commit to any one method of transportation for all youth.

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Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

A homeless child or youth shall be immediately deemed to meet all residency requirements for participation in interscholastic sports or other extracurricular activities.

Waiver of Fees for Afterschool Programs

The Charter School shall not charge any student who is a homeless youth and family fees associated with an After-School Education and Safety Program operated by the Charter School.

Professional Development

All administrators, teachers and employees of SDCCS, including the Charter School Liaison, will be provided professional development on the identification, services, and sensitivity necessary when dealing with homeless children and youth. The Charter School Liaison will verify that the Charter School is providing the required training to school personnel providing services to youth experiencing homelessness at least annually through the CDE's verification system. (Education Code Section 48852.5(c)(2).)

The Charter School Liaison shall offer training to SDCCS certificated and classified employees providing services to students experiencing homelessness, including, but not limited to, teachers, support staff, and other school staff who work with pupils, at least annually relating to:

- (1) SDCCS's homeless education program policies; and
- (2) Recognition of signs that pupils are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

The Charter School Liaison shall inform such employees of the availability of training and the services the Charter School Liaison provides to aid in identifying and providing services to students who are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, homelessness.

Acceptance of Course Work

The Charter School will accept any coursework satisfactorily completed at any public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency by a homeless student.

The Charter School will provide homeless students credit for the partial completion of courses taken while attending a public school, a juvenile court school, a school in a country other than the United States, and/or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency. Suppose the student did not complete the entire course. In that case, the Charter School shall not require the student to retake the portion of the course the student completed unless the Charter School, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the student, finds that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the homeless student shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the student may continue and complete the entire

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course. These students shall not be prevented from taking or retaking a course to meet California State University or the University of California admission eligibility requirements.

Notice

For any homeless student who seeks enrollment at the Charter School, written notice will be provided to the parent/guardian at the time of enrollment and at least annually while the student is enrolled at the Charter School.

Annual Policy Review

The Charter School shall annually review and revise any policies that may act as barriers to the identification of homeless children and youths or the enrollment of homeless children and youths at the Charter School. In reviewing and revising such policies, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. Special attention shall be given to ensuring the identification, enrollment, and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school. SDCCS's review of its homeless education program policies shall use resources developed by the CDE and posted on the CDE's internet website and resources developed by homeless education technical assistance centers established using funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

School Website Posting

SDCCS shall ensure that the following information is posted, and updated as necessary, on its internet website:

- The name and contact information of the Charter School Liaison(s) for homeless children and youths.
- The contact information of any employee or contractor that assists the Charter School Liaison in completing the Liaison's duties.
- Specific information regarding the educational rights and resources available to persons experiencing homelessness.

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