For more information about the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act or for assistance in enrolling, please contact:

~ Your school counselor

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Homelessness has no face; it can strike any family at any time. The Puyallup School District can provide stable education, resources and academic support.

This pamphlet explains the rights afforded to homeless children and youth and how to access services.
What is the McKinney-Vento Act?

Homelessness is a condition that can strike any of us. Especially in an economic recession, the loss of a job can lead to the loss of a home. Homelessness has been escalating since the 1980s. The National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that one in 50 American children are homeless. The term “homeless” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

In 1987 Congress authorized the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act to protect the rights of homeless students. Today’s McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act provides that each child of a homeless individual and each unaccompanied youth shall have equal access to the same free public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. It is the policy of the Puyallup School District that homeless children and unaccompanied youth shall have access to the education and other services that they need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

At a time when a child’s life may be in upheaval, the McKinney-Vento act is designed to provide consistent and stable education. Many families find that they need to move away from their resident school. The protection of this act provides transportation back to the resident school, free breakfast and lunch, school supplies, clothing, and tutoring among other services. The Puyallup School District aims to remove barriers that prevent or hinder homeless children and youth from attending school and excelling.

In an effort to eliminate barriers to school, McKinney-Vento children and youths do not need to have the same documentation as other students. McKinney-Vento students do not need to provide:

- Proof or residency
- Transcript from previous school(s)
- Immunization records
- Birth Certificate

School counselors can help you attain these documents.

In addition, McKinney-Vento students have the right to begin attending school on the day they enroll and receive a free lunch. Required fees can be reduced and/or waived.

If a homeless student becomes permanently housed during the school year, McKinney-Vento rights and services remain in place through the end of the current school year.

You may qualify for McKinney-Vento Homeless services, if you are:

- Living with someone else because you have lost your home,
- unable to find affordable housing,
- staying in a motel or hotel,
- living in a shelter,
- living in a campground, car, park, abandoned building or train station,
- “couch surfing” night to night,
- experiencing loss due to a natural disaster, or
- considered migrant.

Your rights as a McKinney-Vento Youth:

- To be enrolled immediately at your school of residence or school of origin
- To receive transportation back to your school of origin
- To receive free breakfast and lunch
- To receive school supplies
- To have required fees reduced or waived
- To receive supplemental tutoring, as needed
- To have full and equal access to education, activities and athletics