



Homeless Standard Program Evaluation

Program Evaluation Question(s)

1. What resources are available to students who become homeless during the school year?

I. Program/Service Information

1. Name of Program or Services:
Homeless Services
2. Personnel Responsible for Evaluation and Program :
Mary Lee Burlemann, Area Coordinator
3. Demographic Description of Program:
Location: Central Office
Number of staff: Administrator plus support staff
Participants: Those identified
Length of program/service: Annual
4. Date of Evaluation (Year/Duration):
July, 2005-January, 2006
5. Goal/Objective of Program/Services:
To identify homeless students and ensure that they have immediate access to a free, appropriate public education in the school of origin or in the school of best interest.
6. Brief description of relationship between program goals, CSIP and MSIP Standards:
Program goals are related to CSIP and MSIP standards. Information gathered about homeless students would ensure that homeless students are afforded the full range of educational programs in the district (MSIP Standards 8.3.1 and 6.3.6.

II. Evaluation Criteria for Programs/Services Offered (check type utilized)

File reviews, census information

III. Description of Stakeholders Engagement in Program Evaluation:

Parent Engagement activities: Devean Gaston (relative of a homeless student)
Community member: Joan Nenner (Salvation Army Community in Partnership Program), Doris Magwood (St. Louis Public Schools Students in Transition Program)
SSD Staff: Marsha Meyers, Dee Byrnes, Mary Lee Burlemann, and Bob Molitor
Partner District Staff: Cheryl Thomas (Rockwood SD Social Worker)



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Committee members were contacted to obtain agreement to serve. The members communicated via telephone and fax machine. No one felt the need to have a formal meeting.

IV. Results

1. Strengths of program/service

- DESE now conducts an annual homeless census (beginning '03-'04) instead of counting homeless students every three years. The number identified for the '04-'05 school year was 37 versus 32 for the '03-'04 school year. Please refer to Attachment A for a full description of the identification process and the services available to homeless students.
- The homeless coordinators in each school district are invited to meet quarterly to discuss topics of mutual interest regarding the needs of homeless students thereby creating a network of persons interested in providing immediate response to families facing a housing crisis.
- SSD social workers provide a wide range of services to students whose families are facing a housing crisis. Services provided include parent contacts, referral to outside resources, and participation in school conferences. This information was gained through a review of files of students who became homeless last year.
- SSD teachers are familiar with the process to refer a self-contained student who has become homeless for services and transportation. Please see Attachment A for a description of the process.

2. Concerns regarding program/service

- Families are reluctant to come forward to identify themselves as homeless for a variety of reasons. There is a stigma associated with that situation, but families need to know that there are services available to them in order to maintain a consistent school life for their children.
- School district homeless coordinators should respond collaboratively when information becomes available about a homeless situation. The child's prompt return to school should be of foremost importance.

3. Recommendations regarding program/service

- Social workers and teachers, usually the first to know about a change in circumstances, need to make families aware that they are entitled to the same



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programs and services their children had prior to becoming homeless and that the child (ren) will receive transportation to and from the school of origin or the school of best interest. School personnel need to make contact with the homeless coordinator as soon as possible to ensure a quick return to school.

- The homeless coordinator or a representative in each school district should attend the regional quarterly meetings of homeless coordinators to keep abreast of changes in the McKinney-Vento Act.

V. Action Plan for Recommendations as A Result of Program Evaluation

- The rights of homeless students need to be advertised in each of our SSD buildings to make families aware that there is a process in which to privately notify the district homeless coordinator of a change in housing status.
- The SSD homeless coordinator will remind other SSD Directors/Liaisons of the homeless coordinator meetings.
- Design a tracking system of additional services provided to families and students and their outcome.
- Our CSIP plan is adequate for this program. No resources need to be reallocated.

Person responsible to champion action plan

Mary Lee Burlemann

Timeframe for reporting updates to Board of Education

Annually

Date: _____

Signature of Administrator Responsible for Chairing Evaluation

Attachment A

Homelessness is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment. The Special School District, in accordance with state and federal law and the Missouri State Plan, actively seeks to identify homeless students and ensure that they have access to a free, appropriate public education. Identification usually begins with contact from a component district representative, a social worker or a parent alerting the Homeless Coordinator of homeless status. There are guidelines in determining eligibility for homeless status. The majority of homeless students receive services through the component district. Special School District becomes involved when a student receives self-contained (more than 60%) services.

Each identified homeless child or youth is to be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the district, either the component district program or service or through Special School District programs and services. Services to homeless students may include transportation, educational services for which the child meets the eligibility criteria, such as educational programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students, vocational and technical education programs, school meal programs, preschool programs, before- and after-school programs, and programs for students with limited English proficiency. Homeless students are not to be segregated in a separate school or placed in a separate program within a school based on a child's status as homeless.

After eligible status is determined, transportation issues are addressed. If it is in the best interest of the homeless child or youth to attend the school of origin, transportation to and from that school is provided. If the student's temporary housing is outside of the district of the school of origin, the homeless coordinator for Special School District will work with the homeless coordinator of the school district of origin to arrange for, and share the costs for transportation.

All student records shall be maintained so that appropriate services can be given to the student, so that necessary referrals can be made, and so that records are transferred in a timely manner if a homeless child or youth enters a new school district.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has, in the past, conducted a Homeless Children and Youth Census every three years. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2003, this census will be conducted annually due to increased reporting requirements.