 **No. 237**

 **SECTION: PUPILS**

**TITLE: HOMELESS STUDENTS**

**MEDICAL ACADEMY ADOPTED: 10/8/13**

**CHARTER SCHOOL REVISED:**

 237. HOMELESS STUDENTS

The Board recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same programs and services provided to other students. The Board shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children within the school, encourage their attendance, and eliminate barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.

The Principal/CEO may waive policies and procedures that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation and success in school of homeless students.

Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and nighttime residence, which include the following conditions:

 1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship.

 2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of adequate housing.

 3. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters.

 4. Abandoned in hospitals.

 5. Awaiting foster care placement.

 6. Living in places not designed for or ordinarily used for human beings.

 7. Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing or similar settings.

 8. Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.

 9. Living as run-away children.

10. Abandoned or forced out of homes by parents/guardians or caretakers.

11. Living as school age unwed mothers in houses for unwed mothers if they have no other

 living accommodations.

School of origin is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

The Guidance Counselor shall 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 and youth and families.

 2. Other schools on issues of records transfer and transportation.

 3. State and local housing agencies responsible for housing affordability strategies.

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

Enrollment/Placement

To the extent feasible, and in accordance with the student's best interest, a homeless student shall continue to be enrolled in his/her school of origin while s/he remains homeless or until the end of the academic year in which s/he obtains permanent housing. Parents/Guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living or other schools. If a student is unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, the school liaison will consider the views of the student in determining where s/he will be enrolled.

Medical Academy shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment pursuant to school policies. However, the school may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information. The school liaison may contact the previous school for oral confirmation of immunizations, and the school shall request records from the previous school, pursuant to Board policy.

If the school is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing records, the school shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's placement.

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parents/guardians shall be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision, their right to appeal and the procedures to use for the appeal.

Services

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other school students including, but not limited to, transportation services; school nutrition programs; vocational programs and technical education; programs for students with limited English proficiency; and educational services for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students.

Transportation

Transportation will only be provided by the cooperation of surrounding districts required to transport students to Medical Academy Charter School.

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.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations –34 CFR Part 99

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

PA Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan