

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Program
Blackwater Community School
Akimel O’Otham Pee Posh Charter Schools Inc.

Homeless Student Education Policy

Blackwater Community School/Akimel O’otham Pee Posh Charter Schools, Inc., adheres to the McKinney- Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 1991 and the State of Arizona’s laws regarding homeless student education (to the extent applicable to Akimel O’otham Pee Posh Charter Schools). Additionally, the School follows the Bureau of Indian Education Homeless Policy. The McKinney- Vento Act was established to assist homeless children and youth with enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youth as children who lack a regular and adequate nighttime residence. The term “homeless” includes children and youth who are:

- “doubled up” -sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason
- living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations
- living in emergency or transitional shelters
- not sleeping at a consistent location or are sleeping someplace not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations}
- awaiting foster care placement

The duration of homelessness that a family or youth experiences may be brief, or it may last a long time; as a result of this variability, the law addresses how long a student is eligible to attend the school of origin. A homeless student may attend a school of origin for the entire duration of the homelessness or until the end of any school year in which the student becomes permanently housed. Students who become homeless over the course of a summer may also remain in their schools of origin for the upcoming school year. Regardless of the school option chosen, the placement of students experiencing homelessness should always be based on the student’s best interest.

The mission of the Homeless Education Program is to ensure that homeless children and youth have access to a free, appropriate public education, comparable to that provided to the children of the Gila River Indian Community and consistent with the Community’s mandatory attendance laws. The McKinney-Vento Act intends for a homeless child or youth to be able to remain in the school of origin, to the extent feasible, except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the student’s parent or guardian.

The rights of a student under the McKinney-Vento Act include:

- the child can be enrolled in school, even if required documents such as a birth certificate or shot records are not available.
- the child may be able to stay at the same school and may be able to receive transportation to that school.
- the child can receive free school breakfast and lunch.

The School works to provide resources and support to students in transition as soon as they are identified. This may include providing uniforms, school supplies, and basic toiletries, as well as other forms of support. Needs will be identified on a case-by-case basis. Support from the school counseling team will be made available to these students as well as referrals to community services as needed.

McKinney-Vento eligibility must be reviewed and reevaluated every school year. Transportation, free meals, and other services that may have been provided do not automatically carry over to the following school year.

Designated Homeless Education Liaison:

Blackwater Community School/Akimel O’Otham Pee Posh Charter Schools, Inc., have designated a Liaison for this program. For assistance with the information on criteria for homeless eligibility status, contact the following McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaisons:

Name: Ms. Angie Guerrero

Title: Special Education Coordinator/ MCV Liaison

Phone: (520) 215-5859

Email address: Angie.Guerrero@bwcs.k12.az.us

Homeless Education Dispute Procedure:

Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, families and unaccompanied youth in homeless situations have the right to dispute school enrollment decisions. The dispute resolution process should be as informal and as accessible as possible and be consistent with impartial and complete review of the information to determine if the student is eligible for homeless status and services.

When a dispute arises, the student must immediately be enrolled in the school of choice while the dispute is being resolved. The student must remain in the school of choice until the dispute is resolved. As long as the dispute continues through the resolution process, the student must remain enrolled in the school of choice.

1. The school must refer the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth within two school calendar days to a McKinney-Vento Liaison to carry out the resolution process as expeditiously as possible.
2. The McKinney-Vento Liaison will meet with the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth within two school calendar days of the school's referral to review the school's written decision and assess the status of the student as homeless and eligible for homeless services.
3. Following the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) guidelines for determining homelessness, the McKinney-Vento Liaison will determine if the family or student is homeless.
 - a. If the student is eligible for homeless status, the liaison will notify the Principal and work with the parent and school to ensure the student's continued enrollment in the school of choice and access to support services through the McKinney-Vento Program.
 - b. If the student is not eligible for homeless status, the liaison will notify the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth in writing and provide a copy of that notice to

the Principal within two school calendar days to proceed with the original decision for school placement or enrollment.

4. If the dispute continues, the McKinney-Vento Liaison will refer the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth to the Principal. Based on that information, the Principal will determine if the student is eligible for homeless status and McKinney- Vento services.
 - a. If the student is eligible, the administrator will notify the McKinney-Vento Liaison within five school calendar days to work with the parent and school to ensure the student's continued enrollment in the school of choice and access to support services through the McKinney-Vento Program.
 - b. If the student is not eligible for homeless status, the administrator will notify the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth in writing as well as provide information on appealing the school's decision to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE)/BIE and will provide the appropriate forms from ADE/BIE. A copy of that notice will be sent to the school within two school calendar days to proceed with the original decision for school placement or enrollment.
5. At any point in the resolution of the dispute, School/Liaison may choose to consult with the Arizona Department of Education and/or BIE Homeless Education Program Coordinator.



BLACKWATER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School Inc.

“Quality Education Begins Here”



Identification Procedures and Guidelines For Homeless (McKinney-Vento) Students and Youth

- (1) Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter and Blackwater Community School will include the Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ) and Rights of Homeless Students in all enrollment packets as well as through online enrollment portal.
- (2) If an option in Section A is checked, the enrollment clerk will scan the MCV Questionnaire and email it to the MCV Liaison Ms. Angie Guerrero (Angie.Guerrero@bwcs.k12.az.us) for further action.
- (3) If a child is enrolled through online portal, the enrollment clerk will verify if check mark was put in Section A, if Yes, the clerk will flag the enrollment by adding a check mark in the appropriate box on the InfiniteCampus (Nasis & School Master portals) and notify the MCV Liaison Ms. Angie Guerrero via email.
- (4) If the enrolling individual checks Section B, no further action will be required.
- (5) Once the MCV (McKinney-Vento) Liaison is notified, she will follow up with the parent, guardian, caregiver, or student to conduct an interview. The enrollment office will receive a notification to confirm the eligibility decision.
- (6) If the MCV Liaison decision is made and the child is considered as eligible, that **student does not need to provide:**
 - Affidavit of Shared Residency
 - Birth certificate
 - Immunization records
 - Open enrollment application
 - Power of Attorney (POA) or guardianship documents (for situations involving an unaccompanied youth)

3652 E. Blackwater School Road, Coolidge AZ. 85128

Tel.(520)215-5859 Fax. (520)215-5862



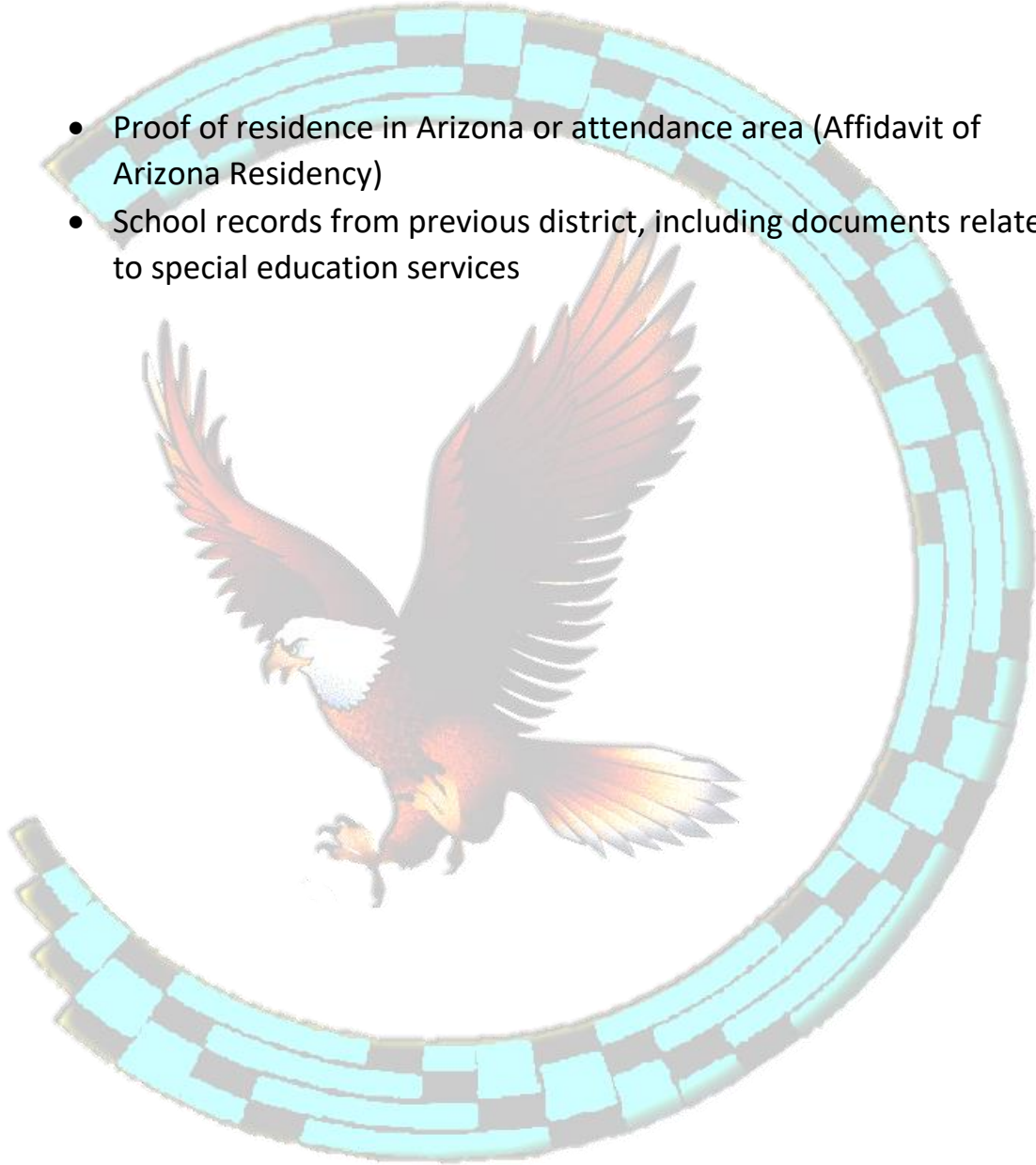
BLACKWATER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School Inc.

“Quality Education Begins Here”



- Proof of residence in Arizona or attendance area (Affidavit of Arizona Residency)
- School records from previous district, including documents related to special education services



3652 E. Blackwater School Road, Coolidge AZ. 85128
Tel.(520)215-5859 Fax. (520)215-5862