Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS)

Notice of Rights of Homeless Students

The Board of Education of the City of Chicago (Board) shall provide an educational environment that treats all students attending the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) with dignity and respect. Every student in a temporary living situation shall have equal access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are permanently housed. This commitment to the educational rights of students in a temporary living situation, youth, and youth not living with a parent or guardian, applies to all services, programs, and activities provided or made available by the Board.

A student is considered to be in a temporary living situation if he or she lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youth who are:

- sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
- living in a motel/hotel, trailer park or camping ground, due to lack of alternative, adequate housing;
- living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting;
- abandoned in hospitals;
- migratory children living in one of the above settings;
- youth not in the custody of a parent/guardian (unaccompanied youth) of any age, in one of the above settings.

Students who temporarily reside outside of Chicago due to homelessness and attend their CPS school of origin receive transportation assistance as do students experiencing homelessness who live in the City of Chicago but attend a school of origin outside of CPS.

Dispute Resolution: When a school official denies a student in a temporary living situation enrollment, eligibility, school selection and/or transportation, the parent or student may file a complaint with the CPS STLS Department. The STLS Department will attempt to resolve the dispute in a timely manner. The STLS Department will refer you to free and low-cost legal services to help you, if you wish. During the dispute, the student must be immediately enrolled in the school with participation in school activities and/or provided transportation until the dispute is resolved. Every Chicago Public School, including charter schools, has an STLS Liaison who will assist you in making enrollment decisions, provide notice of the dispute resolution process, if needed assist you in completing the dispute resolution forms and refer you to low-cost legal assistance.

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Chicago Public Schools

All STLS Students Have Rights To

Immediate school enrollment. A school must immediately enroll students even if they lack health, immunization or school records, proof of guardianship, or proof of residence. "Enrollment" means enrolled into the school, attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

Enroll in:

- the school they attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled (school of origin).
- any school that permanently housed students living in the same attendance area in which the STLS student or youth is actually living are eligible to attend (attendance area school).
- preschool

Remain enrolled in his/her selected school for as long as they remain in a temporary living situation or, if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year.

Access to charter schools, selective enrollment schools, magnet schools, and all other CPS programs in the same manner as students who are permanently housed and assistance with application process will be provided upon request.

Participate in tutoring services beyond those provided to all students; school-related activities; and/or receive other support services.

Receive free school meals, fee waivers, free uniforms, and low-cost or free medical referrals.

Transportation services: If parents/caregivers choose to continue their child's education in the school of origin and transportation is requested, CPS will provide transportation to and from the school of origin, and all school-related activities, for as long as the student is in a temporary living situation or, if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year.

Eligible students receive CTA transportation cards and adult caregivers of eligible students in grades PK-6 receive CTA transportation cards to accompany the student to/from school. Eligible students in grades PK-6 whose caregiver is unable to accompany them on public transportation due to a hardship may apply for yellow school bus service by submitting documentation or affidavit of their inability to transport the student. Examples of a "hardship" situation are:

- Parent/caregiver employment, job training, or education program.
- Parent's/caregiver's mental and/or physical disability.
- Children need to be transported to and from schools at different locations.
- Court order, DCFS, or DCFS contract agent requires activities that do not enable parent/guardian to transport children to and from school.
- Rules of shelter or similar facility will not permit parent/caregiver to leave to transport children to and from school.
- Other good cause why parent/caregiver cannot use public transportation to transport children to and from school.

For more information about the rights of STLS students in Chicago Public Schools, call the STLS program at **773-553-2242**, fax at **773-553-2182**, email at STLSInformation@cps.edu, go to cps.edu/STLS, or visit the STLS policy at cps.edu/STLSpolicy.