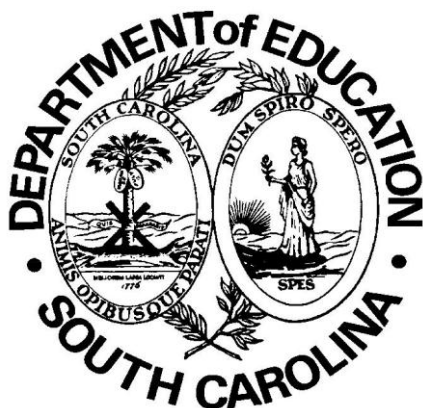

South Carolina Department of Education

Dispute Resolution Procedures



Dispute Resolution

R 43-272.2, State-Level Resolution Process for Disputes Involving Unaccompanied Youth and Homeless Children

The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires that each state implement a state-level process to review district-level decisions regarding the enrollment of a homeless child or an unaccompanied youth. An unaccompanied youth or the parent or guardian of a homeless child may request that the state conduct a review of a school district's final decision regarding an enrollment issue. The contact person at the State Department of Education is the coordinator for the Office of Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth.

Under no circumstances must resolution of a dispute delay the school enrollment of an unaccompanied youth or a homeless child. That is, during the pendency of any administrative or judicial proceeding regarding a dispute over the enrollment of an unaccompanied youth or homeless child, the student must continuously be enrolled in school, be provided all relevant services, and be allowed to participate fully in all school activities (as consistent with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended).

I. Responsibilities of the School District

- A. When it is determined that a dispute cannot be settled at the district level, the school district must carry out the following responsibilities in a timely manner:
 1. inform the unaccompanied youth or the parent or guardian of the homeless child concerning his or her right to request that the State Department of Education review the decision of the school district,
 2. inform the unaccompanied youth or the parent or guardian of the homeless child that this request must be made either on the district-supplied request-for-review form or by a telephone interview with the coordinator in the State Department of Education's Office of Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth,
 3. give the unaccompanied youth or the parent or guardian of the homeless child a copy of the State Department of Education's request-for-review form and the contact information for the Office of Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth, and
 4. inform the unaccompanied youth or the parent or guardian of the homeless child that he or she may seek the assistance of advocates or attorneys for the review.

- B. Once the Office of Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth has received either the completed request-for-review form or has conducted a full telephone interview with the youth or the parent or guardian, the coordinator will send a copy of the completed form and any other relevant material to the school district.

The school district must send a written response to the state and to the person filing the state review request within five business days from the date it receives the request-for-review form.

II. Responsibilities of the Youth or the Parent or Guardian

- A. The unaccompanied youth or the parent or guardian of the homeless child must complete and return the request-for-review form to the address designated on the form or must telephone the coordinator in the Office of Coordinator for Education of Homeless Children and Youth and make an oral report on the circumstances surrounding the request for review.
- B. The youth or the parent or guardian either may attach to the form any additional information he or she thinks is relevant or may telephone the coordinator and provide the information orally.

III. Responsibilities of the Coordinator

- A. The coordinator for the education of homeless children and youths will conduct all state reviews requested by unaccompanied youths or the parents or guardians of the homeless children.
- B. The coordinator will review all written documents submitted concerning the particular dispute. The coordinator may request additional information from the parties in making his or her determination.
- C. The coordinator will make a final decision within ten business days of receiving the written response from the school district. The decision of the coordinator is binding and will be effective immediately.