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HCCSC's Education-Related Duties

I. Establishing Standards for Service Providers

To carry out its duty to collaborate with local educational authorities, the HCCSC will prescribe and enforce standards that HUD-funded projects providing shelter, housing, or services for the homeless must meet to ensure that the educational needs of homeless children and unaccompanied youth are met.

II. Identifying, Convening, and Educating Individuals Responsible for Educational Services

The HCCSC Board will take the following steps to identify, convene, and train school personnel and the HCCSC providers who are responsible for collaborating with them to meet the educational needs of homeless children and youth:

- A. Create and update annually a list that includes the names and contact information for the homeless liaisons designated by each of Stark County's 17 public school districts and post that list on its website;
- B. Create and update annually a list that includes the names and contact information for the education coordinator(s) designated by HUD-funded projects providing shelter, housing, or services for the homeless;
- C. Extend an annual invitation to homeless liaisons in all Stark County school districts to attend HCCSC member meetings and to join HCCSC as a member;
- D. Work with the Early Childhood Resource Center in Canton to offer programs to train staff to identify and address the special needs of homeless families and children;
- E. Collaborate with the Stark County Educational Service Center to schedule annual presentations to educate iCARE teams and other selected representatives of schools about (1) recognizing the signs of homelessness; (2) helping families and unaccompanied youth access homeless services in the county; and (3) ensuring that those families and youth know their educational rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; and
- F. Develop and share with all school districts in Stark County a recommended protocol for district and building personnel to follow in identifying homeless families and youth, connecting them to services, and informing them of their educational rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

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III. Identifying the Homeless Who are Eligible for Education Services and Informing Them of Their Rights

To identify the homeless who are eligible for education services and inform them of their rights, the HCCSC Board will:

- A. Ensure that all Homeless Hotline staff members:
 - 1. Know the definition of homelessness that applies in evaluating eligibility for education services so they can identify families and youth that may qualify for such services; and
 - 2. Discuss their education rights with unaccompanied youth and families with school-aged children who may qualify for education services and refer them to their local school district liaison for more information even if they do not qualify for HUD-funded homeless services.
- B. Post information on its website about the education services to which homeless families and youth are entitled and encourage them to contact their school district's homeless liaison for assistance in accessing these services;
- C. Make available for display or distribution by service providers, homeless liaisons, and others brochures and posters explaining the educational rights of the homeless.

IV. Considering Education Needs in Referring Families to Emergency Shelters or Housing

To guarantee that the education needs of children and youth are taken into account in placing families with children and unaccompanied youth in emergency shelters and transitional or permanent housing, all Homeless Hotline and project staff serving these families or youth must:

- A. Determine the following::
 - 1. Whether or not the children and youth are enrolled in and attending school or preschool;
 - 2. The names of the schools they are attending;
 - 3. Any special programs, such as special education, gifted and talented, or English language learner programs, which they are attending or for which they qualify; and
 - 4. Whether they have any concerns about school attendance, particularly fears related to domestic violence.

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- B. Include education needs and school stability as key criteria in determining the appropriate shelter or housing for the families or youth; and
- C. Refer families and youth to shelter and housing options as close as possible to their current schools.