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Agora Cyber Charter School

Board of Trustees

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY

Authority

The Board of Trustees ("Board") of Agora Cyber Charter School ("Charter School") is committed to providing homeless children and youth with equal access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education, as mandated by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This policy outlines the Charter School's responsibilities to ensure that homeless students' rights are protected and enforced.

Purpose The purpose of this policy is to provide comprehensive guidance on identifying, enrolling, and supporting homeless children and youth, ensuring that they receive equitable access to the Charter School's academic and support services in a safe and inclusive environment.

Definitions For purposes of this policy, "homeless children and youth" are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes those living in temporary housing, shelters, hotels, shared housing due to economic hardship, or other places not meant for human habitation. Homeless status is determined in collaboration with the parent/guardian or, in the case of unaccompanied youth, by the Charter School's Homeless Liaison.

Enrollment and Access to Services Homeless students will be immediately enrolled and granted access to all educational services offered by the Charter School, regardless of whether typical enrollment documentation is available. Services shall include access to special education as governed by IDEA, Title I services under ESEA, and protections for

the privacy of student records as stipulated by FERPA. The Charter School shall ensure that homeless students receive services comparable to those provided to other students, including but not limited to special education, gifted programs, language support, and any resources necessary for their participation in a virtual school environment.

Role of the Homeless Liaison The Homeless Liaison is tasked with coordinating the identification, enrollment, and support of homeless students. The liaison's responsibilities align to the Pennsylvania Education for Children & Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) and include, but not limited to:

- Collaborating with ECYEH regional coordinators and other agencies to ensure compliance with McKinney-Vento.
- Identifying students experiencing homelessness, ensuring that young children, school-age children, and unaccompanied youth are supported.
- Maintaining accurate, confidential records of homeless students and reporting data to PIMS and ECYEH as required.
- Acting as a resource for school staff, parents, and community organizations regarding the educational rights of homeless students, including compliance with IDEA, FERPA, and ESEA.

FERPA Compliance

The Charter School will comply with FERPA requirements to protect the privacy of homeless students' educational records. The Homeless Liaison may disclose relevant student information to authorized parties when necessary to coordinate educational support services for homeless students. **IDEA Compliance** Homeless students with disabilities will receive services under IDEA, including evaluations, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and related support services, to ensure they receive the appropriate accommodations and modifications for their academic success.

Title I, Part A Compliance under ESEA

Title I funds shall be utilized to support homeless students' needs, including supplemental academic programs, tutoring, and resources to support academic achievement. Homeless students will be granted access to Title I services, regardless of their typical low-income eligibility.

Dispute Resolution Process

If a dispute arises regarding enrollment, services, or placement, the student shall remain enrolled and entitled to full services while the dispute is resolved. The Charter School's Homeless Liaison will provide a written explanation of decisions, details of the appeal process, and assistance to families or unaccompanied youth as needed. The dispute resolution process will adhere to state and federal guidelines to protect students' rights.

Professional Development

To ensure effective support for homeless students, the Charter School will provide ongoing training for all staff on the identification, enrollment, and rights of homeless students. This training includes sensitivity to the unique needs of homeless students and strategies for removing barriers to their academic success.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER OR APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS AND/OR

CHARTER SHALL PREVAIL.

Adopted this 9th day of December, 2024