

PARENT/YOUTH'S GUIDE TO THE MCKINNEY-VENTO DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Homeless Education Program

If a parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal the Bellingham School District's decision regarding school placement:

1. The parent/unaccompanied youth must submit a request for dispute resolution form to a district Liaison or the school where enrollment is sought within fifteen **(15) business days** of receiving the district's notification that they plan to enroll the student in a school other than the one requested.
2. Within five **(5) business days** of their receipt of the complaint, the Liaison must make a decision on the complaint and inform the parent or unaccompanied youth of their decision in writing.

If the parent or youth disagrees with the decision made at Level I and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level II, the parent or unaccompanied youth shall notify a district Homeless Liaison of their intent to proceed to Level II within ten **(10) business days** of their receipt of notification of the Level I decision. If the parent or unaccompanied youth wishes to proceed to Level II, the district's Homeless Liaison will provide an appeals package that includes:

1. A copy of the parent or youth's complaint which was filed with a district Homeless Liaison at Level I
2. The decision rendered at Level I by a Homeless Liaison
3. Any additional information from the parent, guardian, unaccompanied youth, or Liaison.

If the dispute remains unresolved after a Level I appeal, the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth may appeal the decision to the Bellingham School District Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. The appeals package from the Level I dispute will be used to facilitate the following:

1. The Superintendent or Superintendents designee (not the Homeless Liaison), will arrange for a personal conference with the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth. This will occur within five **(5) business days** of the parent, guardian, or youth's notification to the district of their intent to proceed to the Level II dispute resolution process. This meeting, once arranged, should happen as quickly as possible.
2. The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee will provide a decision, in writing, to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with supporting evidence and reasons within five **(5) business days** of the meeting.

If the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision at Level II and wishes to move the dispute process to Level III, the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth must notify the district's Homeless Liaison of their intent to proceed to Level III within ten **(10) days of receipt** of notification of the Level II decision. If the dispute remains unresolved:

1. The Bellingham School District Superintendent must forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the OSPI Homeless Education Coordinator or designee, for review within five **(5) business days** of receiving notification that the parent, guardian, or youth would like to proceed to Level III.
2. The entire dispute package including all documentation and related paperwork is to be submitted to OSPI in one complete package via hard copy mail delivery. Documents submitted separately from the dispute package may not be reviewed. It is the responsibility of the district to ensure the dispute packages are complete and ready for review.
3. The OSPI Homeless Education Coordinator, along with appropriate OSPI personnel, will make a final decision within fifteen **(15) business days** of receipt of the complaint.
4. The final decision will be forwarded to a Bellingham School District Homeless Liaison for distribution to the parent and local Superintendent.
5. The decision made by OSPI will be the final resolution for placement of a homeless child or youth in the district.