



REDWOOD PREPARATORY CHARTER TIMBER WOLVES

1480 Ross Hill Road, Fortuna, CA 95540 * (707)
682-6149
Charter #1304 * Tax ID#
27-4062747

Student Board Policy #3
Adopted/Ratified: August, 2011
Revision Date: 9/13/23

Redwood Preparatory Education for Homeless Children and Youth Policy

Homelessness exists in our community. A combination of high housing costs and poverty causes many families to lose their housing. Many young people leave their homes due to abuse, neglect, and family conflict. Children and youth who have lost their housing live in a variety of places, including motels, shelters, shared residences, transitional housing programs, cars, campgrounds, and others. Their lack of permanent housing can lead to potentially serious physical, emotional, and mental consequences. Redwood Preparatory Charter School (“Redwood Prep” or the “Charter School”) will ensure that all children and youth in transition are provided with equal access to its educational program, have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state of California academic standards, are provided a free and appropriate public education, are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless, and to establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.

It is the policy of Redwood Preparatory Charter School to view children as individuals. Therefore, this Policy will not refer to children as homeless; it will instead use the term children and youth in transition. Under federal law, children and youth in transition must have access to appropriate public education and be given a full opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards. They must be included in state- and district-wide assessments and accountability systems. Redwood Prep will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination and harassment.

Definitions

The term “children and youth in transition” or “homeless children and youth” means children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. It includes children and youths who (42 U.S.C. § 11434a):

- Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;

- Have a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
- Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition of “homeless.”

A child or youth will be considered to be in transition for as long as he or she is in a living situation described above. Transition status is determined in cooperation with the parent or guardian. In the case of unaccompanied youth, status is determined by the School Liaison. In the event that the eligibility changes mid school year, the student will remain eligible for benefits for the remainder of the school year.

School Liaison

The Director or designates the following staff person as the School Liaison for children and youth in transition (42 U.S.C. §§11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) & (e)(3)(C)(i)(IV).):

Rebecca Scales, Secretary
 Redwood Preparatory Charter School
 1480 Ross Hill Road, Fortuna, CA 95540
 707-682-6149

The School Liaison shall ensure that (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)):

1. Youth in transition students are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
2. Youth in transition students enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed at Redwood Prep.
3. Youth in transition students and families receive educational services for which they are eligible, including services through Head Start programs (including Early Head Start programs) under the Head Start Act, early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, any other preschool programs administered by Redwood Prep, if any, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
4. Parents/guardians are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
5. Public notice of the educational rights of youth in transition children is disseminated at places frequented by parents or guardians of such youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, and in a manner and form understandable to

the parents and guardians of homeless youth and unaccompanied youth.

6. Enrollment/admissions disputes are mediated in accordance with law, Redwood Prep charter, and Board policy.
7. Parents/guardians and any unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, as applicable.
8. School personnel providing services receive professional development and other support;
9. The School Liaison collaborates with State coordinators and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to youth in transition children and youths.
10. Unaccompanied youth are enrolled in school; have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic standards as the State establishes for other children and youth; and are informed of their status as independent students under section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and that the youths may obtain assistance from the School Liaison to receive verification of such status for the purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 of the Act.

Enrollment

Consistent, uninterrupted education is vital for academic achievement. Due to the realities of homelessness and mobility, students in transition may not have school enrollment documents available readily. Redwood Prep shall immediately admit/enroll the student (subject to Redwood Prep's capacity and pursuant to the procedures stated in the Redwood Prep charter and Board policy), even if the student lacks records normally required for enrollment. Records will immediately be requested from the previous school. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C); Education Code Section 48850(a)(3)(A).) Enrollment will not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including:

- Proof of residency
- Previous academic records
- Immunization or other required health records

If the student needs to obtain immunizations or does not possess immunization or other medical records, the Director or designee shall refer the parent/guardian to the School Liaison. The School Liaison shall assist the parent/guardian in obtaining the necessary immunizations or records for the student. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(C).)

Comparable Services

Children and youth in transition will be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in Redwood Prep, including (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(4)):

- Transportation services

- Educational services for which the child or youth meets eligibility criteria, such as educational programs for students with disabilities and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency
- Programs in vocational and technical education
- Programs for gifted and talented students
- School nutrition programs
- School ELOP

In the event that Redwood Prep provides transportation services to all Redwood Prep students, Redwood Prep shall provide comparable transportation services to each youth in transition child or youth attending Redwood Prep, as noted above. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(4)) If the Redwood Prep does not otherwise provide transportation services to all Redwood Prep students, Redwood Prep shall ensure that transportation is provided for youth in transition students to and from Redwood Prep, at the request of the parent or guardian (or liaison). (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J))

Redwood Prep recognizes that children and youth in transition suffer from disabilities at a disproportionate rate, yet frequently are not evaluated or provided appropriate special education and related services. To address this problem, evaluations of children and youth in transition suspected of having a disability will be given priority and coordinated with students' prior and subsequent schools as necessary to ensure the timely completion of a full evaluation. Any necessary individualized education program ("IEP") meetings or re-evaluations will be conducted expeditiously. If complete records are not available, IEP teams will use good judgment in choosing the best course of action, balancing procedural requirements and the provision of services. In all cases, the goal will be to avoid any disruption in appropriate services.

When applying Charter School policy regarding tardiness or absences, any tardiness or absence related to a child or youth's living situation will be excused. Charter School personnel will refer children and youth in transition to appropriate health care services, including dental and mental health services. The School Liaison will assist the Charter School in making such referrals, as necessary.

Charter School personnel will also inform parents/guardians of all educational and related opportunities available to their children while in transition and provide parents with meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education. All parent/ guardian information required by any provision of this Policy will be provided in a form, manner, and language understandable to each parent/guardian.

Enrollment Disputes

If a dispute arises over any issue covered in this policy, the child or youth in transition will be admitted immediately to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E).)

The school will provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its admission/enrollment decision, including an explanation of the parent/guardian's the right to appeal the decision. He/she shall also be referred to the School Liaison. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E).)

The School Liaison shall carry out the Board-adopted dispute resolution and complaint process as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E).)