



# Texas Education Agency

1701 NORTH CONGRESS AVENUE

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-1494

(512) 463-9734

March 18, 1991

Dear Shelter Care Provider:

The Texas Education Agency is preparing to revise the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth*, a document designed to assist our state in appropriately addressing the educational needs of homeless children. Before revising the plan, it is important to measure any progress that may have been made in this area, to note barriers that still remain, and to identify any new barriers that may have arisen. As a person who has valuable expertise in the field of homelessness, you are asked to complete the enclosed questionnaire regarding barriers to the education of homeless children and youth in Texas.

The first 3 pages of the survey are primarily concerned with barriers to enrollment while the final 2 pages emphasize barriers to attendance and success in school. As you assess each possible barrier, focus on **current** conditions, not the past. For example, if 2 years ago a school district refused to enroll students living in shelters, but now enrolls such students, it would be appropriate to circle "1" to indicate "none are having any difficulty." If, however, that pattern of refusal to enroll homeless students still exists, you would circle "5" to indicate "many are having great difficulty."

If you are aware of barriers that are not stated, please list them in the appropriate section(s). It is critical to identify all barriers that prohibit homeless children from receiving access to education.

Please return your completed questionnaire in the envelope provided by April 5, 1991. If you have any questions regarding this questionnaire, or homeless education in general, please call me at (512) 463-9694.

Thank you for your cooperation as we work together to improve the educational process for homeless children and youth in Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara E. Wand".

Barbara E. Wand  
Educational Program Director  
Education for Homeless Children and Youth  
Special Programs Planning and Implementation

BEW/jcr

Enclosure

# BARRIERS TO THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN TEXAS: MEASURING THE PROGRESS

## QUESTIONNAIRE

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please read each item carefully, then circle the response for each item which best reflects your perception. Rate each item based on your awareness of the **current** experiences of homeless children and youth in your area. Please respond to all items and please be sure to use the "Other Barriers..." section to explain other barriers that may be affecting the education of homeless students. On the last page, please offer any suggestions for overcoming the barriers. Use additional sheets if necessary -- your thoughts and opinions are important! All responses are confidential!

Name:(optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Check populations served:  homeless families in shelters  runaway/homeless youth  domestic violence victims  
 children/youth on the street  children/youth living with friends/relatives  
 other: (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

<i>To what extent are homeless children/youth in your area <b>currently</b> having difficulty enrolling in school because of the following barriers?</i>	None Are Having Any Difficulty	Few Are Having Some Difficulty	Few Are Having Great Difficulty	Many Are Having Some Difficulty	Many Are Having Great Difficulty	Can't Judge or N/A
<b><u>Enrollment Barriers Associated with Records</u></b>						
The cost of acquiring birth certificates	1	2	3	4	5	6
The length of time required to acquire birth certificates	1	2	3	4	5	6
The length of time required to acquire records of previous immunizations	1	2	3	4	5	6
The problems associated with acquiring needed immunizations	1	2	3	4	5	6
The length of time required to acquire tuberculosis screenings	1	2	3	4	5	6
Previous schools' refusal to transfer records because the student did not return textbooks or pay fines/fees	1	2	3	4	5	6
The refusal of the school to enroll students without drop slips or other documents indicating the student no longer attends the previous school	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Other Enrollment Barriers Related to Records:</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6

<b><i>To what extent are homeless children/youth in your area <u>currently</u> having difficulty enrolling in school because of the following barriers?</i></b>	None Are Having Any Difficulty	Few Are Having Some Difficulty	Few Are Having Great Difficulty	Many Are Having Some Difficulty	Many Are Having Great Difficulty	Can't Judge or N/A
<b><u>Enrollment Barriers Related to Residency Requirements</u></b>						
District requirements for rent receipts, utility receipts, or related documents as proof of residency	1	2	3	4	5	6
District refusal to enroll all children who live in shelters	1	2	3	4	5	6
The difficulty associated with verifying the residence of a homeless family or child who lives with friends or relatives or on the street	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Other Enrollment Barriers Related to Residency:</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b><u>Enrollment Barriers Related to Guardianship Issues</u></b>						
District requirements that student caretakers (other than parents) acquire formal legal guardianship in a court of law	1	2	3	4	5	6
District requirements that student caretakers sign documents to assume legal responsibility for the student	1	2	3	4	5	6
District refusal to enroll students who don't live with an adult	1	2	3	4	5	6
District refusal to enroll runaway/throwaway students without parental permission	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Other Enrollment Barriers Related to Guardianship:</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b><u>Enrollment Barriers Related to Domestic Violence</u></b>						
Risk of danger related to the possibility of an abuser tracking the child through requests for school records	1	2	3	4	5	6
Risk of danger related to the possibility of an abuser kidnapping a child who must walk to and from the shelter and the school	1	2	3	4	5	6
Risk of danger related to the possibility of an abuser removing a child from school	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of homebound services when the risk of danger is severe.	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Other Enrollment Barriers Related to Domestic Violence:</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6

<i>To what extent are homeless children/youth in your area <b>currently</b> having difficulty enrolling in school because of the following barriers?</i>	None Are Having Any Difficulty	Few Are Having Some Difficulty	Few Are Having Great Difficulty	Many Are Having Some Difficulty	Many Are Having Great Difficulty	Can't Judge or N/A
<p><b><u>Enrollment Barriers Related to Awareness of Rights</u></b> Homeless parents' lack of awareness regarding their right to have their children enrolled in school</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Homeless parents' lack of awareness that they are legally responsible for ensuring that their children remain in school</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p><b>Other Enrollment Barriers Related to Awareness of Rights:</b></p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p><b><u>Enrollment Barriers Related to Choice of Schools</u></b> Refusal by the school the student attended prior to becoming homeless to enroll or re-enroll the student, even when attendance at the previous school is in the student's best interest</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Refusal by the the school where the student is temporarily residing to enroll the student, insisting that the student return to the previous school, regardless of the student's best interest</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p><b>Other Enrollment Barriers Related to Choice of Schools:</b></p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p><b><u>Enrollment Barriers Related to Dispute Resolution</u></b> Parents'/caretakers' lack of awareness of procedures for acquiring assistance from the district administrative office when they have difficulty enrolling homeless children in school</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Parents'/caretakers' lack of awareness of procedures for acquiring assistance for the Texas Education Agency when they have difficulty enrolling homeless children in school</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Promptness of Texas Education Agency response to requests for dispute resolution</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Effectiveness of Texas Education Agency response to requests for dispute resolution</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p><b>Other Enrollment Barriers Related to Dispute Resolution:</b></p>	1	2	3	4	5	6

<i>To what extent are homeless children/youth in your area <b>currently</b> having difficulty attending or being successful in school because of the following barriers?</i>	None Are Having Any Difficulty	Few Are Having Some Difficulty	Few Are Having Great Difficulty	Many Are Having Some Difficulty	Many Are Having Great Difficulty	Can't Judge or N/A
<b>Barriers Associated with Academic Services</b>						
Lack of access to tutorial services during or after school	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of access to small classes that provide individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of access to assessment services to promptly determine student learning needs	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of access to alternative school programs	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of opportunity to gain credit when students enroll in the middle of the semester	1	2	3	4	5	6
Difficulty obtaining evaluations for special services because of student transiency	1	2	3	4	5	6
Difficulty obtaining access to public school programs for four-year-old homeless children	1	2	3	4	5	6
Difficulty obtaining evaluations for potential developmental disabilities for homeless three- and four-year-old children	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of school personnel awareness of the special needs of homeless children and youth	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of school personnel sensitivity to the special needs of homeless children and youth	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of availability or access to services for homeless students who have limited English proficiency	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of availability or access to services for homeless students who are intellectually/academically gifted or talented	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of access to work-study programs	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Other Barriers Related to Academic Services:</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6

<i>To what extent are homeless children/youth in your area <b>currently</b> having difficulty attending or being successful in school because of the following barriers?</i>	None Are Having Any Difficulty	Few Are Having Some Difficulty	Few Are Having Great Difficulty	Many Are Having Some Difficulty	Many Are Having Great Difficulty	Can't Judge or N/A
<b><u>Barriers Associated with Support Services</u></b>						
Lack of availability or access to counseling services	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of availability or access to case management services	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of availability or access to social work services	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of availability or access to health services	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of access to essential school supplies	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of access to funds for participating in school events	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of access to appropriate school clothes	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of communication between schools and shelters	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of coordination between schools, shelters, and other social service agencies	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of transportation for homeless children who live in shelters that are closer than two miles from the school	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of transportation for homeless children who are attending the school they attended prior to becoming homeless	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of transportation for homeless children to and from before- and after-school programs provided by community agencies	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of availability or access to school meal programs	1	2	3	4	5	6
Lack of availability or access to programs that encourage the involvement of homeless parents in the education of their children	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Other Barriers Related to Support Services:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6