

# **PROJECT CONNECT PROGRAM**

## **What is the Project Connect Program?**

Authorized under Federal law through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, the Columbus City Schools' Project Connect Program provides services to ensure that identified children and youth experiencing homelessness have access to a free and appropriate public education by removing barriers due to homelessness. As advocates for educational rights, there are various services the program provides to assist families in transition.

## **How can the Project Connect Program help?**

Project Connect works with students, parents, Columbus City Schools (CCS) employees, partner agencies, and other local school districts to provide assistance with:

- school selection and enrollment
- school transportation
- wellness checks and on-going social and emotional support
- book bags and school supplies for students
- assistance with high school graduation fees and expenses
- addressing barriers that affect school attendance and full participation
- obtaining necessary documents such as birth certificates, school records, and medical records
- dispute resolution regarding school choice and enrollment

## **Who may qualify for the Project Connect Program?**

The term "children and youth experiencing homelessness" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence. It includes those who are:

- sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of home, economic hardship, or similar reason
- living in motels or hotels
- staying in trailer parks or campgrounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- living in emergency or transitional shelters
- abandoned in hospitals
- living on their own, such as youth who have run away or have been put out of their home

## **How do families access homeless services through CCS?**

- Parents and students may call the Project Connect Office at 614-365-5140
- Email: [ProjectConnect@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:ProjectConnect@columbus.k12.oh.us)