

**Memorandum of Understanding between Synergy and
USD 500 Homeless Liaison (As Approved by School Board)**



Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools

Unified School District No. 500

MEMORANDUM

To: Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education
From: Dr. Jill Shackelford, Superintendent
Date: May 19, 2009
Subject: USD 500 Homeless Program

Memorandum of Understanding with Synergy Services Inc.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education approve this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between USD 500's Homeless Program and Synergy Services Inc., as submitted by Dr. Cindy Lane, Asst. Superintendent of Business and Instructional Support and Jim Clevenger, Director of Federal Programs and recommended by Dr. Jill Shackelford, Superintendent of Schools.

EXPLANATION:

Synergy Services Inc. is an established provider of shelter and street outreach to youth in the Kansas City Metro area. Synergy plans to write a grant that will enable it to place street outreach workers in Wyandotte County. At no cost to the school district, Synergy will help us identify homeless unaccompanied youth in USD 500. This is one of our obligations under the federal McKinney-Vento Act. In partnership with USD 500's Office of the Homeless Liaison, Synergy will place street outreach workers in school lunchrooms and athletic events, at the middle and high school level. This is often the most effective way to reach homeless and unaccompanied youth. Synergy also plans to apply for funding from the Unified Government to support a Homeless Youth Case manager, who would work closely with USD 500's Office of the Homeless Liaison.

If funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the grant will support street outreach workers in our schools over a three year period.

Recommended by:

Dr. Jill Shackelford
Superintendent of Schools

Jim Clevenger
Director, Federal Programs

Submitted by:

Dr. Cindy Lane
Asst. Supt., BISS

Staci Pratt
Homeless Liaison

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Partners: Synergy Services, Inc. - 400 East Sixth St. Parkville, MO 64152

Office of the Homeless Liaison, USD 500 - 645 Nebraska Ave, Kansas City, Kansas 66101

Background:

Synergy Services Inc. is an established provider of shelter and street outreach services to homeless youth in the Kansas City metro area. They maintain an emergency shelter, a transitional living program, 24-Hour Crisis Hotlines, a network of SafePlaces throughout the city, and offer life skills and peer group opportunities for homeless youth. In existence since 1971, Synergy has a profound commitment to working with homeless youth and significant experience in providing associated services.

Pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento law, each homeless liaison “shall ensure that—(i) homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.” 42 U.S.C § 11432(g)(6)(A). The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) has echoed the need to ensure the strength of our identification efforts. In this year’s competitive grant application for McKinney-Vento funds, KSDE added a new question focused entirely on the identification of homeless youth. KSDE asked that we describe “how the district will specifically identify ‘unaccompanied homeless youth’” and ensure their access to services. This is the purpose behind this MOU.

Unaccompanied homeless youth are particularly difficult to identify. They often fear that knowledge of their living situation may lead to their removal from the school environment, or separation from friends or siblings. Typically, identification is the result of consistent interaction and the development of trust. It is for this reason that USD 500’s Office of the Homeless Liaison desires to enter into this MOU with Synergy Services, Inc. Synergy possesses the experience and history necessary to provide identification services.

Cost to USD 500: \$0

Specific Guidelines:

- 1) USD 500’s Office of the Homeless Liaison will coordinate with Synergy Services to place Synergy street outreach workers in lunchrooms, and athletic events, at the middle and high school level. Identification depends on consistent access.**
- 2) Synergy will seek a Street Outreach Program grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to permit the placement of three full time advocates in Wyandotte County. These street outreach workers would be employees of Synergy, but provide services specifically to USD 500 homeless youth. Through this MOU, Synergy’s street outreach workers would work in coordination with the USD 500 Office of the Homeless Liaison to create a consistent schedule for lunchroom and athletic event outreach.**
- 3) How will the two key partners provide referrals to each other? Upon completion of appropriate release forms,**

- a. The Office of the Homeless Liaison will provide referrals using the form that is Attachment A.
 - b. Synergy will provide referrals to the Office of the Homeless Liaisons Office using the form that is Attachment B. Synergy will fax or e-mail the completed referral to the Homeless Liaisons Office. The fax number is 913-281-0993 and the e-mail address is stpratt@kckps.org.
- 4) Synergy will gather data on the County of Origin of Street Youth they encounter.
 - 5) The Office of the Homeless Liaison will provide continued education and support as requested to Synergy .
 - 6) Synergy will also pursue funding from the Unified Government to support a Homeless Youth Case Manager position. While a Synergy employee, this individual would office with the USD 500 Homeless Liaison program and act as a direct link between associated service coordination.
 - 7) Synergy will not discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender, national origin, religion or disability in its execution of the duties and obligations herein.



Attachment B: **Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools**
Office of the Homeless Liaison

645 Nebraska Ave., Kansas City, KS 66101

(913) 621-4690

fax: (913) 281-0993

www.kckps.org

CONFIDENTIAL: Referral to Synergy Services Inc.

Phone: (816) 777-0356

Fax: (816) 777-0360

E-mail: ljackson@SynergyServices.org

Date:

Name of Person referring:

Phone (or e-mail) of person referring: (913) 621-4690 ext. _____

Fax # of person referring: (913) 281-0993

Student's name:

Student's date of birth:

Parents name:

Parent contact phone number:

Parent address:

Recommended method for contacting family (if known):



Attachment B:

CONFIDENTIAL REFERRAL—FAX COVER MEMO

To: **USD 500 Homeless Liaison's Office**
Office of the Homeless Liaison
645 Nebraska Ave., Kansas City, KS 66101
Phone: (913) 621-4690 **fax: (913) 281-0993**

From: **Synergy Services, Inc.**

Date:

Name of Person referring:

Phone (or e-mail) of person referring:

Fax # of person referring:

Student's name:

Student's date of birth:

Parent's name:

Parent contact phone number:

Parent address:

Recommended method for contacting family (if known):