

**281—33.8(256) Dispute resolution.**

**33.8(1)** If a homeless child or youth is denied access to a free, appropriate public education in either the district of origin or the district in which the child or youth is actually living, or if the child's or youth's parent or guardian believes that the child's or youth's best interests have not been served by the decision of a school district, an appeal may be made to the department of education as follows:

*a.* If the child is identified as a special education student under Iowa Code chapter 256B, the manner of appeal is by letter from the homeless child or youth, or the homeless child's or youth's parent or guardian, to the department of education as established in Iowa Code section 256B.6 and 281—Chapter 41 and governed by that chapter and the order of the presiding administrative law judge.

*b.* If the child is not eligible for special education services, the manner of appeal is by letter from the homeless child or youth or the homeless child's or youth's parent or guardian to the director of the department of education or a designated administrative law judge. The provisions of 281—Chapter 6 apply insofar as possible; however, the hearing shall take place in the district where the homeless child or youth is located or at a location convenient to the appealing party.

*c.* At any time a school district denies access to a homeless child or youth, the district will notify in writing the child or youth and the child's or youth's parent or guardian, if any, of the right to appeal and manner of appeal to the department of education for resolution of the dispute and shall document the notice given. The notice will contain the name, address, and telephone number of the legal services office in the area.

**33.8(2)** This chapter will be considered by the presiding officer or administrative law judge assigned to hear the case.

**33.8(3)** Mediation and settlement of the dispute prior to hearing are permitted and encouraged.

**33.8(4)** While dispute resolution is pending, the child or youth is enrolled immediately in the school of choice of the child's parent or guardian or the school of choice of the unaccompanied homeless youth. The school of choice is to be an attendance center either within the district of residence or the district of origin of the child or youth.

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