

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS MONTH

SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

RESOLUTION No. 2307-4

WHEREAS, November is National Homeless Youth Awareness Month. Every year, hundreds of thousands of American families become homeless, including more than 1.7 million children; and

WHEREAS, among the nation's homeless population, more than 1.2 million students, from kindergarten through grade 12, experienced homelessness at some point during the 2019-20 school year (SY) totaling about 2.5% of all students in public schools; and

WHEREAS, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, youth and children experiencing homelessness are individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including those 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 adequate alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; and

WHEREAS, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act further defines youth and children experiencing homelessness as those who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; children and youths who are living in garages, sheds, cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

WHEREAS, the population of youth experiencing homelessness also includes unaccompanied youth who have left home for one or more nights without permission; youth who have been kicked out of their homes, are abandoned, deserted, or prevented from returning home; and systems youth who have either aged out of foster care or have been released from juvenile justice or other public systems with nowhere to go; and

WHEREAS, in 2021 the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported 15,763 people under the age of 25 experienced sheltered homelessness on their own as "unaccompanied youth." This represents a decline of nine percent between 2020 and 2021; and

WHEREAS, in California public schools the number of students experiencing homelessness was 246,350 in the 2019-20 SY, about 4.0% of statewide enrollment, which was a 3% decrease from the 2018-19 SY; and

WHEREAS, between 2017 (the baseline year for youth experiencing homelessness at a point of time) and 2021, there was a 15 percent decline in the overall number of sheltered unaccompanied youth reported nationally (or 2,779 fewer youth).

WHEREAS, the number of homeless youth who were transgender increased by 29 percent, and the number of sheltered unaccompanied youth who were gender non-conforming increased by 26 percent; and

WHEREAS, the pandemic has contributed to significant job losses, residential evictions, and in turn an increase in family homelessness; and

WHEREAS, furthermore, the U.S. has welcomed record numbers of newly arrived immigrant and refugee youth into classrooms from South America, Afghanistan, and Ukraine, many of who are unaccompanied minors who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and are eligible to receive services under title VI, subtitle B of the McKinney-Vento Act; and

WHEREAS, the California Department of Education's web-based data reporting system, CALPADS, reported 4531 youth experiencing homelessness in the 2021-22 SY within Santa Clara County; and

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Clara and City of San José's preliminary results of the 2022 point-in-time homeless census reported 1,155 unhoused youth in 2022, .12 percent of the total homeless population, a 38 percent decrease from 2019; and

WHEREAS, due to the varying definitions of homelessness and the difficulty in capturing accurate data, the county statistics do not necessarily reflect the numbers caught in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) has established programs to best assist schools and school districts in capturing accurate data and helping in the alignment of services to serve students and their families best; and

WHEREAS, over the past two years, SCCOE, in partnership with four other bay area county offices of education and WestEd, contributed to a research paper, "Addressing the Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness During the COVID-19 Pandemic," commissioned by Bay Area Geographic Leads Consortium; and

WHEREAS, the pandemic resulted in school closures to help protect students from COVID-19, SCCOE expanded its efforts to assist three qualifying districts that met criteria for differentiated assistance based on outcomes for students who qualified for McKinney-Vento services; and

WHEREAS, in response to the research found from 2019-2021 with WestEd, SCCOE addressed the digital divide by quickly distributing technology devices and providing Wi-Fi hotspots to the highest-need districts and students experiencing homelessness. In additional efforts to reach students experiencing homelessness, SCCOE created a check-in protocol for districts to assess the social-emotional needs of those students, and supported districts in the opening of learning hubs at select elementary and middle schools; and

WHEREAS, the SCCOE continues to help students experiencing homelessness through Foster & Homeless Youth Services (FHY) by providing assistance and training to local education agencies (LEAs) that help connect school districts and community stakeholders as well as keep them abreast on educational law that protects youth who are in foster care and experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, FHY also collaborates with group home providers, the juvenile justice system, and the Department of Family and Children's Services Prevention Bureau, as well as other agencies and organizations that are dedicated to working with youth who are in foster care and experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit* continues to be available on the SCCOE website as a comprehensive tool with helpful information for increasing educational access and success for children and youth experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the SCCOE is committed to improving student equity and access to high-quality education for youth experiencing homelessness and who are in foster care through the FHY continued liaison support to districts, schools, students, and communities; as well as being a premier service organization; now,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Santa Clara County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools do hereby adopt this resolution to recognize November as National Homeless Youth Awareness Month.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the County Board of Education at a meeting held on October 5, 2022, by the following vote:

AYES: President Ortiz, Vice President Chon, Trustees Di Salvo, Kamei, Mah, Rossi, and Sreekrishnan

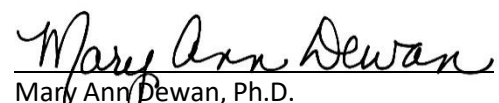
NOES: none

ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: none



Peter Ortiz, President
Santa Clara County Board of Education



Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.
County Superintendent of Schools