

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS MONTH

SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

RESOLUTION No. 2289-3

**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 1.5 million students, from kindergarten through grade 12, experienced homelessness at some point during a school year, totaling about 3% of all students in public schools in 2018; 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 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**, California has experienced a faster increase in students experiencing homelessness than any other state, with about 270,000 students identified by California public schools in 2019, about 4.3% of statewide enrollment; and

**WHEREAS**, in January 2020, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported that California had the largest population of unaccompanied children and youth experiencing homelessness on a single night, with the city of San Jose/Santa Clara amongst the top five major cities; and

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

**WHEREAS**, the 2020 resolution referenced the 2019 Homeless Census and Survey, the Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing has since released a statement notifying the public that due to the current health crisis, the HUD has offered a waiver removing the requirement for the Continuums of Care to conduct a count of individuals who are unsheltered or homeless in 2021; and,

**WHEREAS**, the California Department of Education's web-based data reporting system, DataQuest, reported 2899 youth experiencing homelessness from 2019-2020 and 2529 from 2020-2021 within Santa Clara County; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2019 1.6% of total enrolled students in Santa Clara County were reported to be experiencing homelessness; 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 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.

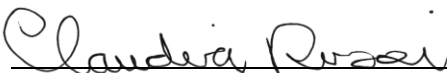
**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the County Board of Education at a meeting held on October 6, 2021, by the following vote:

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

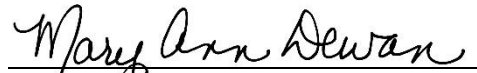
NOES: none

ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: Trustee Di Salvo



Claudia Rossi, President  
Santa Clara County Board of Education



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