

Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District

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Beth Lougee, Superintendent • Katie Jo Parrott, Business Manager

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Dear KGBSD Educators, Agencies, Churches and Families,

As Ketchikan Gateway Borough School Districts Superintendent it is my responsibility to assure that our school district is making every effort to meet the needs of our students who may be experiencing homelessness. Remember, confidentiality is very important when assisting a student or family in a homelessness situation. This year our designated homeless education liaison is Dawn Hull. She is trained to answer questions and assist with requests.

First, Dawn and I would like to let you know how impressed we are with each school, agency and family and the efforts put forth to make sure all students are being provided an education and every effort is made to assist any and all families in need. Together, we need to make every effort in **identifying** these students through documentation and by linking students and their families to school and community services. The district now has forms that need to be filled out to identify homelessness students and make sure that as a district we are making every effort to assist students in a free and appropriate education.

Title X-C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), called the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, includes requirements for all districts to identify and serve children and youth experiencing homelessness so that these children have access to the same free appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth in the state. Some funding is available to award competitive grants to districts that meet eligibility requirements based on the number of homeless children and youth identified in the district.

If you know of any student who does not have a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence please notify a school counselor, principal or me. There are funding and resources available to assist students and families with:

1. **Making connections** to available community resources.
2. **Assisting** the family or youth efforts to gather documentation typically needed for school and to connect with public health as needed.
3. **Facilitating** the establishment, maintenance, acquisition, and transfer of academic and immunization records for homeless students.
4. **Providing transportation** to homeless students so that they can remain in their school of origin.
5. **Supplying materials** homeless students need to participate in the regular school program and activities.
6. **Enrolling homeless students in free and reduced breakfast and lunch program.**

Examples of Homeless Situations (as defined in the McKinney Vento Act-federal law)

1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason. Commonly called **doubling-up**.
2. Children and youth living in **motels, hotels, or camping grounds** due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
3. Children and youth living **in emergency or transitional shelters, abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement.**
4. Children and youths who are living **in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.**
5. **Unaccompanied youths or runaways.** Children in this situation can be described as **couch surfers**; chronically spending a few nights at one friend's home then moving on to another.

Again, if you have a student or know of a student who you feel may be homeless contact a school counselor, principal or Dawn Hull immediately. Our contact information at the district office for guidance is 247-2109 or dawn.hull@k21schools.org.

Beth Lougee, KGBSD Superintendent

Dawn Hull, District Homelessness Liaison