



Alameda County Office of Education

L. K. Monroe Superintendent of Schools

August 23, 2022

Presiding Judge Charles A. Smiley
Alameda County Superior Court
1225 Fallon Street, Department One
Oakland, California 94612

Foreperson Randolph E. Pico
Alameda County Civil Grand Jury
1401 Lakeside Drive, Suite 1104
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Response of the Alameda County Office of Education to the 2021-22 Grand Jury Report entitled Homeless Students Need More Help.

Dear Hon. Judge Smiley and Foreperson Pico:

Attached please find the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) Response to the 2021-22 Alameda County Grand Jury Report ("Report") entitled Homeless Students Need More Help. The ACOE would like to thank the Jurors for their work and their attention to the needs of these vulnerable students. We appreciate the time that the Grand Jury invested in talking with ACOE leaders and district McKinney-Vento liaisons. As the ACOE and school districts continue to support homeless students in our county, we will build upon our currently acknowledged practices and integrate your recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'L.K. Monroe', written over a horizontal line.

L.K. Monroe
Alameda County Superintendent of Schools

Attachment
Response to 2021-22 Grand Jury Report “Homeless Students Need More Help”

Finding	Agree/ Disagree Wholly/ Disagree Partially	Explanation
<p>Finding 62: McKinney-Vento liaisons face significant time restraints fulfilling their duty to assist homeless students in Alameda County.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>The ACOE recognizes, as the Grand Jury report states, that McKinney-Vento liaisons often have multiple program responsibilities and may be unable to devote all of their time to homeless student supports.</p>
<p>Finding 63: McKinney-Vento liaisons lack visibility within their organizations to effectively impact school districts’ service for homeless students.</p>	<p>Disagree Partially</p>	<p>The ACOE agrees that the work of liaisons may not be as visible as it should be, particularly to district leadership. But visibility varies from district to district. In addition, many factors contribute to the effectiveness of services for homeless students; lack of visibility of liaisons is just one possible factor. Districts are responding to a variety of student needs, with shifting priorities, resources, and funding.</p>
<p>Finding 64: Teachers in Alameda County are not required to be trained or certified to identify homeless students.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>State and federal laws do not mandate that teachers be trained or certified to identify homeless students.</p>
<p>Finding 65: Efforts to identify homeless students throughout Alameda County are inconsistent from district to district, including differences as to which school district employees receive training on identifying homeless students and how they are trained.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>In its role as convener and trainer of district McKinney-Vento liaisons, the ACOE ensures that liaisons are fully trained. Each district determines which additional district personnel will receive training, which can result in inconsistencies across districts.</p>

<p>Finding 66: Wrap-around services provided at a single geographical location, such as those provided at the Union City Family Center, offer tremendous value to homeless students and their families and are a critical component in assisting with the difficulties associated with homelessness.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>The ACOE supports wrap-around services at a single geographical location, when that location is accessible to students and their families.</p>
<p>Finding 67: Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations are an effective way for school districts and schools to overcome funding deficiencies for the provision of services for homeless students.</p>	<p>Disagree Partially</p>	<p>The ACOE agrees that partnerships with Community-Based Organizations are essential, but Community-Based Organizations also need to be fully funded to provide effective services. Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations are not a work-around for deficient funding.</p>

<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Has Been Implemented/ Will Be Implemented/ Requires Further Analysis/ Will Not Be Implemented</p>	<p>Explanation</p>
<p>Recommendation 90: The Alameda County Office of Education should identify strategies for reducing the workloads for McKinney-Vento liaisons in Alameda County to provide greater focus on homeless student service provision.</p>	<p>Will Be Implemented</p>	<p>The ACOE will identify strategies for reducing liaison workloads and share them with all districts. Strategies can include better utilization of support staff, such as social workers and counselors, and increased funding through consistent application for McKinney-Vento grants available through the CA Department of Education.</p>

<p>Recommendation 91: The Alameda County Office of Education should work with school districts to increase visibility for McKinney-Vento liaisons within their organizations, including making MKV liaisons cabinet-level positions for district superintendents.</p>	<p>Will Be Implemented</p>	<p>The ACOE can do the following to support increased visibility of McKinney-Vento liaisons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create with liaisons a list of strategies to increase visibility • Present Grand Jury Report findings and recommendations at the McKinney-Vento quarterly meetings of liaisons, hosted by the ACOE • Present Grand Jury Report findings and recommendations at a Superintendents Council meeting <p>The ACOE can also suggest that district McKinney-Vento liaisons be cabinet-level positions, but each district makes its own decision in this regard.</p>
<p>Recommendation 92: The Alameda County Office of Education should require, to the extent possible, that Alameda County teachers be certified that they have completed training on identifying homeless students.</p>	<p>Will Not Be Implemented</p>	<p>The ACOE will recommend that school districts train teachers on identifying homeless students, but cannot require school districts to do so.</p>
<p>Recommendation 93: The Alameda County Office of Education should develop standards to identify which district/school personnel should complete training related to homeless students, as well as how that training should be conducted.</p>	<p>Will Be Implemented</p>	<p>The ACOE will add to its McKinney-Vento webpage recommended standards for training school personnel, including who should be trained, and will provide links to sample training modules. Standards will include having an online module on homeless student identification as part of school personnel’s annually mandated training. The ACOE will also support liaisons in assessing personnel training needs in their districts.</p>

<p>Recommendation 94: The Alameda County Office of Education should assist districts within the county as to possibilities for wrap-around service centers and which services could be offered at such centers.</p>	<p>Has Been Implemented</p>	<p>The ACOE convenes quarterly meetings of liaisons and service providers. (The quarterly meeting schedule for 2022-2023 is available on ACOE's McKinney-Vento webpage.) The meetings provide participants with the opportunity to discuss a variety of existing and potential service models, including wrap-around. The ACOE will continue to use these meetings as a way to identify best practices in service delivery. In addition, the ACOE recently created its own family resource center, which, similar to other wrap-around models, offers a variety of support services.</p>
<p>Recommendation 95: The Alameda County Office of Education should create a clearinghouse to identify potential partnerships for districts in the county with appropriate Community-Based Organizations as well as assist districts in how to establish these partnerships.</p>	<p>Will Be Implemented</p>	<p>The ACOE will create an online clearinghouse with a list of potential Community-Based Organization partners and the services they offer. This information, as well as new information about how to establish partnerships with Community-Based Organizations, will be added to the ACOE's McKinney-Vento webpage.</p>