

April 8, 2019

Elaine M. Howle
California State Auditor
621 Capitol Mall, Suite 1200
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Audit of Student Homelessness Data

Dear Ms. Howle,

On behalf of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors, we respectfully request that in your audit of student homelessness, as requested by the State Legislature, data on student homelessness by County and distribution of McKinney-Vento Act funding to local educational agencies in those counties.

According to a November 2018 report by Pivot Learning and the National Center for Youth Law, *Crisis on the Coast – The Bay Coastal Foster Youth and Homeless Student Populations*, over 7,000 students in the County of Monterey are homeless, which represents nearly 10% of the student population. Twelve schools in the county have homeless rates of 20% or more, and over a third of the students at one elementary school in Salinas do not have stable housing. Two-thirds of homeless students in the county are English learners, which is much higher than the overall rate in California, where 33% of homeless students are English learners.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act) (42 U.S.C. § 11431-11435) is federal legislation that ensures the educational rights and protections of children and youths experiencing homelessness. It requires all local educational agencies (LEAs) to ensure that homeless students have access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschools, as provided to other children and youths. The McKinney-Vento Act defines LEAs as public school districts, direct-funded and locally funded charter schools, and county offices of education. The McKinney-Vento Act also authorizes the funding for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program. Monterey County local education agencies have received no funding from the McKinney-Vento Act to address the issues of homeless students.

Again, we ask that the State Auditor Report include data on student homelessness by County and related funding to local education agencies in those counties. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

John M. Phillips
Chair, Board of Supervisors

cc: Senator Bill Monning
Senator Anna Caballero
Assemblyman Mark Stone
Assemblyman Robert Rivas
California State Association of Counties

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