

1 CITY OF SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

2 RESOLUTION NO. 2007- 19

3 INTRODUCED BY:

4 C. Dominguez
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10 A RESOLUTION

11 DIRECTING STAFF TO REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE
12 SANTA FE PUBLIC SCHOOLS HOMELESS YOUTH TASK FORCE AND TO
13 PREPARE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GOVERNING BODY REGARDING
14 CITY TRANSPORTATION FOR THE HOMELESS YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES.

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16 WHEREAS, the Homeless Youth Task Force is comprised of agencies that work with
17 homeless children, youth and their families; and

18 WHEREAS, these agencies include the Santa Fe Public Schools ¡ADELANTE!
19 program, Faith at Work Community Outreach, St. Elizabeth Shelter, Esperanza Shelter for
20 Battered Families, Health Care for the Homeless, the Life Link and Youth Shelters and Family
21 Services; and

22 WHEREAS, the Task Force has been meeting monthly for more than three years; and

23 WHEREAS, the Task Force has identified transportation for homeless children and
24 youth as a priority; and

25 WHEREAS, many common myths and truths exist about homelessness, see attached

1 Exhibit "A"; and

2 **WHEREAS**, according to the Santa Fe Public School ¡ADELANTE! Program, as of
3 January, 2007 there are more than 600 homeless youth between the ages of 0 – 21, see attached
4 Exhibit "B"; and


5 **WHEREAS**, transportation vouchers for homeless and near homeless children and youth
6 on Santa Fe Trails Buses, would allow them and their parents access to resources such as hot
7 meals, medical care, mental health care, doctor appointments, social service agencies, public
8 facilities, find and maintain a job, attend school, and shop for groceries.

9 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE**
10 **CITY OF SANTA FE** that City staff is directed to meet with the Santa Fe Public Schools
11 Homeless Youth Task Force to discuss and review Task Force Transportation Recommendations.

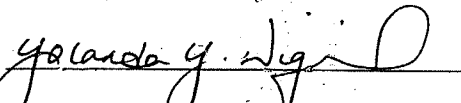
12 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that City staff is directed to bring forward a
13 recommendation to the Governing Body, in conjunction with the Santa Fe Public Schools
14 Homeless Youth Task Force to help address homeless youth transportation, and that this
15 recommendation be presented to the Governing Body 60 days from the adoption of this resolution
16 for action by the Governing body.

17 PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED this 14th day of February, 2007.

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20 ATTEST:



DAVID COSS, MAYOR

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23 YOLANDA Y. VIGIL, CITY CLERK
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1 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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4 FRANK D. KATZ, CITY ATTORNEY

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EXHIBIT A

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT HOMELESSNESS

The SFPS ¡ADELANTE! Program depends on all the homeless providers, other social service oriented agencies and everyone at all the school sites to refer students and their siblings to our program so that they can receive services that strengthen their opportunities for succeeding in school and in life.

Following are a few commonly held beliefs that even the most stalwart youth advocates may hold, based on our lack of information and experience with homeless children and their families. See if you can relate to any of the common "myths" below.

- **THE ONLY HOMELESS STUDENTS ARE THOSE THAT SLEEP OUTSIDE OR IN SHELTERS.**

The Truth: Although SFPS has many students and siblings that live in shelters, cars and outdoors (including teens that have left school for a variety of reasons), at least half of our families live doubled up in crowded conditions. The ¡ADELANTE! Program is governed by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which defines homelessness in a broad way in order to provide services for families that are a day or week away from being out on the streets. Plus, McKinney-Vento grasps that these families are not only in a precarious living situation, but the children face most of the same issues of children living in shelters: lack of privacy to do homework, lack of food, bedding and warm clothing, no utilities, fear of when they'll be kicked out of the place they're sleeping, chaos, and the need to take care of siblings and sometimes even parents.

- **MOST PARENTS OF "HOMELESS" STUDENTS HAVE LEARNED TO WORK THE SYSTEM AND ARE FAKING THEIR SITUATION IN ORDER TO GET INTO A PARTICULAR SCHOOL OR OBTAIN MORE CLOTHING, ETC.**

The Truth: Through screening families, we have found that most are truthful about their situations, and in fact, many hesitate to describe the entire situation until they get to know us. However, ¡ADELANTE! Program has screened out approximately 50 students who did not qualify but were still in great need. When we explain that they are not eligible for our program, we refer them elsewhere to receive appropriate services. So far this year, we've discovered only two families who have falsified information, out of more than 450 children. Of course, we assume that a few more may have "faked it" without our knowledge; however, we are more concerned about those hundreds of children and youth that we have yet to discover that qualify for our services.

- **ONCE A STUDENT'S FAMILY BECOMES "PERMANENTLY" HOUSED, THE DISTRICT SHOULD NOT PROVIDE THEM WITH HOMELESS SERVICES.**

The Truth: According to the law, once a family is registered as homeless, services are maintained for them throughout the entire school year, even if they've found long-term housing. Further, the McKinney-Vento law states that homeless services should be provided on a case by case basis up *until one full year after the family has been housed*. This shows much foresight, since many of our families wind up back in homeless situations again within a few months. The most important goal is to maintain stability and well-being for the children so that they may succeed. Therefore, we will provide tutoring and other supportive services as needed and when we can afford it.

- **MOST HOMELESS FAMILIES WIND UP IN THEIR SITUATIONS BECAUSE OF LAZINESS.**

The Truth: The most prevalent reasons we have observed for homelessness are: domestic violence; huge medical bills coupled with continuing need for medical care; a financial crisis occurs (loss of job, car breaks down, illness), which places the family in jeopardy due to an already tight budget; lack of affordable housing to match people's wages; and, Latino immigrants with minimal access to services, and no documents to work openly to support their family. Some families also have mental health and substance abuse issues

- **HOMELESS PROGRAMS OFTEN ENABLE FAMILIES TO STAY IN THEIR DIFFICULT SITUATIONS BY PROVIDING SERVICES TO SUPPORT THEM.**

The Truth: As with learning challenges in students, it's important to balance that fine line between providing supportive services with high expectations and just "doing it" for the person. ¡ADELANTE! provides case management to families that need extra services due to multiple needs. Our goal is to promote independence and empowerment as well as supportive networks.

EXHIBIT B

**Primary Night Time Residence of Homeless Children and Youth,
Including Students and Siblings, Ages 0-21**

Primary Night Residence	2005-06 Aug. 1, 05 – July 31, 06	2006-07 Aug. 1 – Jan. 9, 2007
Shelters	190	60
Doubled - Up	344	347
Outside, or in car or Camper	26	34
Hotels	16	20
Couch-Surfing	43	33
Substandard Housing	30	53
Living w/other than Parent or Guardian	53	56
Total	702	603