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KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

Candlelight vigil for KPBSD students who are homeless

Soldotna, November 12, 2015—Families and unaccompanied youth are homeless on the peninsula. An invisible reality to many residents, the number 253 is important. Would it surprise you to know that 253 is the average number of students who experience homelessness, but are enrolled in the KPBSD Students In Transition (SIT) program, and attend a KPBSD school, everyday? The SIT program has enrolled 183 students since the start of the school year in August, 2015.

People of every age are invited to the 6th Annual Candlelight Vigil for Homeless Youth and Families

**Thursday, November 19, 2015
6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Farnsworth Park
Birch Street, Soldotna, Alaska**

The event is posted on the KPBSD [Students in Transition Facebook page](#). Please connect there, then share the event invitation in social circles.



Guest speaker Pegge Erkeneff, KPBSD communications liaison, will help raise awareness about the reality of homelessness on the Kenai Peninsula, and invite us to become a voice, advocate, and welcoming presence to our young people who are homeless. Music will be provided by Vickie Tinker, the Knight in Shining Armor Award will be presented, and information for high school students regarding the Scholarship of Hope will be shared. Learn ways everyone can help support local homeless students, and connect with our caring community members. This is an outdoor event, please dress for the weather.

KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-FOUR DIVERSE SCHOOLS

The mission of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is to develop productive, responsible citizens who are prepared to be successful in a dynamic world.

ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

FOR RELEASE NOVEMBER 12, 2015

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“For the past several years we have seen an increase in the number of students in transition across our district,” said Sean Dusek, superintendent. “This is very challenging, but through the efforts of Kelly King, homeless liaison, our district is stepping up to support our students and meet this challenge. The public vigil is an excellent opportunity for all of us to stop and reflect on our students in transition. The vigil is also a time to re-focus attention on this issue to further benefit our students in transition.”

About KPBSD Students in Transition (SIT) program

Students experiencing homelessness are provided assistance through two KPBSD homeless liaisons. This program’s primary purpose is to ensure that educational programs for students are not interrupted while they are in transition. In order to facilitate helping our communities grow in awareness and advocacy, KPBSD created a Facebook page to provide updates and resources. Please like and share, [KPBSD Students in Transition](#).

The SIT program provides KPBSD Pre-K to 12th grade students:

- An advocate to help students and families find the resources they need in the community for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and permanent housing
- Free school lunches
- School supplies
- Immediate school enrollment
- Paperwork assistance to secure school documents
- Special academic support if needed
- Local referrals to other agencies

Eligible families or youth are those who lack a stable, adequate, and permanent place to sleep at night. If you or someone you know is sleeping in a motel, a camper, a tent, couch-surfing, or living with friends or relatives then this program can help.

KPBSD Students in Transition program contacts

Kelly King, homeless liaison, serving Central Peninsula, Seward and Tyonek schools, kking@kpbsd.k12.ak.us, 907.714.8869

Jane Dunn, homeless liaison, serving Southern Peninsula schools and Ninilchik, jdunn@kpbsd.k12.ak.us, 907.226.1890

Links

KPBSD SIT program website <http://bit.ly/TransitionsKPBSD>

KPBSD Students in Transition on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/kpbsdStudentsInTransition>

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