



*Dr. A. Katrise Perera, Superintendent*

## Gresham-Barlow School District No. 10Jt

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January 8, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Gresham-Barlow School District (GBSD), I am writing this letter of support for Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Second Home application for the Portland General Electric Foundation grant. Over the past several years, we have maintained a strong and positive relationship with Second Home and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon as we have established a Second Home program here in Gresham.

Homelessness affects a staggering and growing number of children and youth in Multnomah County and in the Gresham-Barlow School District. During the 2016-17 year, GBSD identified 387 students experiencing homelessness. Of those, 79 were unaccompanied homeless youth, not accompanied by a parent or legal guardian or adults with educational guardianship.

Homelessness is a devastating circumstance for any child, but for youth on their own, the stresses and trauma of homelessness are multiplies. Unaccompanied homeless youth are at a higher risk of human trafficking, serious illness and dropping out of school. Second Home helps mitigate these risks by meeting their immediate needs: providing them long-term residential services.

GBSD partners with Second Home and East Metro Mediation to serve homeless youth by conducting prevention and outreach efforts to move youth out of homelessness and into a stable, rental arrangement with a supportive member of the local community, so they can focus on their education. With this stable, long term housing assistance and wrap-around supports, unaccompanied homeless youth are more likely to benefit from their education. Through education, these young people are will obtain the skills they need to avoid poverty and homelessness as adults and be productive members of the community.

We are appreciate your consideration of this request. This invaluable programming demonstrates the core values we work to instill in our youth and in our community. It has been a pleasure to collaborate with Second Home and we look forward to continued partnership, one that will allow more of our unaccompanied students being matched with long term housing to support their educational success and truly change their lives and futures.

Sincerely,

April Olson  
Director of Federal Programs  
McKinney Vento Homeless Liaison  
Gresham-Barlow School District