



Lisa Mentasana, Beaverton School District
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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to urge that your organization consider Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Second Home program as a potential beneficiary. Second Home is a highly valued community partner that has worked tirelessly to meet the needs of our school district's homeless youth for many years. They have our highest recommendation as a program that is well organized and respected in our community for the work they do.

Homelessness is affecting an unprecedented number of youth in Washington County as well as the entire state of Oregon. During the 2016-2017 school year the Beaverton School District identified, documented and served over 1700 homeless students, 342 of which were homeless, unaccompanied youth living on their own without a parent or legal guardian. (see attachment)

Homeless children and youth are at high risk for human trafficking, illness, and trauma; they also perform lower on academic assessments, and are more likely to drop out of school, than housed children living in poverty. The Second Home program has helped many students in our district stay in school, complete their education and continue onto a postsecondary opportunity.

The Second Home program serves homeless youth by meeting their immediate needs, providing long-term residential services, and conducting prevention and outreach efforts to move youth out of homelessness so they can focus on their education. Without stable, long term housing assistance, homeless unaccompanied youth are unlikely to benefit from their education. Without an education, these young people are unlikely to obtain the skills they need to avoid poverty and homelessness as adults.

Second Home is an invaluable resource to our homeless youth and community. Please consider this remarkable, community based program as an opportunity for your funding to truly change the lives and future of many youth who truly have no other options.

Sincerely,

Lisa Mentasana

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*Beaverton School District's Goal: **WE** empower all students to achieve post-high school success.*