

South Bay Coalition to End Homelessness General Meeting Minutes
Hosting Organization: Torrance Unified School District
Triangle Annex Conference Room 3, 2201 Plaza Del Amo, Torrance, CA
Wednesday, January 8, 2020 ~ 9:30 – 11:30 am

Attendees: Hosting Agency (Torrance Unified School District): Dr. Nancy Gutierrez. Guest Speakers: Jennifer Kottke (LA County Office of Education), Lawrence Doss (LA Unified School District), Sharon Stewart (Harbor Interfaith). Members: Mark Silverbush (SBCEH), Bill Callahan (PACS), Jolayne Greco, Bill Greco, Rita Crabtree-Kampe (MBSAFE), Pastor Lisa Williams (San Pedro United Methodist), Eboney Stephens (School on Wheels), Barbara Kuho (community member), Alejandra Sanchez (Rainbow Services), Keith Bennett (City of Carson), Paul Stansbury (NAMI South Bay), Marie Gambon (DPH SPA 8), Jennifer Pesavento (SoCal ROC), Veronica Aguilar (DMH SA8), Cameron Wallone (1736 FCC), Jeanette Christian (US Senator Feinstein), Courtney Reed (PATH), Juan Mendez (Providence Little Co of Mary), Mary Agnes Erlandson (St. Margaret's Center), Zhenia McCullom (DHM), Ronson Chu (LACity Attorney), Grace Farwell (SBCCOG), Maria Paiva (St. John Lutheran Church), Nancy Wilcox (St. Peter's by the Sea).

1. **Welcome & Introductions.** SBCEH co-chair Mark Silverbush opened the meeting at 9:38 a.m. Attendees introduced themselves and gave their affiliation.
2. **Meeting Minutes Review.** The November 2019 meeting minutes were approved without change.
3. **2020 Homeless Count Update.** Steve Yu, LAHSA Community Engagement Supervisor, was not able to attend the meeting so Nancy Wilcox gave his report (please see the attached slides). Signups for the annual "Street Count" component in the South Bay are going well, with historically most people signing up the week before the January 22nd event. Mark gave a quick review of the Shelter/Housing Inventory Count component that will be conducted starting in February to capture those who stayed in a shelter/interim housing, and who live in rapid re-housing and permanent supporting housing programs. If any program is in HMIS, the information will be pre-populated so agencies will only need to confirm the data. For others, they will need to manually enter it. LAHSA revamped the "back end" of this process so this confirmation or data entry process should be smoother than last year.
4. **Special Topic: Supporting Grades K-12 Student Homelessness.** Four guests were invited to describe their programs. (Please refer to their attached briefings for more details.)
 - i. **LA County Student Homelessness Overview.** Jennifer Kottke is with the LA County Office of Education (LACOE) and explained that it represents 80 districts and not just LA Unified. Additionally, it includes 14 charter schools, all that operate differently from the traditional school districts. Nationally, half the students homeless are under 5 years of age. Though not yet in school, early trauma affects the brain chemistry making it more challenging to be academically successful. The number of homeless in LA County went down this past reporting year (data was collected during the '18-'19 academic year and reported to the State after the school year had concluded). County data does not include private preschools and K-12 schools, but does include the Head Start program. Jennifer reminded us that they go by the McKinney-Vento definition of "homelessness," which is broader than HUD's definition. The SPA 8 school district homeless stats include all of LAUSD so the numbers appear much higher than just for those South Bay schools.
 - ii. **Torrance Unified School District (TUSD) Homelessness Program.** Nancy Gutierrez with TUSD reported there are three social workers at the district level focused on special education, homelessness, and foster children. They provide targeted services since there are not specialists at the school sites. At the beginning of each school year, families are invited to their Welcome Center to ensure a consistent, trauma-informed approach is maintained. Children are given school supplies, backpacks, and clothing. Although staff does not catch students if they become homeless during the academic year since

homelessness status is just asked in the fall, new families in this situation are always welcome when referred by a school or if the family self-identifies as wanting additional support. Most people are surprised TUSD has over 100 homeless students because of the city's social-economic demographic, but housing costs are raising along with health care expenses, impacting a family's ability to stay stably housed. There are also many who are under-employed or in temporary living situations such as staying with grandparents (but can't live indefinitely with them because of senior housing rules where children are not allowed). Students in high school are reluctant to self-identify as homeless. Torrance's PTA is active in raising funds so twelfth graders can participate in all special senior events.

- iii. **Role of Coordinated Entry System (CES) Education Coordinator.** Lawrence Doss with LAUSD is our SPA 8 CES Ed Coordinator. He works out of Harbor Interfaith's San Pedro facility 3 days a week and Sanctuary of Hope in Hawthorne the other 2 days to ensure coverage of the entire South Bay. In addition to supporting students in grades K-12, he also works with transition aged youth (ages 18-24). Because of stigma, he has found that some students do not want to disclose their living status to school district staff. Excuses such as "I'm home schooled," or "my family is moving soon" are sometimes red flags. He has access to student transcripts that will help facilitate enrollment at a new school. Referrals to CES and other programs such as School on Wheels are also made.
- iv. **CES-Family Brief Program Overview.** Sharon Stewart of Harbor Interfaith Services is SPA 8's CES-Families Regional Coordinator. Prevention services are available for families who are living doubled-up. Her staff tries to keep families in the neighborhood where they already have school or work connections. They try to place anyone literally homeless in a shelter or motel, and typically screen over 400 families a year. Because of limited funding, more creative ideas such as Problem Solving are being used to help families get stably housed without entering the homelessness system. Most families are connected with rapid rehousing, unless they score 9+ on the CES Assessment and are then eligible for permanent supportive housing.

5. **Co-Chairs' Report.** Mark reported on his work with LAHSA on the County's Gap Analysis "system modeling," and Nancy has been focused on the Homeless Count.

6. **Member Announcements.** The following announcements were made:

- a. League of Women Votes of the Beach Cities is hosting a housing forum at the Hermosa Beach Community Theatre at 7:00 pm on January 30th.
- b. MB Safe is holding "A Night in Jail" movie screening and panel discussion at American Martyrs Church at 7:00 pm on January 13th.
- c. Department of Mental Health is having a town hall meeting in Santa Monica on January 25th where Director Dr. Jonathan Sherin will present.
- d. Medical Missions Adventures' 2020 calendar was shared that provides the monthly event venue for its services. The January Fair will be on the 25th at Inglewood's Buford Elementary School.
- e. San Pedro United Methodist Church is hosting mobile showers on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. A hot meal will also be served along with clothing that the participants can have. Service providers are welcome to host a table by contacting Pastor Lisa at pastorlisa.sanpedroumc@gmail.com.
- f. SoCal ROC registration is now open for the spring semester that begins on February 3rd.
- g. The Homeless Initiative's 4th Annual Conference will be held on March 5th at the Biltmore. RSVP soon as this free event books up quickly.

The meeting concluded at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Wilcox.