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**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

# NEWS RELEASE

## *Candlelight Vigil for homeless youth and family*

**Soldotna, November 5, 2014—Families and unaccompanied youth are homeless on the peninsula. An invisible reality to most residents, the number 253 is important. Would it surprise you to know that 253 is the average number of students who are homeless in the KPBSD Students In Transition (SIT) program, and attending a KPBSD school?**

The community is invited to learn more at an annual candlelight vigil for homeless youth and families:

**Thursday, November 13, 2014**  
**6:00 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Farnsworth Park**  
**Birch Street, Soldotna, Alaska**

Guest speaker Dr. Steve Atwater, KPBSD superintendent, will help raise awareness about the reality of homelessness on the Kenai Peninsula. Music will be provided by Beau Miller and Scott Lazaros. Please dress for the weather.

The SIT program has enrolled 138 students since the start of the school year, which is thirty-three percent higher than last year at this time. In the central peninsula, 111 youth are enrolled, and thirteen are unaccompanied youth, while ninety-eight are with a family unit. In the southern peninsula, twenty-seven students are enrolled, eighteen are unaccompanied youth, and nine are with a family unit.

“One of our more persistent challenges is serving our students in transition,” said Dr. Steve Atwater, superintendent. “The good work of our students in transition coordinator Kelly King and our [Students in Transition Facebook page](#) are helping us to meet this challenge. The public vigil

**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 5, 2014**

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Please join our special guest  
**Dr. Steve Atwater, Superintendent of Schools, KPBSD**  
 Emceed by Dave and Debbie Michael of Larva Child and  
 Kelly King, Homeless Liaison, KPBSD Students in Transition  
**Music by: Beau Miller & Scott Lazaros**

The Candlelight Vigil is an outdoor event.  
 Please dress warmly!  
 (No restroom facilities available)

Interested in volunteering? Want more information?  
 Contact us at [dmichael@alaska.net](mailto:dmichael@alaska.net)

**BIG DADDY'S PIZZA**  
 262-9000

KPBSD posts flyers as a community service. Such posting does not constitute an endorsement for or against the products and companies represented therein.

is a good opportunity for all of us to stop and reflect on our students in transition. I trust that each of these students will benefit from this attention.”

### **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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