

School Board Members

William Allen, District 1
Lori Cunningham, District 2
Sarah Fortney, District 3
Sara Beth Reynolds, District 4
Kay Fields, District 5
Lynn Wilson, District 6
Lisa Miller, District 7

Superintendent
Frederick Heid



**POLK COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

MAIN LINE (863) 457-4709

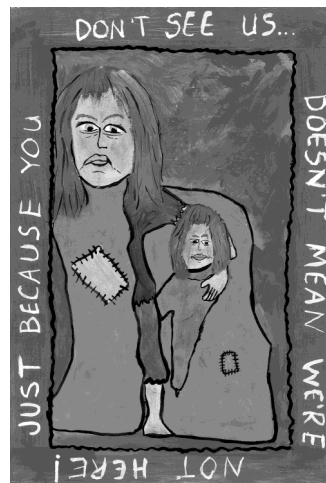
Jenn Jordan (863) 457-4709 ext. 680
Leandra Garcia (863) 457-4709 ext. 682
Maddy Lynott (863) 457-4709 ext. 681
Ben Ruch (863) 457-4709 ext. 683
Mandy Stock (863) 457-4709 ext. 686

Visit the School Board's website at:
www.polk-fl.net
search words: Homeless and/or Hearth

HEARTH

Homeless Education Advocates Restoring the Hope

RESOURCE GUIDE



**For possible school related assistance,
please call the Hearth Project at (863) 457-4709.**

Education of Homeless Children and Youth
Ben Ruch - Homeless Liaison

Polk County Public Schools
P.O. Box 391
Bartow, Florida 33831
(863) 457-4709
Fax (863) 534-0210

*The mission of Polk County Schools is to
provide a quality education for all students.*

McKinney-Vento

Homeless Definition

The term "homeless children and youths"—

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and

(B) includes—

- children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (doubled up);
- are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals;
- children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purpose of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described above.
- "unaccompanied youth" (students not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) who qualify as homeless for the purpose of this subtitle.

Educational Rights of Homeless Students

- Free, appropriate public education, no matter where the student lives;
- Immediate school enrollment when missing certain documentation (physical, immunization, birth certificate, school records, guardianship, and proofs of residency) and attendance in school while obtaining those necessary documents;
- Remain at the school of origin (school last enrolled in or attended), when in the best interest of the student;
- Transportation to and from school of origin;
- Same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children served in these programs;
- Free breakfast and lunch.

Homeless Liaison and School District must ensure:

- Homeless students are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
- Students experiencing homelessness enroll in school and receive educational services for which they are eligible.
- Assist homeless children and youth who do not have proper documentation for school enrollment.
- Help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school, after considering the youths' wishes.
- Inform parents or guardians of homeless students of the educational rights, including transportation to the school of origin, along with other educational and related opportunities available to their children.
- Public notice of the educational rights of students in homeless situations is disseminated where children and youth receive services.
- Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the Enrollment Disputes section of the McKinney-Vento Act.

The School District of Polk County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability or marital status in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its hiring or employment practices. The district also provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other patriotic youth groups, as required by the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act. Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding discrimination or harassment may be sent to: Equity & Compliance Analyst, P.O. Box 391 Bartow, Fl. 33831; (863) 534-0781 ext. 570.

Resources

United Way: 211/800-881-8929/863-648-1515/www.uwcf.org

Aunt Bertha Resource Guide: <http://heartland.auntbertha.com>

ABUSE: CHILD & ADULT

Abuse Hotline 800-962-2873
Guardian Ad Litem Program 534-4605
Gulf Coast Community Care 904-3000
Peace River Center Domestic Violence Shelter
-Women, Men & Families 413-2700

ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE

ACTS..... 428-1520
Alcoholics Anonymous 687-9275
Al-Anon..... 687-3800
Toll Free..... 866-539-3030
Drug Helpline..... 800-662-4357
InnerAct Alliance 802-0777
Lakeland Grace Academy 647-1944
Narcotics Anonymous Helpline 683-0630
Peace River Center 248-3311
Talbot House Ministries..... 687-8475
Tri-County Human Services 533-4139

CRISIS INTERVENTION

Behavioral Health Division..... 800-723-3248
Peace River Mental Health Crisis 519-3744
Rape Crisis 413-2707
Tri-County Human Services 533-4139

CHILD CARE

Early Learning Coalition of Polk. County..... 577-2450
Toll free 800-843-9780
Head Start..... 648-3051

DENTAL CLINICS

Polk County Health Department Dental Clinics –
Auburndale..... 965-6333
Lakeland 413-2636

COUNSELING & MENTAL HEALTH

Behavioral Health Adult Counseling 297-1702
Outpatient Counseling 294-7062
Bethany Center (Good Shepherd)..... 968-1707
Catholic Charities – Lakeland 686-7153
Winter Haven..... 299-7983
Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource 647-4258
Florida Division of Blind Services 499-2385
Florida Epilepsy Services 686-5880
Frostproof Care Center 863-635-5555
Help of Fort Meade..... 285-6600
Lake Wales Care Center 863-676-6678
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill 450-2943
Neighborhood Service Center..... 294-5860
Peace River Center – Lakeland..... 248-3300
Polk County Veterans Services..... 534-5220
Salvation Army – Lakeland..... 940-9696
Tri-County Human Services..... 533-4139
W.H. Hospital Behavioral Health Division 294-7062
Women's Resource Center Winter Haven 294-5318
Youth & Family Alternatives 499-2430

EDUCATION RESOURCES

Fl. Diagnostic & Learning Resource..... 647-4258
Learning Resource Center..... 688-9477

EMPLOYMENT & JOB TRAINING

Career Source – Polk..... 508-1100
Several Locations throughout Polk County: Bartow,
Lake Alfred, Lake Wales, Lakeland and Winter Haven
Vocational Rehabilitation – Lakeland..... 680-5534
Winter Haven 291-5280

FOOD, MEDICINE, FINANCIAL AID

Agricultural & Labor Program (ALPI) 956-3491
Toll Free 800-330-3491
Catholic Charities – Lakeland..... 686-7153
Winter Haven 299-7983
Church Service Center 533-5822
Dept of Children & Families – Access Florida
(WAGES, Food Stamps, Medicaid) ... 866-762-2237
Family Emer. Service Ctr. of WH..... 294-1939
Frostproof Care Center..... 863-635-5555
Help of Fort Meade 285-6600
H.O.P.E. Center..... 683-8182
Lake Wales Care Center..... 863-676-6678
Lighthouse Ministries 687-3705
Mulberry Community Service Center 425-1523
Polk County Health Department 863-519-7900
Polk Co. Social Services..... 534-5387
Salvation Army – Lakeland 940-9696
Winter Haven..... 291-5107
Talbot House Ministries 687-8475
The Way 422-2309
WIC (Women, Infants & Children) 519-7542
Women's Resource Center 294-5318

HOMELESS SERVICES

Lighthouse Ministries 687-3705
Talbot House Ministries 687-8475
Salvation Army – Lakeland (Family)..... 940-9696
Winter Haven (Women & Children).... 291-5107

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Housing Authority –
Bartow 533-6311
Lake Wales..... 863-676-7414
Lakeland 687-2911
Winter Haven 294-7369
Section 8 Housing 534-5240
Haines City Housing Assistance 421-3680
HUD 813-228-2026

HOUSING – EMERGENCY & TRANSITIONAL

Coordinated Entry (Homeless Coalition) 687-8386
George Harris Youth Shelter (Under 18)..... 595-0220
Heart for Winter Haven 291-6270
Lake Wales Care Center (Families)..... 863-676-6678
Lighthouse Ministries 687-3705
Salvation Army – Lakeland..... 940-9696
Winter Haven (Women & Children)..... 291-5107
Talbot House Ministries 687-8475
The Way..... 422-2309
Tri-County Human Services..... 299-7003
Women's Care Ctr. (Women & Children)..... 534-3844

LEGAL SERVICES

Dept. of Revenue (Child Support) 800-622-5437
Florida Rural Legal Services (Civil)..... 688-7376
Heart of Florida Legal Aid Society
(Divorce) 519-5663

TRANSPORTATION

Citrus Connection 688-7433
Handy Bus 688-5438
Polk County Transportation 534-5500

*** Information courtesy of United Way Quick Guide ***