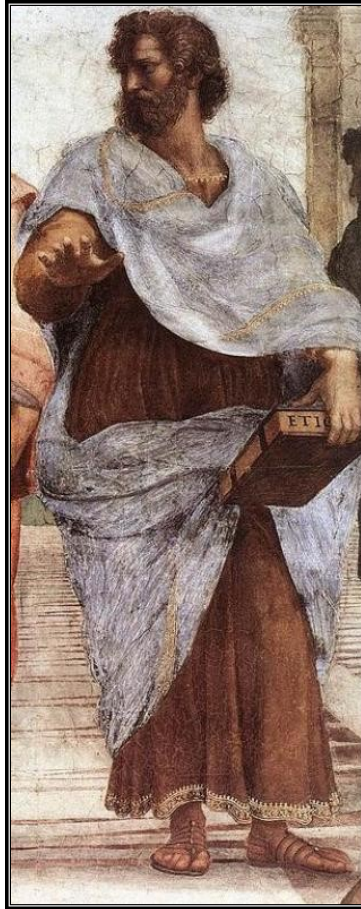


## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

June 29-July 6, 2018

### HUMPTY DUMPTY HOUSING - Part 19



### TO EDUCATE OR NOT TO EDUCATE DETAINED IMMIGRANTS' CHILDREN?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

**SIGNING** his executive order to keep illegal immigrant families together last week raised a question Donald Trump faces: If displaced (homeless) detainees in US custody are under 18, will we educate them pending parental deportation hearings?

Since the immigration courts' backlog is around 800,000 cases, and local educators preferred not to debate it as a political issue, I time-traveled 2,400 years back to the place Democracy started.

I found Socrates standing in his famous trance, gazing into the azure Athenian sky.

“Master, if the children of an illegal Thracian immigrant seek admission into school, would you admit them?”

“What do you think I should say?” Socrates stared past me.

“Knowledge is a virtue?”

“And what is education to virtue?”

“A path to a virtuous life?”

“I am but one man, so why not ask several teachers?” the 71-year old said, adding, “I am about to drink hemlock. Excuse me, please?”

I used his popular Jeopardy-style TV-show method of answering one question with another at Plato’s Academy, where I joined a circle of toga-clad students under a tree. A dialogue called “The Republic” was in session.

Master,” I asked, “what is your purpose for such discourse of ideas?”

Instead of replying Socratically, Plato snapped like a snoot, “Isn’t it obvious my plan is to ensure politicians are educated in areas relevant to making reasonable, important decisions for society-at-large?”

“Well, excuse me!” I retorted.

“There are some bad dudes out there.”

“Why politicians?” I asked.

“The ruling class should be morally excellent, virtuous individuals, who serve as examples to society-at-large.”

“How should a virtuous ruler behave?”

“You want an example?”

“Yes, please.”

He pointed toward himself, but said, “The leader of the senate should treat the person who scrubs his chamber pot as his equal.”

A young man raised his hand.

“Yes, Ari?” Plato said.

“Master, my Lyceum will be founded on the notion that he who studies how things originated and came into being. . . will achieve a clearer view of them.”

I thought, “That was then. This is now.”

So, what’s today’s view of the virtue of education for all—including homeless immigrants both legal and illegal?

### **The McKinney-Vento Definition Of Homeless**

Back in 1987, the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which has since been amended several times, was passed into law. Subtitle VII-B (per Title IX, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act) defines homeless as follows:

The term “homeless children and youths means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)); and includes children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.

Also, children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));

And, 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 (as such term is defined in section 1309

of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described. . . above.

Will the next revision include asylum-seeking detainees' children as eligible homeless students? That may depend on whether they are defined as "awaiting foster care."

### **Foster Care, Detained Children And Monterey County's Safe Parking Program**

Participation in McKinney-Vento is optional. Per Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, "covered states" had until December 10, 2017 to remove "awaiting foster care placement" from their definition of homeless.

As a McKinney-Vento state, California's policy is: Enroll the child first; follow up on other facts later.

To read the McKinney-Vento Act, visit <https://nche.ed.gov/downloads/legis/mv-essa.pdf> .

Meanwhile, locals who live in vehicles under the County of Monterey Safe Parking program are protected because \$50,000 was approved for the county's 2018-2019 budget.

District 4 Supervisor Jane Parker told me, "It is at least partially funded, but until the staff tells the board the full cost of the program, we don't know whether the \$50,000 that has been allocated is full or partial funding."

The 2018-2019 County of Monterey Budget edited by Paul Lewis is online at [www.co.monterey.ca.us](http://www.co.monterey.ca.us).

At 626 pages, it's a good bedtime read!

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Photo: Aristotle by Raphael

"The educated differ from the uneducated as much as the living from the dead." Aristotle, 384-322 BC

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