

## HANNAH FREEDOM SCHOOL RESOLUTION ON CHILDHOOD POVERTY

As part of the Children's Defense Fund's Freedom School Family, we are taught that we can make a difference in ourselves, our families, our communities, the nation and the world. In order to be all that we can be, we have learned that all children everywhere deserve a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* and the support of caring families and communities. But we also have learned that not all kids get what they deserve. Global poverty denies children these important opportunities. In as much as:

- In America, 14.7 million children live in poverty. That means that about one out of every five kids is poor. If you are black or brown, the number is closer to one in three - even in families where parents are working
- If you are poor as a child, you have a lesser chance of graduating from high school or going to college, but a greater chance of going to jail or being in a low paying job, which means you have a greater chance of becoming a poor adult, suffering from poor health, and becoming involved in the criminal justice system.
- Poverty has no face. It can be anybody. It can be anywhere, Not just homeless people. Not just kids in hoodies. Not just in urban areas. It is even in Marin. There are 21,000 poor families in Marin who live on less than \$24,000 a year, while most families in our county earn more than \$80,000 per year.
- Children living in poverty, almost 2,000 in Marin, often struggle in school to keep up with their classmates in math, science and language arts.
- Poverty is not safe. It is not healthy. It is not fair. It is wrong. It must be ended!

We, the students of Hannah Freedom School commit to work toward ending childhood poverty in our lifetime, joining the global initiative to end poverty by 2030.

Therefore, Be It Resolved that:

- Being poor is like being on punishment. It means that you have to go without. You have to go without good and nutritious food, decent housing, healthy neighborhoods, or schools that address your needs or celebrate your culture. It amounts to 'cruel and unusual' punishment that must be abolished.
- Childhood poverty can be ended globally by 2030.
- We as children are using our voices, now it's time for the adults to use theirs.
- We call on our lawmakers to imagine ending child poverty in our county, in our state, in our nation NOW.
- Ending child poverty means that we will be able to stop the cradle to prison pipeline, we will be better educated, and we will be better prepared for a peaceful world.
- As Bryan Stevenson, founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, stated: "The opposite of poverty is not wealth . . . the opposite of poverty is justice...and opportunity."

**Signed: Hannah Freedom School Scholars 2015**