

Children in Foster Care

Consistent with Title I requirements and Ohio Department of Education guidelines, the School shall collaborate with the Ohio Department of Education and state and local child welfare agencies to provide educational stability for children in foster care.

Definitions

- A. Foster Care. Foster care means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility. Foster care may include, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and preadoptive homes. Any child meeting this definition shall be deemed to be in foster care regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and/or the foster caregiver receives payments from a federal, state, local, or tribal agency for the care of the child.
- B. School of Origin. The school of origin is the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care. If the child's foster care placement changes, the school of origin is the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of the placement change.

School Placement

A child in foster care shall remain enrolled in the school of origin unless it is determined that it is not in the child's best interest. Such determination will be made consistent with federal and state laws, rules, or guidance, and in collaboration with relevant child welfare agencies when practicable.

Any dispute regarding the best interest determination shall be decided according to federal and state laws, rules, or guidance. The relevant child welfare agency shall be the final decision maker in all best interest determinations. To the extent feasible and appropriate, the child shall remain in the school of origin until any dispute or determination is resolved.

Immediate Enrollment

If it is determined that a child's enrollment in the School is in the best interest of the child, the School shall immediately enroll the child, even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, has missed application or enrollment deadlines, or is subject to outstanding fees or fines, or excessive absences. The School shall immediately contact the school last attended by the child to obtain relevant academic or other records. See **Policy 241.2** Records Upon Enrollment.

Transportation

Consistent with Title I requirements, the School shall coordinate with the state or local child welfare agencies and other relevant schools to develop and implement clear written procedures to ensure that transportation to the school determined to be in the child's best interest is provided,

arranged, and funded. Such arrangements and funding agreements will consider federal and state laws, rules, and guidance for inter-district transportation. Children in foster care requiring transportation shall promptly receive transportation in a cost-effective manner. If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin, the School will provide transportation to the school of origin if (a) the local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the School for the cost of such transportation, (b) the School agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation, or (c) the School and the local child welfare agency agree to share the cost of such transportation.

Point of Contact

The Principal or his/her designee shall be the point of contact to coordinate with the Ohio Department of Education and relevant child welfare agencies. The point of contact may be responsible for coordinating with the Ohio Department of Education and child welfare agencies on implementation of the Title I foster care provisions, developing best interest determination procedures and documentation requirements, facilitating the transfer of records, developing and coordinating local transportation procedures, and ensuring that children in foster care are immediately enrolled and regularly attending school.

Privacy

Information about the living situation of a child in foster care shall be treated as a student education record and shall not be deemed to be directory information.

20 USC 6311-6312; 45 CFR 1355.20(a)