



Interagency Collaboration to Ensure Stability for Students in Foster Care

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Objectives

- Describe the importance of interagency collaboration in the implementation of Title I, Part A educational stability provisions for students in foster care; and
- Identify strategies for effective interagency collaboration to address the needs of students in foster care.

Defining Foster Care

- Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections Act).
 - *Foster care* means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the child welfare agency (CWA) has placement and care responsibility.
 - Foster care includes placements in:
 - Foster family homes
 - Kinship providers
 - Group homes
 - Emergency shelters
 - Residential facilities
 - Childcare institutions
 - Pre-adoptive homes

Educational Stability of Students in Foster Care

2008

Fostering Connections to
Success and Increasing
Adoptions Act

2013

Uninterrupted
Scholars
Act

2015

Every Student
Succeeds
Act

Educational Stability for Students in Foster Care, continued

Educational agencies and institutions are permitted to disclose PII from the education records of students in foster care placement, without parental consent. While parental consent is generally required before an LEA or school can share a student's records, there is an exception for students in foster care. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides that the education records of students in foster care, or the PII contained therein, may be released without parental consent to an agency caseworker or other representative of a state or local CWA or tribal organization authorized to access a student's case plan "when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with state or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student." 20 U.S.C., section 1232g(b)(1)(L).

Educational Stability for Students in Foster Care, continued

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), includes new foster care provisions in Title I, Part A. These provisions went into effect on December 10, 2015.

Interagency Data Exchanges

The ESEA does not require formal data and information sharing between State Educational Agencies (SEAs), Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and CWAs; however, non-regulatory guidance from the U.S. Department of Education and Health and Human Services encourages the use of data-sharing agreements between educational and child welfare agencies.

Benefits to SEAs/LEAs Education stakeholders will be able to...	Benefits to CWAs Caseworkers will be able to...
Accurately identify students in foster care.	Better assist with school transitions.
Ensure educational stability requirements implemented for all students in foster care.	Monitor academic performance of students in their care.
Develop an enhanced understanding of students' unique needs.	Monitor school attendance for students in their care.

Fostering Connections (2008)

Coordination with LEAs

Presumption to stay in school of origin

Best interest determinations

Immediate and appropriate enrollment

Permissible use of federal Title IV-E
funds to support transportation

ESSA (2015)

Collaboration with child
welfare agencies

Presumption to stay in school
of origin

Best interest determinations

Immediate enrollment, even without
documentation

Transportation must be arranged,
provided and funded

State and local points of contact



Foster Care Liaison Duties

Foster Care Liaison Duties

Make sure every school has a building point of contact and coordinate with them

Serve as the primary contact person for child welfare and case workers

Attend training and professional learning opportunities to improve district implementation efforts

Facilitate the transfer of records and immediate enrollment

Facilitate data sharing with CWAs, consistent with FERPA

Develop and coordinate local transportation procedures

Manage best-interest determinations and transportation cost disputes

Ensure that children in foster care are enrolled in and are regularly attending school

Building Point of Contact Duties



Request a list of students in foster care in your building from your foster care liaison



Obtain a copy of the CWA School Notification Form from the foster care liaison



Check with nutrition services to make sure the student is receiving free meals (no application needed)



Fees and Fines – work with a Department of Children and Families caseworker to have any outstanding fees and fines of the student paid



Connect with student

Problem Solving

1

2

3

4

Questions





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