

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

The term “foster care” means 24-hour substitute care away from parents or guardians and for whom a public agency has care and placement responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to: placements in foster family homes, kinship care (when a court is involved), group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, and pre-adoptive homes. Foster care placements may be short- or long-term.

The term “school of origin” means the school in which a child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care or at the time of a change in foster placement.

The District shall collaborate with the Ohio Department of Education (“ODE”) and with local child welfare agencies to provide educational stability for children in foster care.

Point of Contact

The District’s **Social Worker/Parent Support Specialist** shall serve as the point of contact for correspondence with child welfare agencies regarding children in foster care.

Transportation

Transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin, when determined to be in their best interest, will be provided, arranged, and funded for the duration of their time in foster care. Further, the Board shall ensure:

- A. Children in foster care needing transportation to their school of origin will promptly receive transportation in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with 42 U.S.C. 675(4)(A).
- B. If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin, the District will provide transportation to the school of origin if:
 1. The local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the District for the cost of such transportation;
 2. The District agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation; or
 3. The District and the local child welfare agency agree to share the cost of such transportation.

Educational Stability

To ensure the educational stability of children in foster care, the Board shall ensure that:

- A. Any such child enrolls or remains in such child’s school of origin, unless a determination is made that it is not in such child’s best interest to attend the school of origin, which decision shall be based on all factors relating to the child’s best interest, including consideration of the appropriateness of the current educational setting and the proximity to the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement;
- B. When a determination is made that it is not in such child’s best interest to remain in the school of origin, the child is immediately enrolled in a new school, even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment; and
- C. The enrolling school shall immediately contact the school last attended by any such child to obtain relevant academic and other records.

Best Interest Determinations

The District will adhere to the guidelines established by the ODE in making a “best interest” determination for a child in foster care. The District will consult with the relevant child welfare agencies in making a best interest determination. A best interest determination shall be made within five (5) school days of the child’s placement in foster care, or change in living arrangement, and shall be provided in writing.

Dispute Resolution

Disputes regarding whether the educational placement of a child in foster care is in his/her best interest shall be resolved in accordance with the process established by the ODE. To the extent possible, as determined appropriate by the Superintendent, the child will remain in his/her school of origin during the pendency of dispute resolution processes.

LEGAL REFS: 20 U.S.C. §§6311; 6312

Adopted: __10/2021_____