

Sheldon ISD

Every Child, Every Day



Procedural Guidelines for Foster Care Students

Overview

Children and youth in foster care represent one of the most vulnerable student subgroups in this country. Of the approximately 415,000 children in foster care in 2014, nearly 270,000 were in elementary and secondary schools.

Children in foster care experience much higher levels of residential and school instability than their peers; one study showed that 75 percent of children in foster care made an unscheduled school change in one school year, compared to less than 40 percent for children not in foster care.

Sheldon ISD will implement the ESSA, Title I educational stability requirements for children in foster care, including ensuring that:

- A Child in foster care remains in his or her school of origin; unless it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in that child's best interest.
- If it is not in the child's best interest to stay in his or her school of origin, the child is immediately enrolled in the new school even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment; and
- That the new (enrolling) school immediately contacts the school of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(E)(i)-(iii))

-Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care

The Federal and State Programs Department will work in tandem with the Transportation Department to oversee the implementation and coordination of this program:

- Foster Care Liaison & Director of Student Services
 - James Webster jameswebster@sheldonisd.com 281-727-2013
- Coordinator of Support Services/Transportation
 - Dr. Tyrus Doctor tyrusdoctor@sheldonisd.com -727-1400
- Director of Federal Programs/Grants:
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The attached documents provide procedural guidelines to satisfy the new legislative requirements.

Attachments:

1. FFC (Regulation) Student Welfare/Student Support Services
2. **Exhibit A:** Student in Foster Care Educational Best-Interest Factors – 3 pages
3. **Exhibit B:** Individual Transportation – 4 pages

TRANSPORTATION OF
STUDENTS IN FOSTER
CARE

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) addresses additional protections for students in foster care and establishes a system of joint responsibility for school districts, the state education agency, and the state and local child welfare agencies to ensure the educational stability of students in foster care. [See TEA's Foster Care and Student Success website at

<http://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess/> and the U.S. Department of Education and Health and Human Services' *Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care* at

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/edhhsfostercarenonregulatorguide.pdf>.]

ESSA requires each Texas school district to collaborate with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to develop and implement clear, written procedures for how transportation to maintain a student in foster care in his or her school of origin (unless it is not in the student's best interest) will be provided, arranged, and funded. The procedures must ensure that the transportation will be provided promptly, in a cost-effective manner, in accordance with federal child welfare Title IV-E funding requirements [section 475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 675(4)(A))], and ensure that if there are any additional costs incurred in providing transportation to maintain the student in his or her school of origin, the district will provide the transportation if:

- The child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the district for the additional costs;
- The district agrees to pay the additional costs; or
- The child welfare agency and district agency split the additional costs.

By December 10, 2016, and annually thereafter as directed by TEA, each school district must provide an assurance to TEA in the district's Title I Plan and eGrants application that the district has transportation procedures meeting the above requirements.

DEFINITIONS

ADDITIONAL COSTS

Additional costs reflect the difference between what the District would spend to transport a student to the assigned school and the cost of transporting a student in foster care to his or her school of origin. Title I, Part A funds may be used to pay for additional transportation costs in Title I districts.

SCHOOL OF ORIGIN

The school of origin is the school in which a student is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care or a change in placement. A student in foster care is entitled to remain enrolled in his or her