

***(K–12 Districts)***

The Ava R-I School District recognizes that students in foster care face unusual educational challenges. The purpose of this policy is to provide foster care students with educational stability and remove barriers to, and provide opportunities for, academic excellence for foster care students. In order to achieve this purpose, the district will work collaboratively with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Children's Division (CD) of the Missouri Department of Social Services.

**Definitions**

*Foster Care* – Twenty-four-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents/guardians and for whom the CD has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placement in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, childcare institutions and pre-adoptive homes, regardless of whether the home, shelter, facility or institution is licensed or receives payments from the state.

*Foster Care Student* – Any pre-K–12 student who is residing in a foster care setting in this state or who is awaiting foster care.

*School of Origin* – The school or preschool in which the student was enrolled at the time of placement in foster care. If the student's placement changes, the school of origin is the school or preschool in which the student was enrolled at the time of the change.

**Liaison/Point of Contact**

The district designates the following individual as the liaison for foster care students:

Superintendent

P.O. Box 338

Ava, MO 65608

(417) 683-4717 (417) 683-6329 (fax)

The liaison will provide assistance regarding all aspects of the enrollment, placement, transfer and withdrawal of children in foster care and serve as the point of contact for DESE and the CD. The liaison will also work with DESE and the CD to implement the district's complaint resolution process.

**Enrollment and Placement of Foster Care Students**

Students in a foster care placement located within the boundaries of the district will be educated in the school of origin unless it is not in the best interest of the student to do so. A student placed in the school of origin will remain in the school of origin for the duration of the time he or she is in foster care. If it is not in the best interest of the student to stay in the school of origin, the Ava R-I School District will immediately enroll the student, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, and will contact the school of origin to obtain relevant records.

Foster care students who attend school in the district because attending the school of