

Fostering Connections: FAQ for Parents

What is fostering connections?

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 requires child welfare agencies to have a plan for ensuring the educational stability of the child while in foster care including the child remaining in the school in which the child is enrolled at time of placement unless it is not in the best interest of the child.

Title 1, Part A (Title 1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) now contains key protections for children in foster care that require State and Local Education entities to collaborate together to ensure educational stability.

Under FOSTERING CONNECTIONS:

- Youth in foster care are entitled to remain in their same school when feasible. Youth foster care placement decisions take school stability into account and school stability is a priority whenever possible and is in the best interest of the child
- Youth in foster care have the right to immediate enrollment and are guaranteed seamless transitions between schools and school districts when school moves occur. School district must make every effort to obtain school records as soon as possible.
- Youth in foster care have the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular curricular activities
- Transportation may be available either through the county, the school district or a shared cost between the county and school district when a child is returning to the school of origin. Youth in foster care automatically qualify for free school meals.

Is there a timeline for foster care?

ESSA states that children are entitled to school stability and prompt school enrollment protections for the durations of the child's time in foster care. Children in foster care are entitled to transportation to their school of origin, when feasible, from the time they enter foster care and until the end of the school year in which they exit foster care.

Are preschool children eligible for transport under fostering connections?

Yes, a child in foster care under ESSA also includes children in foster care attending a public pre-school.