Georgia Department of Education
Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent
"Educating Georgia's Future"

FY27 Foster Care Transportation Plan

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Bulloch County Schools

Superintendent Name Richard Smith (Interim)

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Physical Address (if different from above)

City Statesboro **Zip** 30458

Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) Name Hanson Polk **POC Email** hpolk@bullochschools.org

POC Mailing Address 150 Williams Road

City Statesboro **Zip** 30458

POC Telephone 912-212-8516 **POC Fax** 912-212-8529

Superintendent Signature

5/28/26
Date

RICHARD SMITH
Print Name of Superintendent

FY27 Foster Care Transportation Plan

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is required to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(E)). In coordination with state and tribal child welfare agencies, GaDOE must ensure that its LEAs implement the 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)). In fulfilling this role, the SEA should coordinate with the state or tribal child welfare agency to develop and disseminate uniform guidelines for implementing the Title I educational stability provisions. Developing uniform statewide policies and procedures for ensuring educational stability for children in foster care, as many States have already done under the Fostering Connections Act, will facilitate successful implementation at the local level. This is particularly important given the shared agency responsibility for educational stability under Title I and the Fostering Connections Act, and because a single LEA or local child welfare agency will likely have to collaborate with multiple partner agencies in implementing these provisions.

Additionally, the SEA must conduct regular monitoring and oversight to guarantee appropriate implementation of these provisions at the local level. (See 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.331(d), 200.328(a); 34 C.F.R. § 76.770).

On the state level, the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS), which houses the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) periodically sends a list of children in foster care that are flagged in GaDOE's student information system for information sharing and reporting purposes. On the local level, LEAs are now able to retrieve a list of children in foster care to better identify and provide services. LEAs are to continue collaborating with their local child welfare agencies and may periodically receive information directly from foster parents, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), DFCS case workers, or Education Support Monitors (ESM), within the Educational Programming, Assessment and Consultation (EPAC) unit of DFCS. Once identified, LEAs must implement its plan to ensure educational stability for children in care. For the best interest of the children in care, LEAs should follow all mandated regulations under FERPA and keep the status of these children confidential.

As a result, GaDOE is requiring all LEAs, including virtual schools and charter schools that function as an LEA, to complete a Foster Care Transportation Plan. The plan should be completed in addition to the development and implementation of written transportation procedures and the identification of a Foster Care Point of Contact. Please complete this plan and return it by:

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Instructions for submission:

- After the LEA superintendent signs the assurances, scan the entire document as a PDF and save it as the "FY27 Foster Care Transportation Plan".
- Upload the signed PDF version of the document to the CLIP online portal via the Consolidated Application for FY27.

FY27 Foster Care Transportation Plan

***NOTE**: In order to answer the questions below, refer to the Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability and Success for Students in Foster Care.*

I. Foster Care Transportation Plan: PLANNING

A. The LEA's role is to have a transportation plan in place for children in foster care to their school of origin. Describe your plan to:

1. Coordinate transportation with the local child welfare agency.
2. Implement steps to be taken if additional costs are incurred.
3. Execute the local dispute resolution process.

Include the roles of key players (e.g. LEA Foster Care Point of Contact, LEA Superintendent, LEA Federal Program Director, EPAC Unit Education Support Monitor, Case Worker, Court Appointed Special Advocate, Juvenile Court representative, etc.) *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

Mr. Richard Smith, Interim Superintendent; Ms. Hanson Polk, School Social Worker & Foster Care Point of Contact; Dr. Dawn Tysinger, Executive Director of Student Wellness and Support, Mr. Michael Powell, Federal Programs Director; Chad Ivester, Transportation Director; Ms. Victoria Horton, Director of Bulloch County Department of Family and Children Services.

Bulloch County Schools and Bulloch County DFCS will work cooperatively to develop a transportation plan that ensures the educational stability of children enrolled in LEA. In the event of a dispute, Bulloch County Schools and DFCS will defer to the Federal Programs Director and DFCS County Director for a final determination of resolution. In accordance with ESEA section 1112 (c) (5)(B)(i), LEA will provide or arrange for adequate and appropriate transportation during the dispute resolution process.

B. What steps should an LEA and local child welfare agency take to ensure that transportation is provided immediately, even if they face difficulty reaching agreement on how to pay for additional transportation costs? *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

If it is in the best interest of the foster child to remain in the school of origin, the following steps would take place:

Bulloch County Schools will assume financial responsibility for costs incurred as the result of the rerouting of the school buses while DFCS will assume the financial responsibility for costs associated with reimbursing foster parents for travel or the cost of a private provider.

Disputes will be forwarded to the Federal Programs Director and DCFS County Director for resolution.

The final determination of how to pay for additional transportation costs will be made by the Transportation Director.

Daily attendance will not be impacted by transportation disputes between LEA and DFCS. In accordance with ESEA section 1112 (c)(5)(B)(i), LEA will provide or arrange for adequate and appropriate transportation to and from the child's school or origin during the dispute resolution process.

C. The LEA must designate a Foster Care Point of Contact that coordinates with the local child welfare agency. Describe the point of contact's role and responsibilities. *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

Facilitate discussion between LEA and child welfare agencies to make determination if student should remain in school of origin when logistically feasible

Facilitating the transfer of records and immediate enrollment

Facilitating data sharing with the child welfare agencies, consistent with FERPA and other privacy protocols

Developing and coordinating immediate local transportation costs disputes

Ensuring that children in foster care are enrolled in school in a timely manner

Complete Trauma Informed Education Support Plan in accordance with Georgia House Bill 855

II. Foster Care Transportation Plan: GUIDING QUESTIONS

A. If a child is placed within the LEA's school attendance area and projected transportation cost are negligible, transportation should be immediately provided without supplemental assistance from the local child welfare agency. If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin, the LEA will provide transportation to the school of origin if:

	YES	NO	N/A
1. The local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the LEA for the cost of such transportation.	No		
2. The LEA agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation.	No		
3. The LEA and local child welfare agency agree to share the cost of such transportation.	Yes		

Describe the agreement the LEA has made with the local child welfare agency regarding transportation costs. *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

LEA will work with the local child welfare agency to share the responsibility of transporting students to the school of their origin when in the best interest of the student. The system has agreed to transport students within the county. The local child welfare agency will work with foster parents and utilize available resources to fund extraordinary costs.

LEA will provide transportation for children who are in foster care to their schools of origin within the district. The district will work with the county's child welfare agency on a case-by-case basis to ensure transportation is provided beyond district lines.

B. All LEAs must meet the requirement to provide transportation for children who are in foster care to their schools of origin *(Similar to the McKinney-Vento requirement for students experiencing homelessness)*. Does your LEA currently provide transportation services? If no, describe your plan to meet this mandate.	Yes

Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.

N/A

ASSURANCES

By checking the box beside each statement and by affixing my signature to these Assurances, I certify that I have read each and agree to be held accountable for the content of each of the following statements:

☒ The LEA will collaborate with state or local child welfare agency to develop and implement clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin when in their best interest will be provided, arranged and funded for the duration of time in foster care.

☒ The LEA ensures that children in foster care needing transportation to the school of origin promptly receive such transportation in a cost-effective manner.

☒ The LEA ensures that children in foster care remain in the school of origin while any disputes regarding transportation costs are being resolved.

☒ The LEA will collaborate with State or local child welfare agency to provide transportation if a child is placed in foster care placement across district, county, or State lines.

☒ In accordance to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Fostering Connections Act, the LEA will continue to provide transportation to children that exited foster care for the remainder of the school year, if it is in the best interest of the student.

I am authorized to sign and submit this application on behalf of the applicant. My signature certifies that all information included in the application is accurate. I understand that all information submitted is subject to verification.

Bulloch County Schools
LEA Name

Richard Smith
Printed Name of Superintendent

Superintendent
Title

Signature of Superintendent
(Please sign in blue ink only)

5/28/26
Date