Grenada School District

Grenada School District
Education, Training, Dreams

EDUCATIONAL **STABILITY**
for CHILDREN *in*
FOSTER CARE

2026-2027

BOARD APPROVED
JUL 14 2026
Kelly McNamee

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the procedures used in the Grenada School District to enroll and withdraw children that have been placed under the care of the Mississippi Child Protection Service.

Goal

Grenada School District in collaboration with Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services and Grenada County Division of Child Protection Services ensures that children placed in foster care have stability with regards to their education.

Vision

To provide an educational environment where each student has the opportunity to reach his or her maximum potential

Mission

To educate all children to their greatest potential academically, socially, emotionally, mentally, and physically

Definitions

District Point of Contact (DPC) – the person designated by the Grenada School District Superintendent to represent the District with regards to foster children being enrolled or withdrawn from the district. The District Point of Contact will communicate directly with the Regional Director of Child Protective Services.

School Point of Contact (SPC) – the person designated by the building level Principal to represent the school with regards to foster children being enrolled or withdrawn from the school. The School Point of Contact will communicate directly with the District Point of Contact. The School Point of Contact will ensure that any and all student records are obtained when a foster child enrolls in the local school and that any and all student records are provided to the Child Protective Service Case Work when a foster child withdraws from the local school.

Regional Director of Child Protective Services (CPS) – the person from Child Protective Services who will communicate directly with the District Point of Contact and with the Child Protective Service Case Worker in charge of the case for a particular foster child.

Case Worker – the person from Child Protective Services who has been assigned the case of a child in foster care.

Foster Child – a child to whom the custody has been appointed to Child Protective Services by a sitting judicial authority.

Foster Parent – the parent(s) to whom a foster child is currently residing.

Best Interest Determination (BID) – refers the collaborative process between MDCPS and local school districts based on the individual student's unique best interests. The determination involves input from multiple parties to make decisions about whether a student placed in foster care should continue to attend his or her school of origin.

School of Origin – refers to the school that a student was attending at the time of placement in foster care or the last school the student attended, despite a change in home. To ensure continuity in education, remaining in the school of origin is preferred.

Enrollment of a Foster Child

Per MDE and CPS guidelines, the enrolling LEA shall ensure enrollment in the new school takes place on the same day the MDCPS representative (i.e. case worker, educational liaison) enrolls the student, even if the child is unable to provide records normally required for enrollment, to prevent disruption of the student's education. A student in foster care must be enrolled by a MDCPS representative.

The District Point of Contact (DPC) must be contacted immediately for enrollment and withdrawal of a child in foster care by the MDCP representative. A Best Interest Determination meeting must be held with the CPS Case Worker upon enrollment and withdrawal.

CPS serves as foster children's legal guardians; therefore, all educational documents and meeting notifications will be sent to the student's case worker. Copies will also be sent home with students to share with foster parents, unless otherwise instructed by the caseworker. According to MDE, Foster Care parents may be notified of meetings about the student; however, a Caseworker must be present at the meeting to discuss the students and may make educational decisions.

Resident Foster Children

Foster children residing within the district boundaries shall be enrolled as any other student that resides within the boundaries of the district. The School Point of Contact (SPC) shall obtain any and all records pertaining to the student's current education. **See Appendix A Children in Foster Care Enrollment Records Checklist (SPC) and Records Checklist for Case Worker/Foster Parent Enrolling a Child (CPS).**

Following the enrollment of the student, the SPC will complete the enrollment document. The SPC will place a copy in the student's cumulative file in the office of the SPC and forward the original to the DPC. The DPC will keep on file the original until the student withdraws or graduates from the Grenada School District or the child is no longer in the care of Child Protective Services.

The Grenada School District recognizes the right of a foster child to attend the child's school of origin provided that it is reasonable.

Withdrawal of a Student by CPS

CPS has the right to withdraw students assigned to them by a judicial authority. As legal guardian, only the CPS Caseworker has the authority to withdraw a student from school. The SPC in this case is responsible for providing as many educational records as possible to make any transition from the school of origin to the new school a smooth transition. Records not on file in the school office shall be forwarded the new school within 24 hours following a request by the school or CPS. **See Appendix A Records Checklist for Case**

Free/Reduced Lunch Application

Foster Care Parents or Child Protective Services should complete a Free/Reduced Lunch Form for the Grenada School District. The form along with verification of foster care shall be submitted to the School Point of Contact who in turn will forward the documents to the Food Service Director.

Transportation

Some children in foster care may need transportation to remain in their school of origin. Any child in foster care needing transportation to their school of origin must promptly receive transportation services. If the child remains in their school of origin and moves outside the current school's attendance zone, the Grenada School District (GSD) must collaborate with the local MDCPS and with the Transportation Director to develop and implement clear written transportation procedures in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 299.13(c)(1)(ii). The two entities must establish a system that expedites transportation for children placed in foster care. The goal is to maintain educational stability for the student. There are various modes of transportation available for students. Examples of no-cost or low-cost options for transportation that the GSD and the MDCPS could explore include whether:

MDCPS will arrange for the child to be dropped off at a school bus stop for the school of origin;

MDCPS will arrange for the foster parent or other designee to transport the child to school (mileage reimbursable through foster care maintenance payments);

MDCPS and the GSD will review pre-existing bus routes or stops close to the foster care placement that cross district boundaries, such as bus routes for magnet schools and transportation for homeless students as required by the McKinney-Vento Act;

MDCPS and the GSD will determine if the child is already eligible for transportation covered by other programs;

MDCPS and the GSD will address how the child welfare agency will use foster care maintenance payments and administrative funds to pay for transportation to the school;

MDCPS and the GSD will specify how "additional costs" of transportation will be calculated, to delineate clearly the GSD's responsibility to provide transportation when there are no additional costs;

MDCPS and the GSD will specifically describe how transportation to the school of origin will be provided in situations where there are no additional costs; and

MDCPS and the GSD will specify the timing and procedures for the child welfare agency to reimburse the GSD for transportation costs.

In the event of a dispute between the GSD and MDCPS concerning the cost of transportation, the two entities must consider what is in the best interest of the student. If the disagreement continues, the cost will be divided equally between the GSD and MDCPS. The dispute shall be brought before the state appointed POCs from MDE and MDCPS. Current transportation expenses shall remain in effect until a decision is rendered to maintain the student's status quo.

Appendix A

- **Children in Foster Care Enrollment Records Checklist**
- **Records Checklist for Case Worker Withdrawing a Child**
- **Records Checklist for Case Worker Enrolling a Child**
- **Children in Foster Care Best Interest Determination Worksheet**
- **Dispute Resolution to State Level Point of Contact**

Children in Foster Care Enrollment
Records Checklist

The following records are recommended for enrollment of a child in foster care:

Supporting Documentation:

- € Report Cards and Progress Reports
- € Discipline Records
- € Student Achievement
- € Teacher Evaluations
- € Attendance Records
- € Written input from absent participants
- € IEP and/or 504 Plan
- € Cumulative File and Transcript showing current credits if high school student
- € Withdrawal from Previous School
- € Copy of Birth Certificate
- € Copy of Immunization Form
- € Foster Parent's proof of residency
- € Other: _____

Records Checklist for Case Worker Withdrawing a Child

Supporting Documentation:

- € Report Cards and/or Progress Reports
- € Current Grades
- € Discipline Records
- € List of student activities, if junior high or high school student
- € Attendance Records
- € IEP and/or 504 Plan
- € Transcript showing current credits, if high school student
- € Withdrawal Form
- € Copy of Birth Certificate
- € Copy of Immunization Form
- € Other: _____

Records Checklist for Case Worker Withdrawing a Child

Supporting Documentation:

- € Report Cards and/or Progress Reports
- € Current Grades
- € Discipline Records
- € List of student activities, if junior high or high school student
- € Attendance Records
- € IEP and/or 504 Plan
- € Transcript showing current credits, if high school student
- € Withdrawal Form
- € Copy of Birth Certificate
- € Copy of Immunization Form
- € Other: _____

Records Checklist for Case Worker Enrolling a Child

Supporting Documentation:

- € Report Cards and/or Progress Reports
- € Withdrawal Form from Previous School if available
- € Copy of Birth Certificate
- € Copy of Immunization Form
- € Completed Registration Packet
- € Completed Free/Reduced Lunch Application
- € Verification Document for Foster Care Placement
- € Other: _____

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION
FOSTER CARE SCHOOL PLACEMENT

Rationale

Promote educational stability by ensuring that students in foster care can perform at the same high levels as their peers with limited disruption by first determining what is in the youth's best interest.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) stipulates that foster care students should only change schools if remaining in the school of origin is not in the student's best interest.

- If a change in school is being considered, the local education agency (LEA) and child welfare agency (CWA) must collaborate to complete the Best Interest Determination (BID) process.
- The MDCPS case worker or designee and the school of origin POC should engage in a conversation with the youth and any other appropriate parties to discuss the following information as it relates to the youth's educational stability:
    - Number of schools the youth has attended
    - How often the youth is changing schools
    - Home placement type/length as well as number of placements
    - Youth's involvement in extracurricular / community activities
    - The youth's academic/career goals
    - The youth's academic achievement
    - The youth's ability to earn full academic credits, participate in sports, graduate on time, etc.
    - The student's ability to receive necessary supports/services
    - What the youth wants, what the family wants, what the resource family wants, what CPS wants
    - School safety concerns
    - Youth's access to gifted or accelerated programs
    - If changing schools could affect the youth's end of year testing
    - Travel time to and from school
    - Biological family, resource family, friends, mentor, residential staff, MDCPS connections
    - Youth's relationships and connections to teachers and school staff
- The conversation will result in a determination that should be recorded on the BID Form. All parties who participate should be listed on the BID Form with the corresponding signature.
- Youth shall remain enrolled in their school of origin until the BID process is complete and a determination has been made.
- If the determination is made for the youth to change schools, the youth should be enrolled immediately in the new school even if the required paperwork is not available.
- The enrolling school's Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) will contact the school of origin to obtain necessary documentation.
- There must be a school of origin in order for the BID process to occur. With no school of origin, the normal school enrollment process will occur.

Dispute Resolution to State Level Point of Contact

To appeal the district's decision to the Mississippi Department of Education and Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services, please complete this form and submit it by the date indicated on the Written Notice you received from the school. You may submit this form by any of the following methods:

- Scan and email it to Terissa Williams TWilliams@mdek12.org with the subject "Foster Child Dispute Appeal" to Terissa Williams, Mississippi Department of Education, Foster Care Point of Contact;

OR

- Return the paper form to Terissa Williams, Mississippi Department of Education, Foster Care Point of Contact at 359 N. West Street, Jackson, MS 39201

Student Name: _____

School in which enrollment is sought: _____

I am the educational decision-maker for this student, and I believe the school in which we are seeking enrollment is in the student's best interest because:

I believe the student has a right to attend this school because:

_____

_____

_____

_____If you would like to provide additional information, please attach it to this form. The

student shall remain in the school of origin, receiving all appropriate educational services including transportation, until the dispute reaches its final resolution.

Educational decision-maker name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Is the youth's home placement 60 miles or more from the youth's school of origin? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

STUDENT INFORMATION		
Youth's Name:		Youth's DOB:
Date of BID:	Current Academic Grade Classification:	
School of Origin:		
MDCPS Case Worker or Designee:		Phone:
Youth's COR:	IEP Ruling? ☐ YES* ☐ NO	

***A placement meeting should be scheduled with the new school's POC.**

DETERMINATION

☐ The student will remain in the school of origin.

Reason for Determination:

Name of School:

☐ The student will change schools and be enrolled in the school/district of his/her current residence.

Reason for Determination:

Name of School:

	Participants ***Only indicate who participates in the decision*** **ROLE**	