

**PURPOSE:** To outline a clearly defined process and protocol for how education and child welfare partners are to work together to make education best interest decisions, as required by the Every Student Success Act (ESSA). The following chart describes a variety of child welfare scenarios, details regarding who and when the school will be contacted, what type of information will be collected and clarifies timelines for follow-up, and related information sharing to support collaborative educational best-interest decisions.

**RESULT:** That education and child welfare partners will have an increased understanding and road map for how to work together to support education-best interest decisions, resulting in more informed education-decisions; greater school stability; improved school transitions, when school moves occur; ultimately, creating better educational outcomes for students in foster care.

## SCENARIO: EMERGENCY SCHOOL WITHDRAWAL

### CIRCUMSTANCES AND EXAMPLES:

The student quickly moves from one residential location to another in these circumstances. The student is in immediate/crisis situations that require swift action.

**Examples include:**

- ◆ Initial entry into foster care
- ◆ Immediate placement change (e.g., the student needs to live somewhere else due to court orders or safety concerns)
- ◆ Psychiatric hospital admission
- ◆ Arrest or juvenile detention

### WHO WILL CONTACT THE SCHOOL?

Agency staff (e.g., DFPS/SSCC\* caseworker or education specialist) or student's new caregiver will contact the previous school attended, by phone.

### WHEN WILL CONTACT OCCUR?

Immediately after student's placement changes. In emergency instances, the placement change most likely will have already occurred.

### WHAT DOCUMENTATION IS NEEDED?

DFPS Form 2085 or 2085E and/or Court Order.

The caseworker or student's caregiver will notify the [foster care liaison](#) to expedite the collection of information and records to support a smooth transition to the new school.

### WHAT INFORMATION OR DOCUMENTS WILL BE COLLECTED BY THE SCHOOL AND PROVIDED TO DFPS/SSCC?

- ◆ TASB [Exhibit A](#) Student in Foster Care Education Best-Interest Factors
- ◆ Special education services or special accommodations (e.g., IEP or 504), such as transportation
- ◆ Information on the student's positive connections and school community supports
- ◆ Extra-curricular activities/interests
- ◆ Any other services, tutoring, general transportation arrangements
- ◆ Special endorsements

\* All relevant information will be helpful to the student and DFPS to reduce trauma, identify services and support needed, and ensure education continuity.

### HOW MUCH TIME DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION?

- ◆ As soon as possible
- ◆ Within 10 business day turn around

**Recommendation:**

- ◆ Day 1-3: foster care liaison (or other school designee) reaches out and begins gathering information
- ◆ Day 5-10, or sooner: foster care liaison (or other school designee) synthesizes information and follows up with DFPS caseworker and the student's caregiver

### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Education Best Interest Decision will already have been made. However, schools can provide information to expedite enrollment, support streamlined transitions, and gather information to support the student.

Foster care is a term used to describe when a child is placed outside the home with a relative, kinship, foster home, or residential placement.

\*Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is appointed the managing conservator if a court decides it is unsafe for a child to remain in the home. In regions with Community-Based Care, a Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) performs the duties required of DFPS. DFPS works with the SSCC to ensure educational needs are met.

**KEY:**

- DFPS LED
- LEA LED

## SCENARIO: PLANNED SCHOOL WITHDRAWAL (DFPS OR CAREGIVER INITIATED)

### CIRCUMSTANCES AND EXAMPLES:

Planned school withdrawals may happen in advance. There may be more time to plan but this is not always the case. Student should remain in their [school of origin](#) whenever possible. However, planned school withdrawals may happen in advance. There may be more time to plan but this is not always the case.

#### **Planned Withdrawal (DFPS Initiated) examples:**

- ◆ Student returning home
- ◆ Moving to a placement to be connected with siblings
- ◆ Moving to be with a kinship caregiver
- ◆ Placed in another state
- ◆ Caregiver and student move together to another location

#### **Planned Withdrawal (Caregiver Initiated) examples:**

- ◆ Caregiver no longer providing foster care (e.g., health issues)
- ◆ Caregiver requests a placement change
- ◆ Caregiver moves out of state and cannot take student with them

### WHO WILL CONTACT THE SCHOOL?

Agency staff (e.g., DFPS/SSCC\* caseworker or education specialist) or student's caregiver in some cases.

### WHEN WILL CONTACT OCCUR?

Depending on the circumstances, before the student is withdrawn from their current school. Generally, about 7-10 business days before the placement change is to occur.

### WHAT DOCUMENTATION IS NEEDED?

The Court order and DFPS Form 2085 or 2085E.

The caseworker or student's caregiver will notify the [foster care liaison](#) to expedite the collection of information and records to support a smooth transition to the new school.

### WHAT INFORMATION OR DOCUMENTS WILL BE COLLECTED BY THE SCHOOL AND PROVIDED TO DFPS/SSCC?

- ◆ TASB [Exhibit A](#) Student in Foster Care Education Best-Interest Factors
- ◆ Special education services or special accommodations (e.g., IEP or 504), such as transportation
- ◆ Information on the student's positive connections and school community support
- ◆ Extra-curricular activities/interests.
- ◆ Any other services, tutoring, general transportation arrangements
- ◆ Special endorsements

\*All relevant information will be helpful to the child and DFPS to reduce trauma, identify services and support needed, and ensure educational continuity.

### HOW MUCH TIME DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION?

- ◆ Maximum 10 business day turn around

#### **Recommendation:**

- ◆ Coordination should be as soon as change of placement is identified
- ◆ Day 1-3: Foster care liaison (or other school designee) reaches out and begins gathering information
- ◆ Day 5-10, or sooner: Foster care liaison (or other designee) synthesizes information and follows up with caseworker and the student's caregiver

### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Information from the school will help to inform decision-making. The caregiver can inform the teacher of the child moving and when it will occur; if the teacher is aware of close connections that the student has that would be interested in having the student in their home, they can inform the caseworker.

\*Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is appointed the managing conservator if a court decides it is unsafe for a child to remain in the home. In regions with Community-Based Care, a Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) performs the duties required of DFPS. DFPS works with the SSCC to ensure educational needs are met.