

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH

The Governing Board recognizes that foster youth may be at greater risk for poor academic performance due to their family circumstances, disruption of their educational program, and emotional, social, and other health needs. The district shall provide such students with full access to the district's educational program and other support services necessary to assist them in achieving state and district academic standards.

(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)
(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)
(cf. 5149 - At-Risk Students)
(cf. 6011- Academic Standards)
(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)
(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)
(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)
(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)
(cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that placement decisions for foster youth are based on the students' best interests as defined in law and administrative regulation. To that end, he/she shall designate a staff person as a district liaison for foster youth to help facilitate the enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth.

The Superintendent or designee and district liaison shall ensure that all appropriate staff, including, but not limited to, each principal, school registrar, and attendance clerk, receive training regarding the enrollment, placement, and rights of foster youth.

(cf. 4131, 4231, 4331 - Staff Development)

The Board desires to provide foster youth with a safe, positive learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and promotes students' self-esteem and academic achievement. The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies to build students' feelings of connectedness with the school, including, but not limited to, strategies that promote positive discipline and conflict resolution, the development of students' resiliency and interpersonal skills, and the involvement of foster parents, group home administrators, and/or other caretakers in school programs and activities.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)
(cf. 5131 - Conduct)
(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)
(cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)
(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)
(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

The Superintendent or designee shall regularly report to the Board on the educational outcomes of foster youth enrolled in the district including, but not limited to, school attendance, student achievement test results, promotion and retention rates by grade level, graduation rates, and suspension/expulsion rates.

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)
(cf. 5123 - Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)
(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))
(cf. 6162.51 - Standardized Testing and Reporting Program)
(cf. 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

32228-32228.5 Student safety and violence prevention
42920-42925 Foster children educational services
48645-48646 Juvenile court schools
48850-48859 Educational placement of students residing in licensed children's institutions
49061 Student records
49069.5 Foster care students, transfer of records
49076 Access to student records
51225.3 High school graduation
56055 Rights of foster parents in special education
60851 High school exit examination

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

1522.41 Training and certification of group home administrators
1529.2 Training of licensed foster parents

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

300 Children subject to jurisdiction
309 Investigation and release of child
361 Limitations on parental or guardian control
366.27 Educational decision by relative providing living arrangements
602 Minors violating law; ward of court
726 Limitations on parental or guardian control
727 Order of care, ward of court

16000-16014 Foster care placement

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

794 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

670-679b Federal assistance for foster care programs
11431-11435 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Educating Foster Youth: Best Practices and Board Considerations, Policy Brief, March 2008

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

Mythbusting: Breaking Down Confidentiality and Decision-Making Barriers to Meet the Education Needs of Children in Foster Care, 2005

CITIES, COUNTIES AND SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PUBLICATIONS

Our Children: Emancipating Foster Youth, A Community Action Guide

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California Department of Education, Foster Youth Services: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy>

California Department of Social Services, Foster Youth Ombudsman Office:

<http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov>

California Youth Connection: <http://www.cal youthconn.org/site/cyc>

Cities, Counties and Schools Partnership: <http://www.ccspartnership.org>

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH**Definitions**

Foster youth means a child who has been removed from his/her home pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 309, or has been removed from his/her home and is the subject of a petition filed under Welfare and Institutions Code 300 or 602, or is a non-minor who is under the transition jurisdiction of a juvenile court, as described in Welfare and Institutions Code 450, and satisfies the criteria specified in Education Code 42238.01. (Education Code 42237.01, 48853.5)

Person holding the right to make educational decisions means a responsible adult appointed by a court pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 361 or 726.

School of origin means the school that the foster youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which he/she was last enrolled. If the school the foster youth attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which he/she was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster youth attended within the preceding 15 months and with which the youth is connected, the district liaison shall, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth, determine, in the best interests of the foster youth, which school is the school of origin. (Education Code 48853.5)

Best interests means that, in making educational and school placement decisions for a foster youth, consideration is given to, among other factors, educational stability, the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress, and the foster youth's access to academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all district students. (Education Code 48850, 48853)

District Liaison

The Superintendent designates the following position as the district liaison for foster youth: (Education Code 48853.5)

Project Director of Student Services

9515 Haney Street

Pico Rivera, CA 90660

(562) 801-5162

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

The district's liaison for foster youth shall:

1. Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of students in foster care (Education Code 48853.5)
2. Ensure proper transfer of credits, records, and grades when students in foster care transfer from one school to another or from one district to another (Education Code 48853.5, 48645.5)

(cf. 5117 - Interdistrict Attendance)
(cf. 5125 - Student Records)
(cf. 6146.3 - Reciprocity of Academic Credit)

3. When required by law, notify the foster youth's attorney and the representative of the appropriate county child welfare agency when the foster youth is undergoing any expulsion or other disciplinary proceeding, including a manifestation determination prior to a change in the foster youth's placement, when he/she is a student with a disability (Education Code 48853.5, 48911, 48915.5, 48918.1)

(cf. 5144.1 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
(cf. 5144.2 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))
(cf. 6159.4 – Behavioral Interventions for Special Education Students)

4. As needed, ensure that students in foster care receive appropriate school-based services, such as counseling and health services, supplemental instruction, and after-school services

(cf. 5141.6 – School Health Services)
(cf. 5148.2 – Before/After School Programs)
(cf. 6164.2 – Guidance/Counseling Services)
(cf. 5141.6 – School Health Services)
(cf. 5148.2 – Before/After School Programs)
(cf. 6164.2 – Guidance/Counseling Services)
(cf. 6172 – Gifted and Talented Student Program)
(cf. 6174 – Education for English Language Learners)
(cf. 6177 – Summer Learning Programs)
(cf. 6179 – Supplemental Instruction)

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

5. Develop protocols and procedures for creating awareness for district staff, including principals, school registrars, and attendance clerks, of the requirements for the proper enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth.

(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 – Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 – Staff Development)

Enrollment

A foster youth placed in a licensed children's institution or foster family home within the district shall attend programs operated by the district unless one of the following circumstances applies: (Education Code 48853, 48853.5)

1. The student has an individualized education program requiring placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency or in another local educational agency.

(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)

(cf. 6159.2 - Nonpublic, Nonsectarian School and Agency Services for Special Education)

2. The parent/guardian or other person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student determines that it is in the best interest of the student to be placed in another educational program and submits a written statement to the district indicating that determination and that he/she is aware of the following:
 - a. The student has a right to attend a regular public school in the least restrictive environment.
 - b. The alternate education program is a special education program, if applicable.
 - c. The decision to unilaterally remove the student from the district school and to place him/her in an alternate education program may not be financed by the district.
 - d. Any attempt to seek reimbursement for the alternate education program may be at the expense of the parent/guardian or other person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student.

(cf. 6159.3 - Appointment of Surrogate Parent for Special Education Students)

(cf. 5116.1 – Intradistrict Open Enrollment)

(cf. 5117 – Interdistrict Attendance)

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

3. At the initial placement or any subsequent change in placement, the student exercises his/her right to continue in his/her school of origin, as defined above
 - a. The student may continue in the school of origin for the duration of the court's jurisdiction or, if the court's jurisdiction over a K-8 student is terminated prior to the end of a school year, then for remainder of the school year.
 - b. If the court's jurisdiction is terminated while the student is in high school, the student may continue his/her school of origin until he/she graduates.
 - c. To provide the student the benefit of matriculating with his/her peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school districts, a student who is transitioning between school grade levels shall be allowed to continue in the district of origin in the same attendance area. A student who is transitioning to a middle school or high school shall be allowed to enroll in the school designated for matriculation in another school district.

The district liaison may, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth, recommend that the youth's right to attend the school of origin be waived and he/she be enrolled in any school that students living in the attendance area in which the foster youth resides are eligible to attend. All decisions shall be made in accordance with the foster youth's best interests. (Education Code 48853.5)

Prior to making any recommendation to move a foster youth from his/her school of origin, the liaison shall provide the youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth with a written explanation of the basis for the recommendation and how this recommendation serves the youth's best interests. (Education Code 48853.5)

The role of the liaison shall be advisory with respect to placement decisions and determination of the school of origin. (Education Code 48853.5)

If the liaison, in consultation with the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth, agrees that the best interests of the youth would be served by his/her transfer to a school other than the school of origin, the principal or designee of the new school shall immediately enroll the foster youth. The youth shall be immediately enrolled even if he/she has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or monies due to the school last attended or is unable to produce records, such as academic or medical records, including, but not limited to

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

immunization records, proof of residency, or clothing normally required for enrollment. (Education Code 48853.5)

(cf. 5125.2 - Withholding Grades, Diploma or Transcripts)

(cf. 5132 - Dress and Grooming)

(cf. 5141.26 - Tuberculosis Testing)

(cf. 5141.31 - Immunizations)

(cf. 5141.32 - Health Screening for School Entry)

Within two business days of a request for enrollment, district staff shall contact the school last attended by the student to obtain all academic and other records. Upon receiving a request from a new school, district staff shall provide all records within two business days of receiving the request. (Education Code 48853.5)

If a person with the right to make educational decisions for a foster youth or the foster youth disagrees with the liaison's enrollment recommendation, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall make a determination within 30 days of receipt of the appeal. Within 30 days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision, the parent/guardian or foster youth may appeal that decision to the Board. The Board shall consider the issue at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board's decision shall be final.

If any dispute arises regarding the request of a foster youth to remain in the school of origin, the youth has the right to remain in the school of origin pending resolution of the dispute. (Education Code 48853.5)

Transportation

The district shall not be responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.

Applicability of Graduation Requirements

To obtain a high school diploma, a foster youth shall complete all courses required by Education Code 51225.3 and fulfill any additional graduation requirements prescribed by the Board.

(cf. 6146.1 – High School Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6162.52 – High School Exit Examination)

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

When a foster youth who has completed his/her second year of high school transfers into the district from another school district or transfers between high schools within the district, he/she shall be exempted from all coursework and other graduation requirements adopted by the Board that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements specified in Education Code 51225.3, unless the district makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the additional requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of his/her fourth year of high school. Within 30 calendar days of the foster youth's transfer, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the foster youth, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for him/her, and the foster youth's social worker of the availability of the exemption and whether the foster youth qualifies for it. If the Superintendent or designee fails to provide this notification, the student shall be eligible for the exemption once notified, even if the notification occurs after the student is no longer a foster youth. (Education Code 51225.3, 60851)

To determine whether a foster youth is in his/her third or fourth year of high school, the district shall use either the number of credits the foster youth has earned as of the date of the transfer or the length of his/her school enrollment, whichever qualifies him/her for the exemption. (Education Code 51225.1)

The Superintendent or designee shall notify any student who is granted an exemption and, as appropriate, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student if any of the requirements that are waived will affect the student's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution and shall provide information about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges. (Education Code 51225.3)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination)

The district shall not require or request a foster youth to transfer schools in order to qualify for an exemption and no request for a transfer solely to qualify for an exemption shall be made by a foster youth or any person acting on behalf of a foster youth. (Education Code 51225.1)

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

If a foster youth is exempted from local graduation requirements, the exemption shall continue to apply after the termination of the court's jurisdiction over the student while he/she is still enrolled in school or if he/she transfers to another school or school district. (Education Code 51225.1)

Upon making a finding that a foster youth is reasonably able to complete district graduation requirements within his/her fifth year of high school, the Superintendent or designee shall: (Education Code 51225.1)

1. Inform the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for him/her of the foster youth's option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the district's graduation requirements and how that will affect his/her ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution
2. Provide information to the foster youth about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges
3. Upon agreement with the foster youth or, if he/she is under 18 years of age, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for him/her, permit the foster youth to stay in school for a fifth year to complete the district's graduation requirements

Grades/Credits

Grades for a student in foster care shall not be lowered if the student is absent from school due to either of the following circumstances: (Education Code 49069.5)

1. A decision by a court or placement agency to change the student's placement, in which case the student's grades and credits shall be calculated as of the date he/she left school
2. A verified court appearance or related court-ordered activity

(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)

When a foster youth transfers into a district school, the district shall accept and issue full credit for any coursework that the foster youth has satisfactorily completed while attending another public school, a juvenile court school, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency and shall not require the foster youth to retake the course (Education Code 51225.2)

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)**Transfer of Course Work and Credits**

If the foster youth did not complete the entire course, he/she shall be issued partial credit for the coursework completed and shall be required to take the portion of the course that he/she did not complete at his/her previous school. However, the district may require the foster youth to retake the portion of the course completed if, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the foster youth, the district finds that the foster youth is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. Whenever partial credit is issued to a foster youth in any particular course, he/she shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that he/she may continue and complete the entire course. (Education Code 51225.2)

Partial credits shall be awarded on the basis of 0.5 credits for every seven class periods attended per subject. If the school is on a block schedule, each block schedule class period attended shall be equal to two regular class periods per subject. Partial credits and grades earned by a student shall be included on the student's official transcript within two business days of the district's notification of the student's transfer, as required under Education Code 49069.5

# OF CLASS PERIODS ATTENDED	CREDITS EARNED
7-13	.5 Credits
14-20	1.0 Credits
21-27	1.5 Credits
28-34	2.0 Credits
35-41	2.5 Credits
42-48	3.0 Credits
49-55	3.5 Credits
56-62	4.0 Credits
63-69	4.5 Credits
70	5.0 Credits

*Based on a 5 credit course

**For block schedule courses, count each class period of attendance as 2

EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH (continued)

In no event shall the district prevent a foster youth from taking or retaking a course to meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University or the University of California. (Education Code 51225.2)

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

A foster youth who changes residences pursuant to a court order or decision of a child welfare worker shall be immediately deemed to meet all residency requirements for participation in interscholastic sports or other extracurricular activities. (Education Code 48850)

(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)

(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)