

## Core Competencies of Foster Care and Education

July 19, 2019



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### Foster Care Legal Milestones



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### EDUCATIONAL STABILITY --WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

- Children and youth represent one of the most vulnerable student subgroups in this country.
- Children and youth in foster care are much more likely to struggle academically and fall behind in school.
- Children and youth in foster care are more likely to experience unplanned school changes than the peers.
- It is estimated that a child or youth loses four to six months of academic progress each time they change schools.
- School stability often impacts placement stability.



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### WHAT TO DO?

Best interest decisions require gathering quality information from a number of sources.

- often in a short period of time, and
- while other critical events are occurring



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### HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT IT?

- Talk to your youth.
- Talk to the parent or caregiver.
- Get school records and review them.
- Be aware as you connect with the youth and the people that surround the youth.
- Understand the protections that federal and state law provide,
- Don't be afraid of to ask questions and don't be afraid to change directions if what your doing does not work.
- If you don't have enough information, figure out how to get it.



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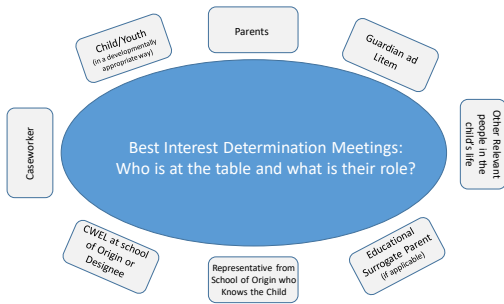
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Note: Ideally the child's whole system and the potential receiving school should attend the meeting (e.g. CASA, support people for the child)

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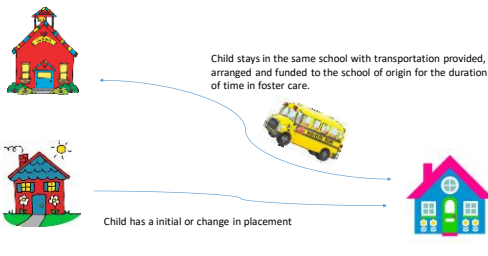
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Ideally...



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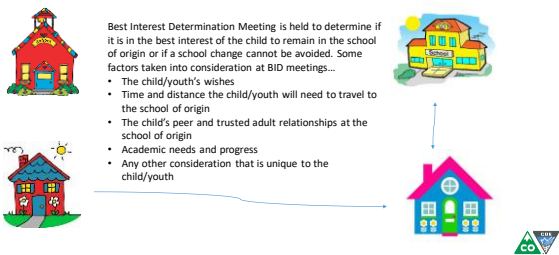
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But if the school of origin is too far from the new placement



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### When a school change is necessary



- School A and the BID team should make sure:**
- Complete records are sent before the student starts school at School B
  - Arrange a transfer meeting and ideally meet before the child leaves School A for School B
  - Talk to the new school about the child's interests, struggles, and academic progress
  - Make a meaningful transition plan



- School B Should:**
- Ensure immediate enrollment
  - Make sure the right people are at the school to help the child feel welcomed and safe
  - Ensure fees are waived
  - Ensure child receives free meals at school
  - Provide access to extracurricular activities
  - Assess any academic gaps/needs and make a child-centered plan



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### So how long does this go on?



There is no set time limit. Permanency plans should be discussed along the way, and the child's voice is always the most important, but the child is entitled to remain in their school of origin.



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## References

- 42 U.S.C. § 675 (1)(G); 20 U.S.C. § 6311 (g)(1)(E) and § 6312(c)(5)(B).
- 20 U.S.C. § 6312(c)(5)(B).
- Clemens, E. V. (2014). Graduation and Dropout Rates for Colorado Students in Foster Care: 5-Year Trend Analysis (2007-08 to 2011-12). Greeley, CO: University of Northern Colorado.
- Colorado Department of Education (March 15, 2018). 2017 State Policy Report, Dropout Prevention and Student Engagement at 16.
- HB 18-1306 codified at § 22-32-138(1)(h), C.R.S. (2018, eff. August 8, 2018).
- *Id.* at § 138(1)(g).

