



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

FY23 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, the 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 the 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, the 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.

Instructions for submission:

- After the LEA superintendent signs the assurances, scan the entire document as a PDF and save it as the "FY23 Foster Care Transportation Plan".
- Upload the signed PDF version of the document to the CLIP online portal via the Consolidated Application for FY23.



FY23 Foster Care Transportation Plan

NOTE: *In order to answer the questions below, refer to the [Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability for Children 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.*

The CSD identified POC will work closely with EPAC POC to ensure that each child placed into foster care will be placed in the school of origin or the school which the local child welfare office determines most appropriate and receive transportation to his or her school of origin.

When transportation of the foster child is an issue, the CSD POC, Federal Programs Coordinator/Director, case manager/social workers, and the EPAC POC, will collaborate to develop a transportation plan that meets the needs of the individual child.

If additional transportation costs are incurred in providing transportation to the school of origin, CSD will provide such transportation if (1) the local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse CSD for the cost of such transportation; (2) CSD agrees to pay for the cost; or (3) CSD and local child welfare agency agree to share the cost.

In the event of a dispute, CSD & EPAC will defer to the CSD Federal Programs Coordinator and DFCS Director for resolution.

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.*

CSD and DFCS will work cooperatively to insure that transportation is provided immediately and not a barrier, even in the face of difficulty regarding transportation costs. If there is difficulty reaching an agreement on how to pay for additional transportation costs, the partners will coordinate a meeting to consider and utilize all allowable funding sources, including Federal funds. All possible funding sources will be maximized to help ensure that transportation costs for children in foster care do not become overly demanding on any one agency.

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.*

The CSD Foster Care POC will contact the CSD Transportation Director immediately when foster parents, a DFCS Caseworker, LEA Student Support Director, Court Appointed Special Advocate, Juvenile Court representative, etc., contacts or makes a request for transportation to CSD for a student in foster care. The CSD POC will also collaborate with parties involved to ensure transportation needs for children in foster care are met in a timely manner.



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II. Foster Care Transportation Plan: GUIDING QUESTIONS			
<p>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:</p>			
	YES	NO	N/A
1. The local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the LEA for the cost of such transportation.	Yes		
2. The LEA agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation.	Yes		
3. The LEA and local child welfare agency agree to share the cost of such transportation.	Yes		
<p>Describe the agreement the LEA has made with the local child welfare agency regarding transportation costs. <i>Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.</i></p> <p>CSD and DFCS will share transportation cost in the event that additional transportation costs are unavoidable. DFCS will assume financial responsibility for exceptional costs such as paying foster parents to transport distances over 25 miles or contracting with transportation companies. CSD will assume financial responsibility for costs associated with re-routing CSD transportation.</p>			
<p>B. All LEAs must meet the requirement to provide transportation for children who are in foster care to their schools of origin (<i>Similar to the McKinney-Vento requirement for students experiencing homelessness</i>). Does your LEA currently provide transportation services? If no, describe your plan to meet this mandate.</p>	Yes		
<p><i>Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.</i></p> <p>N/A</p>			