



NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

2023-2024 Foster Care Program Report **FC01-FC05**

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Submission FC01 – Foster Care Liaison

- Submit a copy of the following four items:
 - School board meeting minutes to reflect the designation of the foster care liaison,
 - The district's job description for the foster care liaison,
 - The percentage of time devoted to the role of foster care liaison, and
 - Documentation of webinars/sessions attended, and 5) staff development training provided by the district liaison.

Label as Submission FC01.

Requirement

1111(g)(1)(E) and 1112(c)(5)(A)

LEAs have a designated foster care liaison in place. The local liaison must be knowledgeable about implementing the Title I educational stability requirements for children in foster care and have sufficient capacity to fulfill their duties.

Liaisons provide information on their role to school personnel, service providers, and advocates working with foster care youth. The local liaison provides the following information for all students in foster care: the names and addresses of the educational agencies; the child's grade level performance; placement and exit date; current class schedule; home language; high school exit exam results, and attendance records.

Documentation

- School board meeting minutes naming the district foster care liaison (please highlight appropriate section)
- District job description for foster care liaison
- Documentation of the percentage of time devoted to the role of foster care liaison per week
- Documentation of other responsibilities and roles that the foster care liaison is responsible for in the district
- Documentation of webinars attended by liaison
- Documentation of staff/school training provided by liaison

Resources

- [Foster Care Webpage](#)
- Webinars
 - [Ensuring Educational Stability](#)
 - [Strategies for Collaboration](#)
 - [Best Interest Determination, Immediate Enrollment, and Record Transfer](#)

Submission FC02 – Best Interest of Determination

- Submit a copy of the following two items:
 - The district's Best Interest of Determination (BID) form, and
 - The district policy ensuring stability or the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Label as Submission FC02.

Requirement

1111(g)(1)(E)(i) and 1112(c)(5)

An LEA, in collaboration with the custodial agency, must determine whether it is in the child's best interest to remain in their school of origin and take into consideration all factors relating to a child's best interest.

If the LEA Foster Care Liaison is not immediately notified of a Foster Care student transfer, it is critical to contact the custodial agency and document why the school was not involved.

Transportation costs should NOT be considered when determining a child's best interest.

Documentation

- District Best Interest Determination form (BID) – displaying district letterhead/logo
- Documentation of foster youth who are attending their school of origin (*names redacted*)
- Documentation of foster youth who have transferred to another district (*names redacted*)
- District Policy that Ensures Educational Stability for Foster Care Youth

Resources

- [Best Interest Determination](#)
- [Collaborative Roles](#)

Submission FC03 – Immediate Enrollment/School of Origin

- Submit the district policy, ensuring immediate enrollment in the school regardless of relevant records and documentation. **Label as Submission FC03.**

Requirement

1111(g)(1)(E)(ii)(iii)

LEAs must immediately enroll foster care students in their new school to prevent educational discontinuity. The school of origin is responsible for sending all essential academic records to the receiving school within 48 hours of the BID decision. In addition, enrollment must not be denied or delayed for any population of students, even if the student doesn't have the required documentation. The enrolling school must immediately contact a child's school of origin to obtain relevant records and documentation.

Documentation

- BID documentation of youth with the date of the decision
- District protocol for record transfer for youth in foster care
- District protocol for enrollment of youth in foster care
- District Policy that Ensures Educational Stability for Foster Care Youth

Resources

- [Best Interest Determination](#)
- [Collaborative Roles](#)

Submission FC04 – Transportation Policy & District Form

- Submit a copy of the following two items:
 - The district’s Transportation form, and
 - The district policy governing how transportation is provided, arranged, and funded or the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Label as Submission FC04.

Requirement

1112 (c)(5)(B) and Social Security Act 475(4)(A)

The LEA must collaborate with local child welfare agencies to ensure that transportation to the school of origin for foster care children is provided, arranged, and funded for the duration of the child's time in foster care.

Documentation

- District Transportation Form – displaying district letterhead/logo
- District policy on transportation for youth in foster care
- Documentation of how transportation to the school of origin will be provided, arranged, and funded.
- Copy of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Resources

- [Transportation Plan Guide](#)
- Sample Transportation Agreement MOU (see following pages)
- [Transportation form template](#)

Sample Documentation – Submission FC04 – Transportation Agreement MOU

TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between
Local Education Agency (LEA)
and
Custodial Agency (CA)

Transportation Procedures Agreement

*To ensure the educational stability of Foster Care Youth:
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Requirements*

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) addresses transportation-related provisions. Additional policies may be added to address the unique needs of each collaboration between the LEA and CA to ensure foster care youth's educational stability. Note: This MOU is not a local transportation plan; it is an agreement between the LEA and CA to collaboratively design a local transportation plan.

Purpose:

The purpose of this agreement is to establish transportation procedures between _____ (LEA) and _____ (CA) to ensure the provision of transportation for foster care youth enrolled in an LEA (Pre-K – 12) when the best interest determination indicates that the student should remain in the school of origin, and alternative means of transportation to and from school have been fully explored and deemed unavailable.

Joint Responsibilities:

- The LEA and CA agree to collaborate to update or establish formal mechanisms to ensure that the LEA is promptly notified when a child enters foster care or has changes in foster care placement.
- The LEA and CA agree to collaborate to jointly design a comprehensive transportation plan to ensure that transportation for children in foster care is provided, arranged, and funded.
- Both parties agree that under no circumstances shall a transportation dispute between parties delay or interrupt the provision of transportation for a child to the school of origin.
- Both parties agree to communicate regularly and share leadership responsibilities at the local level to ensure that available resources for transportation are utilized most effectively, without duplication.
- Both parties agree that transportation must be provided in a “cost-effective” manner with low-cost/no-cost options explored. (e.g., pre-existing bus stops or public transportation, foster parents provide transportation, transportation by other programs if the child is eligible).
- Both parties agree to maintain the confidentiality of information regarding children and families being served in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and all other State and Federal laws and regulations regarding confidentiality.
- Both parties understand that all federal, state, and local funding sources should be maximized to ensure transportation costs are not unduly burdensome on one agency.

School District Responsibilities:

- Establish a Foster Care Point of Contact (POC), given the importance of transportation to ensure educational stability requirements defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Share the Foster Care POC's contact information with state and local education and child welfare agencies.
- Understand that even if an LEA does not transport other students, it must ensure that transportation is provided to children in foster care, adhering to the collaboratively designed transportation plan.
- Acknowledge that Title I is an allowable funding source for additional transportation costs, although funds reserved for comparable services for homeless children and youth may not be used for

transportation.

- Inform CA whether Title I funds are available to support **additional** transportation costs for foster care children to maintain enrollment in their school of origin.
- Agree, if applicable, to support additional transportation costs for eligible foster care youth utilizing funds made available within Title I.
- Understand if there are additional costs to provide transportation for children in foster care to remain in their school of origin, the LEA (school of origin) will provide such transportation if (1) CA agrees to reimburse the LEA for the cost of transportation; (2) the LEA agrees to pay for the additional costs; or (3) the LEA and CA agree to share the costs.
- Agree that a child must remain in their school of origin while any disputes are being resolved. Agree to provide or arrange adequate and appropriate transportation to and from the school of origin while any disputes are being resolved.

Custodial Agency Responsibilities:

- Identify all children in foster care enrolled in the LEA for the LEA and CA to fulfill the jointly agreed upon transportation responsibilities.
- Inform LEA of children in foster care who may need transportation to maintain enrollment in their school of origin.
- Agree to immediately inform the school of origin of children in foster care who experience a change of foster care placement.
- Agree, if applicable, to support transportation costs for eligible foster care youth utilizing funds made available within the county’s child welfare budget under Section 475(4)(A) of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act.
- Inform the LEA/school of origin whether Title IV-E funds are available to support additional transportation costs for foster care children to maintain enrollment in their school of origin. Agree to assist the LEA/school of origin in exploring the full range of options for providing and funding transportation to maintain a child in their school of origin, consistent with the child’s educational stability plan.

Updates and Revisions:

Updates and revisions to this MOU should be made as needed and maintained on file by both entities. The school district and custodial agency agree to update or revise this MOU as needed or every three years to coincide with the contractual timelines.

This agreement will be reviewed and approved by representatives of both agencies:

[Custodial Agency Name]

[Address]

[Address]

[City, State, Zip]

Custodial Agency Printed Name: _____

Custodial Agency Signature: _____ Date: _____

[School District]

[Address]

[Address]

[City, State, Zip]

LEA Printed Name: _____

LEA Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submission FC05 – Collaboration

- Submit documentation that the Foster Care Liaison coordinates with local social services, agencies, parents/ guardians, custodial, and other school personnel providing services to foster care children. Evidence could include meeting schedules, agency and coalition contacts, coordination with other district programs, and interaction with other district liaisons, including documents illustrating the local partnerships and collaborations in which the liaison is engaged. **Label as Submission FC05.**

Requirement

ESSA Sec. 1111(g)(1)(E) and Social Security Act Sec. 475(1)(G) Fostering Connections to Success Act of 2008

Educational and child welfare agencies collaborate to make informed decisions about children and remove barriers that may hinder the implementation of Title I foster care provisions. Liaisons and custodial agencies should collaborate to ensure that all school staff is sensitive to the complex needs of foster youth, are informed about the impact trauma has on a child's ability to learn, and that the appropriate interventions and strategies are in place to support them.

Documentation

- Documentation such as agendas, minutes, sign-in sheets, etc., of meetings, agency and coalition contacts, and coordination with other district liaisons.
- Documentation of collaborative training and meetings.
- Copy of local collaboratively created documents on guidance and resources

Resources

- [Points of Contact](#)
- [Collaborative Roles](#)