Photo by Kurt Von on Unsplash

Foster Care Liaison and Building Point of Contact Training 2024-2025 School Year



Meet the OSPI Foster Care Education Team



Stacey Klim Foster Care Program Supervisor Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)



Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**



Savanna Cavalletto

Foster Care Program Specialist Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)



All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.

Transform K–12 education to a system that is centered on closing opportunity gaps and is characterized by high expectations for all students and educators. We achieve this by developing equitybased policies and supports that empower educators, families, and communities.

- Ensuring Equity
- Collaboration and Service
- Achieving Excellence through Continuous Improvement
- Focus on the Whole Child



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Equity Statement

Each student, family, and community possesses strengths and cultural knowledge that benefits their peers, educators, and schools.

Ensuring educational equity:

- Goes beyond equality; it requires education leaders to examine the ways current policies and practices result in disparate outcomes for our students of color, students living in poverty, students receiving special education and English Learner services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.
- Requires education leaders to develop an understanding of historical contexts; engage students, families, and community representatives as partners in decision-making; and actively dismantle systemic barriers, replacing them with policies and practices that ensure all students have access to the instruction and support they need to succeed in our schools.



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Tribal Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the Indigenous people who have stewarded this land since time immemorial and who still inhabit the area today, the Steh-Chass Band of Indigenous people of the Squaxin Island Tribe.









- How long have you been a Foster Care Liaison or Foster Care Building Point of Contact?
- How familiar are you with the legal provisions around foster care?
- Do you know your duties as a Foster Care Liaison or Foster Care Building Point of Contact?

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

LAW and PROVISIONS

Students Who Qualify as Foster Care

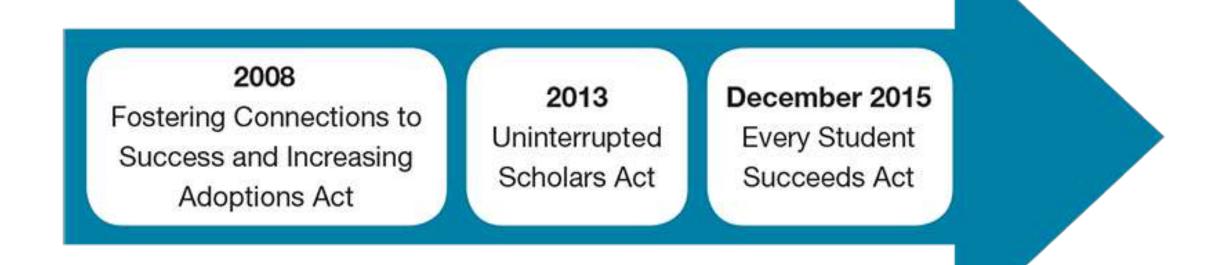
Students who are the "subject of a dependency proceeding":

- Foster Home
- Residential Facility
- Relative
- Group Home
- Emergency Shelter
- Pre-adoptive Home
- Trial-return-home

*Including <u>Tribal Child Welfare</u> and <u>Unaccompanied Refugee Minors</u> (aka Federal Foster Care)



Legislative Milestones for Educational Stability of Students in Foster Care





Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act - 2008

The child's case plan must ensure **educational stability** while the child is in foster care and include:

- Placement takes the education setting into consideration; and
- Child welfare coordinates with the school district to:
 - Ensure the child remains in his or her school of origin; or
 - Immediate and appropriate enrollment in a new school, with records transferred, if remaining in the school of origin is not in the child's best interest.



Uninterrupted Scholars Act - 2013

Educational agencies and institutions are permitted to disclose personally identifiable information (PII) from the education records of students in foster care placement, **without parental consent**, to an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency (CWA) or tribal organization authorized to access a student's case plan "when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student."

Guidance for Sharing Records with DCYF and Treehouse



Data Sharing for Student Support

Child welfare agencies need access to school records.

Caretakers/parents need access to school records.

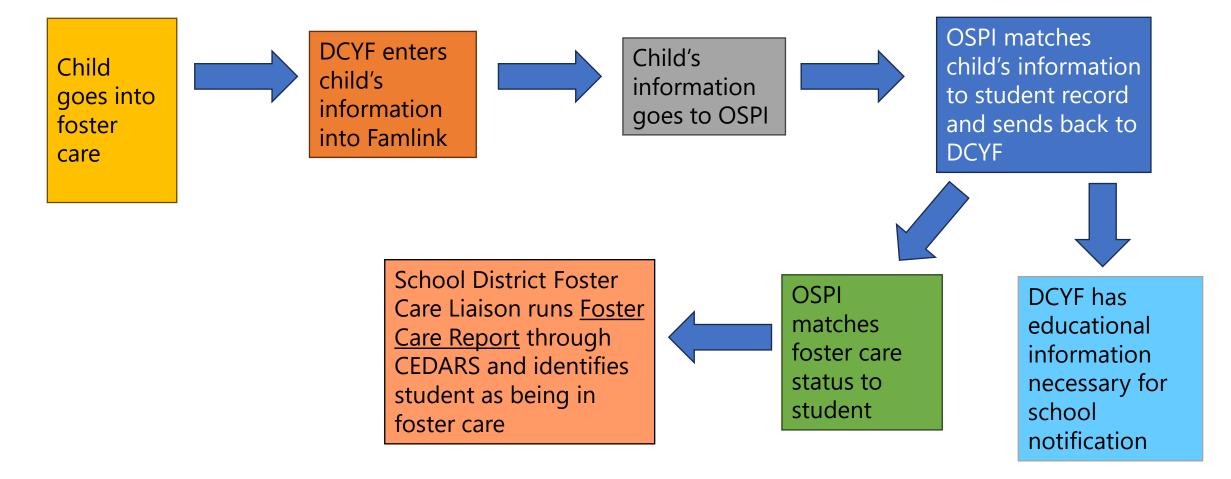
Schools need to know which students are in foster care and when they have placement changes.

Schools must exchange education records when a student in foster care changes schools.



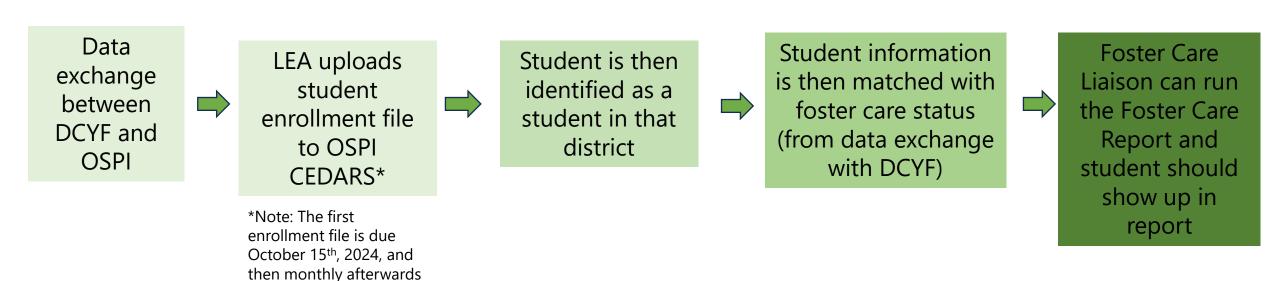


Data Sharing Agreement OSPI/DCYF





CEDARS Foster Care Report





Get access to the Foster Care Report from your school district CEDARS administrator - Foster Care Liaison CEDARS Instructions (ospi.k12.wa.us)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) - 2015

This is federal education law.

All schools must follow these provisions.

Washington State has codified these all into state law as well.

- Every school district is required to designate a Foster Care Liaison.
- Students remain in school of origin unless there is a determination that it is not in their best interest.
- Students in foster care are entitled to immediate enrollment, even without documents normally required.
- Schools/OSPI must collaborate with Child Welfare Agencies.



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – 2015 Cont.

• Every school district is required to designate a Foster Care Liaison.



Foster Care Liaison and Building Points of Contact RCW 28A.320.148

Each school district must designate a foster care liaison responsible for:

- > Facilitating district compliance with state and federal laws related to students in out-of-home care.
- > Leading and documenting the Best Interest Determination process.
- Collaborating with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to address educational barriers and serving as their primary contact person.
- Every school must have a building point of contact appointed by the principal and liaison.
- > Responsible for coordinating services and resources for students in foster care.

OSPI responsible for:

- > Providing best practices for choosing and training building points of contact to each school district.
- Building Points of Contact Toolkit



Foster Care Building **Points of** Contact – Washington **State Law**





Each school is required to designate a foster care building point of contact who knows which students are in foster care and what rights those students have under the law.

Foster Care Contacts

How to find a Foster Care Liaisons, Regional Ed Leads and State Contacts

Foster Care Liaisons/DCYF Contacts

Families, caregivers, and advocates may find contact information for Foster Care Liaison/Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) staff who can help resolve issues and provide support.

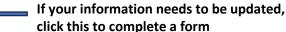
Use one of the functions below to search for your contact.

- By District-Use the searchable table below to find basic contact information for your district.
- Regional Contacts Find contact information for your accompanying DCYF regional staff member.
- State Contact-Find contact information for statewide contacts.

Foster Care Liaisons Contacts

Do you need to update your liaison contact information? Please fill out the update form below.

Update Your Liaison Contact Information



Note: Allow two weeks for submitted updates to be reflected on the list below.

Download full list of contacts

Keyword search



How to find a Foster Care Building Point of Contact

Foster Care Building Point of Contact

School Level Contact Information

Families, caregivers, and advocates may use the Foster Care Building Point of Contact list to find contact information for a specific school that a student attends.

Use one of the functions below to search for Foster Care Building Point of Contacts by school or district.

To update your building point of contact information, please fill out the update form below.

Update Your Building Point of Contact Information	Download full list of c	ontacts 🗲	If your information needs to be updated, click this to	
Note: Allow two weeks for submitted updates to b	elow.	complete a form		
School				
- Please select -	~			
School District				
- Please select -		~	Apply Reset	



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – 2015 Cont. 1

• Students remain in school of origin unless there is a determination that it is NOT in their best interest.



School of Origin

- School in which child is enrolled at time of placement change
- Child must remain in school of origin until a determination is made
- Includes LEA preschool and designated feeder schools



Best Interest Determination Process

- Student goes into Foster Care or has a change in placement
- School zone or district changes
- DCYF notifies Foster Care Liaison with School Notification Form and/or Foster Care Liaison runs CEDARS Foster Care Report and identifies student
- DCYF and Foster Care Liaison work together to schedule Best Interest Determination



Student Placements/Moves and Best Interest Determinations

- Best interest determination meetings **should be made as quickly as possible** in order to prevent educational discontinuity for the student
- The student must remain in his or her school of origin while a best interest determination is made
- Every effort should be made to **gather meaningful input** from <u>relevant and appropriate persons</u>
- <u>Student-centered factors</u> must be used to determine what is in a student's best interest





Special Needs



Timing ofLength ofSchool YearPlacement



711

Existing Connection



Washington State Department of CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

The student's social worker is to notify the school district foster care liaison that the below-named child:							
Date:							
To:							
From							
FIOM.	DCYF WORKER'S N	AME EMAIL	PHONE	FAX			
	DCYF OFFICE	DCYF SUPERVISO	R EMAIL	PHONE			
RE:							
	STUDENT'S NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	GRADE LEVEL	SCHOOL OF ORIGIN/SCHOOL DISTRICT			
	NEIGHBORHOOD S	CHOOL/SCHOOL DISTRIC	T				
	OR 504 PLAN						
		L DECISION MAKER NAME	E: PHONE:	EMAIL:			
		Stat	ement of Confident	tiality			
				r the limitations of RCW 13.50.100. This di			
				o the information by operation of any state			
		disclosure. RCW 13.50.1		laws governing confidentiality and must pro	nect the		
		nt is in the legal custody	.,				
		ed at the following locatio					
_		be moving) to a new place		ng location			
	resides in the parer	2, ,					
is placed in a trial return home							
TYPE OF PLACEMENT ANTICIPATED DATE OF MOVE							
Fo:	ster care 🛛 🔲 Rela	itive 🔲 Parent 🛛 🗌	Other:				
CAREGI	VER NAME(S)			PHONE			
ADDRESS							
EMAIL							
EDUCAT	TION LIAISON (COURT A	APPOINTED-PLEASE ATTACH	H COURT ORDER) 🔲 Y	YES 🔲 NO			
П Ре	FIRST NAME	eople named below car LAST NAME		(PARENT/UNCLE/AUNT/SIBLING, NO RELATIONS)	HIP, ETC.)		
Please	notify the DCYF w	vorker named above im	nediately if contact	t attempts are made.			
School transportation is required to maintain school of origin.							
			jin on (date). A	A best interest meeting finds that the stude	nt should		
change school placement.							
Copy of the court order is attached.							

School Notification Form

Date of Best Interest Meeting: ____ Decision: ____

Representative from Neighborhood School (required)	Parent	Caseworker
Representative from School of Origin (required)	Caregiver	☐ Youth

School Selection: A Checklist for Decision Making

School of Origin Considerations		Local Attendance Area School Considerations		
	Continuity of instruction Student is best served due to circumstances that look to their past		Continuity of instruction Student is best served due to circumstances that look to their future	
	Age and grade placement of the student Maintaining friends and contacts with peers is critical to the student's meaningful school experience and participation.		Age and grade placement of the student Maintaining friends and contacts with peers in the school of origin is not particularly critical to the student's meaningful school experience and participation.	
	Academic strength The student's academic performance is weak, and the student would fall further behind if transferred to another school.		Academic strength The student's academic performance is strong and ai grade level, and the student would likely recover academically from a school transfer.	
	Distance of the commute and its impact on the student's education and/or special needs The advantages of remaining in the school of ongin outweigh any potential disadvantages presented by the length of the commute.		Distance of the commute and its impact on the student's education and/or special needs A shorter commute may help the student's concentration, attitude, or readiness for school.	
	Personal safety of the student The school of origin has advantages for the safety of the student.		Personal safety of the student The local attendance area school has advantages for the safety of the student.	
	Student's need for special instruction The student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504 or special education and related services, can be met better at the school of origin.		Student's need for special instruction The student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504 or special education and related services, can be met better at the local attendance area school.	
	Length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or other temporary location The student's current living situation is outside of the school-of-origin attendance zone, but their living situation or location continues to be uncertain. The student will benefit from the continuity offered by remaining in the school of ongin.		Length of anticipated stay in a temporary shelter or other temporary location The student's current living situation appears stable and unlikely to change suddenly; the student will benefit from developing relationships with school peers who live in their local community.	

For more information about selecting the appropriate school placement for students in foster care, please see:

https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/fostercare/pubdocs/8est_Practices_School_Selection_for_Children_and_Youth_ _In_Foster_Care.pdf

Adapted from the Best Practices: School Selection for Students in Out-of-Home Care issue brief developed by the Legal Center for Foster Care and The National Center for Homeless Education: Fall 20



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School Notification | Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families

Who is Responsible for Education Decisions?

Parent:

Unless limited by the court, parents retain rights to make educational decisions and to access records directly from the school.

Caregivers:

Caregiver or foster care parent makes day-to-day educational decisions

➤Can serve as the "parent" regarding special education decisions

DCYF:

DCYF is authorized to make day-to-day educational decisions without parent approval

≻ May not be special educational decision maker



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – 2015 Cont. 2

• Students in foster care are entitled to **immediate enrollment**, even without documents normally required.



Immediate Enrollment

Immediate enrollment means that a child should be enrolled in, and attending, a new school as soon as possible.

- Appropriate classroom placement
- Transportation, if required

Enrollment must not be denied or delayed because documents normally required for enrollment have not provided

• Including medical records such as immunization or health plans



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – 2015 Cont. 3

• Schools/OSPI must collaborate with Child Welfare Agencies.



Department of Children, Youth, and Families Regional Structure



WASHINGTON STATE Department of Children, Youth, and Families





DCYF Regional Education Leads

Region 1

Bobbi Lloyd Bobbi.lloyd@dcyf.wa.gov

Region 2

Monica Jenkins Monica.Jenkins@dcyf.wa.gov

Region 3

Wryan Young <u>Wryan.Young@dcyf.wa.gov</u>

Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Region 4

Donna LaFrance Donna.LaFrance@dcyf.wa.gov

Region 5

Dawn Flammang Dawn.Flammang@dcyf.wa.gov

Region 6

Heather Lawhead-Hug heather.lawhead-hug@dcyf.wa.gov



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Let's Talk About..... Transportation

- When the Best Interest Determination determines that it is in a student in foster care's best interest to remain at his/her school of origin (SOO), the student is entitled to transportation to the SOO.
- A student in foster care is entitled to transportation to his/her SOO for the duration of his/her time in foster care.
- If it is determined at the Best Interest Determination that a student should be transported, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) will cover 50% of all excess costs related to transporting students in foster care to and from home and school.
- Refer to the <u>Foster Care Transportation</u> for additional information and Q & A about transportation
- Questions about reimbursement? Email DCYF Foster Care Program Manager, Terri Awoko, <u>terri.awoko@dcyf.wa.gov</u> or 360-522-3117

Regional Transportation Coordinators

Serving districts in ESD 112 and Capital Region ESD 113

Rodney McKnight

Educational Service District #112

2500 NE 65th Avenue

Vancouver, WA 98661-6812

360-952-3595

Serving districts in Olympic ESD 114 and Puget Sound ESD 121

Chris Jose

Puget Sound Educational Service District #121 1282 Valentine Ave SE

Pacific, WA 98047

253-686-1126

Serving districts in Northwest ESD 189

Mark Dennis

Northwest Educational Service District #189 1601 R Avenue Anacortes, WA 98221

360-299-4008

Serving districts in ESD 105, ESD 123, and N. Central ESD 171

Dan Payne

Educational Service District #105 33 S. Second Ave. Yakima, WA 98902 509-454-3105

Serving districts in Northeast Washington ESD 101 Eric Engle

Educational Service District #101 4202 South Regal Spokane, WA 99223 509-789-3558



Foster Care Liaison Duties

- ✓ Ensure that children in foster care are enrolled in, and regularly attending school
- \checkmark Serve as the primary contact person for child welfare and case workers
- ✓ Manage best-interest determination and transportation cost disputes
- ✓ Facilitate the transfer of records and immediate enrollment
- ✓ Facilitate data sharing with child welfare agencies, consistent with FERPA
- ✓ Develop and coordinate local transportation procedures
- ✓Attend training and professional development opportunities to improve district implementation efforts
- ✓Make sure every school has a Building Point of Contact and coordinate with them.



Building Point of Contact Duties

- Request a list of students in foster care in your building from your Foster Care Liaison at least weekly.
- Obtain a copy of the DCYF School Notification Form from the Foster Care Liaison (an example of the form can be found <u>here</u>) so you have current information about the student.
- Check with nutrition services to make sure the student is receiving free meals (no application needed).
- Fees and Fines check students' account regularly to see if there are any outstanding fees and fines. Let your district Foster Care Liaison know about any fees and fines so they can work with the DCYF caseworker to have the fees and fines paid.

≻Connect with student and build a relationship with them.



Building Point of Contacts -

Building a Support Structure

- ✓ After school activities
- ✓ School pictures
- ✓ Counseling
- ✓ College prep scholarships
- ✓ Attendance
- ✓ Discipline
 - Monitor
 - Implement supports
 - Inform foster care liaison



Special Education

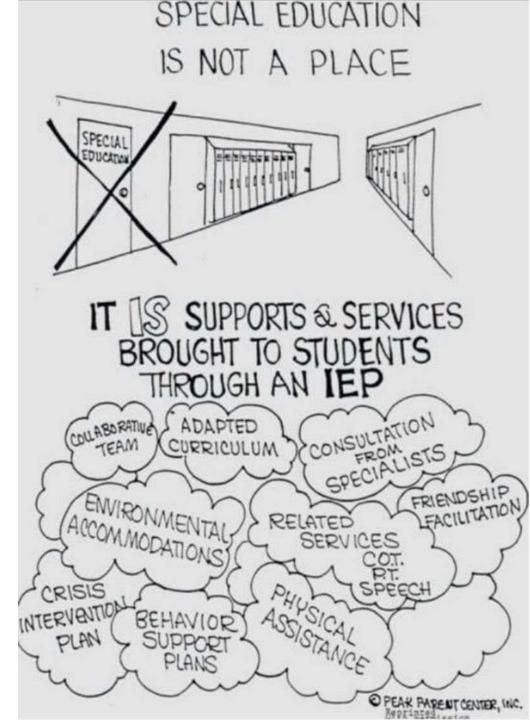
Special Education students can also be foster care students

Foster care students can also be special education students

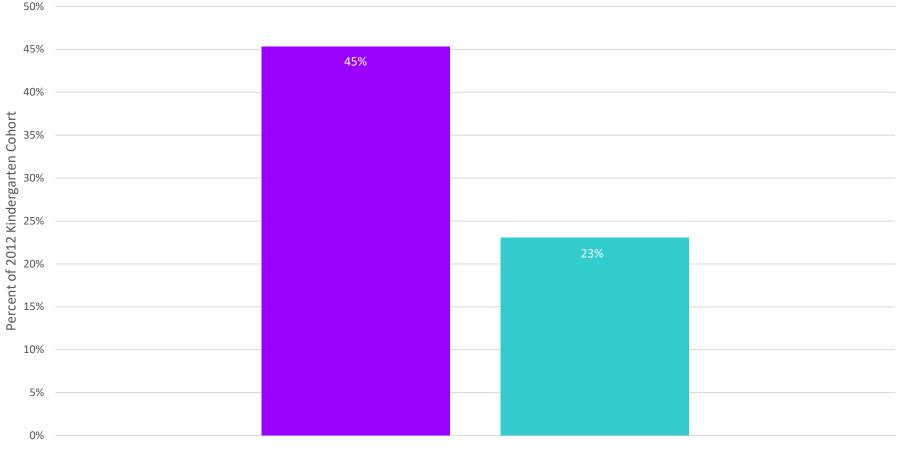
They are both protected by federal laws

They go hand in hand to better support the student





DISABILITY STATUS OF STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE COMPARED TO PEERS



Foster Care No Foster Care



Data source: ERDC P20 Data System, 2012 Kindergarten Cohort

Who Can Serve as "Parent" in Special Education Decisions?

- Biological or adoptive parent
- Caregiver or foster parent
- Person acting in place of parent and with whom student lives
- Surrogate parent appointed by the court (school districts can also appoint surrogate)
- Adult students whose rights have transferred to themselves

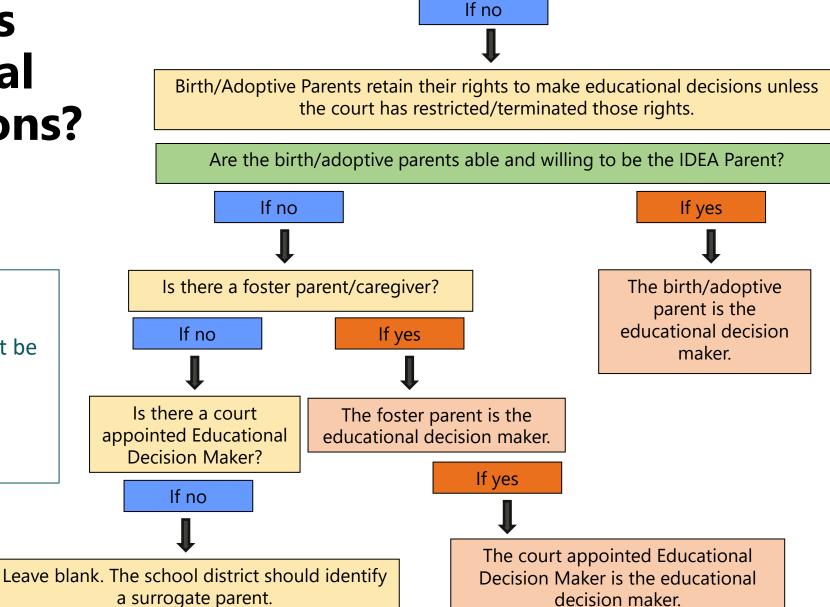
Federal law prohibits a DCYF caseworker, group home staff, and Treehouse representatives from being the special education decision maker for a student in foster care.

If the court has not restricted their access, birth parents are considered "parent" before a foster parent. School should consult with caseworker for more information.



Is the young person 18-21 years of age? (Rights held by parents transfer to the student at age 18.)

Who Can Serve as "Parent" in Special **Education Decisions?**



Who may not be the IDEA Parent?

Individuals who may have a personal or professional conflict of interest must not be the IDEA Parent, including:

- DCYF social worker/personnel
- Group home staff ۲
- OSPI or school district employees

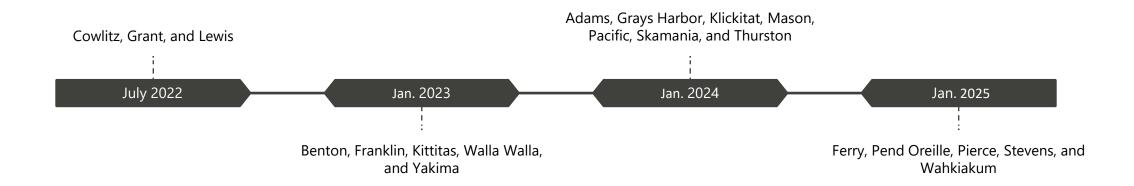
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Attorneys in Schools – Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA)

In 2021, the Legislature expanded a child's right to counsel in dependency proceedings. Codified at RCW 13.34.212(3), this new legislation ensures:

 Appointment of counsel for all children 8-17 years old at or before the commencement of the shelter care hearing and for any pending or open dependency case where counsel has not already been appointed or privately secured



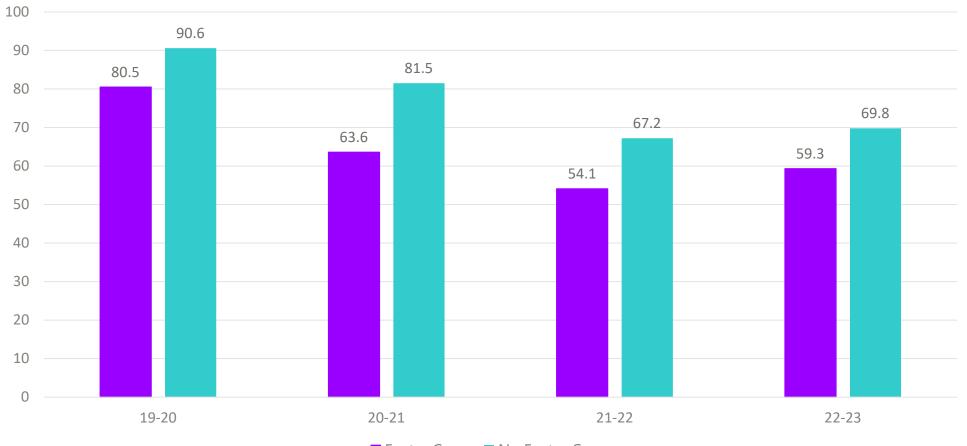


Children in foster care experience much higher levels of residential and school instability than their peers and are more likely to face a variety of academic difficulties.

CDC, 2023; U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016)



Regular Attendance 2022-2023

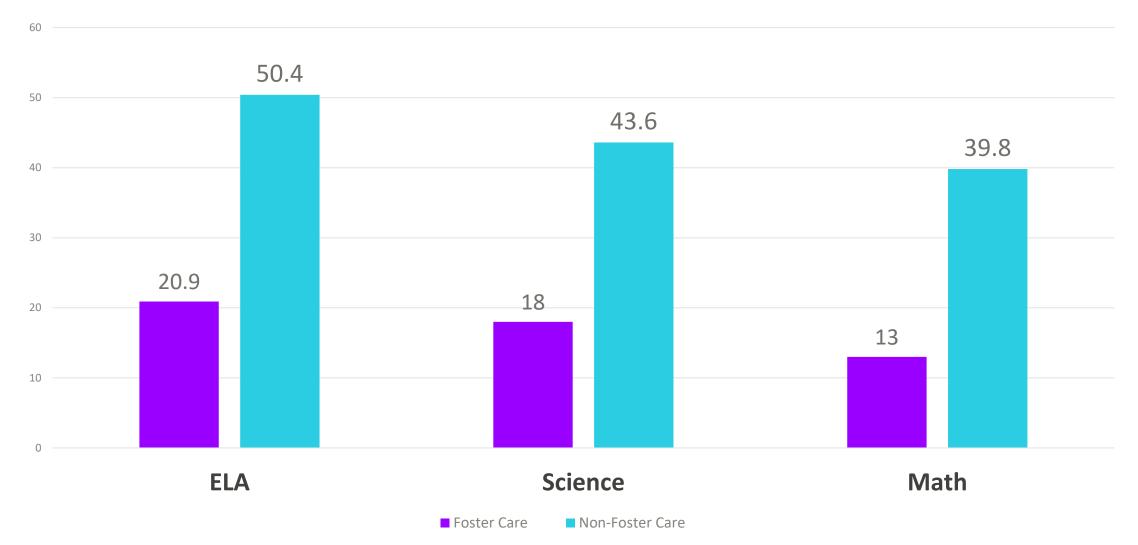


Foster Care No Foster Care

Percentage of Students with Fewer than 2 Absences per Month

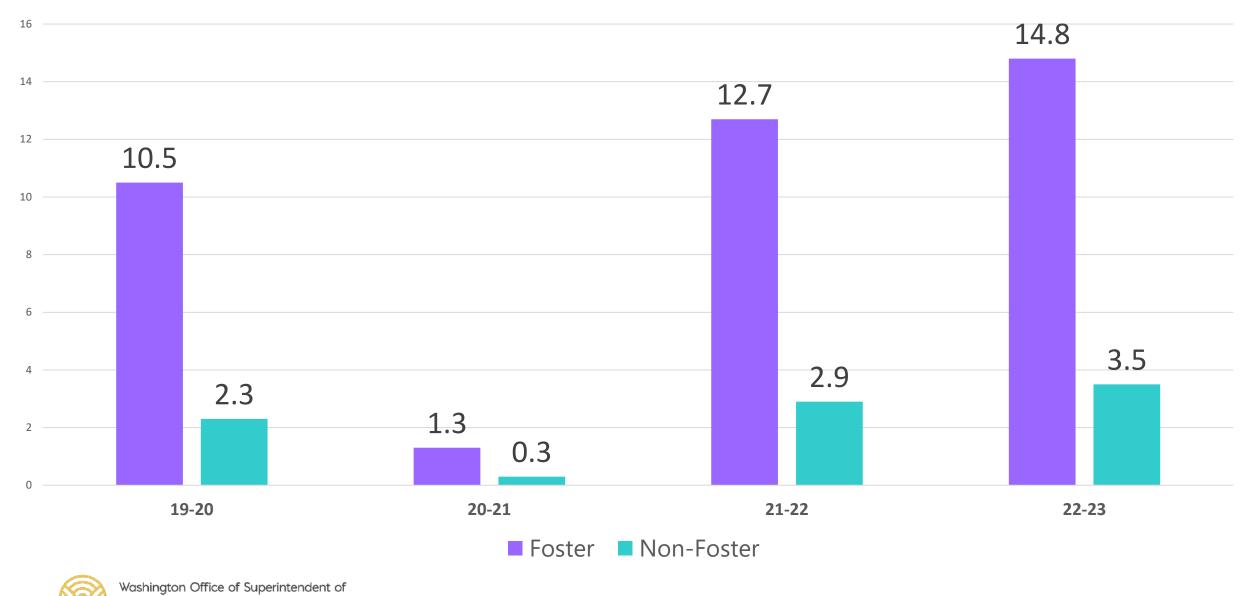


Assessments 2023-2024



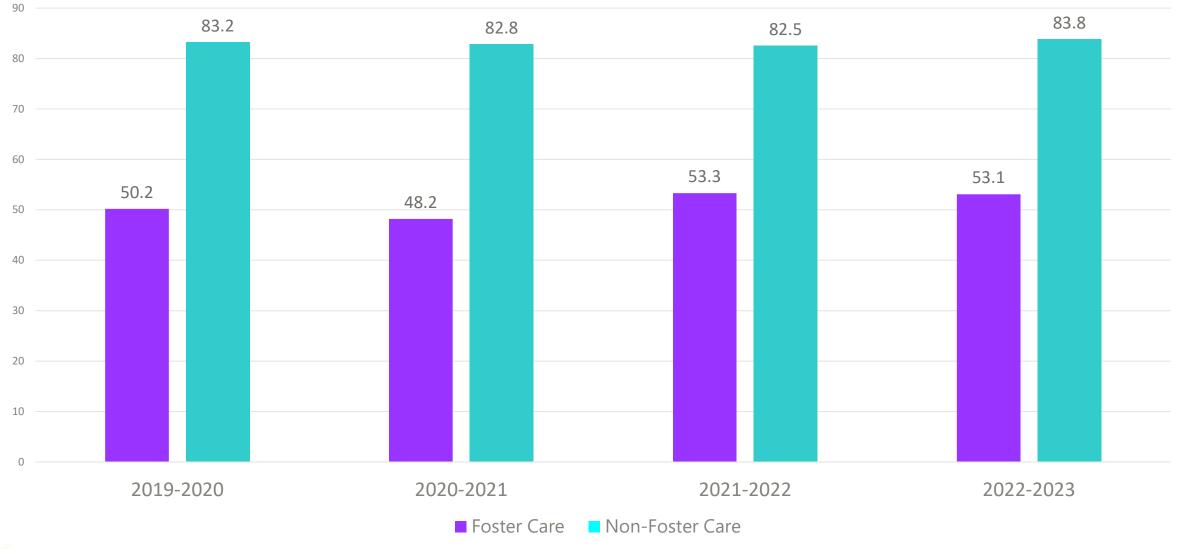


4 Year Discipline Rates



PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

4 Year Graduation Rates





Framework of Support

DCYF Headquarters Education Team

- <u>K-12 Education</u>
- <u>Education & Training Voucher Program (ETV)</u>

DCYF Regional Education Leads

School Districts

- OSPI Foster Care Education Program
- District Foster Care Liaison
- Foster Care Building Point of Contact

Treehouse

- Educational Advocacy
- Graduation Success
- Tribal Engagement Program
- Dual Involved Youth



Image by <u>WOKANDAPIX</u> from <u>Pixabay</u>





<u>Treehouse - Make a Referral for Treehouse</u> <u>Services (treehouseforkids.org)</u>

Grad Success – Work directly with youth to help them graduate from high school with a plan for the future.

Ed Advocacy – Work with social workers, caregivers, and schools to resolve difficult issues at school and to remove barriers to kids' school success.

Note: Treehouse advocates can not serve as educational liaisons





Foster Care Resources and Training

Toolkits

- Foster Care Liaison Toolkit
- Building Point of Contact Toolkit
- Best Interest Determination Toolkit

New/Updated Documents that have been added

- <u>Attendee Input Form</u>
- Best Practices: Best Interest Determination: Meeting Process
- Best Practices: School District Placement
 Decision
- Best Interest Determination Follow Up Checklist



Foster Care Meetings

Foster Care Regional Meetings

- **<u>Region 1 Meeting</u>**: 2nd Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (September, November, January, March, May)
- **<u>Region 2 Meeting</u>**: 2nd Tuesday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (September, November, January, March, May)
- **<u>Region 3 Meeting</u>**: 2nd Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (September, November, January, March, May)
- **<u>Region 4 Meeting</u>**: 2nd Tuesday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (October, December, February, April, June)
- <u>Region 5 Meeting</u>: 2nd Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (October, December, February, April, June)
- **<u>Region 6 Meeting</u>**: 2nd Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (October, December, February, April, June)

Foster Care Office Hours

• Second Thursday of Every Month from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. via Zoom



Post-Secondary Education

- <u>Post-Secondary Resources Document</u> (Financial Aid, Programs and Organizations, Scholarships)
- <u>Post-Secondary Education for Foster</u> <u>Care Webpage</u> (Transition Toolkit, FAFSA Application Instructions, Education Training Vouchers, Supplemental Education Transition Planning Program)
- <u>College Contacts from Passport</u>





Upcoming Trainings

ETV Training

The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program is a federal grant for dependent youth ages 15 through 20 who are enrolled at least part time at an accredited college, university, vocational, or technical school. Students can use ETV funds for educational and living expenses. Eligible youth may receive up to \$5,000 per academic year and \$2,000 for Dual Credit (Running Start) students!

November 12th from 10:00am to 11:00am - Zoom Registration

Best Interest Determination Training

Best Interest Determination meetings can be complex and extensive. Please join us as we go over the legal provisions and process, format, attendees, and documentation requirements. There will be time for questions and feedback. If you are a new Foster Care Liaison, we encourage you to take this training.

December 5th from 10:00am to 11:30am - Zoom Registration | PdEnroller



Upcoming Trainings Cont.

McKinney-Vento vs Foster Care

This webinar will focus on the differences and similarities between McKinney-Vento Homeless Education and Foster Care Education programs. We will dive into the key provisions and requirements of each program, examine when these programs overlap, and discuss student scenarios. Bring your questions as there will be time for Q and A.

November 7th from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Zoom Registration PdEnroller



Contact us anytime!

Stacey Klim OSPI Foster Care Program Supervisor Stacey.Klim@k12.wa.us 564-999-1939 (Cell)

Savanna Cavalletto *OSPI Foster Care Program Specialist* <u>Savanna.Cavalletto@k12.wa.us</u> 564-669-1467 (Cell) **Will not be available until February 2025*



