

North Carolina Foster Care Education Program



4 Key Responsibilities of LEA Points of Contact (POCs)

Each school district is statutorily required to appoint at least one employee to act as a Local Educational Agency (LEA) Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) to facilitate the successful enrollment and transfer of records for students in the legal custody of the Department of Social Services when enrolling in or changing schools. Federal law also requires the POC to coordinate with the local child welfare agency concerning immediate enrollment, education best-interest, transportation, collaboration, and other requirements that support school stability for students in foster care.

<p>Ensure Immediate Enrollment & Eliminate Enrollment Barriers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Serve as the LEA expert concerning the enrollment of students in foster care. b. Ensure systems and processes are in place for appropriately identifying students in foster care at enrollment. c. Ensure students are immediately enrolled, attending classes, and fully participating in school activities. d. If a student cannot remain in their school of origin, ensure that the student’s records are transferred immediately. e. Develop and maintain a tracking system that identifies students and services rendered (see Sample Foster Care Tracking Tool). f. Train registrars, front office staff, school counselors, and school social workers on appropriate paperwork and communication processes. g. Stay knowledgeable and informed of state and federal mandates to support students in foster care.
<p>Ensure Automatic Free School Meals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish a coordinated process with nutrition services to ensure students can receive meals immediately. b. Incorporate nutrition eligibility for students in foster care as a training element for nutrition services and school-based personnel.
<p>Promote School Stability, Educational Outcomes, & Transition Processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support school stability by ensuring school of origin transportation in collaboration with DSS. b. Ensure the immediate transfer of school records, when applicable. c. Coordinate with special education case managers, school counselors, and others to ensure special education provisions and 504 plans are implemented, when applicable. d. Support the awarding of credit and review alternative options for acquiring and restoring course credit. e. Promote access to educational and extracurricular programs. f. Promote post-secondary information to include dual enrollment opportunities for college credit and fee waivers. g. Collaborate with the student’s education decision-maker, when necessary. h. Utilize local funding options to waive costs that may impede access to cap and gowns, and ceremonies. i. Offer resources and/or provide training within the LEA and coordinate with DSS and community partners to increase cross-system awareness of the educational needs of students in foster care.
<p>Collaborate with Local Divisions of Social Services (DSS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Notify DSS of the LEA POC’s contact information. b. Ensure LEA personnel participation in Best Interest Determination (BID) meetings. c. Communicate with DSS and the LEA transportation department to secure transportation for students to the school of origin. d. Develop and annually review the local Memorandum of Understanding and transportation plans. e. Provide information and insight on the school district and processes. f. Communicate with foster care workers regarding the educational needs and progress of students. g. Participate in local and regional foster care meetings and trainings to promote collaboration and strengthen cross-system partnerships.

Do you have questions or need technical assistance?
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