



FY21 Foster Care Transportation Plan

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Richmond County School District

Superintendent Name Dr. Kenneth Bradshaw

Mailing Address 864 Broad St.

Physical Address (if different from above) _____

City Augusta **Zip** 30901

Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) Name Mrs. Shalene Zanatta **POC Email** zanatsh@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us

POC Mailing Address 864 Broad St

City Augusta **Zip** 30901

POC Telephone 706-826-1139 **POC Fax** 706-826-4626

Superintendent Signature

7-21-2020
Click here to enter a date.

Date

Dr. Kenneth Bradshaw

Print Name of Superintendent

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The Georgia Department of Education (Department) 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 Department 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 Department's student information system for information sharing and reporting purposes; however, on the local level, LEAs will be notified directly by foster parents, Court Appointed Special Advocate, 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 Department 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. Please complete this plan and return it by:

Friday, July 31, 2020

Instructions for submission:

- After the LEA superintendent signs the assurances, scan the entire document as a PDF and save it as the "FY21 Foster Care Transportation Plan".
- Upload the signed PDF version of the document to the CLIP online portal via the Consolidated Application for FY21.

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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 DFCS Foster Care Supervisor and/ or the GA Education Support Monitor will submit a transportation referral to the LEA's POC. The DFCS' Foster Care Supervisor or GA Education Support Monitor, LEA POC, and foster parent will consult prior to school selection to facilitate school placement and enrollment. When a youth is placed in foster care within the district and the new address is:

- in zone for the school of origin (SOO), transportation will be provided by the LEA.
- outside of the zone of the SOO, transportation will be provided by the foster parent up to 25 miles roundtrip.
- more than 25 miles roundtrip outside the SOO, foster parent will transport to nearest pickup location.

When the SOO is outside the district, collaboration of agencies will determine school selection in the best interest of the student. Additional costs incurred if rerouting of buses is necessary will be shared by DFCS and LEA . DFCS will assume responsibility of costs to foster parent and contracted services.

- 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.*

The LEA POC will work cooperatively with DFCS and the Education Support Monitor to assess transportation needs and eliminate barriers that would prevent the youth in foster care from attending school immediately. However, if difficulties are encountered resulting from transportation arrangements and or costs, the following measures will be utilized:

1. LEA will assume the responsibility of transporting youth to SOO until a mutual agreement can be reached.
2. LEA POC will coordinate transportation with the RCBOE Transportation Department.
3. The dispute process will be initiated immediately.
4. DFCS will provide reimbursement to the foster parent transporting youth.

- 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 LEA Lead Social Worker/Homeless Liaison will be the Foster Care POC for Richmond County Schools. The LEA POC will collaborate and coordinate services with the DFCS and other stakeholders inside and outside the school system to ensure educational stability for youth in foster care. The LEA POC will be responsible for ensuring the stability of the student while in foster care and enrolled in the school



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district. The Foster Care POC will work collaboratively with the GA Education Support Monitor to ensure foster care students receive immediate enrollment and are provided with educational supports necessary to be academically successful.

II. Foster Care Transportation Plan: GUIDING QUESTIONS

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:

	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		

Describe the agreement the LEA has made with the local child welfare agency regarding transportation costs. *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

DFCS and the LEA will share transportation costs. The LEA will reroute buses to the county line when necessary and feasible to pick up students from neighboring counties. DFCS will provide reimbursement costs to foster parents providing transportation and for contracted transportation services.

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.	Yes
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Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.

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ASSURANCES

By checking the box beside each statement and by affixing my signature to these Assurances, I certify that I have read each and agree to be held accountable for the content of each of the following statements:

- The LEA will collaborate with state or local child welfare agency to develop and implement clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin when in their best interest will be provided, arranged and funded for the duration of time in foster care.
- The LEA ensures that children in foster care needing transportation to the school of origin promptly receive such transportation in a cost-effective manner.
- The LEA ensures that children in foster care remain in the school of origin while any disputes regarding transportation costs are being resolved.
- The LEA will collaborate with State or local child welfare agency to provide transportation if a child is placed in foster care placement across district, county, or State lines.
- In accordance to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Fostering Connections Act, the LEA will continue to provide transportation to children that exited foster care for the remainder of the school year, if it is in the best interest of the student.

I am authorized to sign and submit this application on behalf of the applicant. My signature certifies that all information included in the application is accurate. I understand that all information submitted is subject to verification.

LEA Name

Dr. Kenneth Bradshaw
Printed Name of Superintendent

Superintendent of Schools
Title


Signature of Superintendent
(Please sign in blue ink only)

7/21/2020
Date