Best Practices for LEA Child Welfare Education Liaison

COLORADO DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION cde

***Efforts to meet the educational needs of children in foster care can help LEA's achieve their own goals and objectives by*:**

1. Improving student test scores and enabling schools/district to meet federal ESEA and state performance indicators;
2. Increasing graduation rates;
3. Reducing dropout;
4. Lowering truancy rates; and
5. Improving school climate and lowering suspensions and expulsions.

Title	Legislation and Guidance	Foster Care Education Guidance
Best Practices	Child welfare education liaisons are encouraged to respond to the notification/invitation as soon as possible to facilitate the information sharing and transition planning process in order to prevent delays in enrollment. "School districts should be active partners in developing transition plans for students to achieve successful transitions to public schools".	Information to be provided to the receiving district should include the following information as appropriate. • Transcripts, grades and credits • Grade placement • Assessments taken in the prior 12 months • Performance level (math, reading, writing, science) • Current course enrollment • Copy of current IEP/504/TtI or general education learning plan • Instructional strategies that are effective for the student • Academic strengths/limitations • Extra-curricular activities student has been involved with or is interested in (sports, music, etc.) • For high school students: Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAPS)
	Information should only be shared in the context of what is important for decisions about educational placement and services. The emphasis should be on observable behavior, triggers and successful strategies to address the behavior. This information rather than disclosure of historic medical and personal information will be the most useful in planning for the services the student needs now and will be helpful in making the transition successful without long-term stigmatization based on historical behavior as previously discussed.	
	It is in the best interest of students to begin the school year or semester on time. Therefore, it is important to have someone available during the summer and other regular school breaks that can receive notifications and transition planning invitations and facilitate the transfer of a student into the district when the child welfare education liaison is not available.	
LEA Child Welfare Education Liaison **The primary responsibilities include:**	The duties of the liaison should include:	Each school district and the state charter school institute shall designate an employee of the school district or the institute to act as the child welfare education liaison for the district or for state charter schools. In lieu of designating an employee, a school district or the state charter school institute may contract with an individual to act as the child welfare education liaison.
	1) Working with child placement agencies, county departments, and the state department to facilitate the prompt and appropriate placement, transfer, and enrollment in school of students in out-of-home placement;	
	(2) Participating in transition planning meetings; and	
	(3) Participating in interagency collaboration teams.	

The school districts and the State Charter School Institute also have responsibilities under 22-32-138 C.R.S., which may be fulfilled by the child welfare education liaison or by other personnel. **CO HB 10-1274** **CO HB 08-1019**	If a student in out-of-home placement is enrolled in one school and transfers enrollment to another school either in the same school district or in another school district or to another type of school, the sending school district or school shall transfer the student's education information and records to the receiving school within five (5) school days after receiving a transfer request from the county department that has legal custody of the student;
	The county department that has legal custody of a student in out-of-home placement may request that the school district or school in which the student was enrolled release the student's education information and records to an employee of the county department for the sole purpose of transferring the education information and records to the student's new school. The school district or school may comply with the requirement to transfer the student education information and records to the receiving school (see bullet above) by complying with the county department's request within five (5) school days after receiving the request;
	A school district or school shall not delay the transfer of the education information and records of a student in out-of-home placement for any reason, including but not limited to the existence of any unpaid fines or fees that the student may have outstanding at the school from which the student is transferring;
	If a school district or school receives a transfer request or a request for release of records for a student in out-of-home placement and the request involves a student who is receiving special education services pursuant to an individualized education program, the school district or school shall notify the special education director for the school district or school of the request as soon as possible following receipt of the request;
	If a student who is in out-of-home placement is either newly placed within a school district or school or required to change schools due to a change in placement, the school district or school shall enroll the student in school within five (5) school days after receiving the student's education information and records, regardless of whether the school district or school has received the student's certificate of immunization, whether the student can comply with school uniform or clothing restrictions, or whether the student can comply with any other pre-enrollment restrictions or requirements imposed by the school district or school. There are exceptions to this requirement found in 22-33-106 C.R.S.