

Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 6173.1 Education for Foster Youth

INSTRUCTION

SUBJECT: Education for Foster Youth

The County Office of Education (County Office) recognizes that foster youth may be at greater risk for poor academic performance due to their family circumstances, disruption of their educational program, and emotional, social, and other health needs that may be addressed with the provision of a safe, positive learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and that promotes students' self-esteem and academic achievement.

The County Office shall provide foster youth with full access to the County Office's educational program and other support services necessary to assist them in achieving state and County Office academic standards as identified in the County Office's local control and accountability plan.

(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)
 (cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)
 (cf. 5149 - At-Risk Students)
 (cf. 6011- Academic Standards)
 (cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)
 (cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)
 (cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)
 (cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)
 (cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)

The County Superintendent of Schools or designee (County Superintendent) shall ensure that placement decisions for foster youth are based on the students' best interests as defined in law and administrative regulation. To that end, he/she shall designate a staff person as a County Office liaison for foster youth to help facilitate the enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth.

The County Superintendent and County Office liaison shall ensure that all appropriate staff, including, but not limited to, each site administrator, school registrar, and attendance clerk, receive training regarding the enrollment, placement, and rights of foster youth.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

The County Office desires to provide foster youth with a safe, positive learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and promotes students' self-esteem and academic achievement. The County Superintendent shall develop strategies to build students' feelings of connectedness with the school, including, but not limited to, strategies that promote positive discipline and conflict resolution, the development of students' resiliency and interpersonal skills, and the involvement of foster parents, group home administrators, and/or other caretakers in school programs and activities.

(cf. 0410.3 - Nondiscrimination in Programs and Activities)
 (cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)
 (cf. 5131 - Conduct)

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(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)
 (cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)
 (cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)
 (cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)
 (cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

To address the needs of foster youth and help ensure the maximum utilization of available funds, the County Superintendent shall collaborate with local agencies including, but not limited to, the county placing agency, social services, probation officers, juvenile court officers, tribal alliance, nonprofit organizations, and advocates. The County Superintendent shall explore the feasibility of entering into agreements with these groups to coordinate services and protect the rights of foster youth.

At least annually and in accordance with the established timelines, the County Superintendent shall report to the County Board on the educational outcomes of foster youth enrolled in the County Office including, but not limited to, school attendance, student achievement test results, promotion and retention rates by grade level, graduation rates, and suspension/expulsion rates. As necessary, evaluation data shall be used to determine and recommend revisions to the LCAP for improving or increasing services for foster youth.

Annually, the County Superintendent shall report to the California Department of Education, in accordance with Education Code 51225.1, the number of foster youth graduating from the fourth or fifth year of high school who, for the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from County Office-established graduation requirements that are in addition to statewide coursework requirements.

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)
 (cf. 5123 - Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)
 (cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
 (cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))
 (cf. 6162.51 - Standardized Testing and Reporting Program)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

32228-32228.5 Student safety and violence prevention
 42920-42925 Foster children educational services
 48645-48646 Juvenile court schools
 48850-48859 Educational placement of students residing in licensed children's institutions
 49061 Student records
 49069.5 Foster care students, transfer of records
 49076 Access to student records
 51225.3 High school graduation
 56055 Rights of foster parents in special education
 60851 High school exit examination

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

1522.41 Training and certification of group home administrators

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1529.2 Training of licensed foster parents
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE
300 Children subject to jurisdiction
309 Investigation and release of child
361 Limitations on parental or guardian control
366.27 Educational decision by relative providing living arrangements
602 Minors violating law; ward of court
726 Limitations on parental or guardian control
727 Order of care, ward of court
16000-16014 Foster care placement
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29
794 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42
670-679b Federal assistance for foster care programs
11431-11435 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Educating Foster Youth: Best Practices and Board Considerations, Policy Brief, March 2008

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

Mythbusting: Breaking Down Confidentiality and Decision-Making Barriers to Meet the Education Needs of Children in Foster Care, 2005

CITIES, COUNTIES AND SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PUBLICATIONS

Our Children: Emancipating Foster Youth, A Community Action Guide

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California Department of Education, Foster Youth Services: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy>

California Department of Social Services, Foster Youth Ombudsman Office:

<http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov>

California Youth Connection: <http://www.calyouthconn.org/site/cyc>

Cities, Counties and Schools Partnership: <http://www.ccspartnership.org>