



ESSA TRANSPORTATION MOU HIGHLIGHTS

As required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), this is an MOU created in partnership with the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), the Riverside County Probation Department, and Riverside County Local Education Agencies (LEA) to increase school stability for students in foster care.

Foster Care Definition for the Purposes of ESSA

Transportation MOU: "Foster Care" means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP), emergency shelters, residential facilities, childcare institutions, and pre-adoptive homes.

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION

A Best Interest Determination (BID) meeting must be held to determine if it is in the best interest of the child in foster care to remain in their School of Origin when residency has changed. At the end of each school year, Best Interest must be reviewed.

LEA RESPONSIBILITIES

Each LEA shall provide DPSS and Probation the contact information for their AB 490 liaison. The Lead Education Agency is the LEA in which the School of Origin resides. They are responsible for coordinating transportation and also for billing the shared cost to the Lead Placement Agency (LPA)(DPSS/Riverside County Probation Department) and the Co-Facilitating Education Agency (CFEA). The CFEA is the LEA which houses the new school of residence.

TIMELINES/LENGTH OF ELGIBILITY

LEA's have up to 10 school days after the Best Interest Determination has been made to put transportation into place. In the interim, DPSS, Probation, or the caregiver will provide transportation.

Review of ESSA transportation eligibility: At the end of each school year, the Best Interest Determination and transportation will be reviewed. The agreement will stay in place as long as it's in the child/youth's best interest.

School of Origin if the jurisdiction of the court has ended: If a foster student exits foster care before the end of the school year, the transportation arrangement will be maintained through the end of the school year to maintain education stability.

FINANCIALS

Foster Students with IEPs: If a foster student has an IEP that outlines transportation as part of the foster student's education needs and services, the school of origin will provide and fund the entire cost of transportation services for the foster student to attend his/her special education programs. If the foster student remains at the school of origin and has an IEP, transportation cannot be added for sole purpose of preserving school stability.

Preschool children: DPSS will be responsible for transportation needs of preschool children including those identified as preschool special education students within the LEA.

Share of Costs: The LEA and LPA will share additional costs when a placement change for a foster student occurs and the Best Interest Determination finds the school of origin most appropriate.

The LFEA will examine existing transportation options such as incorporating the foster student into an existing bus route, so long as the LFEA does not incur additional costs. The LFEA, LEA, DPSS, Probation or the caregiver shall have the right to an alternative form of transportation at a lower cost if it is in the student's best interest.

If there are additional costs, the Lead Facilitating Education Agency and Lead Placement Agency must come to an agreement with the most appropriate method of transportation.

Share of cost if the school of origin and the new placement are in the same LEA: If the school of origin and the new placement are in the same LEA, the LEA and LPA will each cover 1/2 of the transportation costs.

Share of cost if the school of origin and the new placement are in different LEAs: If the school of origin and the school of new placement are in different LEAs, the LPA, the LFEA, and the CFEA will each pay 1/3 of the additional costs.

Reimbursement Timeline: In accordance with the terms and conditions contained in the ESSA Transportation MOU, CFEAs shall reimburse the LFEA for their portion of additional costs at the end of each school year.

