



It's hard to believe the summer is half way over and it's time to prepare for the new school year. Every school year comes with new reminders, some new laws and practices, and suggestions on how to improve the education outcomes for students in foster care.

Enrollment: To facilitate a seamless enrollment process for students, please remind caregivers to contact the school for their school registration process.

1. Contact the School District Foster Care Liaison to request school records, transcripts, and withdrawal notice from the student's previous school.
2. Contact the CPS caseworker for your child's Letter of Eligibility to enroll in the free public school pre-kindergarten program.
3. Contact the School District Special Education Director if you know your student was or is receiving special education services or accommodations under Section 504. The school will set a transfer ARD to implement the IEP services or a school meeting to provide Section 504 accommodations.
4. The caregiver must present these forms at enrollment for every student
 - **Form 2085** – Placement Authorization and
 - **Form 2085-E** – Designation of Education Decision-Maker
 - **Immunization Records**

Form 2085 establishes the student is under the legal care of DFPS. This form serves as student enrollment in the National School Lunch Program and alerts the staff for referral for potential student support services.

Form 2085E tells the school staff who is authorized make education-related decisions for the student. This form also names the person, usually the foster parent, who can make decisions for students receiving special education services.

Form 2085E also names the student's caseworker and supervisor.

Immunization Records are required for immediate enrollment for elementary school students. Students can be "conditionally" enrolled by providing written verification of a healthcare appointment within 30 days of enrollment.

Enrollment: All other documentation, including a copy of the birth certificate, transcripts, report cards, and special education paperwork must be submitted to the school within 30 days of student enrollment. For assistance in obtaining student records, see the School District Foster Care Liaison.



School Documents:

1. Read and review the Student Code of Conduct. Student and caregiver signatures required.
2. Caregivers must "OPT OUT" in writing of student receiving corporal punishment at school.
3. The completed Form 2085 should immediately activate the student's enrollment in the free National School Lunch Program. Free Breakfast Programs available in many school districts. No separate application needed. ALL students in foster care are eligible. See the School District Foster Care Liaison to ensure enrollment.
4. Students enrolling in 9th grade or enrolling in a new high school must meet with the school counselor and caregiver to complete their Individual Graduation Plan.
5. See school counselor for credit recovery opportunities, course credit by exam challenge, and fee waivers for college prep exams (SAT,ACT).
6. Communities-in-School programs offer a wide array of services to support students through tutoring, mentorships, and extracurricular activities.



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Confidentiality of child abuse and neglect records and information (including records and information relating to reports, investigations, legal actions, and the provision of services to children and families) is governed by a combination of federal and state laws and regulations. Both federal and state law allow CPS to share selected confidential information about a child in the state's conservatorship with those responsible for the child's protection, diagnosis, treatment, supervision, or education when necessary to meet a child's needs. Decisions to share confidential information must be made on a case-by-case basis to only individuals who need to know the information to support the child's education and well-being.



Education Portfolio: 100% of the students in foster care must have an Education Portfolio. The caseworker delivers the education portfolio to the student at the time of placement.



For Foster Parents and Caregivers
Surrogate Parent Training and Certificate
Special Education Laws and Practices:



CASA
<https://texascasa.org/casa-college-e-learning/>
Free sign up!

Education Service Centers
http://tea.texas.gov/regional_services/esc/

CPS Regional Education Specialists

Local School Districts



Teach age appropriate LIFE SKILLS

Brush your teeth

How to call 911

Fold clothes

Make a doctor's appointment

Read and understand a medicine label





Many children and youth in foster care are 2 grades behind their peers in reading and math

50% of youth in foster care complete requirements for their high school diplomas

87% of their peer group receive high school diplomas

100% of students in foster care say they want to go to college or pursue vocational training and industry certification

3% of students in foster care enroll in some type of post-secondary education or training –

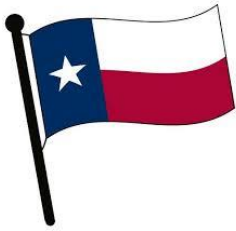
1% of the students in foster care complete post-secondary education or training Casey.org



IMPROVE Education Outcomes For Children and Youth in Foster Care



- 1. Ensure students ATTEND SCHOOL every day.**
- 2. Schedule appointments before school, after school, in the evenings and weekends.** If the student must miss a class or part of the school day because of a court date or as part of his service plan, submit an **EXCUSED LETTER** to the school attendance officer.
https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/State_Care/education.asp
- 2. Encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities** such as school athletics, intramural sports, speech team, chess team, language clubs, 4-H Club and community activities such as YMCA programs, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts.
- 3. Have a scheduled HOMEWORK time** in a quiet, well-lighted area with no distractions. Practice reading and math 20 minutes a day.
- 4. Parents and Caregivers: Meet the teachers! Participate in school meetings. Attend PTA meetings.**
- 5. Collect the best of the student’s schoolwork for his/her Education Portfolio.**



85th Texas Legislature

Notable legislation under Education includes:

Foster Parents can now make Special Education Decisions Immediately after Placement

HB 1556 authorizes foster parents to immediately make special education decisions for a child or youth in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services. The foster parent will no longer have to wait 60 days or be appointed as a “surrogate parent” by the school or the court in order to participate in ARD meetings and make special education decisions for a child in their care, including signing the IEP. Foster parents must complete training before the next ARD meeting at the school, if possible, but at least by 90 days after they start participating in the child’s special education decisions. If the foster parent is unwilling or unable to make the special education decisions for the child, the school or the court may appoint a surrogate parent. Youth living in placements without a foster parent or other non-staff caregiver continue to need a surrogate parent appointed, and the law outlines the criteria a surrogate must meet, including receiving training.

Special Education Services

SB 1153 requires public schools and charter schools to provide written notification in English/Spanish to parents as soon as the student begins to receive intervention services, such as Response to Intervention (RtI) and accommodations.

SB 1220 requires schools to accept education-related decisions for children in foster care or experiencing homelessness entering a new school made at a previous school until the new school develops an IEP or provides a comparable program. Texas Education Agency will ensure schools’ timely transfer (within 10 days) of student records and transcripts. In addition, CPS, in collaboration with Texas Education Agency, local workforce development centers, foster care transition centers, and community and technical colleges will develop a program that assists youth currently or formerly in foster with completing high school requirements or obtaining a GED; provides career guidance; and informs them about the tuition and fee waivers available.

SB 748 address the requirements for transition services for students receiving special education services. This bill strengthens current law regarding the involvement of parents, students, and school staff in transition planning for public school students enrolled in special education program. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARDs) committee meetings will regularly review students’ plans which support independence and self-determination through supported decision-making, community resources and public benefits services. TEA will be required to maintain a list of public benefits or services referrals available to students on the agency’s website.

SB 1398 addresses cameras in classrooms where students are in self-contained classrooms and receiving special education services more than 50% of the day. The bill primarily focuses on informing school districts about who can request video cameras, the procedure for approving requests for video cameras and how to notify parents of video cameras in the classroom. CPS staff and/or foster parents caring for any foster children who require special education services should ask schools if there are video cameras being operated in special education classrooms.



85th Texas Legislature

Notable legislation under Education includes:

Student Behavior and Discipline

HB 674 – Each school district and open enrollment charter school must develop and implement a positive behavior program for children in grade level below grade three. This bill also limits, with some exceptions, disciplinary actions for in-school and out-of-school suspensions for children under grade three.

SB 179 – Student Harassment, bullying, cyberbullying, injury to or death of a minor; creating a criminal offense. SB 179 amends the Texas Education Code, Texas Health and Safety Code, Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code, and Texas Penal Code by identifying and addressing cyberbullying and bullying which can lead to interrupting a student’s education, death or injury of a minor child. The bill attaches injunctive relief for child/parents of child who is a victim of cyberbullying or bullying and also the child/parent of the instigator of cyberbullying or bullying.

Note: This act of cyberbullying or bullying is not limited to in-school or school-sponsored activities.

HB 1569 directs residential facilities to disclose to schools student records on school-related disciplinary actions, behavioral history information not considered confidential, parole or probation status, and participation in programs which involve community supervision or the corrections department.

Transition Services and Post-Secondary Opportunities

SB 490 requires high school counselors to provide specific information to students and reports to parents on post-secondary opportunities, financial aid eligibility, high school completion requirements, education training and fee voucher and tuition waiver available to eligible students in current or former foster care.

HB 2994 opens up certain workforce continuing education courses offered by public junior colleges to high school students. Tuition and fees may be waived for eligible students.

Tuition Fee Waiver and Education and Training Voucher (ETV)

HB 2537 requires high school counselors to inform foster care students about the Education and Training Voucher program (ETV) and the college tuition fee waiver the first year the student is in high school and every year afterwards.

SB 1123 speaks to the conditions on the receipt of tuition and fee exemptions of public institutions of higher education for students formerly in foster care or other residential foster care. This bill exempts students who were adopted from DFPS with an adoption assistance agreement from maintaining a certain GPA average and excessive credit hour requirement.

HB 928 directs DFPS representatives on CRCGs to inform group members about the tuition fee waiver for eligible youth and adopted youth. This bill also requires each school district foster care liaison, in coordination with DFPS staff, to facilitate transition services by assisting student with financial aid applications, campus visits, scholarship applications, appointment to military academy, preparation for entrance exams and coordinating contact between liaison and student.