

Catalina Foothills School District

Transportation Plan to Ensure School Stability for Students in Foster Care

LEA Foster Care Point of Contact: Dr. Erin Matyjasik, Special Services Director, 520-209-8081

Transportation Office Point of Contact: Timothy Morehead, Location Manager, 520-209-7583

Other Point of Contact: Sheryl Castro, Executive Director of Curriculum and Assessment, 520-209-7540

Duration of Transportation

If transportation to school of origin is required in order to maintain school stability for students in foster care, [Catalina Foothills School District #16 (CFSD)], in collaboration with the local child welfare agency (CWA), will ensure that said transportation will be provided for the duration of the child(ren)'s time in foster care.

How Transportation Will Be Provided, Arranged, and Funded

1. Interim transportation should be addressed to ensure no delays for the student in foster care while transportation is being worked out between the parties. Describe how this LEA will promptly provide, arrange, and fund interim transportation for children in foster care as they collaborate with the CWA to institute a child's long term transportation plan (*be sure to include the duration of transportation, method of transportation, etc*): [When CFSD's Special Services Director (point of contact) is notified by the Child Welfare Agency (CWA) that a student has entered into foster care, the District and the CWA will discuss and determine what will be provided as interim (short-term) transportation arrangements. These arrangements will be in effect until the student's best interest decision and the permanent transportation arrangements are finalized. If a student's foster care placement is within the boundaries of CFSD, the district will arrange, provide, and fund the transportation. The district will contact its transportation department to determine if an existing bus route can be used to provide transportation, or if route miles can be added to provide the transportation to the school of origin. If a student's placement is outside of the district's attendance boundaries, it is the responsibility of the CWA to provide for and fund the transportation costs unless CFSD agrees to pay, or agrees to pay, but receive reimbursement from the CWA, or agrees to share the cost. Shared costs may include the CWA providing transportation to the closest bus stop within the district's boundary. The district will then transport the student to his/her school of origin. Should there be a dispute between the district and the CWA regarding additional transportation costs due to placement outside of the district's boundaries, the district will investigate an alternative transportation provider, such as a private transportation company (e.g., bus, van, taxi – based on safety, age) to provide this service. In this case, Title I funds will be allocated to provide interim transportation requirements for a maximum of 10 school days - 5 school days while the best interest decision is finalized and 5 school days while the permanent transportation arrangements are finalized.]
2. Describe how this LEA will examine existing transportation options available for students in foster care (*i.e. transportation covered by other LEA programs, state contracts, etc.*): [The Special Services Director, the Director of Facilities, and the Location Manager of First Student will determine if transportation can be provided at no cost or minimal cost based on existing procedures and route miles if the foster care placement is within the district's school boundaries. This may include adding a stop, making a modification to an already existing bus route, or dropping off the student at a school bus stop within an existing route to safely transport the student to their school of origin. The district will also review pre-existing transportation routes in use for homeless students as required by the McKinney Vento Act, such as private transportation companies, or determine if transportation can be provided under IDEA, for example, if the student is eligible. We have reviewed current state contracts for potential alternate transportation providers, but only found one for private transportation that is local. The CWA will need to

determine if the additional costs associated with private transportation vendors will be part of the permanent transportation plan.]

1. Describe how this LEA will ensure that children in foster care will promptly receive transportation to their school of origin in a cost effective manner & in accordance with section 475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 675 (4)(A)) (*be sure to include no or low cost options to pursue, which occurrences this LEA will agree to pay for the cost of transportation, which occurrences this LEA will pursue reimbursement from the local CWA for the cost of transportation, which occurrences this LEA will seek a cost sharing agreement with the local CWA for the cost of transportation, methods of transportation to be used and when such methods would be used, procedures to ensure student safety, etc.*): [When it has been determined that it is in the best interest of the student to remain in his/her school of origin, the Special Services Director and the CWA will work collaboratively to develop a transportation plan, when it can be done, at no “additional” or “minimal” cost based on the district’s existing procedures. Examples include a stop added, modification made to an already existing bus route, or dropping off the student at a school bus stop on the existing route for the school of origin. Other considerations include foster parents or other family member(s) transporting the student to school or to existing stops that current Open Enrollment families use for bus transportation from the district’s boundary to the school of attendance. If the student’s foster care placement is in a group home, transportation that is provided by group home staff needs to be strongly considered.

If a student is entered into foster care outside of the district’s school attendance boundaries, the district and the CWA will outline how additional costs will be covered or shared. For example, the CWA will arrange, provide, and fund transportation to the nearest bus stop within the district’s attendance area. The district will pay for any transportation costs that are associated with arranging for and providing transportation to the student’s school of origin from that bus stop located within the established routes. The district and the CWA will determine if the student is eligible for transportation under another entitlement such as IDEA or routes used by private transportation vendors (e.g., mini-bus, van, taxi, car service – based on safety, age) for transportation for homeless students (currently established) as required by the McKinney Vento Act. If the district needs to arrange transportation from private vendors, the district will expect reimbursement from the CWA for the difference in costs above what the district pays for transportation within the district’s attendance boundaries. Regardless of which transportation option is chosen, it will be provided for the duration of the student’s placement in foster care as long as it continues to be in the student’s best interest to remain in the school of origin.

As a result of the collaboration with the CWA, a specific transportation plan will be created for the student. It will include (1) the point of contacts for the CWA and the district, (2) address and contact information of the foster care placement, (3) address and contact information of the school of origin, (4) description of the efforts undertaken to identify a cost-effective transportation option, (5) description of an existing transportation option that is available, if applicable, (6) agreed upon cost effective transportation option for the student as determined by the CWA and CFSD, (7) description of how the option will be funded, (8) the date the transportation plan will be implemented, and (8) the interim and immediate transportation plan that will be arranged while the permanent transportation plan is pending, if applicable.]

These transportation procedures were instituted on the following date: [10/06/2023]

Authorized Signature for [Catalina Foothills School District]

