

Amite County School District



Foster Care Plan

FY 2025-2026

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Purpose & Goal

Amite County School District is dedicated to taking measures to ensure foster care students have the educational opportunities to thrive both emotionally and academically by identifying barriers that prevent them from achieving their academic potential. The Amite County School District in collaboration with the local division of the Mississippi Child Protective Services will provide them the opportunities to maintain important relationships with support systems, provide educational opportunities to advance academically, and make educational decisions based on what is best for the child or youth.

Definitions

Best Interest Determination (BID) refers the collaborative process between MDCPS and local school districts based on the individual student's unique best interests. The determination involves input from multiple parties to make decisions about whether a student placed in foster care should continue to attend his or her school of origin.

Education Decision Liaison (EDL) refers to a person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of a child in MDCPS custody.

Foster Care Points of Contact (POC) refers to designated people who carry out various responsibilities to ensure the educational stability and rights of children in foster care.

- **District Point of Contact (DPC)** - The person designated by the ACSD Superintendent to represent the District with regards to foster care students enrollment or withdrawal.
- **School Point of Contact (SPC)** - The person designated by the building level Principal to represent the school with regards to foster care students enrollment or withdrawal.
- **Regional Director of Child Protective Services (CPS)** - The person who will communicate directly with the DPC and the CPS Case worker in charge of the case of the foster child.
- **Case Worker** - The CPS representative who has been assigned the case of the foster child.

Foster Parents refers to an individuals licensed by MDCPS to provide temporary care to children in foster care. MDCPS maintains legal custody of children placed in foster care.

Local School District (also referenced as the LEA, local educational agency) refers to the Mississippi school district in which the child's foster care home, provider, or facility is physically located. When it is determined to be in child's best interest to leave the school of origin, the local school district must enroll the child immediately.

School of Origin refers to the school that a child was attending at the time of placement in foster care or the school a child is attending at the time of any subsequent change in foster care placement.

School District of Origin refers to the Mississippi school district in which a school of origin is physically located.

Single-school Districts/Education Authorities refer to situations in which an individual school operates as an individual school district (for example, charter schools). The school is considered both the school of origin and the district of origin.

Enrollment & Withdrawal of a Foster Child/Youth

Resident Foster Children

Foster children residing within the district boundaries shall be enrolled as any other student that resides within the boundaries of the district. The SPC shall obtain any and all records pertaining to the student's current education. A list of these records is found in Appendix A of this document.

Students must be enrolled by a MDCPS representative (i.e., case worker, educational liaison, or an individual with MDCPS foster parent verification.) MDCPS foster parent verification may come in the form of the court order or a letter/form on letterhead from MDCPS stating the person is the foster parent for the enrolling student.

Following the enrollment of the student the SPC will complete the enrollment document placing a copy on file in the office of the SPC. The SPC will notify the DPC of the enrollment and enrollment verification will be kept at the school of enrollment until the student graduates from ACSD or until the child is no longer in the care of Child Protective Services.

Non-Resident Foster Children

Foster children not residing within the district boundaries shall be enrolled once a determination has been made that it is in the best interest of the child to attend a school within the Amite County School District. The DPC from the originating district will collaborate with CPS, SPC, Principal, Parents (if allowed), Foster Parents, or other interested parties. A determination as to whether or not it would be in the best interest of the child to attend the school in the Amite County School District shall be made immediately following this collaboration. Schools will need a copy of this BID Form when the student arrives to be enrolled.

Exception: Students enrolling into Kindergarten for the first time do not require a BID form to be completed if the foster parents can prove residency in the school zone they are seeking to attend.

Students must be enrolled by a MDCPS representative (i.e., case worker, educational liaison, or an individual with MDCPS foster parent verification.) MDCPS foster parent verification may come in the form of the court order or a letter/form on letterhead from MDCPS stating the person is the foster parent for the enrolling student.

The Amite County School District recognizes the right of a foster child to attend the child's school of origin provided that it is reasonable.

Withdrawal of a Student by CPS

CPS has the right to withdraw students assigned to them by a judicial authority. CPS workers will work with the DPC to complete a BID Form to determine the best interest of the student. The SPC in this case is responsible for providing as many educational records as possible to make any transition from the school of origin to the new school a smooth transition. Records not on file in the school office shall be forwarded to the new school within 24 hours following a request by the school or CPS.

See Appendix A Records Checklist for Case

The SPC shall contact the DPC if he/she thinks it would be in the best interest for the child being withdrawn to remain in the school of origin. The DPC will immediately contact the Regional Director of Child Protective Services to relay the concerns of the SPC as well as possibly scheduling a time to discuss the child's educational placement.

Student Records

In January 2013, Congress passed the Uninterrupted Scholars Act (USA), which amended the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to permit educational agencies and institutions to disclose, without parental consent or the consent of an eligible student, education records of students in foster care to State and Tribal child welfare agencies.

MDCPS workers should provide copies of all educational records for school-age children in foster care when registering the child. Records should include but not limited to the following:

- copy of birth certificate
- copy of immunization form
- withdrawal from previous school
- grades from previous school
- class schedule for junior high and high school students
- copy of the most recent IEP if the student receives services from IDEA
- copy of language service plan if the student received English Learner services
- any other record that will assist the school in the enrollment of the student.

School of Origin

These provisions emphasize the importance of limiting educational disruption by keeping the children who move into foster care (due to entering the foster care system or changing placements) in their schools of origin, unless it is determined in their best interest to change schools.

Best Interest Determination (BID)

- The LEA and MDCPS must determine the best interest of a child in foster care collaboratively.
- The cost of transportation cannot be considered when determining the best interest of the child.

Considerations:

- The child's participation in specialized instruction (e.g. gifted programming, career and technical education program, College Credit Plus, Advanced Placement classes, dual-credit classes).
- The availability of required special education and/or related service in a school other than the school of origin when the student has an identified disability under IDEA and 504.
- The availability of language services in a school other than the school of origin when the student has been identified as an English Learner pursuant to Title VI and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act.
- The student's ability to earn full academic credit, the ability to proceed to the next grade, or the ability to graduate on time.
- School climate, peer support, supportive adults and involvement in extracurricular activities.
- The availability and quality of the services in the school to meet the child's educational and socioemotional needs.
- The impact the commute to and from school would have on the student, based on developmental functioning. The cost of transportation or the appropriate services should not be a consideration when determining a child's best interest.
- For children with disabilities, the Fostering Connections Act, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), federal requirements are to be factored in when determining the best interest.
- The safety of the child.
- The wishes of the parent, caregiver, and child.
- The toll of the commute, distance and time for the child to travel to and from the school he/she is attending at the time of placement.
- The projected duration of out-of-home placement.
- The child's academic, developmental and socialization needs.
- The effect a school change will have on the child's learning.
The potential loss of credits, for high school students, which may occur due to changing schools in the middle of a term or semester.

ACSD Responsibilities

- The DPC will collaborate with the appropriate MDCPS Child Welfare Specialist to ensure educational stability for children in foster care.
- The ACSD shall ensure that children in foster care remain in the school of origin unless there is a determination that it is not in their best interest. LEAs will provide transportation to maintain children in foster care in the school of origin.
- The ACSD shall ensure that, if it is in the best interest of the child to leave the school of origin, the child must be immediately enrolled in the new school even if they do not have the required documentation.
- For students in foster care who leave their school of origin, the ACSD will ensure that the enrolling school shall immediately contact the school last attended to obtain the child's records.
- The ACSD shall develop and implement clear written procedures for how transportation will be provided, arranged, and funded for a child's duration of time in foster care – in collaboration with appropriate MDCPS personnel.
- ACSD shall train all pertinent personnel on the ESSA requirements relating to educational stability for children in foster care, and the procedures for best interest determination and transportation.

Transportation

ACSD will collaborate with MDCPS concerning transportation for a foster care child that lives outside of the district but remains a student in the district or for students placed in a different attendance zone than the school of origin within the district.

The following will be explored in providing transportation such as:

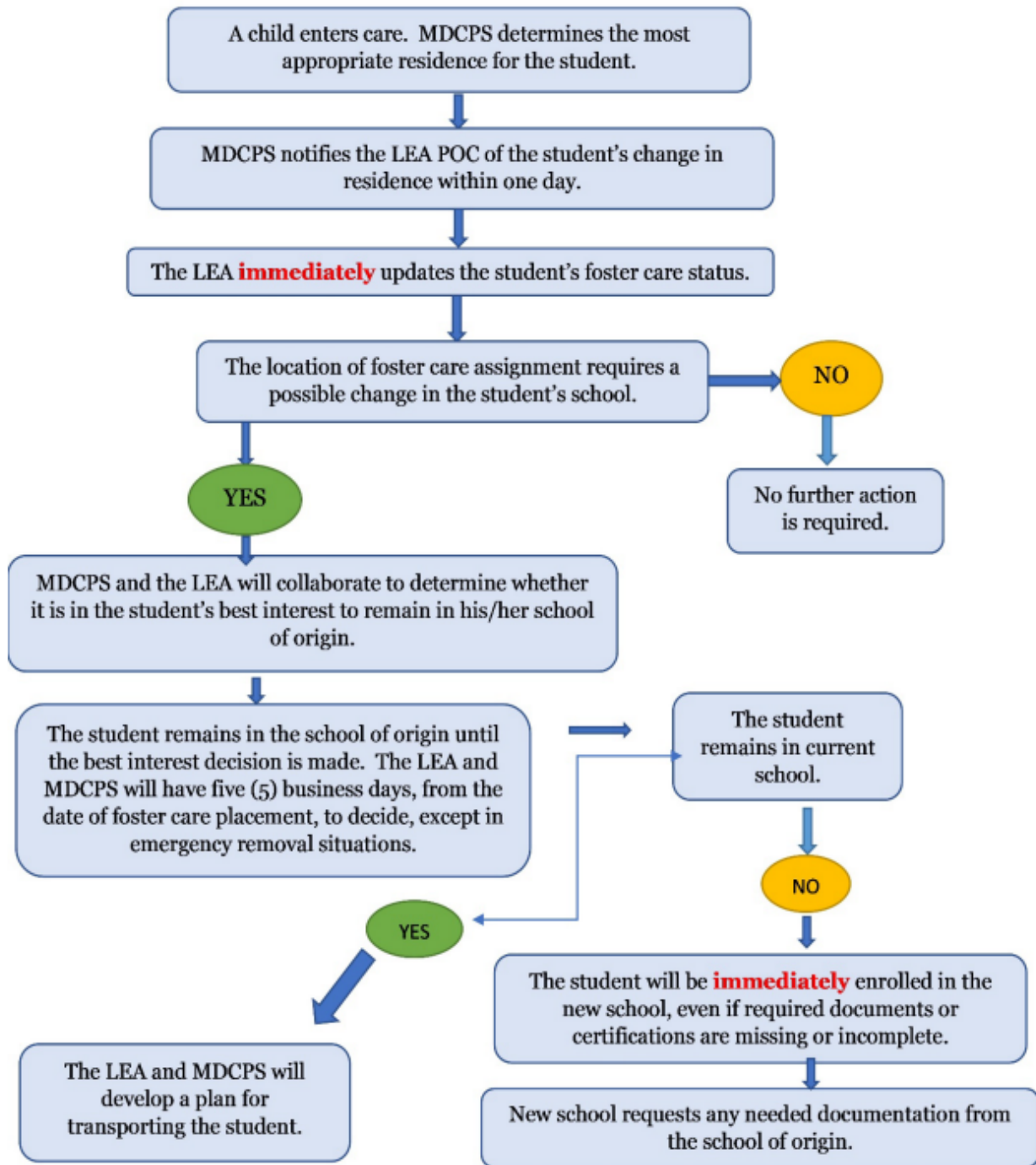
- MDCPS will arrange for the child to be dropped off at a school bus stop for the school of origin
- MDCPS will arrange for the foster parent or other designee to transport the child to school (Mileage may be reimbursable in some circumstances.)
- MDCPS and LEA will review pre-existing bus routes or stops close to the foster care placement that cross district boundaries
- MDCPS and LEA will determine if the child is already eligible for transportation covered by other programs
- MDCPS and LEA will address how the child welfare agency will use foster care maintenance payments and administrative funds to pay for transportation to the school
- MDCPS and LEA will specify how "additional costs" of transportation will be calculated, to delineate clearly the LEA's responsibility to provide transportation when there are no additional costs
- MDCPS and LEA will specifically describe how transportation to the school of origin will be provided in situations where there are no additional costs
- MDCPS and LEA will specify the timing and procedures for the child welfare agency to reimburse the LEA for transportation costs.

The LEA and MDCPS must consider what is in the best interest of the child if there is a dispute between the LEA and MDCPS concerning the cost of transportation. The cost of transportation shall be divided equally between the LEA and MDCPS. If the dispute continues, the LEA and MDCPS case worker may bring it to the MDE POC and MDCPS POC. The district of origin shall be responsible for the transportation while the disagreement is worked out between MDCPS and MDE.

Homelessness

Students who are in the official custody of MDCPS may not be also considered homeless.

Appendix E: Education Stability Flow Chart





Children in Foster Care Enrollment Records Checklist

The following records are required of a child in foster care.

Enrollment Documentation:

- ☐ Report Cards and/or Progress Reports
- ☐ Discipline Records
- ☐ Student Historical Assessment Records
- ☐ Attendance Records
- ☐ IEP and/or 504 Plan (if applicable)
- ☐ Transcript of high school current credits
- ☐ Withdrawal from previous school
- ☐ Copy of birth certificate
- ☐ Copy of immunization records
- ☐ Verification of Foster Care Placement
- ☐ BID form
- ☐ Other: _____



Records Checklist for Case Worker Withdrawing a Child/Youth

Withdrawal Documentation:

- ☐ Report Cards and/or Progress Reports
- ☐ Current Grades
- ☐ Discipline Records
- ☐ List of non-academic student activities
- ☐ Attendance Records
- ☐ IEP and/or 504 Plan (if applicable)
- ☐ Transcript of High School Current Credits
- ☐ Withdrawal Form
- ☐ Copy of Birth Certificate
- ☐ Copy of Immunization Form
- ☐ Other: _____

Appendix F: BID Form

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION FOSTER CARE SCHOOL PLACEMENT FORM

BID Timeframe				
A BID must be completed every time a youth comes into care or there is a placement change while in care. BID conferences/meetings with the school district POC must take place within five (5) business days of a child entering foster care or changing placement. The youth shall not be withdrawn/enrolled until a BID is completed.				
Student Information				
Student Name: (first, middle, last)		DOB:	Date of BID:	
		Grade:		
Address/District of Residence:		MSIS:	IEP Ruling ☐ Yes ☐ No	
School/District of Origin:		(enter school name)		
Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services Information				
Case Worker: _____		COR:	Phone: () - -	
ASWS: _____			Phone: () - -	
Determination				
☐ The student shall remain in the district/school in which the child was enrolled at the time of placement (school of origin).				
Name of School District/School:		(enter school name)		
☐ Based on the best interest determination, a change in school placement is recommended. In accordance with ESSA, the child will be enrolled in the district/school of current residence (receiving school).				
Name of School District/School:		(enter school name)		
NOTE: If a change in educational placement is necessary, enrollment in the new school must take place immediately. All educational records must be provided to the receiving school. * An IEP Placement meeting should be scheduled with the new school district's POC.				
BID Participants				
Title	Participated or Notified	Printed Name	Signature	Agree with determination or received determination
Student	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
Birth Parent(s) if applicable	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
MDCPS POC- Case Worker or Supervisor	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
Guardian Ad Litem	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
POC for School of Origin	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
POC for New School District (if applicable)	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
IEP Team Member (if applicable)	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
Foster Parent (If applicable)	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
Ed. Decision Maker (if applicable)	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only
Other	☐ Participated ☐ Notified ☐ N/A			☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Received Only

Supporting Documentation

Indicate and attach any supporting documentation which was used in making this best interest determination interest. Send documentation to the receiving school district if applicable. (The following is checklist of sample documents that may be considered. The list is not intended to be exhaustive.)

- ☐ Report cards
- ☐ Progress reports
- ☐ Achievement data (test scores)
- ☐ Attendance data
- ☐ E-mails or correspondence from individuals consulted
- ☐ Disciplinary referrals
- ☐ Health reports/records
- ☐ IEP or 504 Plan**

A copy of the BID form must be sent to the receiving school district and BID@mdcps.ms.gov. When applicable, a copy of the BID form must be sent to the group home and/or treatment facility.

Special Education Decision Maker /Surrogate Parent Checklist

****Education Decision Maker/Surrogate Parent needed-** The local school district must appoint one if (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Parental rights have been terminated.
- ☐ Biological/adoptive parent cannot be located or not attempting to act
- ☐ Foster parent/relative is not willing or able to serve as the education decision maker
- ☐ Child/Youth placed in congregate care or residential treatment facility IF the first two boxes are checked

The Youth Court with jurisdiction of the child's case may appoint an Education Decision Maker/Surrogate parent.

_____ is authorized to make special education decisions as an Education Decision Maker/Surrogate Parent under IEAS. See 34C.F.R.300.30(a)(3) and 34 C.F. R.300.519(c).

Transportation Plan

☐ A transportation plan is needed. (Only check if needed)

Any child in foster care needing transportation to their school of origin must promptly receive transportation services, regardless of whether the district provides transportation otherwise. This requirement includes students in foster care who attend public pre-schools. The LEA must collaborate with the local MDCPS to develop and implement clear written transportation procedures in accordance with 20 U.S.C. § 6312(c)(5)(B) if the child remains in their school of origin but moves outside the school's attendance zone. The two entities must establish a system that expedites transportation for children placed in foster care. (MDE ESSA Guidance, December 2016)

BID Impasse

The COR Worker must forward the BID Packet to the MDCPS Education Unit if an impasse is reached between the LEA and MDCPS. The LEA POC must forward a copy to the MDE Compulsory School Attendance Unit if an impasse is reached.

Appendix G: BID Questionnaire

Discussion of Student's Best Interest

1. How long has the student attended this school?
2. How well is the student performing academically?
3. How many schools has the student attended over the past few years? This year?
4. How have past school transfers impacted the student?
5. How is the current school serving the student's academic needs, including gifted or special education, vocational opportunities, and other interests? How can the new school serve these needs?
6. What is the student's academic and career goals?
7. How would changing schools affect the student's ability to earn full academic credit, proceed to the next grade, graduate on time, or receive an industry credential?
8. How is the current school serving the student's social, emotional, and cultural needs?
9. Does the student access school-based supportive services in the current school? How can the new school serve these needs?
10. Describe the nature, quality, and duration of the student's relationships in the current school. Consider whether the student has a meaningful and supportive relationship with an adult at the current school. Does the student have any family members at the school? Is he or she involved in extracurricular or other activities?
11. Is the student's new living arrangement expected to be short-or long term? What impact will this have on the student?
12. How would the commute to the current school impact the student? Consider the child's age and developmental functioning as well as the length of the commute with various modes of transportation. **The cost of transportation cannot be a factor when determining best interest.**
13. What other factors did the team consider when making this decision (How did you address the unique needs of the student?)?

Appendix J: Student Transportation Plan Form



Student Transportation Plan

Individual Student Procedures

Child's Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____ **Grade:** _____

MSIS ID: _____

☐ **Foster care provider: (name and contact information):**

School District: _____

☐ **District foster care point of contact (name and contact information):**

☐ **Case Specialist (name and contact information):**

☐ **Supervisor (name and contact information):**

MDCPS verifies that:

It is in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin based on the following factors:

There is an existing transportation option that can serve the student's new housing placement. ____ Yes ____ No. If YES, describe the option.

The district and MDCPS agree that the most cost-effective transportation procedures for this student will be:

The district and MDCPS agree that while permanent transportation is arranged, interim transportation arrangements will be: (Skip if interim transportation arrangements are not needed.)

These transportation procedures must be implemented by the following date:
_____. (The procedures must be implemented within five (5) calendar days of this agreement being signed.)

Authorized Signature for MDCPS:

Signature Title Date

Authorized Signature for the Local Education Agency:

Signature Title Date

The completed form must be and placed in the youth's MDCPS file. A copy must be given to the school district's foster care POC for placement in the youth's education file.

Appendix H: Notification of Placement



Notification of Placement (Change)Form For Children/Youth in the custody of MDCPS

The below information is for official use by authorized State Child Welfare Agency (CWA) and Local Educational Agency (LEA) personnel only.
To Be Completed & Signed by MDCPS COR Worker/Designee within 7 days of Initial Placement or Placement Change.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Child/Youth Name:

Age:

DOB:

Grade Level/Classification:

Enrollment Status: Initial enrollment ☐ School Change ☐ Currently Enrolled-No School Change ☐

Date of Placement/Placement Change:

Date of Enrollment:

Date of BID:

AGENCY AND PLACEMENT CONTACT

MDCPS COR Worker:

Phone:

Email:

MDCPS ASWS:

Phone:

Email:

COR:

Check one: Initial Placement ☐ Foster Care Placement Change ☐ Exiting Foster Care ☐

Foster Care Provider Type: Foster Home ☐ Relative/Kinship Home ☐ Therapeutic Home ☐ Congregate Care ☐ Facility ☐

Foster Care Provider Name:

Phone:

Foster Care Provider Address:

The above Foster Care Provider has permission to receive and have access to the above student's current records regarding grades, discipline, teacher conferences, accommodations, and other educational related matters/concerns: Yes ☐ No ☐

MDCPS COR Worker Signature:

Date:

LEA/SCHOOL INFORMATION (To Be completed by/obtained from School Personnel Within 7 Days of Initial Placement or Placement Change)

Student's MSIS #:

Current School Year:

School Name:

Phone:

School Address:

School District:

Phone:

Received/Completed By:

Title:

Date Received/Completed:

Signature:

****Email this completed form to education@mdcps.ms.gov****

Appendix I: Enrollment Letter



The State of Mississippi
Tate Reeves, Governor
Andrea Sanders, Commissioner
www.mdcps.ms.gov

Date

Dear _____ enrollment office:
Name of school

This letter is to inform you that _____
Name Relationship to youth
has permission from the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services in
_____ County to enroll _____ in school.
Youth's name

The above-named individual may enroll the youth; however, school withdrawals of children in foster care must be initiated and completed by MDCPS or an individual specifically authorized by the youth court to execute primary and secondary school registration procedures. Parent(s), foster parent(s), and group home staff are not permitted to withdraw a child in foster care from school under any circumstances.

The above-named individual has permission to receive and have access to the youth's current records regarding grades, discipline, teacher conferences, accommodations, and other educational related matters/concerns. The above-named individual may also attend educational meetings regarding the youth. Foster parents/placement providers and school staff should notify MDCPS about any educational related meetings and concerns.

Thank you for your immediate assistance with this matter. Should you have additional questions, please contact me at _____
Email or phone number

Respectfully submitted,

ASWS Signature

ASWS Printed Name

Dispute Resolution to State Level Point of Contact

To appeal the district's decision to the Mississippi Department of Education and Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services, please complete this form and submit it by the date indicated on the Written Notice you received from the school. You may submit this form by any of the following methods:

- Scan and email it to TKersh@mdek12.org with the subject "Foster Child Dispute Appeal" to Toni Kersh, Mississippi Department of Education, Foster Care Point of Contact;

OR

- Return the paper form to Toni Kersh, Mississippi Department of Education, Foster Care Point of Contact at 359 N. West Street, Jackson, MS 39201

Student Name: _____

School in which enrollment is sought: _____

I am the educational decision-maker for this student, and I believe the school in which we are seeking enrollment is in the student's best interest because:

I believe the student has a right to attend this school because:

If you would like to provide additional information, please attach it to this form. The student shall remain in the school of origin, receiving all appropriate educational services including transportation, until the dispute reaches its final resolution.

Educational decision-maker name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Policy JQO: Foster Care Plan

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 08/16/2021 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 03/13/2025

Foster Care Plan

The Amite County School District is dedicated to promoting high achievement and educational stability to those students in foster care. The district will collaborate with the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), the Mississippi's Child Welfare Agency, and the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS) as needed to provide educational services for students in foster care.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Best Interest Determination (BID)** – refers the collaborative process between MDCPS and local school districts based on the individual student's unique best interests. The determination involves input from multiple parties to make decisions about whether a student placed in foster care should continue to attend his or her school of origin.
2. **School of Origin** – refers to the school that a student was attending at the time of placement in foster care or the last school the student attended, despite a change in home. To ensure continuity in education, remaining in the school of origin is preferred.
3. **School District of Origin** – refers to the Mississippi school district in which a school of origin is physically located.

DISTRICT POINT OF CONTACT (POC)

The Amite County School District will maintain a staff person who is designated as the District's POC for students in foster care. The POC will follow all requirements as set forth in MDE Rule 30.8.

The district will provide MDE with the name and contact information of the District POC at the beginning of each school year. The POC and his/her contact information will be posted on the district's website for ease of contact. Any changes to the District POC before the end of the academic year will be provided to the MDE POC.

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION (BID)

The Amite County School District will coordinate with MDCPS to finalize a BID within seven (7) school days from the date the district is notified, by MDCPS, of child's placement in foster care or change in the child's living arrangement, except in emergency removal situations.

During the BID determination period, the district will ensure the child is permitted to remain in his or her school of origin and the district will document how transportation shall be provided, arranged, and funded during the pendency of the BID decision. *See Policy EDA*

The BID decision will involve input from multiple, relevant parties who have the authority to make decisions regarding the child in foster care, and who have the knowledge and expertise about the child and the child's circumstances to determine whether a student in foster care should continue to attend his or her school of origin. These parties may include:

1. MDCPS representative;
2. Student, if applicable;
3. Child's foster family;

4. Individual from receiving school district;
5. Counselor;
6. Guardian Ad Litem; and,
7. Biological Parent, if determined by MDCPS or Court Order.

If there is disagreement regarding school placement for a student in foster care, MDCPS is the final decision maker. Students should continue to attend their schools of origin while BIDs are determined.

The Amite County School District will consider all factors relating to a child's best interest. In evaluating the appropriateness of the current educational setting, the district will consider:

1. Appropriateness of the current educational setting (the school of origin),
2. Proximity to the school in which the child is enrolled (the school of origin) at the time of placement in foster care,
3. Preferences of the child's parent(s) or education decision maker(s) (individual legally authorized by the court to make educational decisions for a child in foster care);
4. Holistic and well-informed determination, utilizing a variety of student-centered factors including, but not limited to –
 1. Student's age and grade level;
 2. Student's preference, when age appropriate;
 3. Student's attachment to the school, including meaningful relationships with staff and peers;
 4. Placement of the student's sibling(s);
 5. Distance/length of time to travel to/from school;
 6. Time of academic year, academic performance, and skills;
 7. Current educational goals and services; anticipated length of time in placement, and whether reunification is the family goal;
 8. Number of placements to date;
 9. Child's participation in specialized instruction (e.g., gifted programming, career technical education program, College Credit Plus, Advanced Placement classes);
 10. Availability of required special education and/or related services in a school other than the school of origin when the student has an identified disability under IDEA or Section 504;
 11. Availability of language services in a school other than the school of origin when the student has been identified as an English learner;
 12. Child's ability to earn full academic credit, the ability to proceed to the next grade, or the ability to graduate on time;
 13. School climate, peer support, supportive adults, and involvement in extracurricular activities;
 14. Availability and quality of the services in the school to meet the child's educational and socioemotional needs;
 15. Impact the commute to and from school would have on the child, based on developmental functioning. For children with disabilities, consider the IDEA's federal requirements when determining best interest;
 16. Any other relevant factors pertinent to the child.
5. Whether the student needs to remain in the school of origin for a limited time (e.g., until the end of the school year, the end of a testing or grading period).
6. Determine if it is appropriate to revisit the question of whether it is in the student's best to remain in the school of origin or enroll locally, and if so, document a specific time to reassess; and,
7. NOT consider the cost of transportation when determining a child's best interest.

REMAIN IN SCHOOL OF ORIGIN

When the district has determined that it is in the best interest of the child to remain in the school of origin, the district will document in the individualized student's plan regarding how transportation will be provided, arranged, and funded for the student.

The district will document, in collaboration with MDCPS, the Transportation Plan that supports the district's obligations under state and federal law and follows all guidelines in MDE Rule 30.8, in order for the student to receive transportation services on the first day of the student's attendance. *See also policy EDA.*

LEAVE SCHOOL OF ORIGIN

When the Amite County School District has determined it is in the best interest of the child to leave the school of origin, the enrolling district will:

1. Ensure enrollment in the new school takes place on the same day the student is enrolled, even if the child is unable to provide records normally required for enrollment.
 1. A student in foster care must be enrolled by a MDCPS representative.
 2. The District will confirm, in writing, the person responsible for making educational decisions. If a student is removed, from the school, by anyone other than a MDCPS employee the district will notify MDE immediately, unless a court order states otherwise.
 3. The District will contact the school last attended (school of origin), within one (1) school day of enrollment, to obtain relevant academic and other records.
2. Update the student database and contact information for the student within one (1) school day of notification of enrollment from the custodial agency (MDCPS).
3. Ensure the student is assigned to a school in the district in the same manner and according to the same process used for all other students in the district.
4. Give foster children transferring into the District credit for full and/or partial coursework completed at their school of origin, in accordance with the District's policy on transfer credits.
5. Ensure each student in foster care shall be provided services comparable to other students in the school of attendance.
6. Ensure that it is documented that a student was withdrawn prior to the best interest determination, if applicable.

STUDENT RECORDS

Upon receipt of a written request for school records from a new school, the school district of origin shall forward, in a manner consistent with state and federal law, a complete copy of the records of the student in foster care. Information needed by the receiving school district shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Proof of age;
2. Immunization records;
3. Cumulative education file, if the child is attending a public school.
4. Copy of the current IEP, if the child is eligible for special education services;
5. Copy of the current Section 504 Plan, if the child has a Section 504;
6. Copy of health records kept by the school; and,
7. Any other pertinent information needed to assist the enrolling school in providing appropriate educational services.

The inability to receive records shall not delay student enrollment. Once a foster student is disenrolled by MDCPS, no other sharing of information shall occur. The Amite County School District will comply with all state and federal law in order to protect student privacy.
