



To: Mr. Brian Foster, Superintendent & The Marion County School Board

From: Dr. Alicia Conerly, Director of Federal Programs

Date: June 17, 2026

Re: Recommendation to approve the updated Annual Foster Care Plan for the 2026-2027 school year/fiscal year.

Mr. Brian Foster and Marion County School Board Members,

Executive Summary

The purpose of this memorandum is to request formal board approval for the MCSD Annual Foster Care Plan. This comprehensive plan ensures that children in foster care experience minimal disruption to their education/care services and receive the necessary support, stability, and equitable access to all programs.

Approval of this plan keeps our organization in full compliance with MDE/ Federal ESSA / State Human Services regulations.

Background & Context

Each year, we are required to update our Foster Care Plan to collaborate effectively with local child welfare agencies. The plan outlines clear protocols for:

- Ensuring immediate enrollment and transfer of records.
- Providing transportation to maintain a child's placement in their "school of origin" when in their best interest.
- Designating a point of contact (Foster Care Liaison) to streamline communication between agencies and families.

Attachments:

MCSD Foster Care Plan for FY'27



Foster Care Plan

Revised June 16, 2026

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT FOSTER CARE PLAN

This plan is to address the requirement for Foster Care provisions under Title I of ESSA, which require State Educational Agencies (SDE) and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to collaborate with Child Welfare Agencies (CWAs) to ensure educational stability and minimize educational disruptions for children in foster care.

FOSTER CARE PLAN

The Marion County Public School District is committed to providing all students with sound educational experiences. We recognize that foster children are at an increased risk of grade retention, gaps in academic achievement, low high school graduation rates, and postsecondary enrollment. These provisions promote greater stability for children in foster care so that they can continue their education without disruption, maintain meaningful relationships with peers and adults, and have the opportunity to achieve college- and career readiness.

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The Marion County School District ensures that the educational stability of the child will be met as follows:

- A child in foster care will remain in the child's school of origin unless it is determined that it is not in the child's best interest in that school.
- If a determination is made that it is not in the child's best interest to remain in the school of origin, the child will be immediately enrolled in the school of residence, even if the enrollee cannot produce records usually required for enrollment.
- The new (enrolling) school immediately contacts the school of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records.

SCHOOL DISTRICT ASSURANCES

- Each placement of the child in foster care considers the appropriateness of the current educational setting and the proximity to the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement.
- The Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS) will coordinate with appropriate local educational agencies to ensure that the child remains in the school where the child is enrolled at the time of placement.

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT FOSTER CARE PLAN

- If it is not in the best interest of the child to return to the resident school, the child will immediately be provided the appropriate enrollment to the Marion County School District.
- The Marion County School District will gather and maintain educational records and promptly send them to any district where the student moves.

FOSTER CARE CHILD LIAISON (POC)

The Marion County School District will assign at least one person to serve as a Foster Care Child Liaison or Point of Contact (POC). The Foster Child Liaison will work in the child's best interest to ensure all educational requirements are met. The liaison assigned to the position will have access to available training and materials to inform them of any foster care regulations changes. The liaison will work closely with the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS) to handle:

- Coordinating implementation of the Title I, Part A provisions, as it relates to Foster Care provisions outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act;
- Coordinating with the corresponding child welfare agency;
- Leading the development of a process for making the best interest determination;
- Documenting the best interest determination;
- Facilitating the transfer of records and immediate enrollment;
- Facilitating data sharing with MDCPS, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other privacy protocols;
- Developing and coordinating local transportation procedures;
- Managing best interest determinations and transportation cost disputes;
- Ensuring that children in foster care are enrolled in and regularly attending school;
- Coordinating and implementing the child's IEP if applicable. If the child is a child with a disability, the school of origin should collaborate with the new school to ensure services begin on day one; and
- Providing professional development and training to school staff on the Title I provisions and educational needs of children in foster care.

FOSTER CARE COMMITTEE, if applicable.

A committee will meet to determine the appropriate placement of each foster care child. The committee will be composed of the school administrator or representative, the Foster Care Liaison, and a member of the CPS.

The MDCPS and MCSD have five (5) school days from the date of the child's placement in foster care or change in the child's living arrangement to finalize the best interest determination,

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT FOSTER CARE PLAN

except in emergency removal situations. In emergency circumstances, the CPS has the authority to make an immediate decision regarding the school placement and then consult with the MCSD and revisit the best interest determination of the child. The child must remain enrolled in their school of origin during this period.

A representative from the school of origin should be knowledgeable about the child and be able to provide insight into significant relationships that the child may have formed with staff and peers. In addition, the representative should be able to express how changing schools could affect the student's academic, social, and emotional well-being. Based on the individual situation, this person could be a teacher, counselor, coach, or other meaningful person in the child's life.

The MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT and MDCPS designee should consult other relevant parties, such as the child (dependent upon age), foster parents, biological parents when appropriate, the education decision-maker(s), and other relatives for their perspectives on which school the child should attend during their time in foster care, consistent with the child's case plan.

If a child has an IEP or a Section 504 plan, the relevant school staff members must also participate in the best interest decision process.

If the child is an EL, Immigrant Child or Youth the appropriate school staff members must also participate in the best interest decision process.

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION

The custodial agency must notify the school and district within one school day of the child being placed in foster care or of a change in the foster child's living arrangement. When a school-age child enters foster care, or there is a placement change while in care, the youth's MDCPS caseworker shall work with the local school district to determine whether it is in the child's best interests to remain at the school of origin or enroll in a new school. **This determination must be in writing.** The school of origin is defined as the school in which a child is enrolled at the time of initial foster care placement or when a change in foster placement is made. The MCSD will use the MDCPS forms for documenting foster care placements and decisions.

Foster care children **Shall Not** be withdrawn or enrolled until a BID is completed.

The custodial agency (CPS) must have the following before a BID meeting.

- Grades, attendance logs, and any behavior reports/logs (suspension or expulsions) from the youth's current school

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- Copy of youth's IEP/504 plan with current eligibility and supports/services (if applicable)
- Youth's current grade
- Youth's school of origin (the school they are currently attending)
- Distance between the school of origin and the youth's new placement
- The foster care provider's willingness to assist with transportation

STEPS TO CONDUCT A BID

1. The CPS worker should phone the school district's POC to schedule a BID conference/meeting. The school of origin and the potential new school district POC should be a part of the BID process. The BID may occur in person, via Zoom, or by conference call. The BID meeting CAN NOT be done via email. BIDs must occur within five (5) business days of the youth entering foster care or changing placement. The student must be enrolled within seven days.
2. The district will use the MDCPS BID forms. An example of the form is in Appendix F.
3. Determine what is in the youth's best interest for educational success by engaging in a dialogue using the guiding questions in the BID packet. The district's POC should ask the guiding questions. See the consideration under "Student Placement Decisions" and Appendix G for a *Discussion of Student's Best Interest* questions. The BID discussion/meeting must include the district's Special Education Department representative(s) if the student has an IEP or is being evaluated.
 - a. The youth's current support and services, behavior concerns, safety concerns, and the youth's-input (when appropriate) should be considered when making a BID.
 - b. Transportation **shall NOT** be a factor in determining what school is in the child's best interest unless the distance will take away from instructional time or is too far and unrealistic for the youth to ride a bus or receive private transportation (typically 50 miles).
4. If a transportation plan is needed, discuss options, and finalize the plan with the CPS worker. Document the decision and have all parties sign the agreement.
5. The POC, MDCPS worker, and all BID participants must sign the BID form. Keep a copy of the BID form for the district records.
6. If the child remains in the school of origin, the CPS worker should complete the MDCPS *Notification of Placement (Change) Form H*. The district must keep a copy of the form.

ENROLLMENT

- MDCPS policy allows the foster parent to enroll a student.
- The Notification of Placement (Change) Form must be provided at the time of enrollment.
- A BID from the school of origin must be provided when a foster child is newly enrolled.
- Each year, the school district should receive an updated MDCPS enrollment authorization form (Appendix I).
- If the necessary paperwork (birth certificates, shot records, academic records, special education records, etc.) is not immediately available, the school district will enroll the student.
- If the school is not provided with the foster student's records from the school of origin, the enrolling school will request records on the same day as the student's arrival. The school of origin is expected to provide the student records to the new school within one (1) school day of request.
- After enrollment, the foster family or CPS shall provide the following guardianship or legal custody documents for verification:
 - Power of attorney
 - Affidavit
 - Court Order

The local MDCPS is responsible for providing pertinent information regarding the child's age, grade, and academic history (e.g., current Individualized Education Program) to aid the MCSD in placing the student in an appropriate classroom setting until the district receives the student's records. The **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT** will share education records with CPS that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows, which permits disclosing academic records (including IDEA) of students in foster care to State agencies without parental consent.

WITHDRAWALS

- An MDCPS worker **MUST** withdraw a student from the school. The foster parent **CANNOT** withdraw a child.
- Foster children cannot be withdrawn and enrolled in an educational setting of "home school." Foster children must be in a public school setting. A private school setting may be an option if a foster parent wishes to be financially responsible for a private school.
- Foster children **CANNOT** be withdrawn until a BID has taken place.
- The school should respond to an enrolling school's request for records within twenty-four hours.

STUDENT PLACEMENT DECISIONS

The district is responsible for ensuring that a child in foster care remains in their school of origin unless a determination is made that it is not in the child's best interest to do so. The Foster Care Committee will consider several factors when making a best interest determination. The determining factors that may be evaluated include the following.

- The proximity of the resource family home to the child's present school.
- Safety considerations.
- Age and grade level of the child as it relates to the other best interest factors.
- Length of time the student has attended current school.
- Needs of the child, including social adjustment and well-being.
- Child's performance, continuity of education, and engagement in the school the child attends.
- Child's special educational programming if the child is classified.
- Point of time in the year; consider academic calendars of current school and new school; consider timing the transfer to coincide with the end of the quarter/semester/school year or following an event significant to the student.
- Child's permanency goal and the likelihood of reunification.
- Anticipated duration of the placement.
- Preferences of the child.
- Preferences of the child's parent(s) or educational decision maker(s).
- The child's attachment to the school, including meaningful relationships with staff and peers.
- Placement of the child's sibling(s).
- Influence of the school climate on the child, including safety.
- Availability and quality of the services in the school to meet the child's educational and socioemotional needs.
- The child's participation in specialized instruction (e.g., gifted programming, career technical education program, advanced placement classes) and availability at the new school.
- The student's ability to earn full academic credit, receive an industry credit, proceed to the next grade, graduate on time, and the child's educational and career goals.
- History of school transfers and how they have impacted the child;
- How the length of the commute would affect the child, based on the child's developmental stage.
- Whether the child is a student with a disability under the IDEA who is receiving special education and related services or a student with a disability under Section 504 who is receiving special education or related aids and services and, if so, the availability of those required services in a school other than the school of origin.

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- Whether the child is an EL, Immigrant Child or Youth and is receiving language services, and if so, the availability of those required services in a school other than the school of origin.

*Transportation costs should not be considered when determining a child's best interests.

In a disagreement regarding school placement for a child in foster care, the child welfare agency should be considered the final decision maker in making the best interest determination. The child welfare agency is uniquely positioned to assess vital non-educational factors such as safety, sibling placements, the child's permanency goal, and other components of the case plan. The child welfare agency also has the authority, capacity, and responsibility to collaborate with and gain information from multiple parties, including parents, children, schools, and the court, in making these decisions.

IDEA STUDENTS

The IDEA, Part B directs school districts to make a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) available to all eligible children with disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). FAPE under IDEA includes the provision of special education and related services at no cost to the parents in accordance with an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

- The Marion County School District will operate in accordance with all state and federal laws regarding special education students.
- Educational placement will be determined annually and will be based on the child's IEP in accordance with the child's individual needs.
- The child will be placed in the least restrictive environment, and unless they require some other arrangement, they will attend the school they would attend if not disabled.
- Timely and expedited evaluations and eligibility determinations for highly mobile children with disabilities will be made when possible.
- Children in foster care will have access to related aids, services, and comparable services, including summer and extended school-year services if applicable.

EL, IMMIGRANT CHILD AND YOUTH STUDENTS

The Marion County School District will ensure that EL, Immigrant Child or Youth students in foster care will participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs by doing the following:

- Identifying and assessing all potential EL, Immigrant Child or Youth students in a timely, valid, and reliable manner;

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- Providing EL, Immigrant Child or Youth students with a language assistance program that is educationally sound and proven successful;
- Sufficiently staffing and supporting the language assistance programs for EL, Immigrant Child or Youth students;
- Ensuring that EL, Immigrant Child or Youth students have equal opportunities to participate in all curricular and extra-curricular activities meaningfully without unnecessary segregation;
- Ensuring that EL, Immigrant Child or Youth students with disabilities are evaluated in a timely manner and that their language needs are considered in these evaluations;
- Monitoring and evaluating EL, Immigrant Child or Youth students in language assistance programs following federal guidelines to evaluate program effectiveness;
- Ensuring meaningful communication with the parents of the students.

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

- Transportation for students in foster care will be provided in the same manner as for other students.
- Should it be determined that it is in the best interest of the child in foster care to remain in their school of origin that is outside the attendance boundaries of the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT (MCSD)**, transportation will be coordinated with the MDCPS and the school district of residency to determine the best possible means of transportation.
- The Marion County School District will collaborate with the CPS to develop clear written procedures governing how transportation is provided and funded to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin. (See Transportation to Ensure School Stability Form A).
- In the event of a dispute between the MCSD and MDCPS concerning the cost of transportation, if the disagreement continues, the cost will be divided equally between the MCSD and the MDCPS. The dispute shall be brought before the state-appointed POCs using the Foster Care Transportation Dispute Form B procedures. Current transportation expenses shall remain in effect until a decision is rendered.
- The regular transportation policies approved by the Marion County School District will be followed in transporting foster care students. Drivers will be appropriately licensed and certified with the required DMV and background checks. Students who must be transported out of state will be school board-approved as Mississippi law requires.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

If the foster care dispute cannot be resolved at the local level, the dispute must be forwarded to the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE). Disputes between the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT (MCSD)** and the Mississippi Department of Child Protective Services

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(MDCPS) regarding implementing local transportation procedures or costs will be resolved by a three-person panel.

Either MCSD or MDCPS can bring a transportation payment dispute to the MDE by submitting a dispute resolution request to the MDE foster care point of contact via an email with the subject “Foster Child Dispute Appeal”. The dispute resolution request must include the following:

- A complete explanation of the basis of the dispute, with all pertinent facts.
- The name and contact information of the people who have been addressing the dispute thus far on behalf of the MCSD and the local child welfare agency (phone, email, and mailing address).
- Details of how the agencies have attempted to resolve the dispute at the local level before appealing to the state.
- Within ten (10) days of receipt of the dispute resolution request, the MDE foster care point of contact will contact the party that did not submit the request (either the MCSD or MDCPS), identifying the subject matter of the dispute and inviting that party to submit any information pertinent to the dispute.
- The party will have ten (10) days to submit its explanation of the dispute, with all pertinent facts.
- Documents submitted by either party after the applicable deadlines will not be considered.
- The panel shall make a final decision within thirty (30) days of receiving all information related to the dispute.
- The MDE foster care contact will forward the written decision and an explanation of that decision to the appropriate parties at both the PPSD and MDCPS. The district of origin must ensure that a child in foster care receives transportation to and from the school of origin cost-effectively until disputes are resolved.
- The decision shall be the final resolution.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PLAN FOR STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT DISPUTE

If the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT** seeks to place a child in a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the educational decision-maker, the decision-maker shall be provided written notice of their right to appeal the decision (see *Sample Placement Decision Letter Form C*), including:

- The contact information for the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT's** appropriate POC and the MDE's POC.
- An explanation of the reasons for the **MCSD's** decision.

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- A detailed description of how to dispute the decision, including *Level I Dispute Resolution to MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT Form D*.
- An explanation that the student shall remain in the school of origin, receiving all services/transportation, until the dispute reaches its final resolution.
- Timelines for resolution of the dispute at each level.
- Notice of the right to appeal to the MDE if the local-level resolution is not satisfactory.

LEVEL I: MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Initiating Dispute Level I

To dispute the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT's (MCSD)** placement decision, an educational decision-maker must request dispute resolution in writing by submitting a dated appeal letter (Form D) within five (5) school days of receiving written notice from the district. The letter may be emailed with the subject "Foster Child Appeal" or delivered to any school to the superintendent's attention. The student shall remain in the school of origin and the District will provide or arrange transportation during the pending dispute.

MCSD Decision The superintendent, or designee, will arrange for a personal conference with the educational decision-maker, the student (if appropriate), and at least one representative from the local child welfare agency within five (5) business days of receiving the appeal letter. Within five (5) business days of the conference, the superintendent or designee will inform the educational decision-maker of the decision in writing.

If the educational decision-maker disagrees and wishes to appeal to Level II, they must inform the **Marion County** superintendent or designee of the intent to appeal within five (5) school days of receipt of the Level I decision. If no appeal is made, the child shall be enrolled in the school determined by the District, with efforts prioritized to minimize educational disruption during transition.

LEVEL II: MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Initiating Dispute Level II

If the student's educational decision-maker disagrees with the decision rendered by the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT's** superintendent or designee at Level I, they may appeal to the Mississippi Department of Education (Level II) by following the instructions on *Form E*. The student shall remain in the school of origin and continue to receive transportation arranged by the District until the dispute is resolved. Once a decision is received from the MDE Level II appeal, the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT** must implement the MDE's decision in full immediately

APPENDIX

Foster Care Plan Forms

TRANSPORTATION TO ENSURE SCHOOL STABILITY
Individual Student Procedures

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Grade: _____ MSIS ID: _____

Complete the appropriate column.

___ The student will remain in the same school. Transportation will be provided by: _____ Responsible party/parties for transportation cost: _____ _____ _____	___ A change in school placement is needed. Enrollment in the new school must take place without interruption. The student will be enrolled in _____ (school) in the _____ (district) on _____ (date). The person responsible for enrolling the student in the new school is: _____ _____.
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ROLE	PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	CONTACT INFO
Caregiver			
MDCPS Agent			
Marion County Foster Care POC			
School Guidance Counselor			
School Administrator			
Other: Describe			

The custodial agency verifies that:

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

- 2) The child is eligible under Title IV-E from the Mississippi Department of Child Protective Services: ____ YES ____ NO

If YES, reimbursement for some funding of transportation costs:

____ will be pursued

____ cannot be pursued for this reason: _____

- 3) The following was executed to identify a no-cost or low-cost transportation service:

The district verifies that: _____

- 4) There is an existing transportation option that can serve the student's new housing placement.

____ YES ____ NO If YES, what is the option? _____

The district and Mississippi Child Protection Services 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 agreements will be _____

These transportation procedures were agreed to on _____ (date) and will be implemented within five days, by _____ (date).

Authorized Signatures:

Mississippi Dept. of Child Protection Services

Marion County School District

**MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT DISPUTE RESOLUTION PLAN FOR
FOSTER CARE TRANSPORTATION DISPUTE**

Disputes between the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT** and the MDCPS regarding implementing local transportation procedures, calculating, or paying for additional costs will be resolved by a three-person panel on the state level. Either the **MCSD** or the MDCPS can bring a dispute to the MDE foster care point of contact:

MDE Foster Child Point of Contact
Terissa Williams
twilliams@mdek12.org

The transportation dispute will be submitted to MDE via email in the following format:

- 1) A complete explanation of the basis of the dispute, with all pertinent facts.
- 2) The name and contact information of the people who have been addressing the dispute thus far on behalf of both the District and the MDCPS (phone, email, and mailing address).
- 3) Details of how the agencies have attempted to resolve the dispute at the local level prior to appealing to the state.
- 4) Within ten (10) days of receipt of the dispute resolution request, the MDE foster care point of contact will contact the party that did not submit the request (either the MCSD or MDCPS) identifying the subject matter of the dispute and inviting that party to submit any information pertinent to the dispute.
- 5) The party will have ten (10) days to submit its explanation of the dispute, with all pertinent facts.

The district of origin must ensure that a child in foster care receives transportation to and from the school of origin in a cost-effective manner until disputes are resolved.

SAMPLE PLACEMENT DECISION LETTER

Date:

To: **Educational Decision-Maker**

Delivered via: **Preferably a reliable email address to ensure delivery**

The **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT** has determined that the appropriate school placement for *[Student Name]* is *[School Name]*. We understand this is neither the school of origin nor the school requested by the student's educational decision-maker. Therefore, we are providing this explanation of our decision and information about how you may appeal.

We have determined that it is in the student's best interest to attend **School Name** because:

The educational decision-maker may appeal this decision by completing the attached Dispute Form, signing it, dating it, and submitting it by *[insert date ten school days from date of this letter]*. If you choose to initiate a dispute, the student shall remain in the school of origin, receiving all appropriate educational services including transportation, until the dispute reaches its final resolution.

Once the Dispute Form is received, the superintendent or designee will arrange for a personal conference within ten (10) business days, and provide a decision in writing within five (5) business days following that conference.

If you have questions about this decision or how to appeal, please contact:

Dr. Alicia Conerly
Marion County Public School District
aconerly@marionk12.org

**LEVEL I DISPUTE RESOLUTION FORM TO
MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

To appeal the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT's** decision, please complete this form and submit it by the date indicated on the Written Notice you received from the district. You may submit this form by any of the following methods:

- Scan and email it to aconerly@marionk12.org with the subject (choose one: Homeless, Migrant, Immigrant, Limited English Proficient, or Foster) Child Appeal.
- Return the paper form to any school in this school district; or
- Submit the paper form directly to the office of the superintendent at 1010 Hwy 13 North, Columbia, MS 39429.

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: _____

LEVEL II DISPUTE RESOLUTION TO STATE LEVEL POINT OF CONTACT

To appeal the **MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**'s decision to the Mississippi Department of Education and Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services, please complete this form and submit it via:

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

OR

- Return the paper form to Terissa Williams, 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: _____

School District 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: _____

**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. <i>The youth shall not be withdrawn/enrolled until a BID is completed.</i>				
Student Information				
Student Name: (first, middle, last)		DOB:	Date of BID:	
Address/District of Residence:		Grade:		
		MSIS:	IEP Ruling ☐ Yes ☐ No	
School/District of Origin: _____				
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: _____				
☐ 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: _____				
<i>(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.</i>				
BID Participants				
Title	Participated	Printed Name	Signature	Agree with Determination
Student	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
Birth Parent(s) if applicable	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
MDCPS POC- Case Worker or Supervisor	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
Guardian Ad Litem	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
POC for School of Origin	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
POC for New School District (if applicable)	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
IEP Team Member (if applicable)	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
Foster Parent (if applicable)	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
Ed. Decision Maker (if applicable)	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No
Other	☐ Yes ☐ No			☐ Yes ☐ No

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
- ☐ IEP or 504 Plan
- ☐ E-mails or correspondence from individuals consulted
- ☐ Disciplinary referrals
- ☐ Health reports/records

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.

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.

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?).



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: Family Foster Home ☐ Relative/Kinship Home ☐ Therapeutic Home ☐ 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 placement@mdcps.org



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

SOURCES:

Best Interest Decision Making Procedures. (2017) MDE website.

[BID Procedures](#)

Mississippi Department of Education and Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services
Joint Guidance. *Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care*. December 2016.

[MDE/CPS 2016 Foster Care Guidance](#)

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth website.

<http://www.naehcy.org/essa-and-children-foster-care>

U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Non-Regulatory Guidance: *Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care*. June
23, 2016.

[USDE/HHS Non-Regulatory Foster Care Guidance](#)