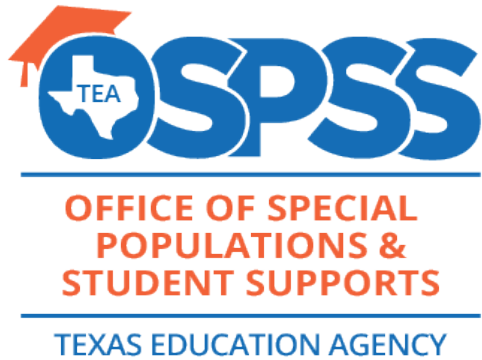
The background of the slide features a large, faint, circular seal of the State of Texas. The seal contains a five-pointed star in the center, surrounded by a wreath. The words "STATE OF TEXAS" are inscribed around the perimeter of the seal.

Fall 2025 Foster Care Webinar & State Office Hours

October 3, 2025 | 10:00 – 11:30 AM



Highly Mobile and At-Risk (HMAR) Student Programs

Texas Education for
Homeless Children
& Youth (TEHCY)

Foster Care &
Student Success
(FC)

Pregnancy Related
Services (PRS)

Military
Connected
Students (MCS)

Webinar Objectives and Agenda

To support students in foster care by sharing updates, resources, and guidance, encouraging collaboration among school systems (e.g., districts and charter schools) and community partners, and gathering input to inform ongoing improvements.

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Who are students in Foster Care?
- TSDS PEIMS Guidance
- Key Reminders & Updates
- Technical Assistance Opportunities
- Resources & Upcoming Trainings



Foster Care and At-Risk Program Support



Kelly Kravitz, MPSA
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*HMAR Student Programs
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Technical Support and Engagement



The **chat feature** is turned on so the audience can **provide input and receive live links** throughout the presentation.



PDF & video recording of today's presentation will be posted to the [HMAR website](#).

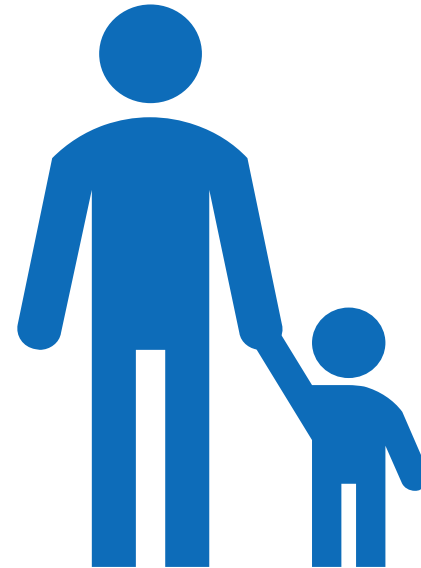


We are unable to make the power point available in advance. Thank you for your understanding.



To obtain your **Continuing Professional Education (CPEs)** certificate, attendees must (1) participate **live** AND (2) complete the end-of-webinar **feedback survey**.

Foster Care Overview



Students in Foster Care

- **Foster care** – refers to children & youth who are in custody of the State of Texas due to abuse/neglect, regardless of their living arrangements.
- A court grants legal custody of the student to Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) if it is determined the student **cannot safely remain** with a parent or legal guardian.
 - DFPS secures a relative, foster home, or other setting to ensure the student's safety and well-being.



DFPS (Department of Family & Protective Services)

- **Conservatorship:** used in the Texas Education Code and by DFPS to describe the status of a child who is placed in DFPS legal custody by a court order.



- Two terms used to define whether a child is in a short or long-term conservatorship:
 - **Temporary Managing Conservatorship (TMC)**
 - **Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC)**

Foster Care Placements



DFPS may place the child in several different types of living arrangements:

- Relative/kinship caregiver or (close family friend)
- Foster family homes
- Residential treatment centers and emergency shelters
- Facilities overseen by another state agency
- Adoptive family
- Supervised independent living (SIL) arrangement



Wheel of Support



Considerations



Highly mobile children may lose **4 to 6 months** of emotional, academic growth and educational progress for each school move.

When students in foster care change schools, despite the protections in place, they may lose course credits, repeat courses they have already taken, be placed in inappropriate classes or grade levels, or not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities.

Students are highly resilient and adaptable.

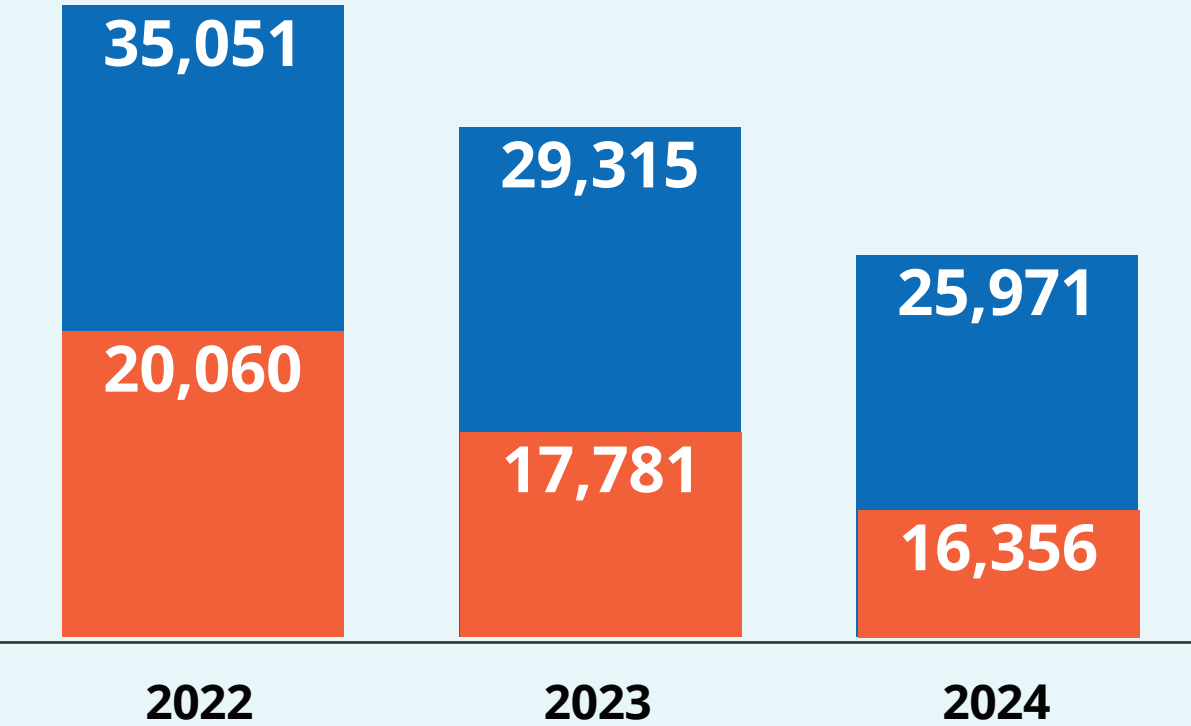
Educators have a significant opportunity to play an impactful role in a student's life in education and post-secondary trajectory.



TSDS PEIMS Guidance

Students in Foster Care in Texas Data

PEIMS vs DFPS

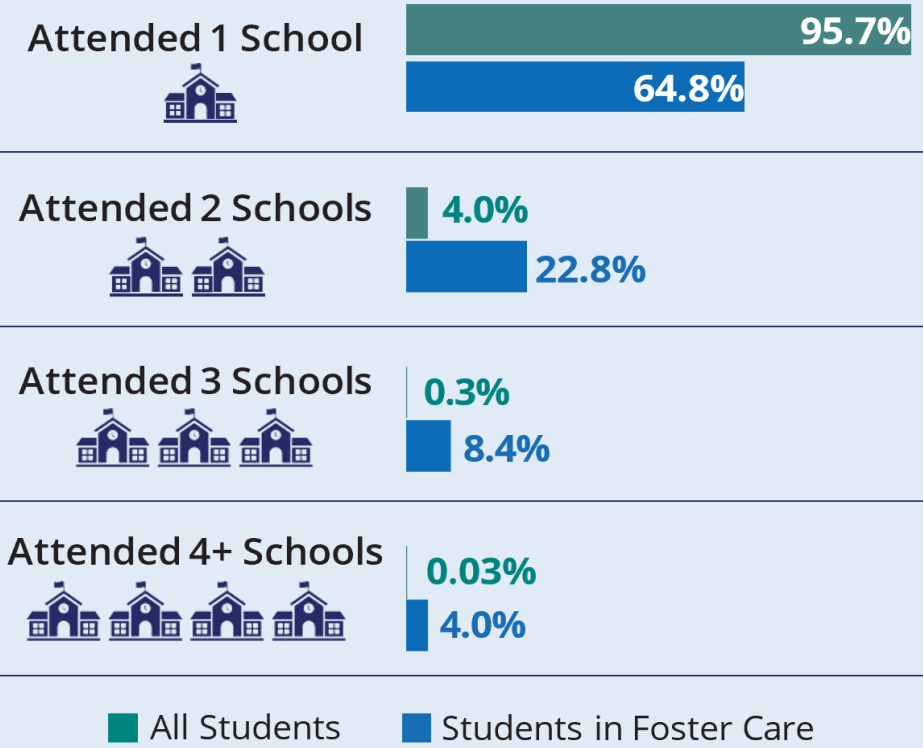


Data Source: DFPS Impact System and 2024 Summer PEIMS Data

Number of Schools Students Attended

During the 2023–2024 School Year

Over a third of all foster care students attended two or more schools in one school year, compared to less than 5% of all students in Texas.



Data Source: 2024 Summer PEIMS Data

TSDS PEIMS Coding Guidance – Foster Care

Table Identification		Name	Date Issued	Date Updated
C196		FosterCareType	08/01/2013	09/01/2023
Descriptor	Short Description	Long Description		
1	Student Is Current Conservator of DFPS	Student is currently in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services		
2	PK Student Previously In Conservator of DFPS Adversary Hearing	Prekindergarten Student Was Previously In The Conservatorship Of The Department Of Family And Protective Services Following An Adversary Hearing Held As Provided By Section 262.201, Family Code.		
3	PK student prior foster care in another state, now resides in Texas	Prekindergarten Student Is Or Ever Has Been In Foster Care In Another State Or Territory, If The Child Resides In This State (Texas). TEC 29.153(B)		

- Improve coding (identification) of students in FC through accurate documentation.
- Ensure Campus Administrators, PEIMS Coordinators, FC Liaisons, Registrars, School Counselors, and other personnel who develop and support the enrollment processes are trained & informed.

DEFINING "FOSTER CARE" FOR TSDS PEIMS (C196):

The general term "foster care" for education purposes includes *all* students in the **managing conservatorship (legal custody) of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)**.

- ◆ This includes students placed by DFPS with a Kinship caregiver, when the child remains in the legal custody of Texas DFPS.¹
- ◆ Students who were in or are currently in another state's foster care system, residing in Texas, are considered in "foster care" (For Pre-K purposes only) TEC §29.153(6)(B).
- ◆ The Texas Legislature granted TEA permission to collect the "foster care" status of students in Texas DFPS Managing Conservatorship, therefore students from another state's foster care system, unless for pre-k purposes, and students who are identified as Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) living in Texas may be considered "foster care" should not be coded for the purposes of TSDS PEIMS.

Foster Care PEIMS (C196) – Codes #1 and #2

(1) A child (of appropriate age) is eligible if they are currently in DFPS conservatorship.

(2) Even if the child has subsequently been adopted or for whatever reason is no longer in DFPS care, the child is still eligible if the age criteria are met.

Therefore, any verification letter establishing that the child was ever in DFPS conservatorship remains valid until the child ages out of Pre-K.

Please email the DFPS Pre-K verification mailbox: prekverificationltrs@dfps.texas.gov.

TEC §29.153(6)(B) allows free pre-kindergarten eligibility to children who are or have been in foster care in another state or territory and reside in Texas.

Acceptable documentation to support this requirement may include:

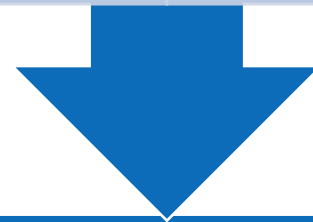
- Official paperwork from state or county welfare system.
- Foster care documents stating closure of a case
- Redacted court order documents
- Adoption paperwork completed by the originating state

Federal foster care is NOT Texas foster care (for PEIMS purposes)

Students in these circumstances are NOT in Texas DFPS managing conservatorship.

Not coded as foster care for PEIMS purposes.

Not eligible for the higher education tuition and fees waiver or other state-specific benefits for students in Texas DFPS managing conservatorship.



The Administration for Children & Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement, places unaccompanied child refugees in Texas in foster homes administered by the federal government.

This is sometimes referred to as “federal foster care.”

They ARE eligible for USDA nutrition benefits as a child in foster care,

And ARE eligible for Education and Training Voucher benefits and ESSA-related school stability provisions.

TSDS PEIMS Coding Guidance Resource

To streamline enrollment and clarify expectations regarding the TSDS PEIMS indicator code, identifying students in foster care and acceptable documentation TEA developed the guidance below. Please ensure that Campus Administrators, TSDS PEIMS Coordinators, Foster Care Liaisons, Registrars, School Counselors, and other personnel who develop and support the enrollment processes are informed.

DEFINING "FOSTER CARE" FOR TSDS PEIMS (C196):

The general term "foster care" for education purposes includes *all* students in the **managing conservatorship (legal custody) of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).**

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ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION FOR TSDS PEIMS:

Schools may accept any official Texas Department of Family and Protective Services form, listed below, that designate that a student is in **Texas DFPS Managing Conservatorship**. A school may also accept a copy of the court order for this purpose.

☒ All forms in the 2085 series:

- ◆ Foster Care/Residential Care - 2085 FC
- ◆ Kinship or Other Non-Foster Caregiver - 2085 KO
- ◆ Verified Kinship Foster Caregiver - 2085 KF
- ◆ Legal Risk - 2085 LR
- ◆ Home and Community-based Services (HCS) - 2085 HCS
- ◆ Supervised Independent Living - 2085 SIL
- ◆ Designation of Education Decision-Maker - 2085 E²
- ◆ Designation of Medical Consenter - 2085 B



¹ A "Kinship" Caregiver is a relative or fictive kin who provides care for a child. A relative is a member of the child's biological family. A fictive kin is a person who has a longstanding and significant relationship with a child in DFPS conservatorship or with the child's family. For more information about "foster care" and other settings a student may live in visit pg. 41-42 of the [Foster Care & Student Success Resource Guide](#).

² All students in DFPS Managing Conservatorship are required to present an Education Decision-Maker 2085 (E-2085) form at enrollment in accordance with Family Code §263.004. If a student does not have this form at enrollment, please request it. The form includes the contact information for the education decision-maker and caseworker. Schools, in accordance with TEC §25.007 and [TDC §89.1617](#), are required to notify the education decision-maker and caseworker regarding any event that may significantly impact the education of a child. It is critical that schools receive this form and store it with other privacy-protected records. The [Foster Care & Student Success Resource Guide](#) contains additional information in [Chapter 9](#) regarding education decision-making and who to contact for what purposes(s).

To streamline
enrollment and clarify
expectations regarding
the TSDS PEIMS
indicator code:

Foster Care TSDS PEIMS Guidance



ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION (CONTINUED):

- ☒ DFPS Kinship Caregiver Agreement - 0695
- ☒ Court-Order naming Texas DFPS as the Temporary Managing Conservator (TMC) or Permanent Managing Conservator (PMC).
- ☒ Pre-k purposes only³ - DFPS issued letter & other states official paperwork (Acceptable documentation from another state's child welfare system, including official paperwork from state or county child welfare system; Foster Care documents stating closure of a case; Redacted court order documents; adoption paperwork completed by the originating state.)

EXAMPLES OF NON-ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION:

- ◆ Placement Authorization forms from Child Placing Agencies^{*}
- ◆ Letters from Child Placing Agencies^{*}
- ◆ Memorandums and Letters on DFPS letterhead (unless for pre-k verification)**
- ◆ Documents from another state's child welfare system
- ◆ Authorization Agreement for Nonparent Relative or Voluntary Caregiver - The State of Texas***
- ◆ Agreement for a Parental Child Safety Placement - DFPS 2298***
- ◆ Home and Community-based Services (HCS), Department of Aging and Disability Services - Form 8665**
- ◆ Documentation that a student is in conservatorship under another party other than Texas DFPS (e.g. Unaccompanied Refugee Minors)***
- ◆ Court/and or Legal paperwork stating another party outside of Texas DFPS is legally authorized representative or the custodial parent***

^{*} Students with this documentation **are likely** in DFPS managing conservatorship and will also have a 2085.

^{**} Students with this documentation **may or may not** be in DFPS managing conservatorship. Students who are in DFPS conservatorship will also have a 2085.

^{***} Student's with this documentation **are not** in Texas DFPS managing conservatorship.



Please remember that the "foster care" status of students is highly confidential. Foster care status and related information should be handled with the utmost sensitivity and in accordance with all FERPA guidelines. *All* foster care related documents should be stored under lock and key with other privacy protected records. Providing training for registrars, counselors, and school staff on confidentiality and sensitivity when enrolling students in foster care is highly recommended.

³ If a student is eligible for prekindergarten because the student is or ever has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing held as provided by Section 362.201, Family Code, the parent or caregiver of the child will be mailed a verification letter of prekindergarten eligibility. Districts are asked to accept the DFPS letter as proof of eligibility to enroll these children in free prekindergarten. For assistance in obtaining a letter, please contact the DFPS [Education Specialists](#) in your area for assistance or for a description of other forms of proof of eligibility. Additional information is provided on pg. 75-76 of the [Foster Care & Student Success Resource Guide](#).

Foster Care & TSDS PEIMS Scenarios

If a student leaves foster care within the school year, do they remain coded for the remainder of the year?

Yes. When a student received the FC TSDS PEIMS Indicator code, the student remains coded the full school year & summer months even if the student leaves foster care within the school year.

If a student remains in FC, does the FC Indicator carry over from year-to-year?

No. The FC Indicator code does not carry over from year to year.

The student must re-identify in TSDS PEIMS at the beginning of the school year.

Acceptable Documentation for TSDS PEIMS

ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION FOR TSDS PEIMS:

Schools may accept any official Texas Department of Family and Protective Services form, listed below, **that designate that a student is in Texas DFPS Managing Conservatorship**. A school may also accept a copy of the court order for this purpose.

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(Acceptable documentation from another state's child welfare system, including official paperwork from state or county child welfare system; Foster Care documents stating closure of a case; Redacted court order documents; adoption paperwork completed by the originating state.)

Examples of Non-Acceptable Documentation

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Key Reminders



AskTED (Texas Education Directory)

All School Systems must designate a Foster Care Liaison to carry out the duties listed in the ESSA.

School systems must ensure their designated Liaison's contact information in AskTED is **up to date throughout** the school year.



Districts submit their liaison information to TEA through the **district's AskTED administrator.**

Charter schools submit their liaison information using the **All-In-One Update Form**

AskTED Navigation & Locating School System (FC) Liaisons

Highly Mobile and At-Risk (HMAR) Programs | TEA's AskTED Database System



Home Search by Quick District Lookup Reports and Directories Search RESCs Administrative Logon Help

Welcome

Use the County above in order to access the Texas Education Directory Customized Reports and Data Files.

AskTED is updated daily. Information downloads should be made as close as possible to the time the information

For further assistance, users may find the resource useful: [AskTED Quick Reference Guide](#).

Searching Directory for Liaisons

Below are instructions with pictures to view and download liaison contact information from TEA's AskTED database.

1. Go to [AskTED Webpage](#).
2. Select "Search by" and choose how you would like to sort the list:
 - A. School → Enter School name or School number
 - B. District → Enter District name or District number
 - C. County → Enter County name or County number
 - D. Region → Select Region from drawdown list
 - E. Texas

Home Search by Quick District Lookup Reports and Directories Search RESCs Administrative Logon Help

Welcome

Use the County above in order to access the Texas Education Directory Customized Reports and Data Files.

AskTED is updated daily. Information downloads should be made as close as possible to the time the information

3. For each of the above guidance from Step 2 (i.e., A-E), you will then need to select:
 - a. Information Type: Select "Personnel"
 - b. Check boxes: Select "Include Other District Roles"
 - c. Then select the role you are searching for: "Homeless Liaison" or "Foster Care Liaison" from the drawdown menu.

Information Type: ☐ Organization ☒ Personnel

Include School Principal(s): ☐

Include District Superintendent(s): ☐

Include Other District Roles: ☒

Select Roles:

CTBERS/SECURITY COORDINATOR
DYSLEXIA DESIGNER
ESSA/FEDERAL PROGRAMS
FOSTER CARE LIAISON
HOMELESS LIAISON
HUMAN RESOURCES
PEIMS COORDINATOR
POLICE CHIEF/HEAD OF SECURITY

Highly Mobile and At-Risk (HMAR) Programs | TEA's AskTED Database System



Introduction

AskTED is an online directory of Texas school information, including charter schools. The directory is primarily used by people seeking contact information for schools, districts, and education service centers. AskTED is a real-time database that is updated regularly by Texas LEAs.



To that end, Texas School Districts and Open-Enrollment Charter Schools are required to have both Homeless and Foster Care Liaisons as individual designated roles for all LEAs. The information must be maintained and stored in AskTED. It is important for LEAs to keep this information regularly updated, so that McKinney-Vento and Foster Care Liaison information is publicly available, and these points of contacts are available to support students and remove barriers related to school transitions and mobility.

Submitting or Updating Liaison Information

Each LEA needs to ensure the contact information for their designated liaison is current and up to date throughout the school year. When information needs to be updated (e.g., change of designated staff, phone number, or email address), these changes need to be submitted to the AskTED database.

- For school districts, changes and/or submissions will be completed to TEA through each school district's AskTED administrator.
- For charter schools, AskTED updates are to be emailed directly to the Charter School Division at TEA at CharterSchools@tea.state.tx.us. More information can be found here for [Charter Schools](#).

Steps to Search for Liaison Information

There are two (2) ways to access AskTED.

1. Go to [TEA Webpage](#) → Select AskTED from Popular Applications in the dark blue menu at the top.

Popular Application **AskTED** ECOS for Educators Grant Opportunities Secure Applications TEAL Login TSDS
2. Navigate directly to [AskTED Webpage](#).

When on AskTED homepage, users can use the drop-down menus at the top of the page to access the Texas Education Directory Customized Reports and Data Files. Under the 'Search by' menu, you will find searches for School, District, County, Region, and Texas.

Highly Mobile and At-Risk (HMAR) Programs | TEA's AskTED Database System



4. Select "Search" at the bottom of the page.
5. To download the list (or desired information), click on the "Select All" purple button (or portion of information that you would like), then select "View Details".

Search Results

1294 records found. Select one or more Personnel to Display

Clear Selections Select All Clear Sort

Sorted by Alternating View/Descending Number

Check to Include Role# Last Name First Name Number# District Name

6. Choose "Download File" to export the information into Excel (.csv file)

View Details

Download File

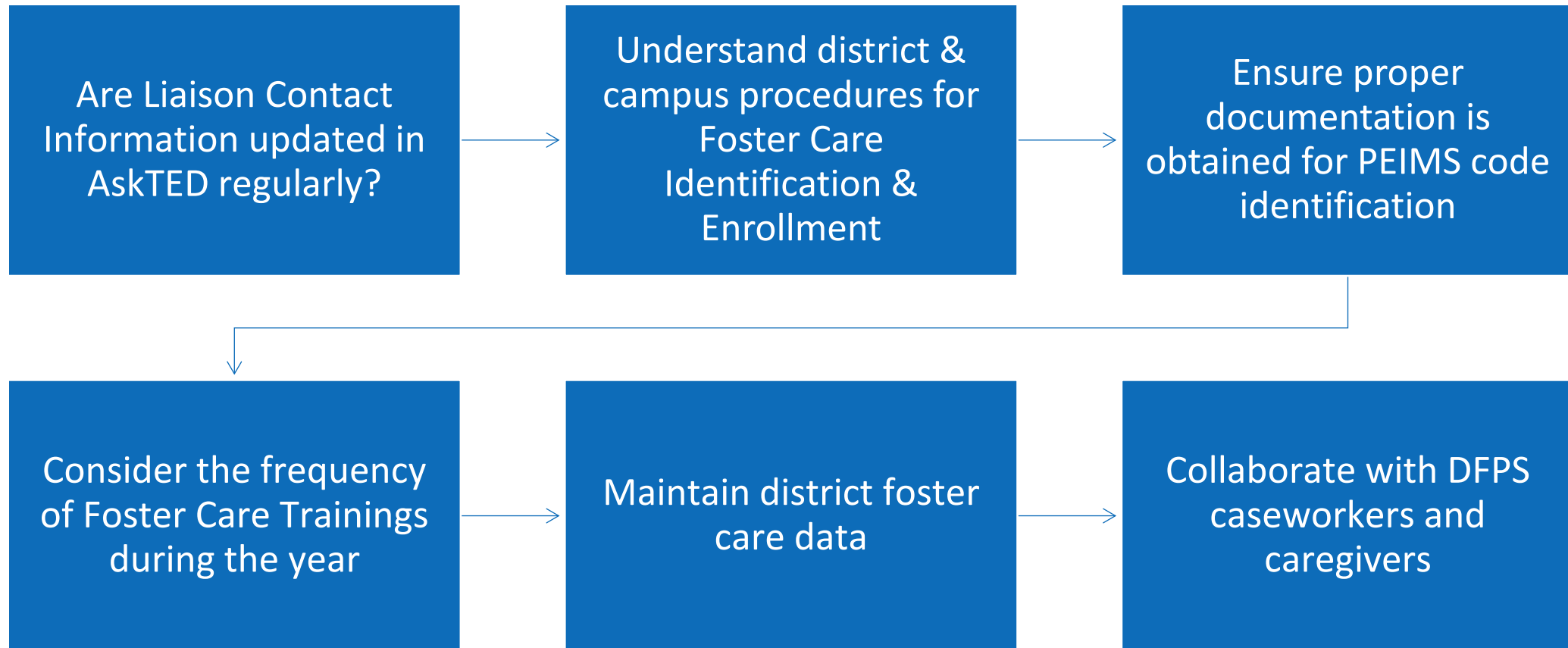
New Search?

LEAs are required to keep Homeless and Foster Care Liaisons' information regularly updated in AskTED. Please review and update this information regularly.





Reminders for Foster Care Liaisons





Transition Assistance Toolkit

Nutrition Benefits

TAC § 89.1605(a)(3)

All students who are identified as homeless or in foster care are eligible for the US Dept. of Agriculture Child Nutrition Program.

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) must ensure there is an expedited process in place for students who qualify to receive nutrition benefits upon enrollment. The process must include communication with the LEA nutrition coordinator to ensure that eligible students are not charged in error or experience delays in receiving these benefits.

Best Practices



Appropriate LEA or campus staff should immediately notify food services when a new student enrolls.



Verify student coding is in alignment with effective date.



Ensure student confidentiality.



Collaborate with your Nutrition Coordinator to establish processes, such as sending an approval notification via email.



LEAs should ensure new staff or eligible applicants are trained on the process.



REMINDER: Applications must be expedited when the student qualifies for SNAP benefits. Ensure systems and supports are student and family-centered!

Enrollment Conferences

TAC § 89.1605(b)

Local Education Agencies must convene an enrollment conference with a student who is homeless or in foster care within the first two weeks, or as soon as feasible after a student who is homeless or in substitute care enrolls at a new school. The student participation in the meeting should be addressed on a case-by-case basis. The conference cannot delay or impede enrollment.

The enrollment conference may be used in conjunction with an existing meeting designed for a similar purpose for newly enrolled students.

An **Enrollment Conference** is a student-centered meeting for a newly enrolled student designed to:

- Identify academic and extracurricular interests.
- Review credits and assessment information.
- Introduce school processes and opportunities for engagement.
- Determine social-emotional support.
- Develop course and instructional strategies.
- Communicate confidential information that impact a student's success, if needed.

Key People to Consider Including:

- School Administrators
- McKinney-Vento Liaisons
- Foster Care Liaisons
- School Counselors

Others to Include*:

- | | |
|--|--|
| LEA AND CAMPUS STAFF | COMMUNITY SUPPORT |
| » Special Program Staff (e.g., Special Education, Emergent Bilingual, Gifted and Talented, etc.) | » Parent or Guardian |
| » Teachers | » Relative or Foster Placement Caregiver |
| » Social Workers | » Texas DFPS Caseworker |
| » Dropout Prevention Specialist | » DFPS Educational Decision Maker |
| » Attendance/Tuency Officer | » CASA Volunteer |

*Additional people may be invited, as needed.
**Discussion topics are required in TAC § 89.1605(b)(3) and should be adapted to meet the unique needs of each student.

Student Welcome Packet Requirements and Best Practices

TAC § 89.1605(a)(1)

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) must provide welcome packets to students who are homeless or in foster care within the first two weeks of enrollment. LEAs may include required welcome packet contents with any existing items being provided to new students.

Welcome Packet Required Items:

- Extracurricular activities (e.g., fine arts, athletics, etc.)
- Club activities
- Information on fee waivers
- Tutoring opportunities
- Student code of conduct
- Available student supports
- Contact information for pertinent school staff
- Contact information for key school members:
 - School counselors
 - Nurses
 - Social workers
 - Foster Care Liaison
 - McKinney-Vento Liaison
 - Principal & Assistant Principals
 - Registrars
 - Nutrition coordinators
 - Transportation specialists
 - Additional support staff (e.g., Special Education, Emergent Bilingual, Gifted and Talented, etc., programs, Pregnancy Related Services)

Additional Foster Care and McKinney-Vento Items:

- Student clubs
- Mentor programs
- Post-secondary planning activities
- After school programs
- Family engagement opportunities
- Summer and holiday resources
- Enrichment programs
- Student ambassador programs
- Other community resources in your area (e.g., FindHelp.org)

School Introductions to Ease Transitions

TAC § 89.1605(a)(2)

School introductions are welcoming activities provided by the school to new students. Staff can introduce students to the school in a variety of ways, such as giving tours of the campus, hosting welcome events, and providing one-on-one student support. These activities can help students acclimate to their new environment, adjust academically, meet new friends, and participate in extracurricular activities. While LEAs are required to provide introductions to students who are homeless or in foster care, these supports are beneficial for easing the transitions of all newly enrolled students.

Strategies to Ease Transitions

- Provide introductions (e.g., staff introductions, campus tours, activities, welcome events, etc.) within two weeks of enrollment.
- Implement mentoring programs in which staff or community mentors can facilitate introductions, have lunch with students, and check-in with students throughout the day.
- Provide information on peer-to-peer programs, such as student-led activities, clubs, programs, extracurriculars, etc.
- Designate a staff member to whom the student can reach out for support and services. This person provides a safe space for the student to share any concerns, needs, or life changes.

Key Contacts

- Campus staff members.
- Staff members who have been designated as student mentors.
- Community mentor sponsor, Student-led groups.
- Student ambassadors and faculty sponsors.

Student Ambassadors

Student ambassadors are students who represent the school and introduce new students to the campus and its culture. Student ambassadors are familiar with the campus environment and have a positive attitude, great communication skills, leadership qualities, and are accepting of others.

Student ambassadors can organize and/or participate in the following activities:

- Newcomer social events throughout the school year.
- Tours of the campus library, nurse's office, counseling office, gym, and cafeteria.
- Accompanying new students to lunch during the first week of school.

Enrollment Conference Topics

Attendance

**Grades /
Credits Earned vs
Credits Attempted**

**Special Student
Populations**

At-Risk Indicators

**District/Campus
Supports**



Technical Assistance

Need Support?

We're Here to Help - Locally, Regionally, and Statewide!



Highly Mobile and At-Risk (HMAR) Student Programs



2025-26 ESC Liaisons/Champions

Introduction

This document serves as a comprehensive contact guide for identifying key HMAR program representatives at each Regional Education Service Center (ESC). Stakeholders can use this resource to quickly locate their ESC's designated Homeless Liaison, Foster Care Champion, and Military Champion. These individuals serve as primary points of contact and support for stakeholders who support students in highly mobile and at-risk situations.



Homeless/McKinney-Vento

Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth (TEHCY)

The TEHCY Program provides direction and leadership on the implementation of state and federal guidance regarding program services for McKinney-Vento eligible students.

- [TEHCY Webpage](#)
- Contact: Dr. Desiree Viramontes (M-V State Coordinator)
- Email: HomelessEducation@tea.texas.gov



Foster Care

Foster Care & Student Success

Foster Care & Student Success maintains resources and information to advance the education of students impacted by foster care.

- [Foster Care Webpage](#)
- Email: FosterCareLiaison@tea.texas.gov




Military-Connected

Military-Connected Students (MCS)

The MCS Program provides information and resources to students, parents, and educators to assist with navigating transitions to new schools, communities, and repeated cycles of separation and reunion.

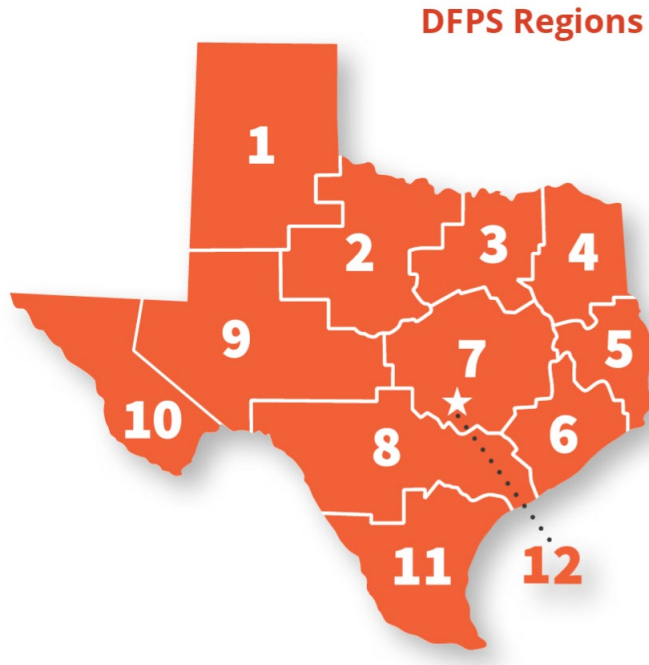
- [Military-Connected Webpage](#)
- Contact: Dr. Ann H. Lê (Manager | HMAR)
- Email: MilitaryConnectedStudents@tea.texas.gov

Whether you're navigating new program requirements, supporting FC students, or implementing best practices, **technical assistance is available at every level:**

-  **Local Support:** Your Local FC Liaisons are your first line of help, ready to assist with immediate needs and context-specific guidance.
-  **Regional Support:** ESC FC Champions offer specialized expertise, training, and resources tailored to your area.
-  **State-Level Support:** Our state team provides policy guidance, program updates, and strategic support to ensure alignment and impact across Texas.

Comprehensive support is available to ensure your success—connect with the appropriate level to meet your needs.

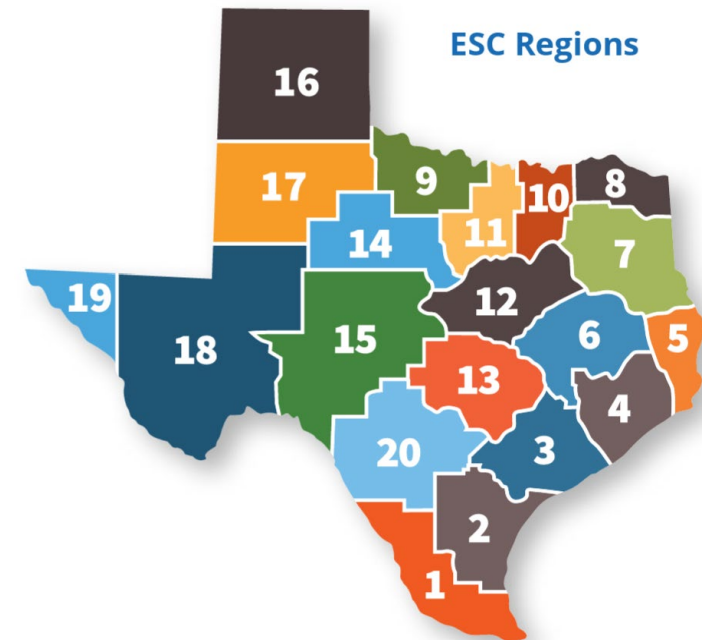
DFPS Regions: Education Specialists



- Each of the 11 DFPS regions has a least 1 Education Specialist.
- These specialists act a liaisons between DFPS and local schools and School Systems within their region.

Contact your DFPS Regional Education Specialist for assistance with:

- Education best-interest decisions
- Transportation
- Dispute resolution
- Cross-system coordination needs, trainings, and requirements
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)





Resources



Foster Care Webpage

Foster Care & Student Success

Foster Care & Student Success is a key initiative within the Texas Education Agency's Highly Mobile and At-Risk (HMAR) Unit, part of the Office of Special Populations & Student Supports. This program is dedicated to advancing the educational outcomes of students impacted by foster care across Texas public schools.

We provide comprehensive resources, guidance, and professional learning opportunities tailored to the unique needs of students in foster care. Our goal is to ensure that every student in the foster care system receives the support they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Foster Care & Student Success Professional Learning & Support Opportunities

Related Content

[Foster Care Guidance and Resources](#)[Aligning Policy and Practice](#)[Highly Mobile and At Risk Student Programs](#)[Supports for At-Risk Schools & Students](#)

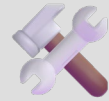
Contact Information

Email: fostercareliaison@tea.texas.gov

FOSTER CARE & STUDENT SUCCESS:



TEXAS SYSTEMS WORKING TOGETHER TO
TRANSFORM EDUCATION OUTCOMES OF
STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE



How this tool can support you:

- **Purpose of the Guide**

A collaborative resource developed by DFPS, the Supreme Court of Texas, and the Children's Commission to support the education of students in foster care.

- **Dual Functionality**

Serves as both an **e-guide** and a **training manual** for educators, caseworkers, and advocates.

- **Comprehensive Coverage**

Includes research-based topics, legal context, and best practices for supporting educational stability and success.

- **Practical Tools & Tips**

Offers actionable strategies, checklists, and templates to guide day-to-day decision-making.

- **Direct Access to Resources**

Embedded links connect users to additional tools, policies, and state-level guidance.

- **Supports Collaboration**

Encourages coordinated efforts between schools and child welfare agencies to improve outcomes.

School of Origin Determination for Students in Foster Care

School of Origin Determinations for Students in Foster Care

A student is entitled to remain at their **school of origin** unless it is not in the student's best interest.



What is a school of origin?

- » The school where the student was enrolled **prior to** entering foster care* OR
- » The school where the student was enrolled **when** a student changes placement while in foster care.



What timelines apply?

- » State law entitles a student to continue to attend the school of origin until **graduation or completion of the highest grade offered at the school** unless it is not in the student's best interest.



Who determines best interest?

- » DFPS/SSCC** **collaborates** with the school district and the student to make the best interest determination. DFPS/SSCC are responsible for final school of origin decisions.
- » Factors may include safety; student preference; academic, social, and emotional needs; and distance to the school. For additional information on best interest determination, see the [Foster Care and Student Success Guide](#) and [TASB Policy](#).

Example Scenarios:

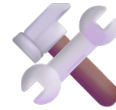
- ▶ **Example A:** Jerry attends School A. Jerry enters foster care and is placed in a foster home in the attendance area for School B. School A is Jerry's school of origin and he is entitled to continue to attend School A unless it is not in his best interest.
- ▶ **Example B:** Jenny attends School A. Jenny enters foster care and is placed in a kinship home in the attendance area for School B. It is determined that attending School A is not in Jenny's best interest. Jenny must be immediately enrolled in School B even if records cannot be produced immediately.
- ▶ **Example C:** During the school year, Dan is adopted and leaves foster care while attending School A. His adoptive parents move to the attendance area for School B. Dan is entitled to continue to attend School A until he attains the highest grade offered in the school even though he is no longer in foster care.
- ▶ **Example D:** Nina continues to attend School A after she enters foster care. Nina enrolls in School B when she returns to her parents, who later moved to the attendance area for School C. Under TEC § 25.001(g), Nina can attend School A or, under TEC § 25.001(g-1), Nina can attend School B. Nina can also attend School C because she resides in the school's attendance area.

For more information, see [TEA's Foster Care and Student Success Website](#)

Legal citations: 20 U.S.C. § 6312(c)(5), 42 U.S.C. § 675(1)(G); Tex. Educ. Code § 25.001(g)-(g-1).
For situations when a student in DFPS conservatorship may be considered homeless, see [Chapter 6 of the Foster Care and Student Success Guide](#).

*Foster care is a term used to describe when a child is placed outside the home with a relative, kinship, foster home, or residential placement.

**Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is appointed the managing conservator if a court decides it is unsafe for a child to remain in the home. In regions with Community-Based Care, a Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) performs the duties of DFPS.



This tool can help you:

- Understand What "School of Origin" Means
- Know the Student's Rights
- Support Best Interest Determinations through Collaboration
- Consider Key Factors (e.g., safety, student preference, academic and emotional needs, and travel distance).
- Apply the Decision Promptly
- Use Real-Life Scenarios for Guidance
- Access Support Resources

Designated Points of Contact for Students in Foster Care

Education and Child Welfare Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Designated Points of Contact for Students in Foster Care

ESSA requires designated points of contact for child welfare and education agencies to support school stability for students in foster care (i.e., education best-interest, transportation coordination).

Every year, the local child welfare agency must notify the local education agency (LEA) of their child welfare point of contact. After this notification is received, the LEA is required to inform the local child welfare agency of their designated point of contact in writing. The Texas Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS) Educational Specialist serves as the Child Welfare Point of Contact for ESSA purposes. Similarly, the LEA Point of Contact for ESSA, in most instances, is the LEA Foster Care Liaison. The chart below maps an annual communication process and timeline for when Points of Contact notifications occur.

Additional information about the Education and Child Welfare ESSA Points of Contact can be found in the [Foster Care & Student Success Guide, Chapter 8](#).

DFPS Education Specialist Communication to LEAs

AUGUST:

DFPS Education Specialist sends email to the LEA Foster Care Liaison contact identified in AskTED (includes both districts and open-enrollment charter schools).

7-10 DAYS:

Upon receipt, the LEA responds to the DFPS Education Specialist with the name of the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact (who in most instances is the LEA Foster Care Liaison).

1 WEEK FOLLOW-UP:

If no response from the LEA after 10 days, DFPS resends the introduction email to the LEA Foster Care Liaison. If communication is not received back from the LEA, DFPS may contact the LEA Administration/Superintendent's Office, to receive the necessary contact information of the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact.

EXPECTATIONS:

DFPS Education Specialists will communicate via email to the LEA annually and identify themselves as the point of contact, provide their contact information to the Foster Care Liaison as a resource for any questions or concerns involving students in foster care. It is the expectations that the LEA will respond promptly with the corresponding LEA ESSA Foster Care Point of Contact information. DFPS Education Specialists should be the first point of contact to resolve any issues related to students in foster care.



LEA Foster Care Point of Contact Communication to DFPS Education Specialist

AUGUST:

Receives an email from DFPS Education Specialist identifying themselves as the point of contact for questions related to students in foster care.

7-10 DAYS:

Responds to the DFPS Education Specialist with the name of the ESSA Point of Contact for their LEA. (In instances, where the LEA has designated individual campus contacts for Foster Care, also include this information in the LEA's correspondence communication with DFPS).

1 WEEK FOLLOW-UP:

If DFPS does not hear back from the LEA Foster Care Liaison, they will re-send the information and follow-up within 10 days. If they still do not hear back, they may contact the LEA Administration/Superintendent's office to request this information.

EXPECTATIONS:

LEAs are required to ensure that the Foster Care Liaison in AskTED is up to date annually. This should occur prior to August for the upcoming school year. DFPS will utilize the Foster Care Liaison contact information in AskTED to notify the LEA of the ESSA Child Welfare Point of Contact (i.e. DFPS Education Specialist). LEAs are to respond promptly, in writing, to the DFPS Education Specialist with the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact and utilize the DFPS Education Specialist for any questions or concerns related to students in foster care throughout the school year.



This tool can help you:

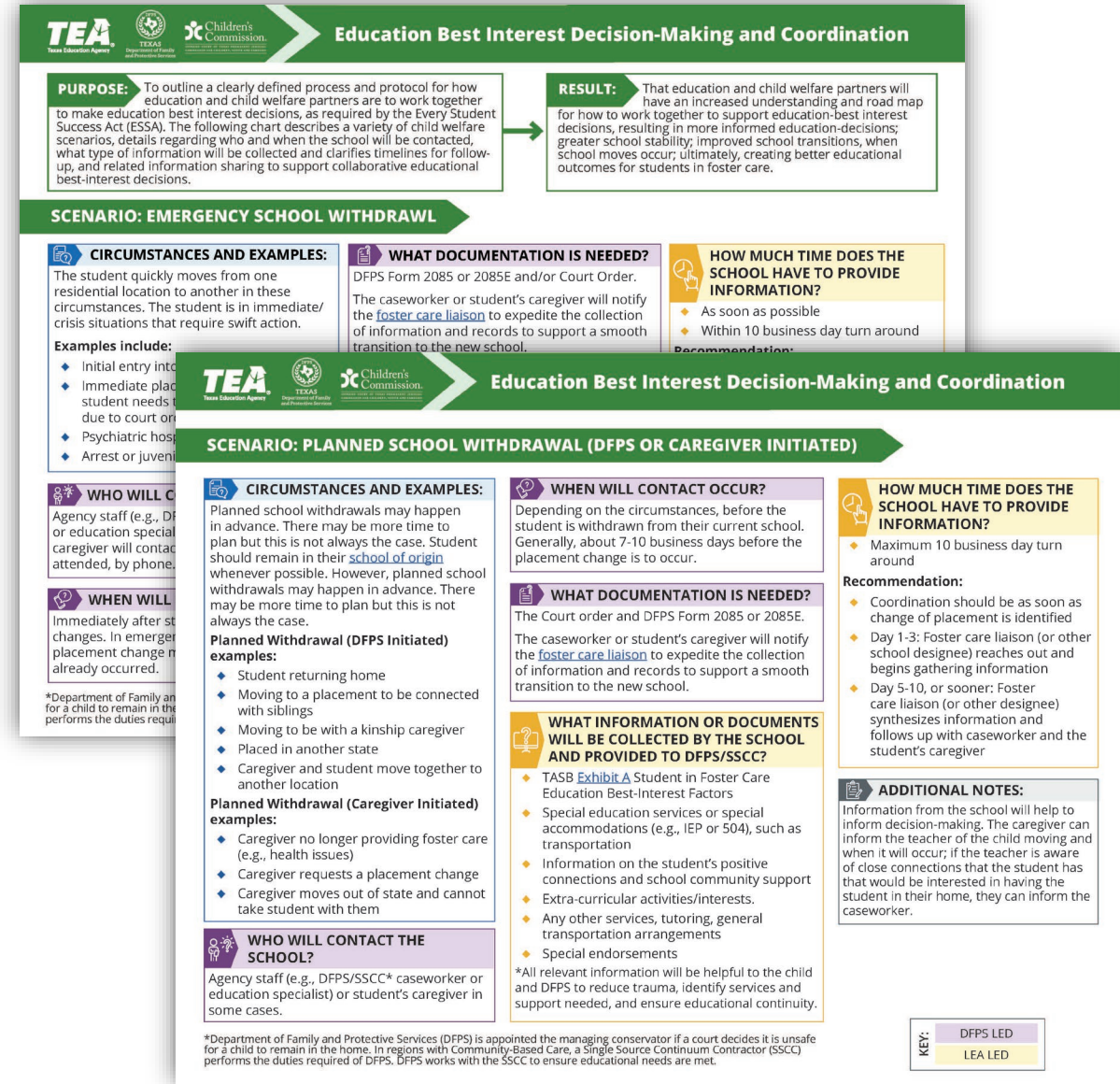
- Understand the **Requirement for Designation** of Points of Contact.
- Know the **Key Roles**
 - DFPS Education Specialist
 - School System Foster Care Liaison
- Annual **Notification Process**
- Maintain **Updated Contact Info** in AskTED Database
- Promote **Timely, Coordinated Support**

Education Best Interest Decision-Making & Coordination



Purpose of this tool:

- Supports **collaboration** between education and child welfare partners to make informed, student-centered decisions that **promote school stability** and **smooth transitions**.
- When to Use It:
 - During **emergency placements** (e.g., initial foster care entry, psychiatric admission, juvenile detention).
 - During **planned school withdrawals** (e.g., reunification, kinship placement, caregiver relocation).
- Understand Who Initiates Contact, When Contact Happens, and Required Documentations
- Goal:** Reduce trauma, ensure continuity, and support better academic outcomes for students in foster care.



Dispute Resolution for ESSA Foster Care



This tool can help you:

■ Understand the Purpose

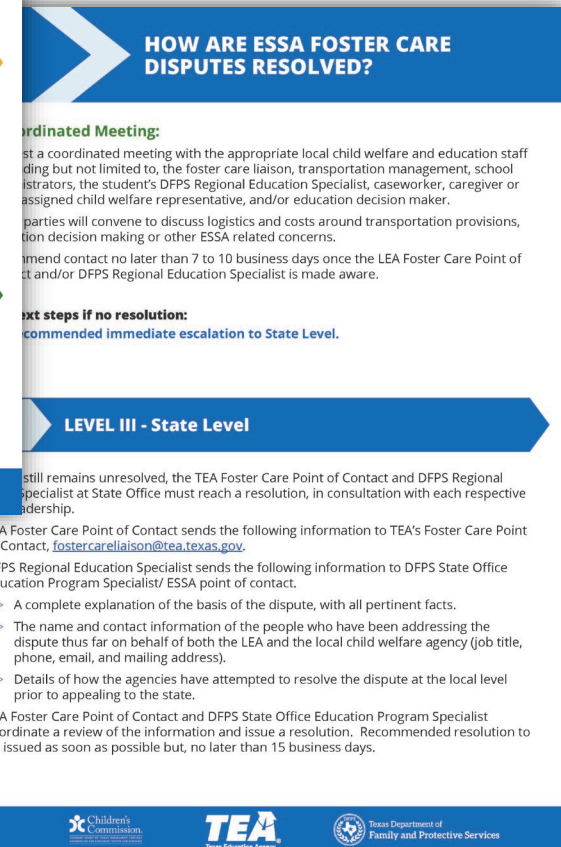
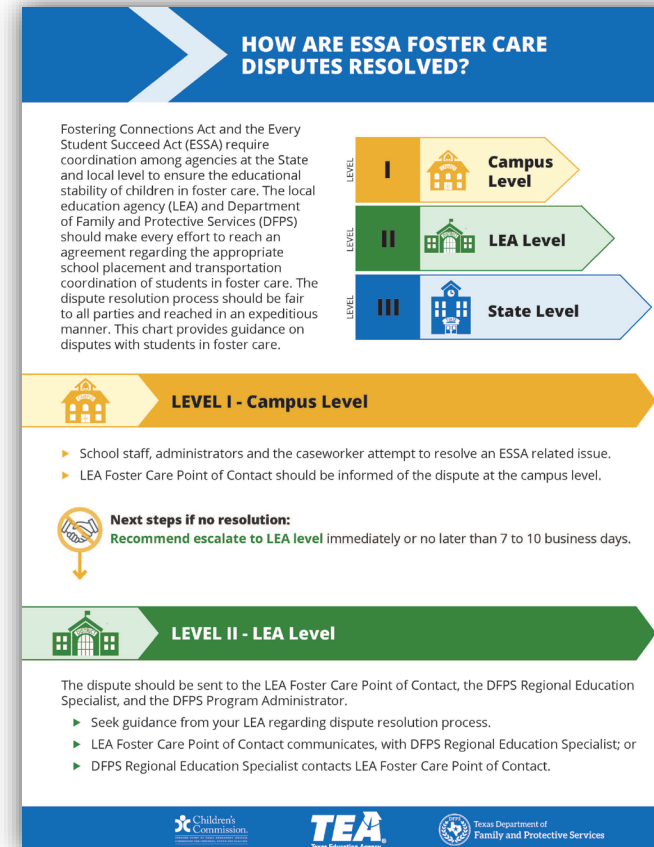
The *Fostering Connections Act* and *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* require state and local agencies to work together to ensure educational stability for children in foster care.

■ Promote Collaboration

School systems and DFPS must coordinate to agree on school placement and transportation for students in foster care.

■ Ensure Fair and Timely Resolution

Disputes should be resolved fairly and as quickly as possible to minimize disruption to the student's education.



25-26 **Foster Care** Program's Events Calendar

– SAVE THE DATES



Combined Foster Care & Education Webinar and State Office Hours (10:00 – 11:30 AM CST)

- Fall Webinar: October 3, 2025 | TODAY!
- Spring Webinar: March 6, 2026 | [Registration](#)

**2025 Foster Care & Education
Summit (Denton, TX) [Postponed](#)
to Fall 2026**



Highly Mobile and At-Risk (HMAR) Student Programs



2025-26 Foster Care/At-Risk Program Calendar

FALL 2025


Date	Time	Event Name	Target Audience & Registration Information
September 18	1:00 – 2:30 PM	HMAR Student Programs Quarterly Webinar #1	Open to all; Registration
October 3	10:00-11:30 AM	Foster Care & Education Fall 2025 Combined Webinar & State Office Hours	Open to all; Registration
November 13	1:00 – 2:30 PM	HMAR Student Programs Quarterly Webinar #2	Open to all; Registration
December 3 - 4	All Day	Foster Care & Education Summit (Denton)	Open to all; In Person

SPRING 2026

Date	Time	Event Name	Target Audience & Registration Information
February 5	1:00 – 2:30 PM	HMAR Student Programs Quarterly Webinar #3	Open to all; Registration
March 6	10:00-11:30 AM	Foster Care & Education Spring 2026 Combined Webinar & State Office Hours	Open to all; Registration
May is National Foster Care Month			
May 7	1:00 – 2:30 PM	HMAR Student Programs Quarterly Webinar #4	Open to all; Registration

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89th Legislature Updates

The Texas Education Agency is sharing information on legislation from the 89th regular legislative session that Texas public school systems need to know. Check back for new resources as they are released.

[LEARN MORE](#)

89th Legislature Updates

TEA Annual Report 2024

Bluebonnet Learning

The Latest TEA News

The latest news from the Texas Education Agency is available through [news releases](#), [online correspondence](#), [mailing lists](#), and other posted information.

Annual Report & Pocket Edition

The Texas Education Agency is pleased to announce the release of its [2024 Annual Report](#) and [Pocket Edition](#) to the general public.

☐ **Special Student Populations**

☒ **At-Risk and Highly Mobile Student Program Division**

☐ Early Childhood Education

☐ Emergent Bilingual

☒ **Foster Care and Student Success**

☐ Gifted/Talented Education

☐ Languages Other Than English

☒ **McKinney-Vento Homeless Education**

☐ Mental and Behavioral Health

☒ **Military Connected Students**

☒ **Pregnancy Programs**

☐ Spanish Curriculum Standards

☐ Special Education Updates

**Visit our Foster Care &
Education Webpage today to
learn more!**



For questions, please email: FosterCareLiaison@tea.texas.gov