

Texas Students in Foster Care

School systems are required to identify and support students in Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Managing Conservatorship, also known as 'Foster Care'. This infographic provides a variety of educational outcomes based on Texas Student Data System (TSDS) Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reported data submitted by Texas schools. TEA utilizes PEIMS data for educational related submissions and reports. This information is reflective of Foster Care student identification information that is shared confidentially at the local school level by the child's caregiver and documented by school systems in PEIMS ([C196](#)).

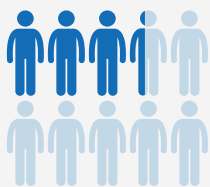
Foster care, or out-of-home care, is the system that a child enters when a child cannot live safely at home and a court of law grants legal custody to the State of Texas. A child "in foster care" can be in either the temporary or permanent conservatorship of Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).

While a child is in foster care, DFPS may place the child in several different types of living arrangements, such as:

- ▶ With a relative/kinship caregiver or 'fictive kin' (a close family friend)
- ▶ With a foster family
- ▶ With an adoptive family
- ▶ Cottage homes
- ▶ Residential treatment centers and emergency shelters
- ▶ Facilities overseen by another state agency
- ▶ Supervised Independent Living (SIL) arrangement (college dorm or apartment)

Students Identified as Foster Care and Other Special Populations 2024-2025 School Year

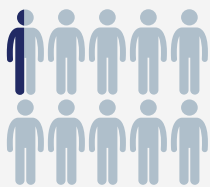
Over half of all foster care students are also in other special populations.



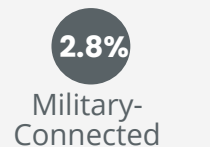
32.6% Foster Care **AND** Special Education



9.7% Foster Care **AND** Emergent Bilingual



4.3% Foster Care **AND** Experiencing Homelessness



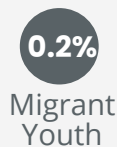
2.8%

Military-Connected



1.6%

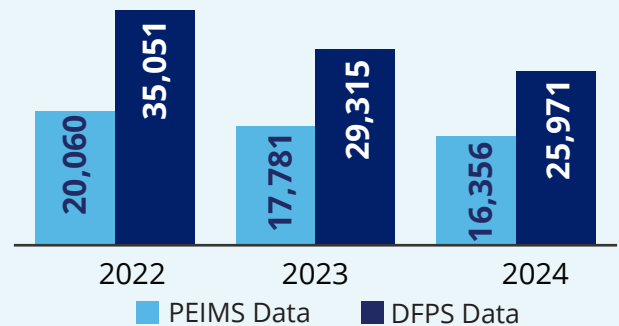
Gifted/Talented



0.2%

Migrant Youth

Students in Foster Care in Texas Data

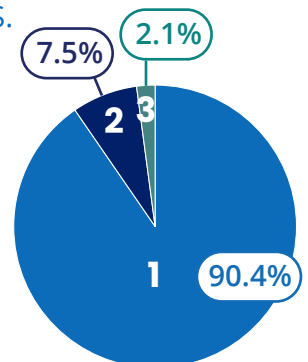


Despite statewide efforts focused on the identification and proper coding of students in DFPS Managing Conservatorship, there remains a discrepancy in the number of students reported by DFPS and those by Texas schools in PEIMS. The chart above highlights this gap and the need for improved identification and support.



Foster Care PEIMS Definition ([C196](#)):

1. Student is currently in the conservatorship of DFPS.
2. Prekindergarten student was previously in the conservatorship of DFPS following an adversary hearing held as provided by Tex. Fam. Code 262.201.
3. Prekindergarten student is or ever has been in foster care in another state or territory, if the child resides in Texas. [TEC 29.153(B)]



2024-25 Breakdown of PEIMS Codes

Foster Care Students have the Right to:

- ▶ Receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) and educational services that are comparable to those provided to other students, according to the student's needs.
- ▶ Immediate enrollment in school and attending classes, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment, while the school gathers needed documents.
- ▶ Remain enrolled in [school of origin](#) upon entering foster care, while in foster care, after exiting foster care, and until completing the highest grade offered at the school.
- ▶ Immediate enrollment in a new school when it is not in the child's best interest to remain enrolled in the school of origin
- ▶ Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, when needed.
- ▶ Participate in the programs offered through the USDA to receive immediate meal assistance.



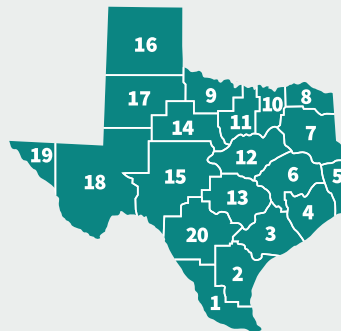
Reference the [Transition Assistance Toolkit](#) for supporting foster care students (TAC §89.1605).

Texas LEAs coordinate with child welfare partners to address the education of students in Foster Care.

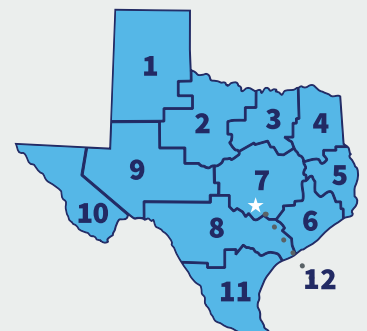
Each School System (e.g., districts and charter schools) in the state of Texas is required to designate a Foster Care Liaison at the district level. Each ESC has voluntarily designated an ESC Foster Care Champion to serve as a point of contact on foster care matters within their respective region.

Each DFPS region has a least one Education Specialist who serves as the child welfare agency ESSA Foster Care POC and act as the liaison between DFPS and School Systems within their region.

ESC Regions



DFPS Regions

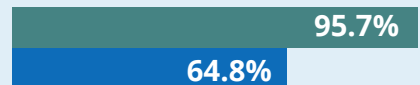


[Foster Care Point of Contacts](#)

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.

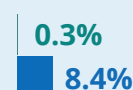
Attended 1 School



Attended 2 Schools



Attended 3 Schools



Attended 4+ Schools



■ All Students

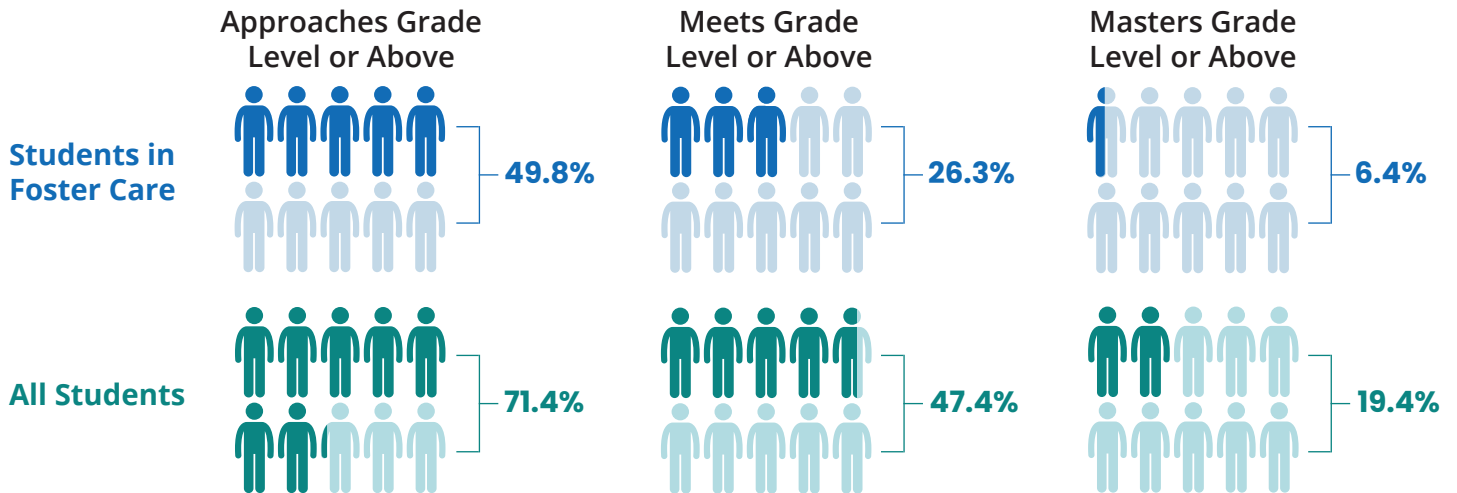
■ Students in Foster Care

Texas Students in Foster Care

Educational Outcomes

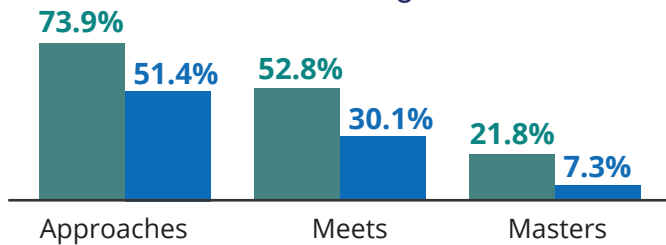
This data reflects statewide assessment outcomes for students in foster care as compared to all other students statewide.

All State Assessments: Grades 3–8 and High School End of Course Exams (EOC)



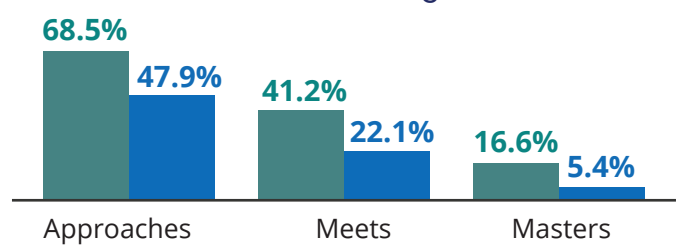
Reading Assessments:

Grades 3–8 and English 1 & 2 EOC



Math Assessments:

Grades 3–8 and Algebra EOC

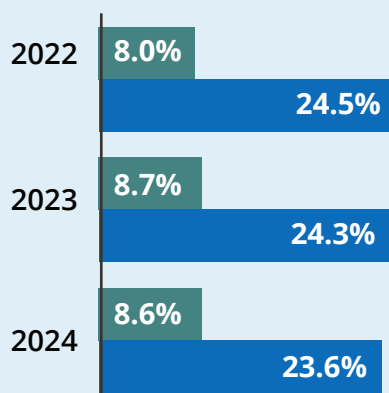


■ All Students ■ Students in Foster Care

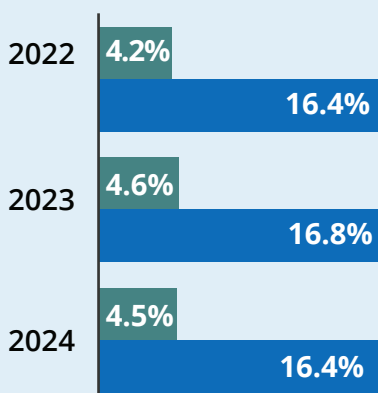
Discipline Count

This data reflects exclusionary disciplinary placements for students in foster care as compared to all other students statewide.

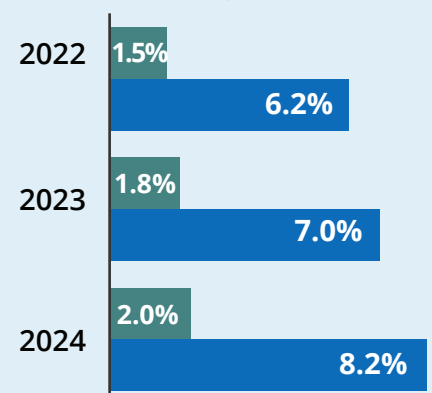
In-School Suspension (ISS)



Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)



Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)

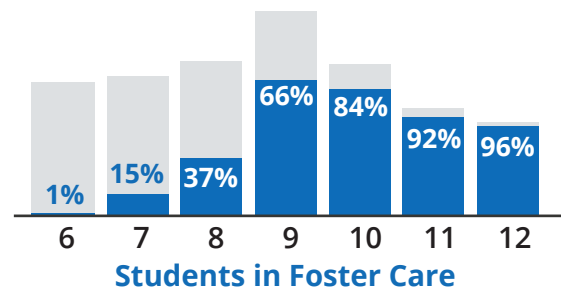
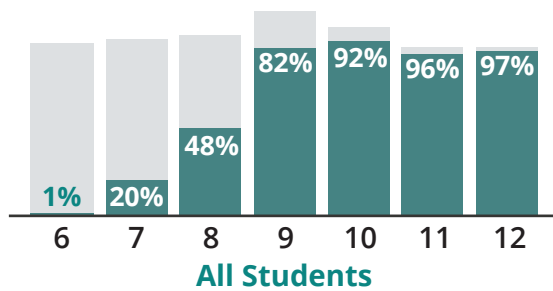


■ All Students ■ Students in Foster Care

Texas Students in Foster Care

Career and Technical Education (CTE) equips students with practical skills, certifications, and real-world experience to succeed in high-demand careers. For Texas students in foster care, CTE is especially critical as it offers stability, career readiness, and a pathway to economic independence amid the unique challenges they face.

CTE Participation by Grade Level (2023–24 School Year)

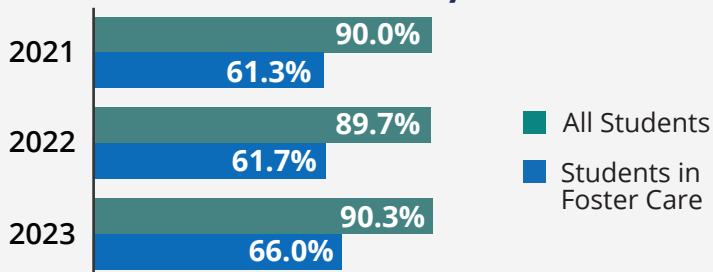


Note: Percent is based grade level for each student group.

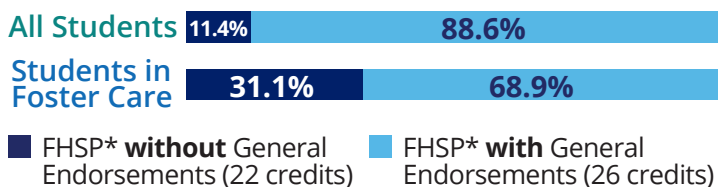
Graduation Data

This data reflects graduation rates for students in foster care as compared to all other students statewide.

Graduation Rate by Year

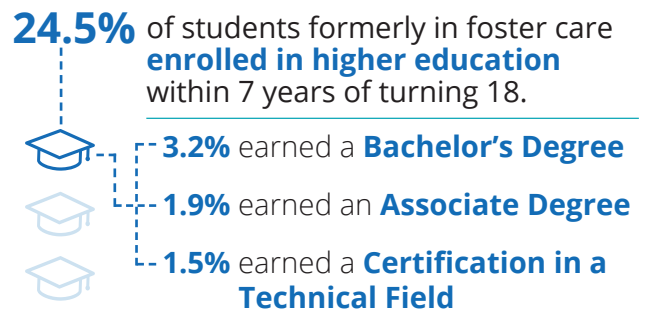


Graduation by Degree (class of 2023)



*Foundations High School Plan (FHSP)

Based on data provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, between 2014 and 2021, a cohort of 8,341 students who aged out of foster care at age 18 were tracked to assess their post-secondary education outcomes. Within seven years, only 24.5% (2,043 students) had enrolled in higher education.



Within the same time period, only 3.2% attained a bachelor's degree, 1.9% earned an associate's degree, and 1.5% completed a vocational certificate.

These figures underscore the need for continued support to improve access to and success in higher education.

Dropout Rate by Year

This data reflects dropout rates for students in foster care as compared to all other students statewide.

