

Foster Care & Student Success Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The Foster Care and Student Success FAQs provide guidance on topics commonly raised by School Systems, caregivers, child welfare partners, and other stakeholders regarding students experiencing foster care. This document is intended to support the consistent implementation of state and federal requirements, promote educational stability, and improve access to educational opportunities and support for students in foster care.

Topics include TSDS PEIMS reporting, prekindergarten eligibility, educational stability requirements under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), postsecondary education supports, Foster Care Liaison responsibilities, and other services available to students experiencing foster care.

For questions or additional information, please visit the [Foster Care and Student Success Webpage](#) or contact TEA Foster Care and Student Success Program at fostercareliaison@tea.texas.gov.

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TSDS PEIMS Foster Care Reporting

1. Which students qualify for a FosterCareType Indicator in TSDS PEIMS?

Students should be reported with a FosterCareType Indicator when they meet the requirements of an applicable FosterCareType Descriptor (C196). For TSDS PEIMS purposes, students qualify for a FosterCareType Indicator when they meet the requirements of an applicable FosterCareType Descriptor (C196). This generally includes students in the managing conservatorship (legal custody) of DFPS, including students placed with kinship caregivers when DFPS remains the managing conservator.

School Systems should report the student using the applicable FosterCareType Descriptor (C196):

- Descriptor 1 – Student Is Current Conservator of DFPS.
- Descriptor 2 – PK Student Previously In Conservator of DFPS Adversary Hearing.
- Descriptor 3 – PK student prior foster care in another state, now resides in Texas.

School Systems should review current documentation to determine the appropriate FosterCareType Descriptor and report the student accordingly in TSDS PEIMS. For additional information, see the Foster Care [TSDS PEIMS Coding and Supplemental Guidance](#).

2. What documentation may a School System use to verify a student's FosterCareType Indicator for TSDS PEIMS reporting?

School Systems may accept official DFPS documentation demonstrating that a student is in the managing conservatorship of DFPS. Acceptable documentation includes:

- a. Forms in the DFPS 2085 series:
 - i. 2085 FC (Foster Care/Residential Care)
 - ii. 2085 KO (Kinship or Other Non-Foster Caregiver)
 - iii. 2085 KF (Verified Kinship Foster Caregiver)
 - iv. 2085 LR (Legal Risk)
 - v. 2085 HCS (Home and Community-based Services)
 - vi. 2085 SIL (Supervised Independent Living)
 - vii. 2085 E (Designation of Education Decision-Maker)
- b. Form 2085-B (Designation of Medical Consenter)
- c. Court orders demonstrating DFPS conservatorship.

Letters or memoranda on DFPS letterhead and documentation from contracted Child Placing Agencies generally should not be used to establish TSDS PEIMS eligibility unless specifically authorized for another purpose, such as prekindergarten verification.

3. Must School Systems review foster care documentation annually for TSDS PEIMS reporting?

Yes. School Systems must review enrollment documentation annually to ensure students are accurately identified and reported in TSDS PEIMS. This annual review applies to both newly enrolled and returning students. School Systems should maintain current documentation verifying eligibility for the applicable FosterCareType Descriptor (C196) and ensure reporting aligns with the student's foster care status at the beginning of each school year. Chapter 5 of the Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide states that School Systems should review enrollment documentation annually to support accurate identification, reporting, and educational services for students in foster care.

4. Is a new DFPS Form 2085 required each year for TSDS PEIMS reporting?

Not necessarily. TEA guidance does not specifically require an annual renewal of DFPS Form 2085. However, School Systems must maintain documentation verifying that DFPS remains the student's managing conservator in order to report the student using the applicable FosterCareType Descriptor (C196) in TSDS PEIMS.

Unless a court order removes DFPS as managing conservator, the student's foster care status generally remains unchanged and previously issued documentation may continue to support the student's identification. However, DFPS policy is to provide updated educational decision-maker documentation, including Form 2085, annually. School Systems are encouraged to obtain and maintain the most current documentation available to ensure accurate records and reporting.

5. If a student exits foster care during the school year, should the FosterCareType Indicator be removed from TSDS PEIMS?

No. Once a student is identified and reported in TSDS PEIMS with a FosterCareType Indicator, the applicable FosterCareType Descriptor (C196) should remain in effect for the remainder of the school year, even if the student subsequently exits foster care through reunification, adoption, guardianship, or another permanency outcome.

6. Does the FosterCareType Indicator automatically carry over from one school year to the next?

No. The FosterCareType Indicator does not automatically carry forward from one school year to the next in TSDS PEIMS. Because foster care placements are often temporary, School Systems must review current enrollment documentation at the beginning of each school year to determine whether the student continues to qualify for reporting under an applicable FosterCareType Descriptor (C196).

7. How should a School System determine whether a student qualifies for a FosterCareType Indicator when a caregiver cannot provide a DFPS Form 2085?

Students may only be reported with a FosterCareType Descriptor when they meet the definition of foster care under the FosterCareType Indicator (C196) requirements. If available court documentation indicates that DFPS has been removed as the student's managing conservator and another individual has been appointed sole managing conservator, the student would generally not qualify for reporting with a FosterCareType Indicator unless subsequent court action reinstated DFPS conservatorship.

When documentation is unclear or conflicting, School Systems should consult local legal counsel and review the most recent court orders to determine the student's legal status. A student should not be assigned a FosterCareType Indicator solely because a caregiver identifies the student as being in foster care. Eligibility must be supported by appropriate legal or DFPS documentation.

8. Are students from another state's foster care system reported with a FosterCareType Indicator in TSDS PEIMS?

Generally, no. Students involved in another state's child welfare system do not meet TSDS PEIMS reporting requirements for a FosterCareType Indicator (C196) except for eligible prekindergarten students reported with FosterCareType Descriptor 3 (Foster Care in Another State).

9. Are students from another state's foster care system eligible for educational benefits and protections in Texas?

Yes. Although these students may not be reported with a FosterCareType Indicator in TSDS PEIMS, they may still qualify for federal protections and benefits, including:

- a. School nutrition benefits
- b. ESSA educational stability protections
- c. Other supports available to students in foster care

School Systems are encouraged to work proactively with these students, caregivers, and child welfare partners to support educational access, stability, and academic success.

10. Are students in foster care reported in TSDS PEIMS as 'at-risk' under [TEC §29.081](#)?

Yes. Students who are currently in foster care and have appropriate documentation must be reported in TSDS PEIMS with At-Risk Indicator Code 11. Students in foster care may also meet one or more additional at-risk criteria. Each at-risk indicator should be evaluated and reported independently based on the student's individual circumstances.

If a student exits foster care during the school year or a subsequent school year, the student may continue to qualify for an at-risk designation under another applicable criterion. For more information visit, [TEA Compensatory Education Webpage](#).

11. Should students in or formerly in foster care be reported in TSDS PEIMS with At-Risk Indicator Code 13?

Not solely based on foster care status. Students in or formerly in foster care do not automatically qualify for At-Risk Indicator Code 13 under TEC §29.081. A student may be reported with Code 13 only if the student meets the specific eligibility requirements associated with that indicator. Eligibility for Code 13 must be determined independently from foster care status. School Systems should review the TSDS PEIMS Data Standards and applicable compensatory education guidance when determining whether a student qualifies for At-Risk Indicator Code 13.

12. Can a student with a FosterCareType Indicator also be identified as experiencing homelessness under the McKinney-Vento Act?

In some circumstances, yes. Students awaiting foster care placement generally are not eligible for identification under the McKinney-Vento Act. However, a student reported with a FosterCareType Indicator in TSDS PEIMS may also qualify for identification as experiencing homelessness if the student's living situation meets the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness.

For example, a student who remains in DFPS Managing Conservatorship but is residing with their biological family may qualify for McKinney-Vento services if the family is living in a temporary, inadequate, or unstable housing situation.

When a student meets the eligibility requirements for both programs, the School System should report the student using the applicable FosterCareType Descriptor (C196) and the appropriate Homeless Status Descriptor in TSDS PEIMS. Questions regarding homeless identification should be directed to the [School System's McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison](#).

TSDS PEIMS Foster Care Reporting Resources

- [Compensatory Education Resources](#)
- [TSDS PEIMS Data Standards](#) (Descriptor Tables C196)
- Foster Care [TSDS PEIMS Coding and Supplemental Guidance](#)
- [Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide](#), Chapter 7

Prekindergarten Qualifications**1. Do children currently in or formerly in foster care through Texas DFPS qualify for free prekindergarten?**

Yes. Children who are currently in the conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) or who were previously in foster care as the result of an adversary hearing are eligible for tuition-free public prekindergarten in Texas, provided they meet applicable age requirements. At enrollment, caregivers should provide documentation verifying the child's foster care status.

2. Does foster care eligibility waive prekindergarten age requirements?

No. Foster care eligibility does not waive state age requirements for prekindergarten enrollment. Children who are eligible due to foster care status must also meet applicable age requirements established under Texas law and local program offerings. For additional information regarding age eligibility, refer to the [TEA Early Childhood Education FAQs](#) and the [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook](#).

3. Can a child who turns five after September 1 enroll in prekindergarten instead of kindergarten?

Yes. Children who turn five after September 1 are not eligible to enroll in kindergarten for that school year. However, if the child meets prekindergarten eligibility requirements, including foster care eligibility, the child may enroll in prekindergarten. Children must be five years of age on or before September 1 to be eligible for kindergarten in that school year.

4. Do children in foster care qualify for a three-year-old prekindergarten program?

If offered by the School System, yes. Children in foster care who are three years old on or before September 1 may qualify for enrollment in a three-year-old prekindergarten program when the School System offers such a program.

5. Does an adopted child remain eligible for free prekindergarten based on prior foster care status?

Yes. A child who was previously in DFPS conservatorship remains eligible for tuition-free prekindergarten after adoption, provided the child meets applicable age requirements. Eligibility is based on the child's prior foster care experience and is not lost because of adoption, reunification, or another permanency outcome.

6. Do children currently in or formerly in another state's foster care system qualify for free prekindergarten in Texas?

Yes. Children residing in Texas who are currently in or were previously in foster care through another state's child welfare system are eligible for tuition-free public prekindergarten, provided they meet applicable age requirements. This eligibility includes children who were in foster care in another state or U.S. territory. Although these children qualify for prekindergarten eligibility, they generally are not reported with a FosterCareType Indicator in TSDS PEIMS unless they meet the requirements associated with FosterCareType Descriptor 03 (Foster Care in Another State).

7. What documentation may be used to verify a child's foster care status for prekindergarten eligibility?

For children currently in DFPS conservatorship, acceptable documentation may include:

- a. DFPS Prekindergarten Verification Letter
- b. Form 2085-E (Designation of Education Decision-Maker)
- c. Other DFPS Form 2085 documentation
- d. Redacted court order

For children formerly in DFPS conservatorship, acceptable documentation may include:

- e. DFPS Prekindergarten Verification Letter
- f. Adoption decree
- g. Other official documentation verifying prior DFPS conservatorship

For children from another state's child welfare system, School Systems may request:

- h. Redacted court orders
- i. Child welfare agency documentation
- j. Placement records
- k. Adoption documentation
- l. Other official state-issued records verifying foster care status

Students from another state's foster care system do not receive a DFPS Prekindergarten Verification Letter.

8. Must School Systems accept the DFPS Prekindergarten Verification Letter as proof of eligibility?

Yes. TEA directs School Systems to accept the DFPS Prekindergarten Verification Letter as documentation of eligibility for children who are currently in or were previously in foster care through Texas DFPS. The verification letter may be used to establish eligibility for public prekindergarten enrollment.

9. How do caregivers and School Systems obtain a DFPS Prekindergarten Verification Letter?

Caregivers and School Systems may request a DFPS Prekindergarten Verification Letter by emailing: prekverificationltrs@dfps.texas.gov. DFPS will review the request and provide a verification letter, when applicable. Additionally, [DFPS Education Specialists](#) may be available to assist with questions related to foster care eligibility and enrollment.

10. Does a DFPS Prekindergarten Verification Letter expire?

No. Once a verification letter establishes that a child was in DFPS conservatorship, the documentation remains valid for purposes of prekindergarten eligibility while the child remains age-eligible for prekindergarten. Eligibility is not affected by subsequent permanency outcomes, including reunification, guardianship, or adoption.

Prekindergarten Qualifications Resources

- [TEA Early Childhood Education Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook](#) (SAAH), Section 7: Prekindergarten Eligibility
- [Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide](#), Chapter 6
- [DFPS Education Specialists](#) Directory
- DFPS Pre-K Verification Mailbox: prekverificationltrs@dfps.texas.gov

Post-secondary Education

1. What postsecondary education and financial supports are available to students currently or formerly in foster care?

Students currently or formerly in foster care may qualify for a variety of financial and non-financial supports and services designed to promote post-secondary enrollment, persistence, and completion. These supports may include:

- a. Texas State College Tuition and Fee Waiver
- b. Texas Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program
- c. Texas Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Services
- d. Campus-based supports through Higher Education Foster Care Liaisons

For additional information, see Chapter 13 of the [Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide](#).

2. What is the Texas State College Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Students who are currently in or were previously in foster care may qualify for the Texas State College Tuition and Fee Waiver. Eligible students may have tuition and certain required fees waived at Texas public institutions of higher education, including:

- a. Public universities
- b. Community and junior colleges
- c. Technical colleges
- d. Medical schools
- e. Dental schools

Students should work directly with their institution of higher education to determine eligibility requirements and required documentation. For additional information, visit the DFPS [State College Tuition and Fee Waiver](#) webpage and review Chapter 13 of the Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide.

3. Are students who were adopted from DFPS conservatorship eligible for the Texas State College Tuition and Fee Waiver?

Possibly. Students who were adopted from the conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) may qualify for the Texas State College Tuition and Fee Waiver if they meet applicable eligibility requirements. Students and families should work directly with DFPS and the institution of higher education to verify eligibility and obtain the necessary documentation.

4. What is the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program?

The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program is a federally funded program designed to support students who are currently in or were previously in DFPS conservatorship as they pursue higher education or vocational training. Eligible students may receive up to \$5,000 annually to assist with educational expenses.

For eligibility requirements and application information, visit the DFPS [Education and Training Voucher \(ETV\) Program](#) webpage and review Chapter 13 of the Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide.

5. What is the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program?

The Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program provides services and supports to youth in DFPS conservatorship who are preparing for adulthood.

PAL services may include:

- a. Independent living preparation
- b. Postsecondary planning
- c. Transitional living assistance
- d. Aftercare room and board assistance
- e. Additional support services that promote successful transition to adulthood

Students generally become eligible for PAL services beginning at age 16. For additional information, visit the DFPS [Preparation for Adult Living \(PAL\) Services](#) webpage and review Chapter 13 of the Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide.

6. What is a Higher Education Foster Care Liaison?

Texas public institutions of higher education designate a Higher Education Foster Care Liaison to assist students who are currently or formerly in foster care.

These liaisons can help students:

- a. Navigate admission and financial aid processes
- b. Access tuition waiver benefits
- c. Connect with campus and community resources
- d. Address barriers that may impact postsecondary success

Students are encouraged to contact their institution's Foster Care Liaison early in the enrollment process. For additional information, review the Texas [Higher Education Foster Care Liaisons](#) Information and Reference Guide and Chapter 13 of the Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide.

Post-secondary Education Resources

- DFPS [State College Tuition and Fee Waiver](#) Program
- DFPS [Education and Training Voucher \(ETV\) Program](#)
- DFPS [Preparation for Adult Living \(PAL\) Program](#)
- [Higher Education Resources and Information](#) webpage
- [Texas Higher Education Foster Care Liaison](#) Information and Reference Guide
- [Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide](#), Chapter 13

Foster Care Liaison Requirements

1. Are School Systems required to designate a Foster Care Liaison?

Yes. School Systems must designate a Foster Care Liaison and submit the liaison's contact information to TEA through AskTED. AskTED serves as the public directory for Foster Care Liaison contact information and is used by TEA, DFPS, caregivers, and education partners to identify the appropriate liaison.

2. What is the role of a School System Foster Care Liaison?

The Foster Care Liaison serves as the primary school-based point of contact for issues related to students experiencing foster care. Responsibilities may include:

- a. Supporting enrollment and records transfer
- b. Collaborating with DFPS, caregivers, and school staff
- c. Assisting with educational stability and school transition supports
- d. Connecting students and caregivers to available educational resources
- e. Supporting implementation of state and federal foster care requirements

Foster Care Liaisons should work collaboratively with the School System's ESSA Designated Point of Contact, DFPS, caregivers, and other education partners to support educational stability and student success. For additional information, see Chapter 5 of the [Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide](#).

3. How does a School System designate or update its Foster Care Liaison in AskTED?

School districts must submit Foster Care Liaison updates through the district's AskTED administrator. School districts should provide:

- a. Liaison name
- b. Email address
- c. Phone number
- d. Fax number (if applicable)

Districts should review and update this information whenever staffing or contact information changes.

4. How does an open-enrollment charter school update its Foster Care Liaison information?

Open-enrollment charter schools should submit AskTED updates using the [All-In-One Charter Update Form](#). Charter schools should ensure the following information is current:

- a. Liaison name
- b. Email address
- c. Phone number
- d. Fax number (if applicable)

For additional information, visit the TEA [Charter Schools](#) webpage.

5. How often should School Systems review Foster Care Liaison information?

School Systems should review Foster Care Liaison information at least annually and update AskTED whenever there is a staffing change or a change in contact information. Maintaining current Foster Care Liaison information supports timely communication among School Systems, DFPS, caregivers, and other educational partners.

6. How can I find Foster Care Liaison contact information for a School System?

Foster Care Liaison information is publicly available through AskTED. Users may search and download liaison information by:

- a. School district
- b. County
- c. Education Service Center (ESC) region

For step-by-step instructions, refer to the [AskTED Foster Care Liaison Search Guide](#).

Foster Care Liaison Requirements Resources

- [AskTED](#)
- [AskTED Foster Care Liaison Search Guide](#)
- [Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide](#), Chapter 5

ESSA Coordination and Stability**1. Are students in foster care eligible for immediate enrollment?**

Yes. Students in foster care are entitled to immediate enrollment, even if records typically required for enrollment are not immediately available. School Systems should not delay enrollment while waiting for records such as:

- a. Academic records
- b. Immunization records
- c. Proof of residency
- d. Previous school records
- e. Other enrollment documentation

School Systems, caregivers, DFPS, and prior schools should work collaboratively to obtain any missing records as quickly as possible while ensuring the student has uninterrupted access to educational services. Immediate enrollment helps promote educational stability and minimizes disruptions that may occur because of a foster care placement change.

2. How does a School System identify the educational decision-maker for a student in foster care?

School Systems should refer to the current DFPS Form 2085-E (Designation of Education Decision-Maker) or other applicable court documentation to identify the individual authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student.

3. Who is the ESSA Designated Point of Contact?

Every School System and child welfare agency must identify a designated point of contact to support implementation of ESSA foster care requirements. The ESSA Designated Point of Contact works collaboratively with School System Foster Care Liaisons, DFPS staff, and caregivers to support educational

stability, school placement decisions, and transportation coordination for students experiencing foster care. For additional information, see [ESSA Designated Point of Contact](#) Resource.

4. How does the School System Foster Care Liaison work with the ESSA Designated Point of Contact?

The Foster Care Liaison and ESSA Designated Point of Contact should collaborate to support educational stability for students in foster care. This collaboration may include:

- a. School of Origin determinations
- b. Best Interest Determinations (BIDs)
- c. Transportation planning
- d. Enrollment transitions
- e. Resolution of disputes related to educational stability

School Systems are encouraged to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each position and establish local procedures for coordination.

5. What is a School of Origin determination?

A School of Origin determination is the process used to determine whether it is in a student's best interest to remain enrolled in their current school following a foster care placement change. The determination should be student-centered and consider factors such as:

- a. Safety
- b. Educational stability
- c. Academic needs
- d. Social and emotional well-being
- e. Transportation feasibility

School of Origin decisions should be made collaboratively and on an individualized basis. For additional information, see [School of Origin Determinations](#) for Students in Foster Care.

6. What is a Best Interest Determination (BID)?

A Best Interest Determination (BID) is a collaborative process used to identify the school placement that best supports a student's educational success and overall well-being. The student's educational and developmental needs should remain the primary consideration throughout the process. For additional information, see [Education Best Interest Decision-Making](#) Guidance.

7. Who participates in a Best Interest Determination meeting?

The composition of the team may vary depending on the student's circumstances, but may include:

- a. DFPS caseworkers
- b. Caregivers
- c. School personnel
- d. Foster Care Liaisons
- e. ESSA Designated Points of Contact
- f. Education decision-makers
- g. Other individuals with knowledge of the student's educational needs

8. What should a School System do when there is disagreement regarding a school placement decision for a student in foster care?

School Systems should follow local procedures and TEA's [Foster Care Dispute Resolution Guidance](#) to address disagreements regarding school placement, transportation, or educational stability decisions. During the dispute resolution process, School Systems and child welfare partners should work

collaboratively to minimize educational disruption and support the student's continued access to educational services.

ESSA Coordination and Stability Resources

- [ESSA Designated Point of Contact](#) Resource
- [School of Origin Determinations](#) for Students in Foster Care
- [Education Best Interest Decision-Making](#) Guidance
- [Foster Care Dispute Resolution Guidance](#)
- [Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide](#), Chapter 5

Additional Supports and Benefits

1. Do students in foster care qualify for school nutrition benefits?

Yes. Students in foster care are categorically eligible for federal school nutrition benefits, regardless of the state in which they entered foster care, including:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP)
- School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- Special Milk Program (SMP)
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)
- Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Caregivers of students in foster care are not required to complete a separate application for these benefits.

The DFPS Placement Authorization Form 2085 may be used to facilitate immediate access to school nutrition benefits. Foster Care Liaisons are encouraged to collaborate with School System nutrition departments and campus staff to ensure students receive meal assistance as soon as possible, including on the student's first day of enrollment. For additional information, refer to [Texas Department of Agriculture guidance](#) regarding eligibility determination and foster care status.

2. Which students qualify for nutrition benefits based on foster care status?

The following students are generally eligible for federal school nutrition benefits based on foster care status:

- Students currently in DFPS Managing Conservatorship
- Students placed through another state's child welfare system when the state retains legal custody
- Students participating in an Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) agreement who remain in foster care in another state
- Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URMs) placed in a federally supported foster care placement

Students who were previously in foster care but are no longer in foster care, including students who have been adopted, are not automatically eligible for foster care nutrition benefits. However, they may qualify through another eligibility category.

3. What is direct certification and how does it support students in foster care?

Direct certification allows eligible students in foster care to receive school nutrition benefits without requiring a household application. Foster Care Liaisons often possess documentation that can assist School System nutrition departments in directly certifying eligible students. Direct certification helps reduce administrative barriers and supports timely access to nutritional services. When a student is directly certified as a foster child, household verification requirements generally do not apply unless non-foster children are included on the application.

4. Do Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) educational stability protections apply to students from another state's foster care system who reside in Texas?

Yes. ESSA educational stability provisions apply to students in foster care enrolled in schools in the state where they reside. Students who are currently in another state's foster care system but reside in Texas may still be entitled to educational stability protections, including school placement considerations and collaborative planning related to enrollment and school transitions. For additional information, refer to the federal [Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability and Success for Students in Foster Care](#).

5. Do educational stability protections apply to Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) placements?

Yes. Students placed through an Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) agreement remain entitled to applicable educational stability considerations while residing in Texas. School Systems, child welfare agencies, and caregivers should collaborate to support educational continuity and minimize disruptions to the student's education.

6. Are Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URMs) eligible for school nutrition benefits?

Yes. Unaccompanied Refugee Minors who are placed by the federal government in foster care settings are generally eligible for federal school nutrition benefits. Although URM's are not reported using a FosterCareType Indicator in TSDS PEIMS, they may qualify for nutrition assistance based on their foster care placement status.

Additional Supports and Benefits Resources

- [Texas Department of Agriculture \(ARM\) guidance](#), Eligibility Determination, Section 4
- USDA Foster Care and [School Meals Guidance](#)
- [Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability and Success for Students in Foster Care](#)
- [Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide](#), Chapter 6