

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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Issue 18-06 (REV)

Date: 08/08/18

## School Stability Transportation Pilot

**This is to inform staff that the School Stability Transportation Pilot will be extended for the 2018/2019 school year.**

On February 7, 2017, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion directing the development of a plan to implement the school stability provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which prioritizes academic excellence and equity for all foster youth students. This reinforces existing DCFS Policy [0700-500.10, Education of DCFS-Supervised Children](#) which specifies that DCFS-supervised foster youth have the right to remain in their School-of-Origin (SOO) following a change in placement, if it's in the youth's best interest to do so. **The youth's SOO should be considered the default school placement until a more permanent decision is made.**

Current strategies to ensure transportation to the SOO are provided in Policy Guide [0900-520.20, Educational Travel Reimbursement](#) including bus passes/tokens for caregivers and youth who are able to access this resource.

An additional option, the School Stability Transportation Pilot, was piloted for the 2017/2018 school year and will continue to be provided in the upcoming 2018/2019 school year.

This pilot utilizes a child-friendly transportation service when other transportation options are not accessible and/or feasible for a foster youth. The School Stability Transportation Pilot will provide immediate support for a child to remain in his/her SOO until a Best Interest Determination can be made, as follows:

- The Education Specialist will be notified when a TA 280 for an initial placement has been submitted.
- The Education Specialist will reach out to the CSW of the possible need to arrange immediate transportation to SOO.
- The Education Specialist will assist the CSW to coordinate this process.
- For replacements, CSWs may directly contact their office's Education Specialist.
- See the [Education Specialist roster](#) for your office's assigned Education Specialist.

Once a youth's immediate transportation needs have been met, the school district staff will initiate a conversation with the CSW, and/or DCFS Education Consultant, the youth's Education Rights Holder (ERH) and the youth, if appropriate, to:

1. Determine if it is in the youth's best interest to remain in his/her SOO (if not, the process stops and the youth is enrolled at his/her new school) and;
2. Determine the long-term mode of transportation if the youth is to remain in his/her SOO.

Caregivers should be involved in the best-interest determination process through DCFS. The [attached Best Interest Determination Tool](#) may be helpful in making the best interest determination. The determination should be made immediately after placement/replacement of the youth.



If you have any questions regarding this release please e-mail your question to:

[Policy@dcfs.lacounty.gov](mailto:Policy@dcfs.lacounty.gov)

*(right click to open footer section and access link)*

**Best Interest Determination Tool**  
**Joint Protocol: Roles and Responsibilities**  
**of**  
**DCFS, Probation, and School Districts in Implementing School of Origin**  
**Rights**

The Education Rights Holder—with input from the social worker/probation officer, the school district’s AB 490 Foster Youth Liaison, and the student—should consider the following factors to assess whether it is in the student’s best interest to remain in his or her school of origin. **Identify school options, select school choice, and identify reason(s) for selection.**

Option 1 Remain at Current School (School of Origin)		Option 2 Transfer to New School Near Placement		Option 3 Transfer to Other School Attended in Prior 15 Months (School of Origin)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Student preference</i> Student wants to remain in the same school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Student preference</i> Student wants to transfer to new local school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Student preference</i> Student wants to attend this school.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Length of attendance/strong ties</i> Student attended this school for an extended period of time and developed strong ties (friends, teachers/staff, extracurricular activities).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Length of attendance/strong ties</i> Student attended prior school for a brief period of time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Length of attendance/strong ties</i> Student previously attended this school for an extended period of time and developed strong ties; or matriculating into this school would preserve strong ties.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Academics</i> School is best able to meet student’s needs (sustain strong academic performance or help student if underperforming)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Academics</i> New local school is best able to meet student’s needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Academics</i> This school is best able to meet student’s academic needs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Special needs</i> School is best able to meet special needs (e.g. IEP, school-based mental health services, English Learner program, child care for parenting students, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Special needs</i> New local school would better meet special needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Special needs</i> This school would best meet special needs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Timing of transfer</i> Student would have to change schools mid-year, during testing, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Timing of transfer</i> School change would occur at end of school year or end of semester	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Timing of transfer</i> School change would occur at end of school year or end of semester
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Commute time (assuming fastest method of transportation)</i> <sup>4</sup> Commute is not so long as to negatively affect the student, and student is willing to commute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Commute time (assuming fastest method of transportation)</i> Commute time will negatively affect the student, in light of student’s age, needs, and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Commute time (assuming fastest method of transportation)</i> Commute to this school is not so long as to negatively affect the student, and student is willing to commute
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Length of anticipated stay</i> The student’s placement is temporary or uncertain, so staying in prior school will provide continuity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Length of anticipated stay</i> The student’s placement appears likely to be permanent or long-term, so the student will benefit from transitioning to new local school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Length of anticipated stay</i> This school is best option in light of anticipated length of placement and student’s permanent plan (e.g., school is near parents’ home and plan is reunification).
	<i>Other factors</i> Number of past school changes; siblings’ school placement; influence of school climate on student, etc.		<i>Other factors</i> Number of past school changes; siblings’ school placement; influence of school climate on student, etc.		<i>Other factors</i> Number of past school changes; siblings’ school placement; influence of school climate on student, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Cost may not be considered as a factor in the best-interest determination