



Foster Care School Plan

Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy

Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy Foster Care Plan

Under the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Section 1112(c)(5)(B) Title I educational stability provisions take effect on December 10, 2016. By such date, each school district shall have a Foster Care Plan developed and disseminated to all stakeholders.

In Section 1111(c)(5) of ESSA, the school district must collaborate with the Child Welfare Agency and Tribal Child Welfare Agencies (CWA) to implement the Title I educational stability provisions. Therefore, each school district shall develop a clear, written Foster Care Plan. As such, the Foster Care Plan for Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy (OVCA) shall be as follows:

LEA Point of Contact and Responsibilities

The head of school will designate at least one person to serve as the Foster Care Point of Contact (POC). This designation of the POC shall be updated annually in August. The name of this person will be turned in to the OSDE through the online Grants Management System by September 30th of each year. If additional staff members are needed to meet the requirements, the head of school will make assignments as deemed necessary. The POC will work in the best interest of the child to ensure that all educational requirements are being met.

Foster Care Liaison: Kaylynn Watts kwatts@okvirtual.org 405-405-3209

Responsibilities:

- Coordinate with the corresponding child welfare agency POC to implement Title I provisions;
- Lead the development of a process for making the best interest determination;
- Document the best interest determination;
- Facilitate the transfer of records and immediate enrollment;
- Facilitate data sharing with the child welfare agencies, consistent with FERPA and other privacy protocols;
- Develop and coordinate local transportation procedures (as applicable);
- Manage best interest determinations and transportation cost disputes;
- Ensure that children in foster care are enrolled in and regularly attending school; and
- Provide professional development and training to school staff on the Title I provisions and educational needs of children in foster care, as needed.

Decision-Making Process

A committee will meet to determine if the school of origin is not in the best interest of each foster care child and the appropriate placement of the child. The committee will be comprised of the site principal or administration representative, the LEA's POC, and a member of the child welfare agency.

In emergency circumstances, the child welfare agency has the authority to make an immediate decision regarding the school placement and then consult with the LEA and revisit the best interest determination of the child.

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

Student Records

Foster care parents, social workers or other legal guardians will be allowed to immediately enroll children in foster care in the school district without having the necessary paperwork (birth certificates, shot records, academic records, special education records, etc.) This is to help aid the student with a smooth transition into the district. The receiving school district will contact the school district of origin for the records and make adaptations as needed. After enrollment, the following guardianship or legal custody documents shall be provided for verification by the foster family or child welfare agency:

- Power of attorney
- Affidavit
- Court Order

Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy will share education records with the child welfare agency that are allowed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other state privacy laws. This allows educational agencies to disclose without parental consent educational records, including IDEA, of students in foster care to the child welfare agency.

Collaboration and Joint Decision-Making

The POC will meet with the site principal, district social worker, classroom teacher, and foster parent as needed to discuss the progress of the child in foster care and will document the results of meetings. All decisions will be made utilizing a collaborative team approach to determine what will be in the best interest of the child. In addition, the Foster Care Coordinator will share updates and needs weekly at administration meetings.

Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy shall utilize the following form in making a “best interest” determination for each child in foster care. The final determination as to what is in the best interest of the child will be made by the child welfare agency.

First Initial: _____ Last Name: _____ Student ID: _____ Birthday: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____ Current District: _____ Current Site: _____ <i>Student will remain in the current school unless consideration of the following factors indicates a change of school placement is in the child's best interest (check all that apply.)</i>			
	School of Origin	Receiving School	Other Previous School Attended
Which school will better meet the relational needs of the child? Select all that apply: ☐ Siblings ☐ Relationships with peers ☐ Relationships with staff Describe the relationship connections at current school: _____ List strategies for maintaining important connections should other best interest determination be made: _____			
Which school will better meet the individual academic needs and challenges of the child? Select all that apply: ☐ IEP ☐ 504 Plan ☐ Gifted Program ☐ Career Tech ☐ EL Services			
Which school will better meet the social/emotional needs and challenges of the child? Select all that apply: ☐ Social ☐ Emotional ☐ Safety			
Which school will better meet the unique needs and interests of the child? Select all that apply:			

○ Extracurricular Activities ○ Sports ○ Flexible Scheduling Student will describe the areas of desired school involvement: _____			
Which school will best meet the permanency goal and likelihood of reunification with parents or siblings? Explain: _____			
Which school does the student prefer to attend? Explain: _____ Is the student preference appropriate for the child's age and length of travel? Explain: _____			
Which school does the caregiver or current placement provider recommends the student attend? Explain: _____			
Identify strategies for successful transition to new school and/or support in current school: _____ _____			
Supporting Documentation Attach any supporting documentation used to determine best interest of child: ○ Report Cards ○ Progress Reports ○ Achievement Data (test scores) ○ Attendance Data ○ IEP or Section 504 Plans ○ Other: _____			
Determination <i>Based on the information provided and considering the best interest of the child, the team has determined the following school is the most appropriate educational placement for the child:</i> _____			
Team Members: LEA Administrator: _____ <i>Printed name</i> <i>Signature</i>			
CWA representative: _____ <i>Printed name</i> <i>Signature</i>			
Teacher: _____ <i>Printed name</i> <i>Signature</i>			
Foster Care POC: _____ <i>Printed name</i> <i>Signature</i>			

Transportation Procedures

Due to the virtual nature of OVCA, the need for transportation is limited. It is only necessary to required state testing dates and optional school outings. The child welfare agency or foster care family is responsible for requesting transportation. For assistance, contact Kaylynn Watts 405-259-9478 ext:3341

Responsibility and Costs

RE: Transportation of Foster Care Students

Dear Child Welfare Agency:

Fostering Connections Act (P.L. 110-351) is a federal law that protects and seeks to promote education stability for foster children. Under this Act, transportation to school must be provided to an enrolled foster care student, even though the student may be physically located in a different school district. Oklahoma law, however, prohibits school buses from crossing the transportation boundaries of another district, with a few exceptions. One such exception is by the mutual agreement of the school district and child welfare agency. This letter is intended to be a Transportation Agreement designed to comply with legal requirements to designate the responsible party for transportation costs.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Section 1112(5)(B) stipulates: "If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin, the local educational agency will provide transportation to the school of origin if:

- (I) the local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the local educational agency for the cost of such transportation;
- (II) the local educational agency agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation; or
- (III) the local educational agency and the local child welfare agency agree to share the cost of such transportation."

In order to comply with ESSA and to ensure educational stability, Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy asks the local child welfare agency to provide transportation to onsite testing and optional school outings, for the duration of the child's time in foster care. Per ESSA, one option is to have the local child welfare agency reimburse the local educational agency for the cost of transportation. However, due to the virtual environment of OVCA and the limited transportation involved, reimbursement to the school is defined as the CWA being the responsible party to pay for transportation, forthright.

Please sign and return this form indicating that you understand this agreement.

Respectfully,

Head of School

Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy

Child Welfare Agency Name

Date: _____

Receiving School District Name

Date: _____