

Alta Loma School District



Alta Loma SCHOOL DISTRICT

Foster / Homeless Youth Procedures and Guidelines

The Alta Loma School District recognizes that our foster/homeless youth may face significant barriers in achieving academic success due to their family circumstances, disruption to their educational program, and their emotional, social and other health needs. To support these students as outlined in the district's local control and accountability plan (LCAP), the Director of Pupil Services and school site designee shall provide foster/homeless youth with full access to the district's educational program and will implement strategies identified as necessary for student success.

The designee shall ensure that placement decisions for foster/homeless youth are based on the students' best interests as defined in law and administrative regulation. It is the desire of the Alta Loma School District to provide our foster/homeless youth with a safe, positive learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and that promotes students' self-esteem and academic achievement. The designee at each school site shall develop strategies to build these student's feelings of connectedness with his/her school, including, but not limited to, strategies that promote positive discipline and conflict resolution, the development of resiliency and interpersonal skills, and the involvement of foster parents, group home administrators, and/or caretakers in school programs and activities.

As a designee of the Alta Loma School District you will be asked to maintain and report all interactions with each foster/homeless youth that enters our school district. The information that each designee reports to the school district will be maintained at the district level. This information will be reported to the Board to show specific actions that are identified in the LCAP, including, but not limited to, school attendance, student achievement test results, promotion and retention rates by grade level, graduation rates, and suspension/expulsion rates. The Alta Loma School District will use this information to benefit all foster/homeless youth.

This packet contains:

- Procedures / Laws
- Forms
- Foster Youth Educational Rights
- Resources
- Checklists
- Definitions
- Homeless Educational Rights

Please read over this information carefully and contact us if you have any questions.

Joan Sanders, Director of Human Resources and Pupil Services x2035

Sara Hagin, Sr. Clerk x2040

Procedures / Laws

- Placement determination for foster/homeless youth must be made in accordance with the student's "best interest."
- Foster/homeless youth are to be provided with a safe, positive learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.
- The designee shall develop strategies to build a foster/homeless youths feelings of connectedness with his/her school, including but not limited to, school programs and activities.
- The Administrative Designee is encouraged to collaborate with other agencies to provide services to foster/homeless youth.
- A school district or county office of education shall not require a foster/homeless youth to retake a course if the pupil has satisfactorily completed the entire course in a public school, a juvenile court school, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency.
- If the foster/homeless youth did not complete the entire course, the school district shall not require the pupil to retake the portion of the course the student completed unless the school district in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the pupil, finds that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school.
- When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the foster/homeless youth shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the pupil may continue and complete the entire course.
- A foster/homeless youth shall not be prevented from retaking or taking a course to meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University or the University of California.

The administrative school site liaison for foster/homeless youth shall:

1. Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school for foster/homeless youth.
2. Meet with the foster/homeless youth at least once a trimester to discuss academic, social and emotional needs.
3. Monitor the educational progress of foster/homeless youth and provide reports to the district office on Illuminate.
4. Make appropriate referrals to ensure that students in foster care receive necessary special education services and services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
5. Ensure that foster/homeless youth receive appropriate school-based services, such as counseling and health services, supplemental instruction, and after-school services.
6. Facilitate access to programs such as after school sports and after/in school enrichment opportunities and ensure that financial constraints do not limit a foster/homeless youths opportunity to participate.
7. Develop protocols and procedures for creating awareness for attendance clerks of the requirements for the proper enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster/homeless youth.
8. Collaborate with the county placing agency, social services, probation officers, juvenile court officers, and other appropriate agencies to help coordinate services for the district's foster/homeless youth.
9. Ensure proper transfer of credits, records, and grades when foster/homeless youth transfer from one school to another or from one district to another.
10. Notify the foster youth's attorney and the representative of the appropriate county child welfare agency when required by law when the foster youth is undergoing any expulsion or other disciplinary proceedings, including a manifestation determination prior to a change in the foster youth's placement, when he/she is a student with a disability.

The attendance clerk at each site shall:

1. Enroll the foster/homeless youth immediately even if he/she:
 - a. Has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or monies due to the school last attended.
 - b. Does not have clothing normally required by the school, such as school uniforms.
 - c. Is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as birth certificate, previous academic records, proof of residency, and medical records, including, but not limited to, immunization records or other documentation.
 - d. Has an IEP that requires special placement.
2. Compile the complete educational record of the pupil including a determination of seat time, full or partial credits earned, current classes and grades, immunization and other records, and, if applicable, a copy of the pupil's IEP.
3. For foster youth, the attendance clerk must request a student's records from their previous school within 2 business days.
4. For foster youth, the attendance clerk must provide another school district who requests records the information they are requesting within two business days. Clerk must provide this information the fastest way possible (i.e. fax, scan) even if they have:
 - a. Outstanding fees or fines.
 - b. Owe money in any way.
5. Determine who has educational rights. If unable to determine who has educational rights, please contact Sara Hagin x2040.
6. Follow these procedures when a new foster/homeless youth enrolls at the site.
 - a. Complete data information in Illuminate for foster/homeless youth on the appropriate screen that applies to them.
 - b. Alert site Administrative Liaison of all new foster/homeless youth.

Definitions

Foster Youth: A child who has been removed from his/her home pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 309, is the subject of a petition filed under Welfare and Institutions Code 300 or 602, or has been removed from his/her home and is the subject of a petition filed under Welfare and Institutions Code 300 or 602 or is a nonminor who is under the transition jurisdiction of a juvenile court, as described in Welfare and Institutions Code 450, and satisfies the criteria specified in Education Code 42238.01.

Homeless Youth:

- A child or Adult who lacks a regular, fixed and adequate nighttime residence (substandard housing, no water or electricity).
- Is sharing housing due to economic hardship (doubled-up/tripled up).
- Is living in a public place not designated for sleeping (cars, parks, abandoned building, motels, trailer parks, and camp grounds).
- Is an unaccompanied youth (without parent or guardian, staying at friend/relative house, i.e. couch surfing)
- Is a child or youth awaiting foster care placement.
- Is a child abandoned in a hospital.
- Is a migrant child who qualifies under any of the above.

Person holding educational rights: Means a responsible adult appointed by a court pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 361 or 726.

School of Origin: The school that the foster youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which he/she was last enrolled. If the school the foster youth attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which he/she was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster youth attended within the preceding 15 months and with which the youth is connected, the district liaison for foster youth shall determine, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth, and in the best interests of the foster youth, which school is the school of origin.

Best interest: Means that, in making educational and school placement decisions for a foster youth, consideration is given to, among other factors, educational stability, the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress, and the foster youth's access to academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all district students.

Foster Youth Educational Rights

- **School stability:** remain in their original school and school feeder pattern as long as they are in foster care (if in their best interests).
- **Immediate enrollment:** be immediately enrolled in a new school (even without uniforms or health/education records)
- **Partial Credit:** receive partial or full credit for work completed at other schools (all students have this right)
- **Fairness:** not be punished or have grades lowered for court-related absences.
- **Modified graduation requirements:** be exempt from school district graduation requirements that exceed state graduation requirements IF: Foster youth transfers to the district, or transfers from one high school to another within a district, after their 2nd year of high school; Is unable to complete the additional district requirements while eligible for foster care.
- **Equal access to activities and resources:** access educational services and participate in extracurricular and enrichment activities available to all students.
- **Least restrictive placement:** remain in their local public school or school of origin, unless they have an IEP requiring a different placement or the education rights holder determines a different program is in the child's best interest.
- **Speedy transfer of records:** have their records transfer to their new school within 2 business days
- **Allow** county placing agencies to access students' records.
- **Designate** an AB 490 educational liaison for every district and county office of education to help foster youth directly.

Homeless Students' Rights

- Right to be immediately enrolled in school without a permanent address.
- Right to remain in his or her school of origin that the student attended before becoming homeless, if it is in the student's best interest.
- Right to go to school, no matter where the student lives or how long he or she has lived there.
- Right to enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of required school records or documents, i.e., shot records, birth certificates, or an address.
- Right to enroll and attend classes even while the school and parent seek to resolve a dispute over enrollment.
- Right to receive transportation to his or her school of origin as long as he or she is homeless, or if the student becomes permanently housed, receive transportation until the end of the academic year.
- Right to participate in tutoring, school-related activities, and/or receive other support services.

Foster Youth Resources

- American Bar Association: <http://www.americanbar.org>
- California Child Welfare Council:
<http://www.chhs.ca.gov/Pages/CAChildWelfareCouncil.aspx>
- California Department of Education, Foster Youth Services:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy>
- California Department of Social Services, Foster Youth Ombudsman Office:
<http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov>
- Cities, Counties and Schools Partnership: <http://www.ccspartnership.org>

Homeless Youth Resources

- To apply for Cash Aid, Food Benefits and Medi-Cal Online visit:
www.C4Yourself.com
- Inland Counties Legal Services, Inc.: www.inlandlegal.org – 909-980-0982
- Inland Empire United Way: www.ieuw.org – 909-980-2857
- Inland Fair Housing and Mediation Board: 800-321-0911 Ext: 114
- Pacific Clinics Rancho Cucamonga One Stop TAY Center:
www.pacificclinics.org – 909-466-8696
- R.C. Family Resource Center:
www.cityofrc.us/cityhall/cs/parks/facility/resource.asp - 909-477-2781
- Returning Home: 909-989-6516

Food and Shelter

Desert Manna Ministry 760-256-7797

Foothill Family Shelter 909-920-5568

Frazer Community Center 909-899-4424

Salvation Army 909-986-6748

Veronica's House 909-888-9064

Tay Center 909-387-7194

Our House 909-335-2676

Stay Center 909-763-4760 x100

Emergency Assistance

American Red Cross 909-481-2835

Catholic Charities 909-391-4882

Mary's Mercy Center 909-889-2558

Comm. Action Partnership 909-723-1500

Medical Assistance

Dept. of Public Health 800-782-4264

Dept. of Behavior Health 909-386-8256

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES CALL 2-1-1