



FOSTER CARE

TRANSPORTATION GUIDANCE

ODHS COUNTY BRANCHES

An LEA must collaborate with the local ODHS caseworkers and offices to develop and implement clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin, when in their best interest, will be provided, arranged and funded. Contact the local ODHS office in your county when questions arise while developing your district transportation plan. An ODHS caseworkers should be included in the development of individual student's plans.

[ODHS County Branch Office](#)

[Oregon School Districts by County Map](#)

COVID TRANSPORTATION GUIDANCE AND SAFETY: FOSTER CARE

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a critical component of educational stability, to help students remain in their school of origin. To facilitate transportation for foster care students, the LEA must collaborate with ODE and ODHS to ensure that transportation is provided, arranged, and funded, for the duration of the child's time in foster care. *ESEA 1112 (c)(5)(B)*

TITLE I-A REQUIREMENTS

Title I funds, available to LEAs, may be used to pay additional costs needed to transport children in foster care to their schools of origin. Please note, however, that funds reserved for comparable services for homeless children and youth under Section 1113(c)(3)(A)(i) of ESEA may not be used to provide transportation for foster care youth.

Even if an LEA does not offer and/or provide transportation to children who are not in foster care, it must ensure that transportation is provided to children in foster care. *ESEA 1112 (c)(5)(B)*

STATE SCHOOL FUND

OAR-581-023-0040
[Approved Transportation Costs](#)

FOSTER CARE REIMBURSEMENT

[2020-21 Reimbursement Form](#)

TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Districts must maintain educational stability for children in foster care to provide students with the opportunity to achieve at the same high levels as their peers during the 2020-21 school year. This includes limiting educational disruption by keeping children who move while in foster care (due to entering the foster care system or changing placements) in their schools of origin, unless their best interest is to change schools.

REQUIRED

- Send school notification forms directly to the district point of contact.
- Continue school of origin considerations, regardless of instructional model.
- Coordinate and communicate an enrollment plan for immediate enrollment of foster care students, particularly in distance learning.
- Report any health issues/testing with foster care students to the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) as well as the foster family.

RECOMMENDED

- ⇒ Provide procedure for DHS staff to check out technology and support distance learning for students in temporary lodging placements.
- ⇒ Consider additional supports, including technology training, to address foster care parent concerns.

RESOURCES FOR TRANSPORTATION

- [Type 10 Activity Manual](#)
- [School-House Connection article: Transportation for Students in Foster Care](#)
- [ODE Transportation Guidance](#)
- [ODE & ODHS Notification and Transportation Process-GRAPHIC](#)
- [LEA transportation plan template](#)

TRANSPORTATION FOR VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT IN SUBSTITUTE CARE

[OAR 413-020-0070](#)

Under a Voluntary Placement Agreement, the parent or legal guardian retains legal authority over the child and is obligated to continue to exercise and perform all parental authority and legal responsibilities. Transportation for children voluntary placed in substitute care when the parent is the legal and/or custodial guardian is provided and the child shall be considered a resident for the school purpose in the school district in which the child resides.

Refer to [ORS 339.134](#) for more guidance on school and transportation.

DEVELOPING THE TRANSPORTATION PLAN: GUIDANCE FOR LEA'S AND ODHS OFFICES

[ODE Guidance for LEA Points of Contact](#)

Transportation procedures must ensure that students in foster care needing transportation to their school district/school of origin will promptly receive transportation and that this transportation is provided for the duration of the student's time in foster care.

This guidance is intended to:

- Assist school districts in understanding their obligation under ESSA regarding transportation for foster care students to their school district/school of origin
- Outline the necessary steps to take when implementing ESSA's transportation requirement
- Assist in developing individual foster student school district/school of origin transportation plans.

DETERMINATION OF RESIDENCE: [ORS 339.133](#)

SCHOOL STABILITY AND STUDENT SUCCESS

The Every Student Succeeds Act provides all children and youth in foster care with core protections for school stability and school access. Additionally, the passage of the Fostering Connections Act of 2008 was a significant step towards supporting the importance of school stability for children in foster care in Federal law. The legislation requires child welfare agencies to collaborate with educational agencies to keep children in foster care in the same school when living placements change, if remaining in that school is in their best interest.

Students who are in foster care are eligible to have the right to school of origin transportation, even if the school is in the same district as where they reside. Due to the pandemic, school buildings may be closed or not be accessible on specific days for students. Students may need continued support and access to their learning through day care centers and other non-school sites who may be open to students as safe learning spaces. Foster care students who participate in online instruction and access learning while at these sites -- whether during, before or after the regular school day -- are entitled to transportation similar to that received to a regular school of origin.

Below are the considerations to take when determining school of origin.

SCHOOL OF ORIGIN:

- School in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement
- Child must remain in the school of origin until a best interest finding is made
- IF the child's foster care placement changes, the school of origin is the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of the placement change.
- Child welfare caseworker provides the [school transportation form](#) with school of origin information and best interest finding, as it applies, to the school district Foster Care Point of Contact.
- Child welfare caseworker will develop the transportation plan in collaboration with the LEA POC when [school notification](#) is provided. This should occur as soon as possible of the student being placed in foster care child welfare custody.
- Best Interest Finding is ONLY needed for changing school of origin.

[Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care](#)