



MEMO

To: School District Superintendents
From: Sarah Drinkwater, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
Subject: Foster Student School of Origin Transportation Reimbursement

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), students in foster care are required to remain in their school district/school of origin, even when a student's foster home placement changes; this continues for the duration of the student's placement in foster care. It is only with a Best Interest Finding, made by the Juvenile Court, that foster students will transition from the school district /school of origin to the school district where the foster home is located. In order to implement this mandate, school districts of origin are required to provide transportation between the student's foster home and the school district/school of origin.

Senate Bill 20, effective July 1, 2017, addresses this transportation requirement and directs the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), the Department of Human Services (DHS) and school districts to collaborate to ensure that this transportation requirement is fully implemented. To support that effort, ODE and DHS have created an agreement in order for ODE to access federal funding provided to DHS that is available to help pay for the school district of origin transportation costs. ODE is working on a process to pass this funding on to school districts and make transportation of foster care students under ESSA cost-neutral.

School districts will be asked to submit a quarterly invoice to ODE for the cost to transport foster care students to their school of origin. Districts will report the full cost, and the federal funds provided to ODE from DHS will then be used to reimburse school districts for the cost of transportation not already covered by the transportation grant of the State School Fund (SSF). OAR 581-023-0040 specifies that funds received from this DHS grant do not reduce the amount that can be claimed for reimbursement through the SSF transportation grant.

A separate memo with more detailed invoicing procedures will be sent to Business Managers, Transportation Directors and Foster Care Contacts.