

MAINE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
AND
MAINE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES

Foster Care Points of Contact Yearly Training 2025-2026

Presented by: Jill Hunter (she/her) and Aubrie Howard (she/her) – with special guest Sarah
Ferguson (she/her)



Aubrie Howard, M.Ed. School Counselor

Student Success and Wellbeing Specialist & Maine SEA

Foster Care Point of Contact

The **Office of School and Student Supports (O3S)** strives to ensure that Maine schools are inclusive, healthy, safe, and supportive communities where every student thrives. O3S endeavors to coordinate resources and programs that promote equitable, psycho-socially, physically, and environmentally healthy school communities for all.

Jill Hunter, LSW

Manager of Field Operations

Maine OCFS State Foster Care Point of Contact

The Maine DHHS **Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS)** is dedicated to helping create a future where all Maine children and families are safe, stable, happy, and healthy.

Sarah Ferguson, MS SpEd

State Agency Programs Specialist

Office of Special Services & Inclusive Education

Maine Department of Education

Office of Special Services & Inclusive Education is dedicated to improving results for students with disabilities by providing leadership, support, and oversight to local education agencies. Our work is accomplished through collaboration with families, school districts, public and private agencies, and other programs.

Who we are...

**Office of School and Student
Supports, Maine DOE**

**Office of Child and Family
Services, Maine DHHS**

**Office of Special Services &
Inclusive Education, Maine DOE**





Maine DOE Mission

The Maine DOE promotes the best learning opportunities for all Maine students by:

- Focusing on a whole student approach
 - Encouraging innovation
 - Respecting educators
- Providing information, guidance, professional learning, and support to schools and educators
- Providing adequate and equitable school funding and resources
- Inspiring trust in our schools



Maine DHHS Mission

The Department strives to ensure that: Maine children grow up in safe, healthy, and supportive environments, allowing them to thrive throughout their lives



✓ Professional Learning

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, you will know:

1. The definition of “student in foster care”
2. Title I, Part A Educational Stability Provisions
 3. Foster Care POCs
4. School of Origin & School of Residence
 5. Best Interest Determination
6. Educational surrogate parents
 7. Immediate enrollment
8. Collaboration Strategies
 9. Foster Care Data
10. Regional Connections

Acronym Overview

DOE: Department of Education (SEA) – State Education Agency

O3S: Office of School and Student Supports

DHHS: Department of Health and Human Services

OCFS: Office of Child and Family Services

CPS: Child Protective Services

SAU: School Administrative Unit (LEA – Local Education Agency)

POC: Point of Contact (4)

- SAU Foster Care POC (aka LEA Foster Care POC)

- OCFS District Foster Care POC (related to entire state – 8 in total)

- SEA Foster Care POC

- DHHS Foster Care POC

BID: Best Interest Determination

IEP: Individualized Education Program

MUSER: Maine Unified Special Education Regulation

FAPE: Free and Appropriate Public Education

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act



Snapshot in Time

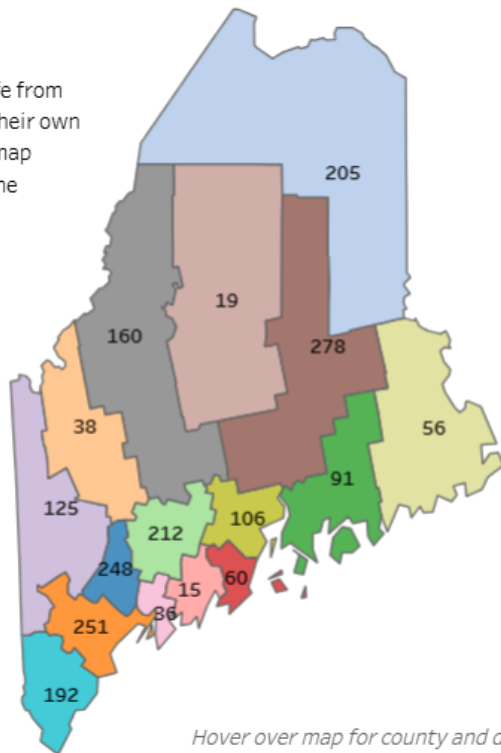
Children in DHHS State Custody

The goal of the child welfare system is to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. When a child cannot be kept safely in their own home, the court may order them into State custody. This map shows the number of children in State custody based on the county they were removed from.

Data is as of a point in time based on the date selected.

Total Number of Children in State Custody

2,192



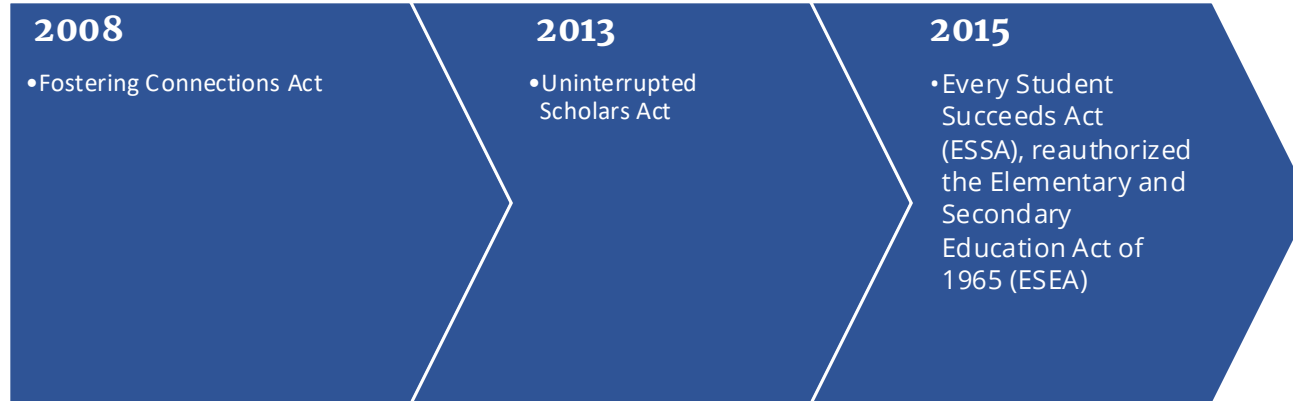
Select Date

11/1/2025



Hover over map for county and detailed information.

Federal Legal Framework



ESSA's Title I educational stability provisions and Foster Connection's Title IV-E requirement to create effective educational stability plans are the keystone to support school-age students in foster care.

Purpose of Education Stability

- Reduce school moves and disruptions
- Provide a familiar setting for learning
- Develop and maintain connections
- Access appropriate coursework, programming, and interventions



Goals for Providing Education Stability

- Improve academic achievement
- Increase grade retention and high school graduation rates
- Support social and emotional wellbeing
- Reduce chronic absenteeism and disengagement



Ensuring Educational Stability and Success for Students in Foster Care

Non-Regulatory Guidance



November 2024

ESSA: Title I, Part A Educational Provisions of Students in Foster Care

- ✓ **Best Interest Determination**
- ✓ **School of Origin & Transportation**
- ✓ **Immediate Enrollment**
- ✓ **Collaboration & Points of Contact**

Title I Education Stability Provisions

The Title I educational stability provisions apply when a student:

- 1) Enters foster care
- 2) Is already in foster care and is experiencing a change in foster care placement



Definition of Student in Foster Care

Applies to all public school students, preschool through grade 12.

24-hour substitute care, placed away from their parents or guardians; DHHS has placement + care responsibilities

- Foster family homes;
- Foster homes of relatives ("formal kinship care");
- Group homes;
- Emergency shelters;
- Residential facilities;
- Childcare institutions;
- Pre-adoptive homes;
- Hotel;
- During trial reunification.

-Title IV-E of the Social Security Act

Foster Care or McKinney-Vento?

The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) enacted in 1965 was reauthorized in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The phrase “awaiting foster care” was **completely removed** from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and the provisions of the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY).

ESSA includes separate provisions for students in foster care, which are very similar to McKinney-Vento. Aside from *rare* exceptions, students in foster care **do not** qualify as McKinney-Vento eligible.

Please collaborate with the SAU and McKinney-Vento Specialist at the Maine DOE if you have questions about whether the student is considered both a foster care student and a McKinney-Vento Student.

Collaboration

- Regular, sustainable collaboration between SAUs/schools and DHHS/OCFS is critical to ensure school stability for students in foster care
- Strong coordination may lead to improve academic, social-emotional, and career and college outcomes for students in foster care
- Collaboration should be viewed as an essential practice

Foster Care Points of Contact

Foster Care Points of Contact (POCs) are essential in ensuring school stability.

- **State POCs**
 - **State Education Agency (SEA) Point of Contact**
 - Aubrie Howard, Maine DOE, aubrie.howard@maine.gov
 - **State Child Welfare Agency Point of Contact**
 - Julie "Jill" Hunter, Maine OCFS, julie.hunter@maine.gov
- **Local POCs**
 - **LEA/SAU Foster Care Points of Contact**
 - Contact information on upcoming slides
 - **OCFS Foster Care Points of Contact**
 - Contact information on upcoming slides

Primary Contacts

Select Primary Contact Type

Foster Care Point of Contact

Search

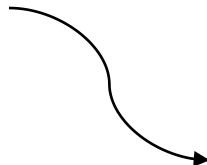
[New Search](#)

Export to Excel

[Go to top](#)

[New Search](#)

Scan here for LEA/SAU Foster
Care Points of Contact



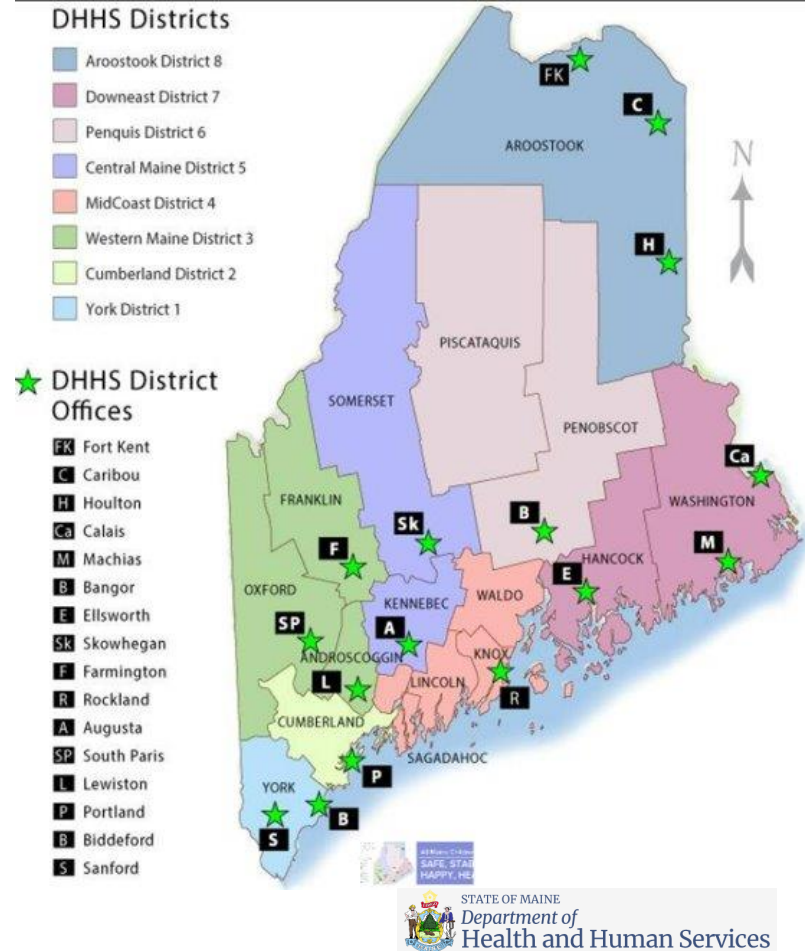
Neo.maine.gov

OCFS Foster Care Points of Contact for Education (OCFS POC)

Email addresses for foster care points of contact all follow the same format*:

first name.middle initial (IF PROVIDED).last name@maine.gov

- District 1 (York)- [Stephanie Gaddar](#)
- District 2 (Cumberland) - [Elijah Herrick](#)
- District 3 (Western Maine) - [Kayleen Godwin](#)
- District 4 (MidCoast) - [Christine "Chris" Winslow](#)
- District 5 (Central Maine) - [Lindsey Caron](#)
- District 6 (Penquis) - [Jennifer E. Brewer](#)
- District 7 (Downeast) - [Janice Davis](#)
- District 8 (Aroostook) - [Chad Kelley](#)
- Statewide* - [Julie Hunter](#) (Jill DHHS POC)



Roles and Responsibilities:

LEA/SAU Foster Care Points of Contact

Best Interest Determination (BID)

- Collaborate on developing BID procedures
- Collaborate on coordinating and facilitating BIDs

Immediate enrollment

- Collaborate on developing immediate enrollment procedures
- Facilitate transfer of school records

Transportation

- Collaborate on developing local school of origin transportation procedures

Students in Foster Care

- Ensure that students in foster care are enrolled in and regularly attending school
- Coordinate and connect student to school resources and programs

Professional development

- Provide professional development and training to school-based staff on the Title I educational stability provisions and the unique educational needs of students in foster care



Roles and Responsibilities:

OCFS District Point of Contact

Serve as one of the primary contacts for school staff, district personnel, and other service providers

Coordinate with the corresponding LEA/**SAU FC POCs** on implementation of the Title I educational stability provisions

Establish a process to notify the **SAU** when a student attending the **SAU** has been placed in foster care or experiences a foster care placement change

Establish procedure for completing BID processes with all relevant parties

Facilitate transfer of records to LEAs, including immunizations, medical records, and copies of IEPs and Section 504 plans and supporting documents and other records relating to the provision of modifications and services required by IEPs and Section 504 plans.

Work with **SAU** to ensure that students in foster care are immediately enrolled in school, and where needed, to coordinate transportation services

Roles and Responsibilities, cont'd:

OCFS District Point of Contact

- Manage BIDs and transportation cost agreements between the SAU and DHHS
- Provide training to SAU and DHHS staff on educational needs of students in foster care, including State and local policies
- Coordinate with the SAU regarding data sharing for students in foster care, consistent with FERPA and other Federal or State privacy laws, regulations, and policies
- Coordinate services so that students in foster care can access early educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and Early Head Start, home visiting, and preschool programs administered by the SEA and SAU, and screening and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services
- Inform parents of students in foster care of the students' educational rights and provide public notice of the educational rights of students in foster care to community stakeholders

The background of the slide is a top-down view of numerous light-colored wooden blocks scattered on a white surface. Each block has a black question mark printed on it. In the center of the image, there is a solid blue rectangular box.

Check-In

School of Origin "SAU of Origin"

- The term 'school of origin' (SOO) means the school the student was attending when placed in foster care, or at the time of a subsequent change in foster care placement.

School of Residence "SAU of Residence"

- The term 'school of residence' (SOR) means the school the student in foster care resides in after initial placement or change of placement.

Note: Students should remain enrolled in their school of origin, unless, after a Best Interest Determination (BID), it is decided **NOT to be in their best interest.**

Best Interest Determination (BID)



- A BID is a process through which SAUs and OCFS **collaborate** to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in the school or origin or change schools.
- Collaboration should include individuals who understand the **student's unique needs**. It should be student-centered and context specific.
- Student should **remain in their school of origin until the BID process occurs**.

Best Interest Determination (BID) Cont.



- A BID can be completed in advance if there is a **planned placement change**.
- **OCFS staff** provides the SAU **initial notification** of a student's foster care placement.
- A BID process should be **co-led** by the placing OCFS staff, the school of origin and new school of residence. This ensure **multiple safeguards** in place that a BID takes place in a timely manner.

BID Considerations



- ✓ **Age, grade**
- ✓ **Student's preference**
- ✓ **Student's attachment**
- ✓ **Placement of siblings**
- ✓ **Impact of commute**
- ✓ **Time of academic year**
- ✓ **Anticipated length of time**
- ✓ **Number of placements**
- ✓ **School climate, services**

Who should/could be involved in the Best Interest Determination?



- ✓ Student, parent/guardian
- ✓ Resource parent
- ✓ Educational decision maker (surrogate parent)
- ✓ Legal representative (guardian ad litem)
- ✓ CPS caseworker
- ✓ CPS supervisor
- ✓ SAU Foster Care POCs (origin and residence)
- ✓ Special Education
- ✓ School-based mental health professional
- ✓ Teacher
- ✓ OCFS District POCs (origin and residence)



All Students are General Education Students First

First - Best Interest Determination (BID), a general education process.

The BID determines into which SAU the student is enrolled.

Then - *if* the student receives Special Education, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting

The BID informs which SAU will hold an IEP meeting. If the student transfers to a new SAU, the new SAU team will determine how to implement the student's IEP.



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Transfer Students

MUSER IX. 3. B. (5) Program for Children Who Transfer School Districts.

(a) In general

(i) IEPs for Children Who Transfer SAUs in the Same State.—If a child with a disability (who had an IEP that was in effect in a previous SAU in the same State) transfers to a new SAU in the same State, and enrolls in a new school within the same school year, the new SAU (in consultation with the parents) must provide FAPE to the child (including services comparable to those described in the child's IEP from the previous SAU), until the new SAU either adopts the child's IEP from the previous SAU; or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP.

Educational Surrogate Parents

Maine Unified Special Education Regulations 34 CFR §300.519

Educational surrogate parents are appointed
when a student either is receiving special education services or
is in referral to special education
and the following:

- ❖ Parent cannot be identified or located
- ❖ Student is state ward
- ❖ Student is unaccompanied homeless youth as defined in McKinney-Vento

MUSER II.

25. Parent.

Parent means:

- A. A biological or adoptive parent of a child;
- B. A foster parent;
- C. A guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the child **(but not the State if the child is a ward of the State);**
- D. An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare; or
- E. A surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with Sec. 300.519 or section 639(a)(5) of the Act.

Has IEP; placed in
residential setting that is
not a Foster Home – needs
Special Education
Surrogate Parent

Has IEP; placed in Foster
Home – Foster Parent holds
Special Education rights

In Child Welfare Custody

Request for Appointment of Educational Surrogate Parent



Child's Name:	DOB:
Disability:	

Is the child an unaccompanied youth? ☐ YES ☐ NO	Is the child a State Ward? ☐ YES ☐ NO
Child's Current Caregiver/Agency:	DHHS Caseworker:
Contact:	Regional Office:
Address:	Address:
City, State Zip:	City, Zip:
Phone:	Phone:

Current School Name:	Special Ed. Director:
Address:	Phone:
City, Zip:	Notes:
Education Contact:	
Phone:	
Current Programming/Placement:	☐ None ☐ Referral ☐ Public School (Regular Ed, Resource, Self-Contained, Day Treatment, Other) ☐ Special Purpose Private School (Day Only) ☐ Residential Treatment Center ☐ Home/Hospital

Are there any special considerations for appointing an educational surrogate parent?
--

Recommendation for Educational Surrogate Parent: Grandparents, Extended Family/Friends; Former Foster Parents; In some cases, biological parents have served for state wards with the approval of DHHS

Name:	Relationship to child:
Address:	Email:
City, State, Zip:	Phone:
Name:	Relationship to child:
Address:	Email:
City, State, Zip:	Phone:

Name & title of individual making referral:	Date:
Email:	Phone:

Additional information/comments:

Additional information/comments:

Educational Surrogate Parent Name goes in Parent section on all Special Education Paperwork



Written Notice

Maine Unified Special Education Regulations (MUSER) Appendix I, 34 CFR 300.503

Date Sent to Parent:			SAU:	
Child's Name:			School:	
Date of Birth:		Grade:	School Phone:	
Parent/Guardian Name:			School Address:	
Parent/Guardian Address:			City, State Zip:	
Parent/Guardian City, State Zip:			School Contact:	

Date of Team Meeting:		Date amended IEP/IFSP sent, if parent requested a copy:	
Date of agreement for amendment without Team participation:			

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SURROGATE PARENTS

As a surrogate parent, your rights and responsibilities are limited to the child's/student's early intervention and/or special education needs.

The surrogate parent's rights include:

- Receiving copies of all records relating to the child's/student's program, within a reasonable time (within 45 school days) of the request and before the IFSP/IEP Team meeting (surrogate parents should automatically receive a copy of each evaluation to be discussed at the IEP meeting at least 3 days prior to the IFSP/IEP Team meeting),
- Providing written consent for every evaluation, as well as the initial placement of the child/student in a program providing early intervention and/or special education or related services,
- Receiving written notice prior to any evaluation or change in the child's/student's educational placement or program,
- Questioning the appropriateness of the child's/student's early intervention and/or educational program and educational placement,
- Being informed of early intervention and/or special education policies, programs, and services of CDS or the educational agency,
- Having access to all procedural safeguards, including independent evaluation, mediation, due process hearings, and initiating a complaint.

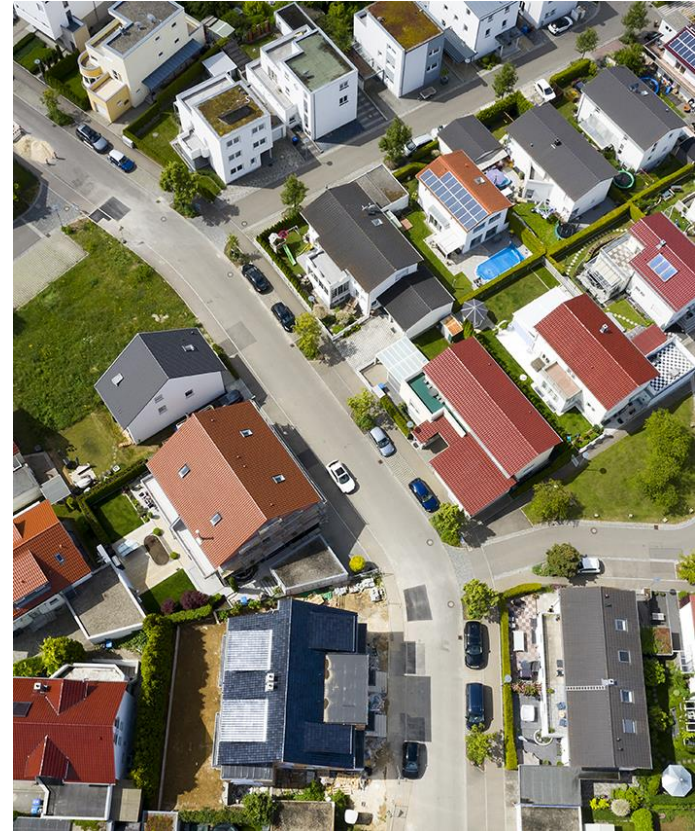
The surrogate parent's responsibilities include:

- Becoming acquainted with the child's/student's disability diagnosis and educational needs by visiting the school and reviewing educational records,
- Representing the child/student in all Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meetings, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and other meetings relating to the identification, evaluation and educational placement of the child/student and the provision of an equal educational opportunity in the least restrictive educational environment,
- Ensuring the confidentiality of information and records concerning the child/student,
- Making sufficient time available to carry out the duties of a surrogate parent properly and having sufficient knowledge and skills to perform these responsibilities,
- Maintaining a file of the child's /student's records and a record of your activity as a surrogate parent (to be sent to the Maine Department of Education upon the termination of appointment as surrogate parent),
- Notifying the Commissioner or designee whenever you believe that a conflict of interest exists with respect to your appointment as a surrogate parent.

Limits of the surrogate parent's responsibilities

- The surrogate parent has no authority or responsibility for the care, maintenance or financial support of the child/student.
- The surrogate parent may participate with the appropriate State agencies in the discussion of the selection of a foster home or group home placement. However, the surrogate parent has no authority or responsibility to approve a non-educational placement in a group home or foster home.

When it is known that a student with a Special Education Surrogate Parent is moving to a new district, please ensure the new school has the SESP contact information.



Educational Surrogate Parents (continued)

- ❖ Request for Appointment of Surrogate Parent form can be found on DOE Special Services website under Special Education Initiatives at:
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/specialed/initiatives/surrogate>
- ❖ Contact Sarah Ferguson at sarah.ferguson@maine.gov or
207-592-6498

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Check-In

Collaboration strategies on BIDs

Design and create a collaborative process for BID implementation. Questions to think about:

- Who will lead/co-lead BIDs, what are their specific responsibilities? Who else will participate in BIDs and what are their responsibilities? How will information be gathered and documented? How will you gather information for individuals who cannot attend BID? How will information be shared while protecting the students' privacy and ensure compliance with confidentiality requirements?
- Will BIDs always include a collaborative meeting? Or will some BIDs take place over an email exchange? What does that process look like? What is the timeline for completing a BID once a change in placement occurs? What circumstances can a BID decisions be revisited or reviewed?
- When will SAU and OCFS Points of Contact meet to review BID implementation and procedures to ensure sustainable collaboration?

Sample BIDs Available

SCAN ME!



BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION FOR FOSTER CARE SCHOOL SELECTION – WORKSHEET
Completed by: SAU DHHS

BID NOTES

COLLABORATORS IN THE BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION
Check box if attaching any relevant correspondence/communication

NAME & CONTACT INFORMATION	RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT	Method	Date
		Attachment	
		Email	
		Face-to-Face	
		Call	
		Email	
		Face-to-Face	
		Call	
		Email	
		Face-to-Face	
		Call	
		Email	
		Face-to-Face	
		Call	
		Email	
		Face-to-Face	
		Call	
		Email	
		Face-to-Face	

NOTE: This process and worksheet are not required but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BID.

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION FOR FOSTER CARE SCHOOL SELECTION – WORKSHEET
Completed by: SAU DHHS

Upon completion of conversations with ALL individuals who understand the unique situation, the following is the resulting BID. The student will:

☒ **REMAIN ENROLLED IN SCHOOL OF ORIGIN.** DHHS

If any specialized transportation is needed, please describe:

Short-Term Transportation Plan: (How will the student be transported to school? established?)

☐ DHHS: _____

☐ District: _____

☐ Other: _____

How will the student get to school?

Will the BID? If so, describe the factors to be revisited, person responsible for follow-up, etc.

Person responsible for follow-up: _____

Approximate date to revisit: _____

☒ **ENROLL LOCALLY / District of Residence (where the student is living in foster care)**

☐ DHHS provides Notice to DOR and initiates immediate enrollment

☐ Records transfer requested by DOR POC (on the day of enrollment)

☐ DDO complete records transfer as soon as possible (within 2-3 days)

Checkmarks below indicate acknowledgement that the BID process occurred, has been completed and is accurately represented in this document.

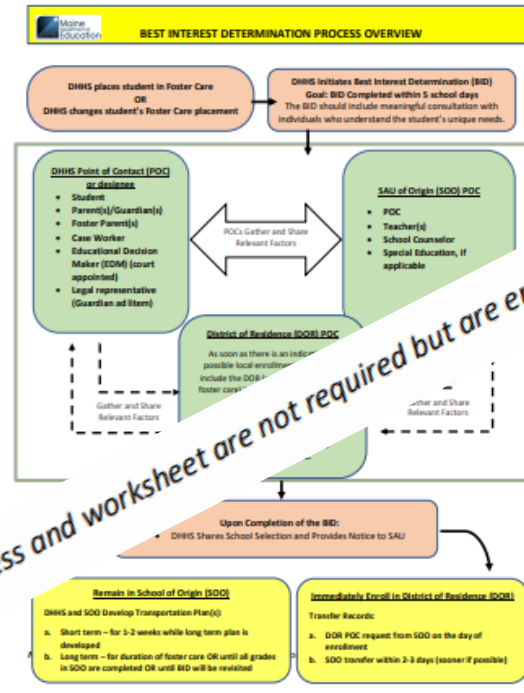
	NAME		DATE
DHHS Representative:		☐	
District POC:		☐	

NOTE: This process and worksheet are not required but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BID.

NOTE: This process and worksheet are not required but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BID.

https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/safeschools/fostercare

SCAN ME!



NOTE: This process and worksheet are not required but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BID.

BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION FOR FOSTER CARE SCHOOL SELECTION
Completed by: SAU DHHS

Student Name: _____

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

Does the student have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)? (Yes/No) _____

Does the student's IEP include a related service? (Yes/No) _____

School (if District) or SAU of Origin: _____

SAU of Origin: _____

POC: _____

Worker and Education: _____

FACTORS CONSIDERED

The following multiple factors related to the student's unique needs should be considered when making the BID. Additional factors may be considered and should be included under Other Factor(s). Check all factors considered and make notes below for documentation. Attach other relevant documents as appropriate (e.g., IEP, SOA Plan, Report Cards, Progress Reports, etc.)

☐ Student's preference (when age appropriate) ☐ Preferences of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or EDM(s) ☐ Distance/duration of travel to/from school ☐ Anticipated duration of time in placement ☐ Number of placements ☐ Duration of time in the current school ☐ Time of academic year ☐ Maintenance of family relationships ☐ Placement and/or school(s) of sibling(s) (provide names of sibling(s) and school(s) attending in BID notes section)	☐ Permanency and goal(s) of placement (e.g., reunification, adoption, etc.) ☐ Relationships to school staff and peers ☐ Engagement in extracurricular activities ☐ Current educational goals and services ☐ Clinical/behavioral issues ☐ Availability and quality of educational and SEL services ☐ Immediate availability of services to meet needs of IEP or SOA Plan ☐ Individual skills, needs, and social connections ☐ School climate and safety issues on student ☐ Academic performance and skills ☐ Other Factor(s)
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NOTES:

- The cost of transportation may not be factored when conducting the BID.
- Financial or programmatic responsibility for a student's special education services is separate from enrollment and the BID process. After the best interest determination, requests for clarification of school district responsibility for a student's special education services can be directed to DOE's Office of Special Services and Inclusive Education.

NOTE: This process and worksheet are not required but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BID.

Sample BIDs Available


Best Interest Determination for Foster Care School Placement Form
 This document shall be kept in student's file.

Best Interest Determination Page

Child's Name: _____

School of Origin:

Grade Placement:

Date of Best Interest Determination Meeting:

Determination:

- ☐ The student shall remain in the school in which the child was enrolled at the time of placement. Name of School: _____.
- ☐ Based on the best interest determination, a change in school placement is needed.

The student will be enrolled in the school of current residence.

Name of School: _____

Note: If a change in educational placement is needed, enrollment should take place immediately at the new school with all educational records provided to the new school.

Was the child or youth informed of the benefits in inviting a significant person to attend the meeting? Yes ☐ No ☐

If a person was identified, who did the child invite?

What school does the child prefer? Why?

NOTE: This process and workflow are not required but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BID.


**Best Interest Determination for
Foster Care School Placement Form**
 This document shall be kept in student's file.

Signature Page

The following individuals participated in determining the school placement that is in the student's best interest:

Participants	Printed name & title and/or relationship with student	Signature, if essential person (**should sign)	Agree with determination
Student or youth in care**			☐ Yes ☐ No
Case worker or supervisor**			☐ Yes ☐ No
Foster parent(s)**			☐ Yes ☐ No
SAU of Origin (SOO) POC from student's school at time of placement**			☐ Yes ☐ No
Parent (if not SAU of Origin)			☐ Yes ☐ No
Other (if attending)			☐ Yes ☐ No
District of Residence (DOR) Point of Contact (POC)			☐ Yes ☐ No
Other			☐ Yes ☐ No
Other			☐ Yes ☐ No
Other			☐ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: This process and worksheet are not required, but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BID.


Best Interest Determination
Foster Care School
 This document is a required BID.

The student... the answers to the following
quest... best interest.

- goal and plan?

... is the expected date for achieving the permanency goal.

3. How many schools has the student attended? How many schools has the student attended this year? How have the school transfers affected the student emotionally, socially, academically, and physically?
4. What, if any, are the safety considerations related to school placement?
5. Which school does the student prefer? Why? How was this information obtained?
6. How does the student feel about any upcoming moves?
7. Which school do the birth parents/guardians, as appropriate, prefer? Why?
8. Which school do the student's current foster parent(s), as appropriate, prefer? Why?
9. What school(s) do the student's siblings attend, if any?

NOTE: This process and worksheet are not required, but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BHD.



Transportation costs should **NOT** be a factor in determining the best interest.



OCFS and SAUs should collaborate to ensure students who need transportation to remain in their school of origin can do so.

State Payment for State Agency Clients

If the student has an IEP with transportation as a related service Maine DOE reimburses (Maine DOE contact – lori.freeman@maine.gov)

Special education costs for state agency clients shall be paid by the Department in the year of allocation at 100 percent of actual costs in accordance with 20-A MRSA §15689-A. Administrative units seeking state payment for state agency clients shall submit Forms EF-S- 01, EF-S-04A and EF-S-04B in the manner required by the Commissioner.

Contacts at Maine DOE

Billing:

Barbara McGowen
Fiscal and Data Coordinator
(207) 624-6645
Barbara.A.McGowen@maine.gov

Program:

Mary Adley
Consultant to State Agency Programs
(207) 624-6671
Mary.Adley@maine.gov

SAC Payable:

Lori Freeman
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Transportation Cont.

OCFS Foster Care Points of Contact will work with SAU Foster Care Points of Contact on transportation.

Maine OCFS and Maine DOE state Foster Care POCs will collaborate on a create of a state-wide transportation guide to support SAUs and OCFS staff in developing local transportation plans, protocols, and procedures.

Immediate Enrollment



Without Normally Required Documents

If BID supports attending school locally (where placed in foster care), districts **must enroll immediately, with or without documentation**, including academic, health, discipline and/or special education records.



What DHHS May Be Able to Provide

DHHS/OCFS provides notice to SAUS, which includes emergency contact, residence, CPS Caseworker, record release, transportation needs, etc.



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School Selection Disputes

We encourage collaboration during BIDs to resolve disputes.

DHHS has the authority to make final decisions about the best interest.

During the dispute student must remain in SAU/school of origin.

Strategies to Improve Collaboration

- Develop standard procedures, criteria, and routines for when a student enters foster care or there is a change of placement
- Develop standard procedures, criteria, and routines for when a student enters foster care or there is a change of placement
- Set clear expectations for immediate enrollment, which includes full participation in school
- Hold bi-annual regional or local meetings to share information and discuss implementation challenges
- Ensure procedures are in place for providing, arranging, and funding transportation.
- Collaboration should be viewed as an essential practice.

Attending Student Details Report in NEO

- NEO Navigation Steps:
 - NEO -> Student Data -> Student Reports -> Attending Student Details Report
 - If you do not have NEO credentials and/or access to the Student Data module in NEO please have your Superintendent submit a [NEO Access Request Form to the MEDMS Support Team](#)
- **Staff who require NEO accounts/access must be entered into NEO Staff prior to submitting an Access Request.**

Attending Student Detail Report

The Attending Student Details Report in NEO provides some of the data that will be helpful to filling out the quarterly spreadsheets

Year: Attending District: View Report

Attending School:

14 of 21 Find | Text

Word
Excel
PowerPoint
PDF
TIFF file
MHTML (web archive)
CSV (comma delimited)
XML file with report data
Data Feed

Export to Excel to see additional codes.

Attending Student Details

Report Filter Criteria:

Year	Attending District	Attending School	Data as of

Results Grid:

Year	Attending School	Responsible District	Resident District	Resident Town Name	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name/Initial	State Student ID	Birth Date	Sex	Race/Ethnicity	Enrollment Type Code	Grade	Enrollment Start Date	Start Status Description	Enrollment End Date	End Status Description	Fiscal Responsibility Description	FTE Definition	Home Instruction	EL Start Date	EL End Date
2025-2026	Elementary School	Rainbows and Unicorns	Rainbows and Unicorns	Makebelieve	Electra	Glimmer		104852374	01/08/2021	Female	White		PK	09/05/2025	Original entry into a United States school			Resident of School Unit	100% Educational time spent at school			
2025-2026	Elementary School	Rainbows and Unicorns	Rainbows and Unicorns	Makebelieve	Philippa	Buttercup		105473276	02/02/2022	Male	White		PK	09/05/2025	Original entry into a United States school	09/09/2025	Withdrawn from school, under the age for compulsory attendance; eligible to return	Resident of School Unit	100% Educational time spent at school			
2025-2026	Elementary School	Rainbows and Unicorns	Rainbows and Unicorns	Makebelieve	Emerald	Clover		105432689	05/07/2022	Female	White		PK	09/05/2025	Original entry into a United States school			Resident of School Unit	100% Educational time spent at school			
2025-2026	Elementary School	Rainbows and Unicorns	Rainbows and Unicorns	Makebelieve	Cornelius	Topaz		102684365	09/29/2022	Male	White		PK	09/05/2025	Original entry into a United States school			Resident of School Unit	100% Educational time spent at school			

Attending Student Details

Report Filter Criteria :

Year	Attending District	Attending School	Report Date	Data as of
2025-2026	Rainbows and Unicorns	ALL		

Results Grid :

Year	Attending District	Attending District ID	Attending School	Attending School ID	Responsible District	Responsible District ID	Resident District	Resident District ID	Resident Town Name	Resident Town Code	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name Initial	State Student ID	Birth Date	Sex	Race/Ethnicity	Race/Ethnicity Code	Enrollment Type Code	Grade
2025-2026	Rainbows and Unicorns	8888	Elementary School	8889	Rainbows and Unicorns Public Schools	8888	Rainbows and Unicorns Public Schools	8888	Makebelieve	22222	Electra	Glimmer		104852374	1/8/2020	Female	White	WH7	P	KG
2025-2026	Rainbows and Unicorns	8888	High School	8889	Rainbows and Unicorns Public Schools	8888	Rainbows and Unicorns Public Schools	8888	Makebelieve	22222	Philippa	Buttercup		105473276	2/2/2010	Male	White	WH7	P	10
2025-2026	Wonderland	7777	Wonder School	7778	Wonder School	8888	Rainbows and Unicorns Public Schools	8888	Makebelieve	22222	Emerald	Clover		105432689	5/7/2019	Female	White	WH7	P	01
2025-2026	Rainbows and Unicorns	8888	High School	8889	Neverland Public Schools	555	Neverland Public Schools	555	Mermoid Lagoon	33300	Cornelius	Topas		102684365	9/25/2011	Male	White	WH7	P	08
2025-2026	Rainbows and Unicorns	8888	Middle School	8889	Rainbows and Unicorns Public Schools	8888	Rainbows and Unicorns Public Schools	8888	Makebelieve	22222	Miracle	Flicker		10287325	9/25/2014	Male	White	WH7	P	06

Cohort Year	Enrollment Start Date	Start Status Code	Start Status Description	Enrollment End Date	End Status Code	End Status Description	Fiscal Responsibility Description	Fiscal Responsibility Code	FTE Definition	FTE Code	Home Instruction	EL Start Date	EL End Date	Date First Enrolled in a US School	EL Status	Immigrant	Language	Title 1A ELA	Title 1A Math
	9/5/2025	01838	Original entry into a United States school				Resident of School Unit	R	100% Educational time spent at school	0	N				N	N	eng	N	N
	9/5/2025	01835	Re-entry from the same school with no interruption of schooling	9/9/2025	01908	Transferred to a public school in a different local education agency in the same state	Resident of School Unit	R	100% Educational time spent at school	0	N				N	N	eng	N	N
	9/5/2025	01835	Re-entry from the same school with no interruption of schooling				Resident of School Unit	R	100% Educational time spent at school	0	N				N	N	eng	N	N
	9/5/2025	01835	Re-entry from the same school with no interruption of schooling				Paid by Resident SAU or EUT	R	100% Educational time spent at school	0	N				N	N	eng	N	N
	9/5/2025	01821	Transfer from a public school in the same local education agency				Resident of School Unit	R	100% Educational time spent at school	0	N				N	N	eng	N	N

Alternative Education Status	Section 504 Status	Academic Gifted/Talented	Artistic Gifted/Talented	Military Connected	Sped Status	Sped Start Date	Sped Exit Date	Sped Exit Reason	Disability/Exceptionality Description	Sped Setting Description	Alternate Assessment	Residential Status	Economic Disadvantage	Homeless Status	Homeless Nighttime Residence	Unaccompanied Youth Status	Migrant	Foster Care
N	N	N	N	Not Military Connected	N	9/5/2025					N	N	N	Y	Doubled Up	N	N	N
N	Y	N	N	Not Military Connected	N	9/5/2025					N	N	Y	N		N	N	Y
N	N	N	N	Not Military Connected	Y	9/5/2025			Speech or Language Impairment	Separate school is the setting in which the student receives special education and related services.	N	N	Y	N		N	N	N
N	N	N	N	Not Military Connected	Y	9/5/2025			Autism	Inside regular class 50% or more of the day in the setting in which the student receives special education and related services.	N	N	Y	N		N	N	Y
N	N	N	N	Not Military Connected	N	9/5/2025					N	N	N	N		N	N	N



STATE OF MAINE
Department of
Health and Human Services



DHHS Districts

- Aroostook District 8
- Downeast District 7
- Penquis District 6
- Central Maine District 5
- MidCoast District 4
- Western Maine District 3
- Cumberland District 2
- York District 1

★ DHHS District Offices

- FK** Fort Kent
- C** Caribou
- H** Houlton
- Ca** Calais
- M** Machias
- B** Bangor
- E** Ellsworth
- Sk** Skowhegan
- F** Farmington
- R** Rockland
- A** Augusta
- SP** South Paris
- L** Lewiston
- P** Portland
- B** Biddeford
- S** Sanford



Regional Breakout Sessions (15–20 minutes)

- Introductions – Name and hats you wear at either SAU/LEA or OCFS
- AFTER introductions, possible discussion points:
 - Current realities in our regions
 - Ideas to improve our communication and work together

Foster Care Resources



Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine, Inc. & The Kinship Program

[Adoptive Foster & Families of Maine](#) (AFFM) provides support, guidance, training, and resources for adoptive and foster parents, and kinship providers.



[FosterClub](#) is a national organization that was created for and is driven by young people who experience foster care. Maine student Nathan Prest was honored with [2025 FosterClub Outstanding Young Leader Award](#).



[Community Health and Counseling Services](#) provides support, case-management, trainings, and more for foster youth and families in therapeutic foster homes.



[Youth Leadership Advisory Team](#) (YLAT) dynamic group of young leaders and adult partners working together to improve outcomes for youth in foster care.

[Special Education Surrogate Parent Program](#) provide educational surrogate parents to children with disabilities whenever the natural parents or guardian of a child with a disability cannot be identified or located, or when the child is in the custody of the state.



[Finance Authority of Maine](#) (FAME) Tuition Waiver Program supports certain foster youth with a tuition waiver to participating Maine public colleges/university under subsidy from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).



LEGAL CENTER FOR FOSTER CARE & EDUCATION

[Legal Center for Foster Care & Education](#) (LCFCE) is a grant-funded project of the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law. LCFCE advances its mission of transforming systems and improving law and practice to create better outcomes for children in foster care.



STATE OF MAINE
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Beyond this presentation

Resources to explore

Sign up for the McKinney-Vento
and Foster Care Office Hours



First Thursday of the month from
3:00pm-4:00pm

- Get to know your local [Foster Care Point of Contacts](#) and [McKinney-Vento Liaisons](#)
- Visit the Maine DOE Foster Care site: [Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care in Maine](#)
- Special Education Surrogate Parent information is found under [Family & Caregiver Resources](#)
- Visit the [Maine DOE McKinney-Vento site](#) to explore resources
- Subscribe to the [McKinney-Vento and Foster Care newsletter](#)

Exit Slip

Click [here](#) to complete the Point of Contact Quiz to check comprehension (required for all Foster Care Points of Contact annually) – a certificate will be emailed to you upon completion

Or copy and paste this link to the quiz:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=q6g_QX0gYkubzeoajy-GTo0ZJIhus71EjDwg4_AVeIJUQzE1NTZLVktJV1IZRVpIQ0laWURUNzEyQS4u

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[More Info](#)





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