



California's New Local Control Funding Formula

FOSTER YOUTH PROVISIONS: ROLE FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The State has a unique legal responsibility to ensure the well-being of foster youth, yet their educational outcomes have been historically tragically poor.

Recognizing this, California's new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF):

- Establishes low-income students, English learner students and students in foster care as the three subgroups of at-risk students that generate supplemental and concentration funds for school districts. EC §§ 42238.02, 42238.03
- Adds foster youth to California's Academic Performance Index (API). EC § 52052
- Requires district Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) to include goals for foster youth, the actions the district will take to achieve these goals, and associated expenditures. EC §§ 52060, 52061

Foster youth are categorically eligible for the free and reduced lunch program and many will benefit from the services provided these students. But, foster youth face unique educational challenges and require a tailored set of educational supports. Below are some examples of Local Control and Accountability Plan goals specific to foster youth that districts should consider incorporating into their Local Control and Accountability Plans.

Provide Comprehensive Assessments

- Formally and regularly assess the educational strengths and needs of each foster youth.
- Promptly and regularly assess whether foster youth are eligible to graduate under Education Code 51225.1, which entitles foster youth who transfer schools after their second year of high school to graduate if they cannot meet local graduation requirements, so long as he or she meets the state graduation requirements.

Ensure Access to Programs and Services

- Ensure foster youth are enrolled in appropriate academic programs provided by the district, including credit recovery classes, A-G classes, AP classes, after-school classes, summer school, academic tutoring resources, CAHSEE tutoring resources, and remediation services.
- Ensure foster youth receive appropriate mental health and behavioral services, including school social worker counseling, school based mental health services and in-school therapeutic services, regardless of whether he or she qualifies for special education.

- Ensure that foster youth with learning challenges are promptly assessed for and provided appropriate special education or 504 services or accommodations.

Employ Teams

- Develop and engage a cross-agency, multi-disciplinary educational team to support the educational success of each foster youth.
- Using an inter-agency teaming approach, develop, monitor and regularly update an education plan for each foster youth. This plan should list the foster youth's educational strengths and needs, goals and objectives, and the programs, supports and services the child will receive.
- Promptly and regularly update each foster youth's educational team as to the youth's progress, achievement and behavior in school.
- Designate a school-based staff person to serve as a liaison to foster youth in that school.
- Actively collaborate with the county child welfare agency, the county office of education and other agencies working to improve the educational success of students in foster care.

Provide Supports

- Provide students in foster care who transfer into a school the support they need to feel welcome and comfortable; ensure their educational records and credits are promptly and accurately transferred, and they are enrolled in appropriate classes; and their individual education plan (IEP) is up-to-date and implemented if the student has special needs.
- Provide office space, basic office supplies, and basic phone, fax and internet access to county agencies working to improve the educational outcomes of children in foster care.

Use and Share Data

- Share information about which students are in foster care with district and school site staff such that appropriate services and supports can be provided. Do not share information about which students are in foster care with district and school site staff without a need to know. Train staff on appropriate uses of such information.
- Share education information with child welfare caseworkers and other stakeholders supporting a student's educational success as helpful and allowed by state and federal law.