

## Foster Care Education



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

### E-Communication

December, 2018-January, 2019

Bookmark us!

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/fostercare\\_index](http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/fostercare_index)

*This e-communication is intended to provide Child Welfare Education Liaisons (CWELs) and other foster care stakeholders informed about current news and events related to students in foster care.*

### 2018 Year End Edition!

#### **Happy New Year!**

I hope you all had a fantastic and relaxing holiday season! Thank you all for your continued dedication to ensuring educational stability for children and youth in the foster care system. The 2018-19 school year is off to an exciting start and we are well on our way to improving educational outcomes for students in foster care. This e-communication includes some highlights of the work that took place from the beginning of the school year until December 2018, and a look forward at upcoming initiatives and efforts.

We are currently in our third school year of implementing the foster care provisions in ESSA and in the first school year of following Colorado House Bill 18-1306, which was signed into law in June 2018. Implementing these laws has come with exciting opportunities and challenges and I appreciate each and every one of you for your work.

In the sections below, you will find highlights as well as links to additional resources. As always, please feel free to contact Kristin Myers at the information listed at the end of this communication document.

### Foster Care Mid-Year Webinar

There will be a webinar for all CWELs and interested foster care stakeholders on **February 5<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-3:00pm**. In addition to foster care education updates, CWELs from Greeley School District 6, Mesa 51, Douglas County School District, and Aurora Public Schools will provide information about current implementation practices. [Click here](#) to attend this webinar. Please contact Kristin Myers if you would like to present any promising practices from your district.

### ESSA and Colorado HB 18-1306 Implementation Fall 2018 Highlights

#### **Regional Meetings and Partnership with the New Education Specialist at the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)**

Samantha Garrett joined CDHS in October and hit the ground running to support educational stability for children and youth in foster care. Samantha and Kristin Myers are in the process of meeting with the counties and school districts with the highest numbers of students in foster care.

The intent of these meetings is to identify common barriers and potential solutions in implementing educational stability laws for students in foster care. The focus areas of these meetings include: (1) Communication practices between counties and school districts, (2) Best Interest Determination (BID) communication and processes, (3) Communication about transportation, and (4) Transfers to and from Facility Schools.

At each meeting, attendees work in small groups to identify any strategies that are currently working, areas that need to be fixed, and potential solutions. Each group records their responses into a shared Google Doc, which serves as a working document for each region. These documents will be available on CDHS's website and will be used to develop a joint best practice guide between CDE and CDHS.

El Paso County and the Denver-Metro counties met in December, 2018 and have future regional meetings set up in January. Contact Kristin Myers for more information regarding dates and times, or to request a meeting if your region has not already been contacted.

#### **Transportation Billing: A Reminder from Counties**

Many school districts have been submitting invoices to counties for transportation reimbursement. Several counties contacted CDHS regarding receiving invoices for children that are not in that county's custody. Sometimes children are in the custody of a county other than the county where the school is located (e.g. in the custody of El Paso County, but attending school in Douglas County). CWELs may contact the child's caseworker to ensure the appropriate county is being billed for transportation costs.

#### **Transportation Agreements**

CDHS required counties to submit transportation agreements with school districts located within their county on October 15, 2018. As a reminder, every school district that receives federal funding checked an assurance in the consolidated application for 2018-19. This assurance reads:

*"The LEA/BOCES has adopted policies and practices to ensure that children in foster care will remain, if possible, in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time placement. When remaining in such school is not in the best interest of the child, the LEA will provide immediate and appropriate enrollment in a new school, with all of the educational records of the child provided to the new school. The LEA has, or will adopt, policies and practices to ensure that the enrolling school will immediately contact the school last attended by the child in foster care to obtain relevant academic and other records. § 1111(g)(1)(E)."*

#### **Increasing Graduation Rates of Highly Mobile Students - Credit attainment and waivers**

HB 18-1306 allows school districts to waive certain graduation requirements and credits for highly mobile student if the district determines it is in the best interest of the student. The intent of these provisions are to allow districts to make professional judgements on behalf of students who experience high mobility during high school and experience barriers to credit attainment and graduation. More information regarding these provisions are listed in the section below.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Additional Resources**

#### **Foster Care Mid-Year Webinar**

There will be a webinar for all CWELs and interested foster care stakeholders on February 5<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-3:00pm. [Click here](#) to attend this webinar. Please contact Kristin Myers for more information.

### **Transportation Basics and Recorded Webinar**

Transportation reimbursement basics under HB 18-1306: School districts may submit an invoice to counties for reimbursement for 100% of transportation costs they incurred for providing transportation for foster students to their school of origin since July 1, 2018. Districts are eligible to receive up to 90% of the total cost of transportation back from the county. To obtain these funds, the county department of human services submits the invoice to the state (CDHS) and receives the money to reimburse the school districts. Schools are not responsible for billing CHDS and will receive funds from the county human services department directly. Transportation agreements do NOT have to be signed to receive funds. [Click here](#) to view a recorded webinar detailing the transportation reimbursement process.

### **FAFSA Webinar for Highly Mobile Students (Foster, Homeless, Migrant)**

CDE partnered with the Colorado Department of Higher Education to record a webinar that is aimed to assist in filling out the FAFSA for youth who are eligible as independent students. This webinar provides guidance for young people, financial aid administrators, high school counselors, and anyone who is advocating for youth experiencing foster care, homelessness, or migrant students. Access this webinar by [clicking here](#).

### **CWEL Toolkit**

Resources for CWELs available on the foster care education website

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/cweltoolkit>

### **Materials Available from Fall Conferences**

There were several opportunities for foster care education stakeholders to present and attend conferences related to foster care education. Below is a list of all conferences/presentations from August-December, 2018. Conference materials and further information are available upon request.

#### **National**

- *Foster Care Education Summit*
- *U.S. Senate Briefing on Foster Care Education*
- *National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) Conference*
- *Alliance for Strong Families and Communities National Conference*

#### **Colorado**

- *Colorado School Counselor Association Annual Conference*
- *School Counselor Corps Grantee Meeting—October*

### **Foster Care Education Website Updates**

Keep checking the Foster Care Education webpage for new resources! In the upcoming months, toolkits for various foster care education stakeholders will be available by topic area. If you have general questions or need assistance, contact:

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