

FY26 Foster Care Transportation Plan

Local Educational Agency (LEA)

Superintendent Name William Schofield

Mailing Address 711 Green Street NW

Physical Address (if different from above) _____


City Gainesville **Zip** 30501

Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) Name Holly Klippel **POC Email** holly.klippel@hallco.org

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City Gainesville **Zip** 30501

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 May 19, 2025
Superintendent Signature Date

William Schofield
Print Name of Superintendent

FY26 Foster Care Transportation Plan

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is required to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(E)). In coordination with state and tribal child welfare agencies, GaDOE must ensure that its LEAs implement the Title I educational stability requirements for children in foster care, including ensuring that:

- A child in foster care remains in his or her school of origin, unless it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in that child's best interest;
- If it is not in the child's best interest to stay in his or her school of origin, the child is immediately enrolled in the new school even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment; and,
- That the new (enrolling) school immediately contacts the school of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(E)(i)-(iii)). In fulfilling this role, the SEA should coordinate with the state or tribal child welfare agency to develop and disseminate uniform guidelines for implementing the Title I educational stability provisions. Developing uniform statewide policies and procedures for ensuring educational stability for children in foster care, as many States have already done under the Fostering Connections Act, will facilitate successful implementation at the local level. This is particularly important given the shared agency responsibility for educational stability under Title I and the Fostering Connections Act, and because a single LEA or local child welfare agency will likely have to collaborate with multiple partner agencies in implementing these provisions.

Additionally, the SEA must conduct regular monitoring and oversight to guarantee appropriate implementation of these provisions at the local level. (See 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.331(d), 200.328(a); 34 C.F.R. § 76.770).

On the state level, the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS), which houses the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) periodically sends a list of children in foster care that are flagged in GaDOE's student information system for information sharing and reporting purposes. On the local level, LEAs are now able to retrieve a list of children in foster care to better identify and provide services. LEAs are to continue collaborating with their local child welfare agencies and may periodically receive information directly from foster parents, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), DFCS case workers, or Education Support Monitors (ESM), within the Educational Programming, Assessment and Consultation (EPAC) unit of DFCS. Once identified, LEAs must implement its plan to ensure educational stability for children in care. For the best interest of the children in care, LEAs should follow all mandated regulations under FERPA and keep the status of these children confidential.

As a result, GaDOE is requiring all LEAs, including virtual schools and charter schools that function as an LEA, to complete a Foster Care Transportation Plan. The plan should be completed in addition to the development and implementation of written transportation procedures and the identification of a Foster Care Point of Contact. Please complete this plan and return it by:

Monday, June 30, 2025

Instructions for submission:

- After the LEA superintendent signs the assurances, scan the entire document as a PDF and save it as the "FY26 Foster Care Transportation Plan".
- Upload the signed PDF version of the document to the CLIP online portal via the Consolidated Application for FY26.

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NOTE: In order to answer the questions below, refer to the [Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability and Success for Students in Foster Care](#).

I. Foster Care Transportation Plan: PLANNING

A. The LEA's role is to have a transportation plan in place for children in foster care to their school of origin. Describe your plan to:

1. Coordinate transportation with the local child welfare agency.
2. Implement steps to be taken if additional costs are incurred.
3. Execute the local dispute resolution process.

Include the roles of key players (e.g. LEA Foster Care Point of Contact, LEA Superintendent, LEA Federal Program Director, EPAC Unit Education Support Monitor, Case Worker, Court Appointed Special Advocate, Juvenile Court representative, etc.) *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

1. Real time coordination and best interest determination will occur between DFCS and the LEA. When determining transportation arrangements, "No cost plans" will be explored first and may include the following: foster parent transports child to school of origin (within 25 miles round trip), foster parent transports child to nearest school transportation pick up location; or LEA will follow existing plan for transporting children with disabilities when the foster child is disabled.
2. Costs will be shared between LEA and DFCS. When determined that it is within a reasonable distance and in the best interest of the child, the LEA will route transportation to the SOO, DFCS will arrange for payment to FPs for transporting more than a 25-mile round trip, or DFCS will utilize existing contracts to provide transportation to the SOO. In some situations, the LEA may charge the federal mileage rate. Mileage will be calculated by the FCL from the FP address to/from the SOO OR from a designated meeting location on the county line to/from the SOO. The FCL will prepare and deliver the invoice to the appropriate DFCS contacts.
3. LEA and DFCS will defer to LEA Director of Student Services and DFCS County Director for final determination of resolution.

B. What steps should an LEA and local child welfare agency take to ensure that transportation is provided immediately, even if they face difficulty reaching agreement on how to pay for additional transportation costs? *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

1. Initial transportation planning will occur between the Case Manager (CM), the Educational Support Monitor (ESM), and the FCL. FPs will be included as appropriate. In case of dispute, the FCL will refer the matter to the LEA's Director of Student Services and the DFCS County Director for a final decision.
2. Daily attendance will not be impacted by transportation disputes between the LEA and DFCS. In accordance with ESEA, the LEA will provide and arrange adequate and appropriate transportation to and from the child's SOO during the resolution process as quickly as possible.
3. If delays are experienced due to driver or vehicle availability, DFCS will ensure transportation is available until a bus can be arranged.

C. The LEA must designate a Foster Care Point of Contact that coordinates with the local child welfare agency. Describe the point of contact's role and responsibilities. *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*



Georgia Department of Education
Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent
"Educating Georgia's Future"

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The LEA Foster Care POC will serve as the liaison that coordinates with local DFCS. This individual will assume responsibility for streamlined communication and collaboration with DFCS staff, including Case Managers and the Education Support Monitor (DFCS POC). Such collaboration will ensure the smooth implementation of provisions outlined in ESSA to include: thoughtful Best Interest Determinations; appropriate and timely transportation plans for those children placed out of the zone of their school of origin; and immediate enrollment and records transfer. In addition, the LEA Foster Care POC will facilitate training for LEA staff with regard to the unique challenges of children in foster care; ensure monitoring of attendance and progress of foster children enrolled in LEA; and ensure effective and confidential data collection and sharing. Finally, the LEA Foster Care POC will ensure that disputes are mediated according to local, state and federal policies.

II. Foster Care Transportation Plan: GUIDING QUESTIONS

A. If a child is placed within the LEA's school attendance area and projected transportation cost are negligible, transportation should be immediately provided without supplemental assistance from the local child welfare agency. If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin, the LEA will provide transportation to the school of origin if:

	YES	NO	N/A
1. The local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the LEA for the cost of such transportation.	YES		
2. The LEA agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation.	YES		
3. The LEA and local child welfare agency agree to share the cost of such transportation.	YES		

Describe the agreement the LEA has made with the local child welfare agency regarding transportation costs. *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

If additional transportation costs are unavoidable, the LEA and DFCS will share transportation costs. DFCS will assume financial responsibility for extraordinary costs such as contracting with transportation companies or paying foster parents to transport farther than a 25-mile round trip. The LEA will assume financial responsibility for costs associated with routing transportation within the county. In some situations, the LEA may charge the federal mileage rate. Mileage will be calculated by the FCL from the FP address to/from the SOO OR from a designated meeting location on the county line to/from the SOO. The FCL will prepare and deliver the invoice to the appropriate DFCS contacts.

B. All LEAs must meet the requirement to provide transportation for children who are in foster care to their schools of origin (*Similar to the McKinney-Vento requirement for students experiencing homelessness*). Does your LEA currently provide transportation services? If no, describe your plan to meet this mandate.

Yes

Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.

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ASSURANCES


By checking the box beside each statement and by affixing my signature to these Assurances, I certify that I have read each and agree to be held accountable for the content of each of the following statements:

- X The LEA will collaborate with state or local child welfare agency to develop and implement clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin when in their best interest will be provided, arranged and funded for the duration of time in foster care.
- X The LEA ensures that children in foster care needing transportation to the school of origin promptly receive such transportation in a cost-effective manner.
- X The LEA ensures that children in foster care remain in the school of origin while any disputes regarding transportation costs are being resolved.
- X The LEA will collaborate with State or local child welfare agency to provide transportation if a child is placed in foster care placement across district, county, or State lines.
- X In accordance to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Fostering Connections Act, the LEA will continue to provide transportation to children that exited foster care for the remainder of the school year, if it is in the best interest of the student.

I am authorized to sign and submit this application on behalf of the applicant. My signature certifies that all information included in the application is accurate. I understand that all information submitted is subject to verification.

Hall County Schools
LEA Name

William Schofield
Printed Name of Superintendent


Signature of Superintendent
(Please sign in blue ink only)

Superintendent
Title

May 19, 2025
Date