FosterEd

Appropriate and Best Uses of
Foster Youth Directory Information by
Local Education Agencies

Background

- Foster youth are children for whom the State is responsible because they have suffered abuse or neglect.

- Foster youth have significantly worse educational outcomes than other at-risk student subgroups.
  - Students in care have the highest dropout rate and lowest graduation rate of any student subgroup
  - Students in care are more likely to miss more school days than their peers

- The LCFF added foster youth to California's Academic Performance Index (API)

- The LCFF made CDE responsible for informing local education agencies (LEAs) which students are in foster care on a weekly basis.

The Challenge

Balancing

The need for district and school site staff to know which students are in foster care so they can provide appropriate services, supports and instruction

with

The need to keep this highly sensitive information confidential

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Questions for Local Education Agencies

1. Who within the LEA should know whether a student is in foster care?

2. How will they receive this information?

3. What is appropriate use of this information?

4. What training should be provided to recipients of this information?

5. How should decisions to these questions be documented and disseminated?

Who within an LEA should know whether a student is in foster care?

District and school site staff who will be better able to provide these students services, supports and instruction.

- District Staff
  - Central Office CALPADS Administrators?
  - Academic Services Officers?
  - AB 490 Foster Youth Liaison?

- School Site Staff
  - School site CALPADS administrators?
  - School site academic services officers?
  - Counselors?
  - Teachers?
  - Enrollment Secretaries?

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How will LEA staff know if a student is in foster care?

- Who will be granted appropriate access to CALPADS?

- How will the data be imported from CALPADS into the LEA's School Information System?

- What assurances can be made that data is accessed by appropriate district and school-site staff?

- Proactive notification?
  - Email
  - Written notice
  - Verbal notice

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What is appropriate use of information related to a student's foster youth status?

Information should only be used to ensure the student receives appropriate services, supports and instruction.

- Under what circumstances should district or school site staff be allowed to share information with:
  - Other district or school site staff?
  - Other students?
  - Non-district employees?

- Under what circumstances should staff be allowed to tell the student that they know he or she is in foster care?

- What processes should be followed in each of the above circumstances?

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What training should staff receive?

- Child welfare system overview: what is it like for a student to be in foster care?

- Common educational challenges facing foster youth

- Strategies, supports and services likely to help foster youth succeed in school

- Information and strategies related to trauma-informed care and instruction

- Training on the LEA's policies with respect to obtaining, using and sharing foster youth directory information

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How should the LEA develop and document their policies?

- Clear, documented policies ensure foster youth's identity is private and shared appropriately

- Developed with input from:
  - County child welfare agency?
  - County probation agency?
  - County office of education?
  - Students in foster care?
  - Caregivers?
  - Other Stakeholders (dependency attorneys, CASAs, Ed rights holders, advocates, etc...)?

- School board resolution?

- School board policy?

Additional Information

For additional information, contact:

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