

- **FOSTER YOUTH BILL OF RIGHTS – EC 48853; 48853.5; 49069.5; 51225.1; 51225.2**

“Foster child” means a child who has been removed from his or her home pursuant to Section 309 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (“WIC”), is the subject of a petition filed under Section 300 or 602 of the WIC, or has been removed from his or her home and is the subject of a petition filed under WIC section 300 or 602.

A foster child who is placed in a licensed children's institution or foster family home shall attend programs operated by the local educational agency in which that licensed children's institution or foster family home is located, unless one of the following applies:

- (1) The pupil is entitled to remain in his or her school of origin;
- (2) The pupil has an individualized education program requiring placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency, or in another local educational agency.
- (3) The parent or guardian, or other person holding the right to make educational decisions for the pupil pursuant to Section 361 or 726 of the WIC or Section 56055 (“educational rights holder”), determines that it is in the best interests of the pupil to be placed in another educational program and has submitted a written statement to the local educational agency that he or she has made that determination. This statement shall include a declaration that the parent, guardian, or educational rights holder is aware of all of the following:
 - (A) The pupil has a right to attend a regular public school in the least restrictive environment. ^[1]_[SEP]
 - (B) The alternate education program is a special education program, if applicable. ^[1]_[SEP]
 - (C) The decision to unilaterally remove the pupil from the regular public school and to place the pupil in an alternate education program may not be financed by the local educational agency. ^[1]_[SEP]
 - (D) Any attempt to seek reimbursement for the alternate education program may be at the expense of the parent, guardian, or educational rights holder. ^[1]_[SEP]

The parent or guardian, or educational rights holder shall first consider placement in the regular public school before deciding to place the foster child in a juvenile court school, a community school, or another alternative educational setting.

A foster child may still be subject to expulsion under applicable law and board policy.

Foster youth are subject to other laws governing the educational placement in a juvenile court school, of a pupil detained in a county juvenile hall, or committed to a county

juvenile ranch, camp, forestry camp, or regional facility, notwithstanding the rights contained in this notice.

Foster children living in emergency shelters (as referenced in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.)), may receive educational services at the emergency shelter as necessary for short periods of time for either of the following reasons:

(1) For health and safety emergencies. ^(L)_(SEP)

(2) To provide temporary, special, and supplementary services to meet the child's unique needs if a decision regarding whether it is in the child's best interests to attend the school of origin cannot be made promptly, it is not practical to transport the child to the school of origin, and the child would otherwise not receive educational services. ^(L)_(SEP) The educational services may be provided at the shelter pending a determination by the educational rights holder regarding the educational placement of the child. ^(L)_(SEP) All educational and school placement decisions shall be made to ensure that the child is placed in the least restrictive educational programs and has access to academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all pupils. In all instances, educational and school placement decisions shall be based on the best interests of the child. ^(L)_(SEP)

CVUSD has designated Miguel Gavillan as the educational liaison for foster children. The role of educational liaison is advisory with respect to placement decisions and determination of school of origin and does not supersede the role of the parent or guardian retaining educational rights, a responsible adult appointed by the court, a surrogate parent or a foster parent exercising their legal rights with respect to the foster child's education. The educational liaison serves the following roles: ^(L)_(SEP)

(3) Ensures and facilitates proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school for foster children; ^(L)_(SEP)

(4) Assists foster children when transferring from one school to another school or from one school district to another school district in ensuring proper transfer of credits, records and grades. ^(L)_(SEP)

(5) When designated by the Superintendent, notifies a foster child's attorney and child welfare agency representative(s) of pending disciplinary proceedings and pending manifestation determination proceedings if the foster child is also eligible to receive special education and related services under the IDEA. ^(L)_(SEP)

At the initial detention or placement by the Juvenile Court, or any subsequent change in placement of a foster child by the Court, the local educational agency serving the child shall allow the foster child to continue his or her education in the school of origin for the

duration of the jurisdiction of the court. If the jurisdiction of the court is terminated prior to the end of the academic year:

- (1) Former foster children in grades kindergarten, or 1 to 8, inclusive, shall be allowed to continue his or her education in the school of origin through the duration of the academic year; ^(L)_(SEP)
- (2) Former foster children in high school shall be allowed to continue his or her education in the school of origin through graduation; ^(L)_(SEP)
- (3) Transportation is not required unless the former foster child has an IEP and the IEP team determines transportation is a necessary related service, required by the unique educational needs of the pupil in order to benefit from their special education program. Transportation may be provided at the local educational agency's discretion. The rights of foster youth do not supersede any other law governing special education for eligible foster children. ^(L)_(SEP)
- (4) To ensure that the foster child has the benefit of matriculating with his or her peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school districts, if the foster child is transitioning between school grade levels, the foster child shall be allowed to continue in the school district of origin in the same attendance area, or, if the foster child is transitioning to a middle school or high school, and the school designated for matriculation is in another school district, to the school designated for matriculation in that school district. ^(L)_(SEP)

In consultation with the foster child and educational rights holder, the educational liaison may recommend that the foster child waive his or her right to attend the school of origin and enroll in a public school within his or her attendance area. The educational liaison's recommendation must be accompanied by a written explanation for the basis of the recommendation and how it serves the foster child's best interests.

- (1) If the educational liaison, foster child and educational rights holder agree it is in the best interest of the foster child to waive his or her right to attend the school of origin and attend the recommended school, the foster child shall immediately be enrolled within the recommended school. ^(L)_(SEP)
- (2) The recommended school shall immediately enroll the foster child regardless of any outstanding fees, fines, textbooks or moneys due to any previous schools of attendance or if the foster child is unable to produce clothing or records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, including proof of immunization, proof of residency or other documentation. ^(L)_(SEP)

Within two business days of the foster child's request for enrollment, the educational liaison for the new school shall contact the school last attended by the foster child to obtain all academic and other records. The last school attended by the foster child shall

provide all required records to the new school regardless of any outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or moneys owed to the school last attended. The educational liaison for the school last attended shall provide a complete copy of the foster child's education record to the new school within two business days of receiving the request.

If any dispute arises as to the school placement of a pupil under this section, the pupil has the right to remain in his or her school of origin, pending resolution of the dispute.

"School of origin" means the school that the foster child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the foster child was last enrolled. If the school the foster child attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which the foster child was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster child attended with which the foster child is connected and that the foster child attended within the immediately preceding 15 months, the educational liaison, in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the foster child and the educational rights holder, shall determine, in the best interests of the foster child, the school that shall be deemed the school of origin.

If the foster child is absent from school due to a decision to change the placement of the foster child made by a court or placing agency, the grades and credits of the foster child will be calculated as of the date the foster child left school and no lowering of grades will occur as a result of the absence of the foster child under these circumstances. If the foster child is absent from school due to a verified court appearance or related court ordered activity, no lowering of his or her grades will occur as a result of the absence of the pupil under these circumstances.

A foster child or homeless youth who transfers between schools any time after the completion of the pupil's second year of high school shall be exempt from all coursework and other graduation requirements adopted by the governing board of the local educational agency that are in addition to the statewide coursework requirements, unless the local educational agency makes a finding that the foster child or homeless youth is reasonably able to complete the local educational agency's graduation requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the pupil's fourth year of high school.

Within 30 days of the foster child's transfer into a school, the local educational agency should determine whether a foster child or homeless youth is reasonably able to complete the local educational agency's graduation requirements within the pupil's fifth year of high school. If the pupil is reasonably able to complete the local educational agency's graduation requirements within a fifth year of high school, the local educational agency shall do all of the following:

- (1) Inform the pupil of his or her option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the local educational agency's graduation requirements. ⁽¹⁾ Inform the pupil, and the educational rights holder, about how remaining in school for a fifth year to complete the

local educational agency's graduation requirements will affect the pupil's ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution. [L] [SEP]

(2) Provide information to the pupil about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges. [L] [SEP]

(3) Permit the pupil to stay in school for a fifth year to complete the local educational agency's graduation requirements upon agreement with the pupil, if the pupil is 18 years of age or older, or, if the pupil is under 18 years of age, upon agreement with the educational rights holder. [L] [SEP]

If the local educational agency fails to provide timely notice of the exemption, the pupil shall be eligible for the exemption, once notified, even if that notification occurs after the termination of the court's jurisdiction of the pupil or after the pupil is no longer considered a homeless youth.

If a foster child or homeless youth is exempt from local graduation requirements pursuant to this section and completes the statewide coursework requirements before the end of his or her fourth year of high school and that pupil would otherwise be entitled to remain in attendance at the school, a school or local educational agency shall not require or request that the pupil graduate before the end of his or her fourth year of high school, nor shall the foster child or homeless youth be required to accept the exemption or be denied enrollment in courses for which they are otherwise eligible.

If a foster child or homeless youth is not exempt from local graduation requirements or has previously declined the exemption pursuant to this section, a local educational agency shall exempt the pupil at any time if an exemption is requested by the pupil and the pupil qualifies for the exemption. The exemption shall apply after termination of the court's jurisdiction or after pupil is no longer considered a homeless youth.

A transfer shall not be requested solely to qualify for an exemption under this section.

The local educational agency shall accept coursework satisfactorily completed by a foster child or homeless youth while attending another public school, a juvenile court school, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency even if the pupil did not complete the entire course and issue that pupil full or partial credit for the coursework completed.

The local educational agency may not require a foster child or homeless youth to retake a course if the pupil has satisfactorily completed the entire course in a public school, a juvenile court school, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency. If the pupil did not complete the entire course, the local educational agency may not require the pupil to retake the portion of the course the pupil completed unless the local educational agency in consultation with the educational rights holder, finds that the pupil is reasonably able

to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the foster child or homeless youth shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the pupil may continue and complete the entire course. The pupil shall not be prevented from taking or retaking a course to meet eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University or University of California.

A complaint of noncompliance with the requirements of this section may be filed with the local educational agency under the Uniform Complaint Procedures set forth in Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. ^(L)_{SEP}