



## FY21 Foster Care Transportation Plan

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**Local Educational Agency (LEA)** Griffin-Spalding County School System

**Superintendent Name** James Smith

**Mailing Address** 216 S. 6th Street

**Physical Address (if different from above)** NA

**City** Griffin **Zip** 30224

**Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) Name** Larry Jones **POC Email** [larry.jones@gscs.org](mailto:larry.jones@gscs.org)

**POC Mailing Address** 234 E. Taylor Street

**City** Griffin **Zip** 30224

**POC Telephone** 770-229-3710 x 10400 **POC Fax** 770-229-3708

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**Superintendent Signature** 7/24/2020  
**Date**

James D. Smith  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Print Name of Superintendent**

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The Georgia Department of Education (Department) 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, the Department 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 the Department's student information system for information sharing and reporting purposes; however, on the local level, LEAs will be notified directly by foster parents, Court Appointed Special Advocate, 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, the Department 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:

**Friday, July 31, 2020**

### **Instructions for submission:**

- After the LEA superintendent signs the assurances, scan the entire document as a PDF and save it as the "FY21 Foster Care Transportation Plan".
- Upload the signed PDF version of the document to the CLIP online portal via the Consolidated Application for FY21.

## FY21 Foster Care Transportation Plan

**NOTE:** In order to answer the questions below, refer to the Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care.

<b>I. Foster Care Transportation Plan: PLANNING</b>						
<b>A.</b>	<p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coordinate transportation with the local child welfare agency.</li> <li>2. Implement steps to be taken if additional costs are incurred.</li> <li>3. Execute the local dispute resolution process.</li> </ol> <p>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.) <i>Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.</i></p> <p>Students in foster care are entitled to immediate transportation to the school where they are to be enrolled. Transportation will be provided when needed to allow foster care students to remain in the school of origin. The school district will coordinate with the child welfare agency to determine cost-effective transportation services necessary for the student to be transported to and from school. If necessary, the school district and local child welfare agency will divide the costs equally. Transportation services may be provided through district transportation, gas vouchers or public means. If transportation is requested, a Transportation Request form should be completed by school staff and forwarded to the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact and the Transportation Director. Any dispute in regard to providing a public education to a child in foster care shall be presented to the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact to be resolved.</p>					
<b>B.</b>	<p>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? <i>Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.</i></p> <p>The LEA and local child welfare agency (LCWA) will work in collaboration to ensure transportation is provided in the most timely, cost-effective manner. The LEA will first attempt to address any transportation needs through the use of local school transportation, then if possible through collaboration with other school systems. If needed, the LEA will work with the LCWA to address other means of transportation identified above. The school district is dedicated to the principle that all eligible children and youth, including students in foster care, who reside within the school district are entitled to a free, appropriate public education. If a dispute is not resolved at the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact level, the dispute will be brought to a committee consisting of the district Deputy Superintendent and Superintendent. If the dispute is not resolved at this level, the dispute will be brought to the Griffin-Spalding County Board of Education in collaboration with the LCWA.</p>					
<b>C.</b>	<p>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. <i>Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.</i></p> <p>The Director of Student Services will serve as the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact. The LEA Foster Care Point of Contact will coordinate with federal, state and/or local welfare agencies to ensure school stability that is in the foster care student's best interest. The Director of Student Services will also coordinate with other districts on issues of transportation and record transfers.</p>					
<b>II. Foster Care Transportation Plan: GUIDING QUESTIONS</b>						
<b>A.</b>	<p>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:</p>					
	<table style="border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none;">YES</td> <td style="border: none;">NO</td> <td style="border: none;">N/A</td> </tr> </table>	YES	NO	N/A		
YES	NO	N/A				





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Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Educating Georgia's Future"

1. The local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the LEA for the cost of such transportation.	No
2. The LEA agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation.	No
3. The LEA and local child welfare agency agree to share the cost of such transportation.	Yes
<p>Describe the agreement the LEA has made with the local child welfare agency regarding transportation costs. <i>Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.</i></p> <p>The LEA and the local child welfare agency agree to work in collaboration on each foster care student case. Both the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact and the local child welfare agency will communicate to determine the best option for transportation.</p>	
B. All LEAs must meet the requirement to provide transportation for children who are in foster care to their schools of origin ( <i>Similar to the McKinney-Vento requirement for students experiencing homelessness</i> ). Does your LEA currently provide transportation services? If no, describe your plan to meet this mandate.	Yes
<p><i>Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.</i></p> <p>The LEA provides transportation.</p>	

**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:

- 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.
- The LEA ensures that children in foster care needing transportation to the school of origin promptly receive such transportation in a cost-effective manner.
- The LEA ensures that children in foster care remain in the school of origin while any disputes regarding transportation costs are being resolved.
- 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.
- 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.

Griffin Spalding County Schools  
LEA Name

James D. Smith  
Printed Name of Superintendent

Superintendent  
Title

*James D. Smith*  
Signature of Superintendent  
(Please sign in blue ink only)

7-24-2020  
Date