

Guide for School District Personnel Conducting BID Meetings

Recommended Best Practices:

- **Remember that school stability is the legally required default school:**

Even if a student is experiencing challenges at school, those are more likely to increase in severity if they are moved schools. The law prioritizes a student remaining in their School of Origin (SOO). A student can ONLY be removed from their SOO after a youth's education rights holder decides it is in their best interests.

- **A BID meeting should be utilized to better inform the education team on the student's needs and how to support them.**

All school staff should receive training on educational rights and resources for students in foster care. This coordination helps ensure that youth are supported, properly informed, and aware of their options. Building staff knowledge reduces the likelihood of miscommunication or unmet needs.

  - To ensure your district's compliance with the law, utilize the Comprehensive Education Toolkit for Youth Who Are Systems Involved (pgs. 9-14) and accompanying tools/resources.

- **Maintain students' privacy.**

Communicate with students privately about meetings rather than through public or classroom announcements.

- **Avoid re-traumatization.**

All staff in attendance should be trauma-informed and trained on working with system-involved youth. The majority of system-involved youth have past trauma, especially from formal meetings/hearings.

- *Trauma-Informed BID Practices:*
  - Appoint a person who will monitor that the student is not becoming overwhelmed/triggered (looking for physical/emotional cues) and call for breaks when needed.
  - Begin meetings by setting a respectful tone and explaining the purpose in youth-friendly language.
  - Ask preferred names/pronouns and use them consistently.
  - Avoid deficit-based language when describing the student.
    - e.g., Do not speak about a student as if they are not in the room. Refrain from disrespectful or isolating language regarding a student's negative attitude or behaviors.
  - Prioritize clear communication and predictability, especially when discussing potential school changes, so that the student can understand what is happening and next steps.
  - Recognize that disengagement or attendance challenges may be responses to instability, not lack of motivation.
    - The meeting should focus on the student's best interest. It is not the time to discuss other issues.
    - Repeatedly encourage the student to engage in the conversation. Alternative ways for students to share their perspective include written statements or an advocate speaking on their behalf.

- **Invite all school staff who have personal knowledge of students:** Foster Youth Liaisons should include all other school personnel who have this personal knowledge, or collect written statements if they cannot attend.

- **Plan for transportation:** Students have a right to transportation to their SOO. ESSA requires every school district and child welfare agency to have a plan to provide, arrange, and fund transportation of youth in foster care to their SOO. A student cannot be transferred out of their SOO due to transportation costs.

- **Provide a written copy of decision** and any follow-up steps that were agreed upon during the meeting to the youth and their education rights holder.

- **Follow up with necessary parties after the meeting,** including the new school, ERH, IEP team, etc.

- **Check in with the student:** double-check that everything that was discussed in the meeting is properly implemented.

We also have a **Guide for Youth** and **Guide for Education Rights Holders Attending a BID** which should be shared with students and their ERH's before the meeting.