

District Leadership Checklist

Reviewing Data and Policies

Supporting Foster Youth



Checklist for District Leadership Reviewing Data and Policies Supporting Foster Youth

Monitoring the ongoing academic, behavioral, and social-emotional well-being of foster youth should be an ongoing process. This checklist uses the term “foster youth” to apply to students that meet the broad definition according to Assembly Bill (AB) 490 (Cal. Educ. Code § 48853.5) to address school stability and related rights, which includes any child who is the subject of a juvenile dependency court petition (Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 300) or a juvenile delinquency court petition (Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 602), whether or not the youth has been removed from their home. For the purpose of the checklist sections that address the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), the definition of foster youth includes any child who is the subject of a juvenile dependency court petition (Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 300) regardless of where they live and any child who is the subject of a juvenile delinquency court petition (Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 602) and who has been removed from his or her home by the court and placed into foster care under a “suitable placement” order.

This checklist includes the following topics: demographic data, AB167/216 state minimum graduation requirements, special education, state required metrics, school of origin, stakeholder engagement, data systems, supports and resources, policy development and review, and LCAP. This document was created for the use of local education agency leadership which includes but is not limited to School Board District Trustees, Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Directors, and Coordinators. Please use what is applicable to your district and add questions as you deem necessary. It is advised that this checklist be used at your discretion to guide conversations about foster youth data, as it provides suggested questions to ask as you monitor progress for this population of students. This document does not constitute or provide legal advice. You should contact an attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular legal issue or question.

This checklist was created in collaboration with the following:

- Bina Lefkovitz, Sacramento County Office of Education, Trustee Area 1
- Cara Onofre, Los Angeles Unified School District, Policy Director, Board District 6
- Donald LaPlante, Downey Unified School District, Trustee Area 4
- Kawena Cole, National Center for Youth Law/FosterEd, Program Manager
- Kelly Gonez, Los Angeles Unified School District, Board Member, District 6
- Kim Kenne, Pasadena Unified School District, Trustee District 1

Note: For non-Yes/No questions, the answer may be recorded in the blank space in place of Yes/No/Unsure

Demographic Data on Foster Youth

	YES	NO	UNSURE
How many foster youth are in our district?			
How many foster youth are also experiencing homelessness?			
How many foster youth are enrolled in comprehensive vs. alternative/continuation schools in our district?			
How many foster youth age 14+ are taking Independent Living Plan classes and have current Transitional Independent Living Plans?			
Do we have data that allows us to break down foster youth by age / grade?			
Do we have data segmented by school?			
Does the data about foster youth in our district reveal that there are clusters of students in certain grades or schools?			
Can we disaggregate data by residential placement type? (ex: Home of parent, group home, placement with relative, foster parent)			
Does disaggregated data vary by grade span to address developmental and academic needs? (ex: primary, middle, secondary)			
Are we able to review data on attendance for foster youth?			
Are we able to review data on chronic absenteeism for foster youth?			
Are we able to review data on the disproportionality of suspension and expulsion rates for foster youth?			
Notes:			

AB 167/216 – Foster youth who change schools after completing 2 years of high school, and cannot reasonably complete the local graduation requirement, are eligible to graduate under the state requirements of 130 credits to graduate.

	YES	NO	UNSURE
How many foster youth that transfer into our school/district/county after their 2 nd year of high school are <u>notified</u> of AB167/216 rights?			
Of those students, how many <u>are found eligible</u> to graduate under AB167/216?			
Of those students, how many do <u>graduate</u> under AB167/216?			
Are protocols in place to assess AB167/216 eligibility, notify students and their ERHs of eligibility, and to prevent over and underqualification?			
Notes:			

Special Education

	YES	NO	UNSURE
How many foster youth are <u>referred</u> for special education assessment each academic year?			
How many foster youth are <u>assessed</u> for special education eligibility each academic year?			
How many foster youth are found <u>eligible</u> for special education services?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many foster youth are eligible under the category Other Health Impairment? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many foster youth are eligible under the category of Emotional Disturbance? 			
How many foster youth who qualify for SPED are in each academic placement type (i.e. SDC vs. RSP vs. NPS)?			
How many foster youth are spending 80% or more of their day in a general education setting?			
Are policies in place to address the need for mental health services vs. special education assessment for foster youth?			
Is there a district education surrogate program, which provides surrogates for foster youth with special needs, or suspected needs, when no ERH is available?			
Notes:			

Demographic Data on State-Required Metrics

	YES	NO	UNSURE
Has a review of the annual and change-over-time data for the previous 3+ academic years been disaggregated for foster youth on state-required metrics in the following areas?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardized test performance 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP test passage (with a score of 3+) 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school graduation rate 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school dropout rate 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic absenteeism 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspensions 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expulsions 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College/Career Preparedness Indicator (CCI) as indicated by a broad course of study including rigorous courses such as honors and advance placement. 			
Has analysis of outcomes for foster youth vs. the general student population been conducted?			
Notes:			

School of Origin (SOO)

	YES	NO	UNSURE
What is the total number of foster youth that transferred in and out of our district?			
What is the number of best interest determinations (BID) facilitated in our district annually?			
How many SOO decisions are being made vs. students enrolling in their school of residence each academic year?			
Are there documented strategies for primary, middle, and high school levels to address mobility?			
Are protocols/policies in place to address the SOO/BID process?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a student in foster care withdraws from my district, there is a process to ensure the education rights holder (ERH) has been informed of the student's right to remain at their school of origin. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My district has a process to ensure that foster youth needing transportation to their school of origin promptly receive such transportation. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My district has a process to ensure short term transportation during the dispute resolution process. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a clear dispute resolution process. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My district allows foster youth to attend their school of origin if a dispute is pending regarding the students' school placement decision. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a student must transfer to a new school, the school changes are coordinated with the school calendar to the extent possible. 			
Notes:			

Stakeholder Engagement

	YES	NO	UNSURE
Is the voice of foster youth leveraged in decision making?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If so, are surveys completed, student advisory groups and/or student foster focus groups convened? 			
Are we engaging stakeholders that have a vested interest in foster youth?			
Are there existing standing meetings to get feedback on an ongoing basis from these stakeholders?			
Notes:			

Data Systems

	YES	NO	UNSURE
Are district staff using the databases available to them for data on foster youth? (i.e. Foster Focus, LA-EPS, SITS, CalPads, CA Dashboard)			
How frequently are these systems used/monitored?			
Who is using and monitoring the systems that are available? (district level and/or site level)			
Notes:			

Supports and Resources

	YES	NO	UNSURE
Are site-level academic supports and resources available for foster youth?			
Are site-level socioemotional counseling, supports, and resources available for foster youth?			
Are district staff trained in Trauma Informed Practices in Schools?			
Are district staff trained in Culturally Responsive Practices in Schools?			
Notes:			

Policies

	YES	NO	UNSURE
Do we have an Education for Foster Youth policy in place? (CSBA AR6173.1)			
Does our Education for Foster Youth policy reflect the latest state and federal legislation?			
Has our Education for Foster Youth policy been reviewed annually (or at LCAP approval) to assess needed updates?			
Does the policy address all of the following?			
• District Foster Youth Liaisons			
• Immediate Enrollment and Identification			
• Transportation to a student's school of origin based on a best interest determination			
• Effect on Absence and Grades			
• Transfer of Coursework and Credits			
• Applicability of Graduation Requirements			
• Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities			
• Notification of Foster youth rights			
• Uniform Complaint Procedure			
• Notice to education rights holders of certain expulsion recommendations?			
Notes:			

**Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Review for
Foster youth Related Goals, Action Steps, and Funding**

Stakeholder Engagement	YES	NO	UNSURE
Does my district/county office drafting committee identify parents, students, and advocates on behalf of foster youth/juvenile justice (Court Schools) students?			
Are the identified stakeholders engaged and participating in the drafting/approval committee?			
Are there district-level policies, data collection and analysis, and MOUs with child welfare or probation?			
Goals and Strategies			
Does our district have general goals specific to foster youth?			
Does the LCAP address those district goals specific to foster youth?			
Was a root cause analysis completed to identify needs, create goals and actions?			
Do the goals and actions listed adequately address the identified needs for foster youth?			
Is there a clear timeline to implement the identified actions?			
Are there strategies for primary, middle, and high school levels?			
Staff			
Are there sufficient staff to fully implement the identified actions?			
Is there hiring and/or assignment, training, and supervision of staff who work with foster youth at school sites?			
LCAP Budget and Actual Expenditures for Actions and Services for Foster youth			
Are we able to revise/increase new year budgeted expenditures as necessary to support all actions/services?			
Are funds being intentionally allocated to address the needs of foster youth vs. going to programs that foster youth can participate in, in addition to the general population?			
With budgetary limits, have innovative ways to use funds to meet the underlying needs of foster youth been considered?			
Have other funding streams, besides LCFF, been identified that can be used for programs, supports, services, and resources specific to foster youth?			
Notes:			