TRANSPORTATION

FOSTER STUDENTS

The following procedures shall apply to ensure that all students who are in foster care and whose foster residence changes during the course of the school year:

1. The child welfare agency should contact the District Foster Child Liaison Shannon Marlin (shannon.marlin@psd150.org, 309-672-6761) and notify her of the change in the location of the foster child’s new residence.

2. The child welfare agency shall cooperate in providing information requested by the District Foster Child Liaison related to whether or not the placement of the foster child is in the best interests of the foster child.

3. The District Foster Child Liaison next determines the placement of the foster child\(^1\). The foster child continues to attend the same school she/he attended (i.e., the school of origin) before the move, unless the District Foster Child Liaison determines that placement is not in the best interests of the foster child. The factors/considerations the District Foster Child Liaison shall consider in making that determination are:
   a. The appropriateness of the current educational setting and proximity of placement;
   b. The preferences of the child;
   c. The preferences of the child’s parent(s) or education decision-maker(s);
   d. The child’s attachment to the school, including meaningful relationships with staff and peers;
   e. The placement of the child’s sibling(s);
   f. The influence of the school climate on the child, including safety;
   g. The availability and quality of the services in the school to meet the child’s educational and social-emotional needs;
   h. The history of school transfers and how they have impacted the child;
   i. How the length of the commute would impact the child, based on the child’s developmental stage; and
   j. Whether the child is an English learner and is receiving language services, and, if so, the availability of those required services in a school other than the school of origin, consistent with Title VI and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA).

Transportation costs may not be considered in determining whether the school placement is not in the foster child’s best interests.

4. The District Foster Child Liaison shall forward her placement determination to the child welfare agency.

5. If there is a disagreement regarding school placement for a child in foster care, the child welfare agency is considered to be the final decision-maker in making the best interest determination. Disagreements regarding placement shall be resolved using the following procedures:

a. If the involved child welfare agency is the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the guardianship administrator or designee is to provide written notification to all parties (the student and the guardian administrator, the parent(s) and his/her legal representative, and the school) of its best interest determination with supporting justification within three business days after making the decision.

i. Any party may challenge the decision within three business days of receiving the determination by providing written notice to DCFS.

ii. If the determination is challenged, DCFS must schedule a meeting within three (3) days of receiving the written challenge. The meeting must take place no later than ten (10) days from the date DCFS received the written challenge. The meeting is to be held at the school of origin. The District must coordinate with DCFS to arrange space for the meeting.

iii. At the meeting, all parties may present facts and statements relevant to the student’s best interests. The DCFS administrator will consider all statements and evidence presented at the meeting and issue a written final determination within three (3) business days. The decision of the DCFS administrator is final.

b. If the involved child welfare agency is not DCFS, once a determination has been made, it may be challenged by any party using the dispute resolution process for a child welfare treatment plan. Disagreements are to be resolved expeditiously. The burden of proof is placed upon the child welfare agency to show that its decision is in the child’s best interest.

6. If the new residence of the foster child is located within the ineligibility area (within 1½ miles from the school), the foster child shall walk to his/her school.

7. If the new residence of the foster child is located outside of the ineligibility area, the District Foster Child Liaison shall arrange for transportation of the foster child using the following procedure:

   a. The District Foster Child Liaison will send an email to the Transportation Department Special Needs Supervisor, with the following information:

      i. Student’s name and new address;

      ii. The name of the school the student is attending;

      iii. The requested start date for transportation from the new residence;

      iv. The funding source for the transportation.

8. Within two working (2) days, the Supervisor will route the student and provide the bus route information and start date back to the District Foster Child Liaison.

9. The District Foster Child Liaison shall provide the transportation plan and start date to the student, the guardian administrator, the parent(s) and his/her legal representative, and the DCFS point of contact.

   a. Any party may challenge the plan within three (3) business days of receiving the plan by providing written notice to the District Foster Child Care Liaison. The District Foster Child Care Liaison must schedule a meeting within three (3)

---

business days after receiving the written challenge. The meeting must take place within ten (10) business days after receiving the written challenge. The District Foster Child Liaison must arrange space for the meeting.
b. The meeting will be led by the Guardian Administrator or designee. The Guardian Administrator or designee shall allow for a complete presentation by all parties of the relevant facts and statements pertaining to the student’s transportation to and from the school of origin. After meeting the presentations and evidence, the Guardian Administrator or designee will issue a written final determination within three business days after the conclusion of the meeting on a form supplied by ISBE. The determination of the Guardian Administrator is final.

Approved:

[Signature]
Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat, Superintendent

Date: November 27, 2017