

MARSHALL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Administrative Procedures

6.15

Effective Date: March 11, 2019

Revised Date:

Section: Students

Subject: Students in Foster Care: Best Interest Determination

Related Policy: 6.505 Students in Foster Care

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) contains key protections for students in foster care that are designed to promote school stability, student success, and collaboration between local education agencies (LEAs) and child welfare agencies.

I. DEFINITIONS

“**Foster Care**” is defined as 24 hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility.

“**School of origin**” is the school in which a child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care. If a child’s foster care placement changes, the school of origin would then be considered the school in which the child was enrolled at the time of the placement change.

II. PROCEDURES

Point of Contact

Upon a student coming into custody or upon a student changing placement while in custody, the Marshall County School System (MCSS) and the DCS Child and Family Team (CFT) will discuss if it is in the best interest of the student to remain in the school of origin. If MCSS and CFT believe that the student should remain in the school of origin, a Best Interest Determination Meeting will be arranged. This is part of the collaborative process of ESSA and must take place.

Best Interest Determination Process

The DCS Education Specialist will notify the point of contact of the MCSS if there is a student who DCS would like to keep in the school of origin, but who will no longer be living in that school’s zone. At that point the school system and DCS can schedule a best interest determination team meeting within 5 school days that includes:

- A. The DCS point of contact (DCS POC);
- B. The MCSS point of contact (MCSS POC);
- C. The educational decision maker for the child or youth; (DCS will contact the birth parent)
- D. The school principal or designee; and
- E. Any other key partners for decision making.

At this meeting, the **Best Interest Determination Form** will be completed.

If the team decides it is in the best interest of the student to remain in the school of origin, then the student will be allowed to remain. Transportation to the school of origin should then be discussed by the team (Reference Transportation to School of Origin Form).

If the team decides it is not in the best interest of the student to remain in the school of origin, MCSS and DCS will enroll the student in the new school. If this school is in the same LEA as the school of origin, the child will be enrolled immediately.

III. ATTACHMENTS

Best Interest Determination Form

Signature on File

Jacob Sorrells, Director of Schools

Signature on File

DCS Representative