

## GUIDELINES FOR THE EDUCATION AND TRANSPORTATION OF FOSTER CHILDREN

When a student no longer lives with a natural parent(s) and/or is displaced, the main concern is the health, safety and well-being of the child. Once safe, the District **must** ascertain how to provide or continue this student's education.

To facilitate this process and to best serve the child and family, the Pupil Services Department, in conjunction with the Guidance Department, assign the Guidance Counselor as the primary point of contact and the Social Worker as the secondary contact. This staff, under the direction of the Pupil Services Supervisor, must ascertain specific information/factors including but not exclusive to:

1. Does the parent(s)/guardian or student need assistance?
2. Is this situation temporary or possibly long-term?
3. Does the parent need assistance contacting the appropriate outside agency? Is that Agency Children and Youth or the local Mental Health Agency? If they have already made contact, who is the contact person/case manager?
4. Establish a line of communication to share relevant information.
5. Is a change of residence eminent? Will this be a case of homelessness, custody order, foster placement, etc., and what will be the role of Children and Youth or the Courts?

Once the Counselor/Social Worker has established the role of the Agency, the existence of a custody order/determination of actual custody arrangements, with specifics of where the child is living and with whom, the Pupil Services Supervisor will advise and make recommendations to the Superintendent and Principal.

Until a (BID) Best Interest Determination can be made, a student would remain in the school of origin and District would be responsible for the education and assume the initial cost until a different Best Interest Determination is made. An MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) would be considered between the LEA and CCYA. If not in the best interest of the student to remain in the school of origin, then the student must immediately be enrolled in a new school and records transferred immediately.

When making a Best Interest Determination (BID), the School Placement Form ([Attachment #1](#)) should be the mechanism through which relevant parties can participate and make a meaningful determine/decision. Participants should include but not be limited to LEA and CCYA representatives, but should include relevant parties such as child (depending on age), foster

parents, biological parents (only if appropriate), teachers, counselors or other meaningful persons in the child's life. Note: If a child has an IEP, Section 504 Plan, or ELL (English Language Learner), then those relevant LEA staff members must also participate in the Best Interest Determination (BID).

Always remember LEA's should work closely with CCYA to tailor processes and procedures in the unique local context for such things as enrollment, transportation agreements, Best Interest Determination, and transfer of records.

In the Morrisville School District, the Pupil Services Department is also responsible for transportation. Although a non-transporting District, we do provide transportation for students with disabilities, health issues and for those students that are either considered homeless or placed in a foster placement. In these cases, the Morrisville School District will honor a guardian's or agency's request to be educated or continued to be educated in the Morrisville Borough School District.

If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to the school of origin, the LEA will provide such transportation if:

- The placing CCYA agrees to reimburse the LEA for the cost of transportation;
- The LEA agrees to pay the cost;
- The LEA and the local CCYA agree to share the cost; or
- Other solutions, such as the sharing of costs between the school district of origin, the school district of residence, and the placing CCYA.

To ensure the educational stability of Foster Care Youth, the Local Education Agency (LEA) and the County Children and Youth Agency may enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). To enter into such a transportation agreement, it is recommended the Memorandum of Understanding between the LEA and the CCYA form ([Attachment #2](#)) be used.

In the interim of any disputes or arrangements being finalized, the Foster Youth's education in his/her school of origin must continue.

Once the specifics of residency have been established, the Assistant the Supervisor of Pupil Services will either arrange transportation via one of our vans, or contract this service through the Bucks County Intermediate Unit #22 or a private contractor using the Transportation Request form ([Attachment #3](#)). If the request is to be educated in another District, the Morrisville School District will work cooperatively with the receiving District to take every step possible to insure the student continues to be educated.