

## DSS Policy and Procedure Guide

Division 03: Child Welfare

Chapter 14: Education

### Item 006: **School Stability**

Suggested changes send to: [DSS PSOA](#) Mailbox

Issued: **August 19, 2015**

References: Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC)  
Section [16501.1\(c\)](#); Education Code [48853.5](#), [49069.5](#),  
[49076 et.seq](#), [56155.5](#); [AB 490](#); [AB 1933](#); California  
Rule of Court [5.651](#); [PPG 03-10-010](#); [CWS 0021](#) form

Complete Revision

Replaces Issue: June 22, 2012

### **Preamble**

Child Welfare Policy and Procedure Guides are meant to be used as tools to relay best practice and staff expectations. It is understood that specific case scenarios may not always align themselves with the stated practices and that at all times what is of paramount importance is the Safety and Well-being of the children we are charged to protect.

### **Policy**

The Department of Social Services (DSS), Child Welfare Division, is committed to supporting the academic success of dependents by ensuring each youth has a “meaningful opportunity to meet the academic achievement standards to which all students are held”. To fulfill this commitment, it is the policy of DSS to ensure collaboration between agencies, assist in the timely transfer of school records, and ensure school stability for all foster youth.

### **Purpose**

To ensure school stability and timely transfer of school records for dependent youth as well as outline the procedures for when a decision needs to be made about a youth’s educational placement.

### **School of Origin**

“School of origin” means the school that the foster youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled. If the school the foster youth attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which they were last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster youth attended within the preceding 15 months and with which the youth is connected, the District Liaison for Foster Youth shall determine, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth, and in the best interests of the foster youth, which school is the school of origin. (Education Code [48853.5](#))

If a youth is unable to remain in their school of origin, then considerable effort should be made to maintain school stability at the new school.

## **Procedure**

### **Educational Placement Changes**

#### School Stability

When considering the initial home placement, and if in the course of managing a case it seems possible that a youth's placement may change, the Case Managing (CM) Social Worker (SW) will consider the following:

- The distance between the home placement and the youth's current school or school of origin; and
- The impact the placement will have on the educational stability of the youth.

#### Efforts to Maintain Youth in School of Origin

When a change of placement must be made (including initial placement), all options shall be explored in an effort to keep the youth in their school of origin, if it is in their best interest, including:

- Placement in the youth's immediate school district, or otherwise in close proximity to the school.
- Placement in which the care provider can transport the youth to their school of origin. Other possibilities for transport may include a parent with unsupervised visits, a community volunteer, school of origin personnel, or bus tokens.
- Utilization of the Educational Travel Reimbursement (ETR) per PPG 03-10-010 to mitigate costs associated with transportation. The CM SW can request ETR through Foster Parent Resources for foster parents and through Home Approval for relatives and Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFM).

#### Early Notification

If the potential for a school change exists (i.e. a seven day notice has been given, a relative placement has been identified, the youth is removed from a parent's care, etc.), the CM SW will:

- Engage the youth's Educational Right's Holder (ERH) and discuss the potential for a school change. The CM SW must document the ERH's awareness of the potential for a school change in Step 1 of the Potential School Change Form (CWS 0021, located in Child Welfare forms in the Education folder).
- If the youth is 10 years or older, engage the youth and discuss the potential for a school change. The CM SW must document the youth's awareness of the potential for a school change in Step 1 of the Potential School Change Form (CWS 0021).

- Send the CWS 0021, “Potential School Change/Notice of School Change Form”, to the School District’s Assembly Bill (AB) 490 Educational Liaison via email. The AB 490 Educational Liaison’s contact information can be found in the last field of Step 1 of the CWS 0021 form. The DSS Educational Liaison’s ([cwseducation@co.fresno.ca.us](mailto:cwseducation@co.fresno.ca.us)) can also be contacted to obtain the current contact listing for the AB 490 Educational Liaison.
- Once the AB 490 Educational Liaison completes the CWS 0021, the AB 490 Educational Liaison will email the completed CWS 0021 to the DSS Educational Liaison’s email box for review.
  - If the AB 490 Educational Liaison is in agreement with a proposed school change, the DSS Educational Liaison will email the completed CWS 0021 to the youth’s attorney, with a cc email to County Counsel, for review and agreement/disagreement.
  - If the AB 490 Educational Liaison is not in agreement with a proposed school change, the DSS Educational Liaison will contact with CM SW to discuss options to maintain the youth in their current school placement. If no plan can be identified, the completed CWS 0021 will be emailed to the youth’s attorney, with a cc email to County Counsel, for review and agreement/disagreement.
- Once the youth’s attorney has reviewed the completed CWS 0021, the youth’s attorney will email the completed CWS 0021 to the CM SW and the DSS Educational Liaisons. The completed CWS 0021 will also include the youth’s attorney’s recommendations regarding school placement change.

### School Placement Change

Once the ERH, youth (10 years and older), AB 490 Educational Liaison and youth’s attorney have submitted their recommendation for potential school change (documented on the CWS 0021), the CM SW will do the following:

- If it was determined that a school change was not necessary and the youth will maintain their current school placement, the CM SW will inform all parties.
- If a school placement change must occur and all parties are in agreement with the school change, the CM SW will file the “Notice of Proposed Educational Placement Change (NPEPC) Report” (located in the green section of CWS/CMS) with the Juvenile Court Clerk and proceed with the school placement recommendation.
- If a school placement change must occur and at least one party is not in agreement with the school change, the CM SW will file the “Notice of Proposed Educational Placement Change (NPEPC) Report”, along with the completed CWS 0021, with the Juvenile Court Clerk and request the Court to make the final school placement decision.
  - All parties must be notified within 24 hours of the filing of the NPEPC report.

- All parties shall receive a copy of the NPEPC and the CWS 0021.
- The youth's attorney and/or ERH may request a hearing within two Court days of receiving the NPEPC by filing a [JV-539](#), "Request for Hearing Regarding Child's Access to Services" or the Court may schedule a hearing of their own accord.
  - If the [JV-539](#) is filed, the Fresno County DSS Court Officer Unit will send the [JV-539](#) via email to the CM SW and their Social Work Supervisor notifying them of the hearing date.
  - Within two Court days from the time the [JV-539](#) was filed, the CM SW must send a hearing packet consisting of the 6141, NPEPC, CWS 0021 and four copies of the [JV-538](#), "Findings and Orders Regarding Transfer from School of Origin" to the Fresno County DSS Court Officer Unit.
  - The youth must remain in their school of origin pending the hearing.
    - ✓ If the Court is in agreement with the school placement change, proceed with the school placement change.
    - ✓ If the Court is not in agreement with the school placement change, the youth must not change their school placement without further approval from the Court.

### Facilitating a School Change

Once the school placement change has been approved, whether by all parties or by order of the Court, the CM SW must email one of the following to the DSS Education Liaisons email box:

- The completed CWS 0021 which documents all parties being in agreement with the school change; or
- The completed CWS 0021 and Court ruling documenting the school change can occur to the DSS Education Liaisons email box.

Once received, the DSS Education Liaisons will:

- Email the completed CWS 0021 to the current school district's AB 490 Educational Liaison;
- Email the completed CWS 0021 to the new school district's AB 490 Educational Liaison (if the youth is changing school districts; otherwise, the current school district's AB 490 Educational Liaison will be notified the school change within their district has been approved).

Additionally, the DSS Education Liaison Unit will update the "education" section of CWS/CMS to reflect the change in school placement.