

# Technical Assistance | CPR Item 17—Foster Care

## 17.1 LEA Foster Care Liaison

### A. Name/title of liaison.

Please type in the name of the district's Foster Care Liaison.

### B. Ensure contact information on OSPI Foster Care website is accurate.

The name provided for 17.1.A must match the OSPI [Foster Care Liaison database](#). To update the contact information for your district, please fill out this [survey](#).

## 17.2 Collaboration with the local Child Welfare Agency

[Elementary and Secondary Education Act \(ESEA\)](#) requires all LEAs to “develop and implement clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin when in their best interest will be provided, arranged, and funded for the duration of the time in foster care...” (Section III2(c)(5)(B).

[RCW 28A.225.360](#) requires school districts to collaborate with DCYF.

### A. Signed copy of DCYF's Regional Education Agreement developed in collaboration with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) or the equivalent agreement approved by OSPI. *The Regional Education Agreement must be signed by both the LEA and DCYF.*

The Regional Education Agreement (REA) was written by both OSPI and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), and vetted by our respective Assistant Attorneys General and federal partners to ensure that it meets compliance requirements.

### ***What if I know we signed the Regional Education Agreement, but I just can't find it?***

Contact your region's [DCYF Ed Lead](#) or [richard.morgan@k12.wa.us](mailto:richard.morgan@k12.wa.us) and ask for a copy. More information can be found on [DCYF's REA page](#).

### ***What if we have never signed a Regional Education Agreement or we're not sure if we have?***



Check the REA master list on [DCYF's REA page](#). If there is no agreement listed for your district, please complete steps 1—4 below.

**If there is not an REA for your district:**

1. Complete a "[Contractor Information Form](#)"
  - Please specify the name and contact information of the "authorized signer." **This person must have authority to sign district contracts.**
  - If the REA should be sent to someone other than the authorized signer, please include that person's name and contact information.
2. Sign, scan and email the Contractor Update Form to Rick Morgan at [richard.morgan@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:richard.morgan@dcyf.wa.gov).
3. **DCYF will generate an REA** and send it to the authorized signer/contact person. Here's a [sample of the REA](#) you will receive.
4. Once all signatures are obtained (School District, DCYF Regional Administrator and DCYF Contracts and Procurement Office), DCYF will send you a copy. **This signed REA will meet the requirement for CPR Item 17.2.A.**

**B. Submit a copy of the district's CEDARS Foster Care Report.**

[Please review these instructions for running this report.](#)

- Scan and submit this report for compliance on this item.

**C. Evidence that the LEA has collaborated with child welfare. (If CEDARS report as submitted for 17.2.B indicates no students then this item is not applicable.)**

Please provide evidence demonstrating communication with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) or with tribal/federal child welfare. Examples include emails between caseworkers and schools; notifications sent to a caseworker re: an IEP meeting or conference, phone log of conversations with caseworkers around best interest determinations or setting up transportation for a student; meeting agenda or minutes showing collaboration with DCYF on school training; or regional foster care liaison meeting with DCYF in attendance.



***We have evidence of communication with other foster care organizations, e.g. Treehouse, Fostering Together, CASA, etc. Will that meet the requirements for 17.2.B?***

No. Although it's commendable that the district is working with these other organizations, the law calls for collaboration specifically with child welfare (DCYF, Tribal Child Welfare).

***What if we only have a few students in foster care and haven't had any communication with DCYF?***

The foster care provisions in ESSA put a great deal of emphasis on collaboration between school districts and child welfare to ensure educational stability and improved outcomes for children in foster care [ESEA Section 1112(c)(5)(B), ESEA Section 1111(g)(1)(E)(iii)]. In addition, state law [RCW74.13.560](#) requires collaboration between child welfare and school districts "to maximize the educational continuity and achievement for children in out-of-home care."

It's possible there are only a few students in foster care in your district and they're doing well. Even so, the district and DCYF still need to communicate. The district should be providing report cards, attendance notifications and other correspondence to child welfare on a regular basis. Please reach out to your region's [DCYF Education Lead](#); the designated contact for schools. You may want to set up a training for staff related to foster care or mandated reporting. DCYF is happy to provide that training. Here's an excerpt from the [U.S. Department of Education's Non-Regulatory Guidance](#):

***"How can child welfare and educational agencies work collaboratively to raise awareness and improve staff capacity to meet the unique educational needs of children in foster care?"***

*Children and youth in foster care are often exposed to a multitude of challenges throughout their childhood, including homelessness, domestic violence, abuse and neglect, chronic poverty, and other adverse childhood experiences. In addition, being separated from their families, even for a short time, is disruptive and potentially traumatizing, with damaging effects that may impact social and emotional development. **LEAs should collaborate with child welfare and other relevant agencies to ensure that all school staff are sensitive to the complex needs of foster youth, are informed about the impact that trauma has on a child's ability to learn, and that the appropriate interventions and strategies are in place to support them to succeed in school.** Agencies may consider opportunities to cross-train both child welfare agency and education staff on the importance of educational stability for children in foster care. Agencies may provide training to school staff including principals, teachers,*



*school counselors, school social workers, and school enrollment personnel about the needs of children in foster care and background information about the child welfare system. Possible areas for training include understanding the importance of maintaining children in their schools of origin, understanding the process and factors involved in making a best interest determination, coordinating transportation plans, protecting student privacy, and maintaining accurate education records for children in foster care.”*

## 17.3 Dispute Resolution

**A. A statement ensuring that the LEA “has read and will follow the OSPI Foster Care Dispute Resolution Process.”**

Please review the OSPI [Foster Care Education Program: Dispute Resolution Process](#), and then submit a statement that includes the verbiage “has read and will follow the OSPI Foster Care Dispute Resolution Process.”

