



MY GUIDE TO

School of Origin (SOO) & Best-Interest Determination (BID)

FOR STUDENTS & EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS HOLDERS

All school districts must allow students involved in the foster care system who live in out-of-home placement to continue to attend their school of origin, even if they move to a placement outside the school's attendance boundaries, as long as they have an open court case.



What does this mean for me?

School stability means you can stay enrolled in any school you attended in the last 15 months, even if you move. You are also eligible for transportation assistance.

School of origin would include:

- The school the student attended when removed from parents
- The school the student most recently attended
- Any school the student attended in the past 15 months, that the student has a substantial connection
- Non-public schools, magnet schools and other special education placements



When a placement change is about to occur (or has occurred on an emergency basis), Specialized Student Services Counselors and district/school foster youth liaisons should work with the DCFS Social Worker to help the student remain at the school of origin unless the student's Education Rights Holder (ERH)* determines that it would be in the student's best interest to change schools.

**ERH can be a student's biological parent, relative caregiver, foster parent, or Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).*

Factors to consider:

- Student preference
- Parent or ERH preference
- Student's attachment to school (including meaningful relationships with staff & peers)
- Placement of student's sibling(s)
- Influence of the school climate on the student (including safety)
- Availability and quality of services in the school to meet the student's education and socio-emotional needs
- History of school transfers and its effect on the student
- The length/time of the commute (based on the student's developmental stage)

How do I advocate for myself?

If you do not agree with the school your student is attending under the School of Origin or School of Residence, you can ask the school for the Dispute Resolution Process. The student will remain in the school chosen until the dispute is resolved. For questions or assistance with a dispute resolution, contact the school liaison.