

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Education Stability for Students in Foster Care

Accounting for Education in Placement Decisions:

- ◆ The Department of Social Services (DSS) has to think about how a change in placement could affect a child's progress in school
- ◆ When changing a foster child's placement, a child welfare agency should try to find one close to the child's current school

3 Additional Supports and Opportunities

- ◆ Children in foster care may be eligible for a variety of fee waivers, tutoring, and additional support to help them succeed in school and participate fully in school activities

Meals: Children in foster care can automatically receive free school breakfast and lunch

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Choice of School & Transportation

Youth in foster care have **the choice** to attend:

1. The 'school of origin,' which means the last school the child went to or the last school the student attended before their placement changed .
- OR**
2. The local school, which means the school that other children living in the same area attend .
- ▶ If a child in foster care attends the school of origin, he or she must be given **free** transportation even if the school is out of the local school zone or district
 - ▶ The decision about which school the child attends should be based on the child's best interests

Higher Education for Students in Foster Care

- ◆ Maryland public college tuition waiver for bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, and vocational certificates for youth who get their GED or diploma while in foster care or are adopted or placed into guardianship after their 13th birthday
- ◆ **Youth who are or were in foster care at age 18 are eligible for Education Training Vouchers (ETV) to help pay for further education**

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Immediate and Appropriate Enrollment

Students in foster care have the right to enroll in class and participate in school activities **immediately** even if they lack

- ◆ Immunization records, school records, birth certificate, proof of residence, etc.;

A child is considered "enrolled" when s/he is in classes and participating fully in school activities

- ▶ After enrolling in a child foster care, the child's new school must get records from the school the child previously attended. DSS should help with this process.

Resources

- ◆ ABA Center on Children and the Law: Legal Center for Foster Care and Education
http://americanbar.org/groups/child_law/projects_initiatives/education.html
- ◆ Fostering Connections
www.fosteringconnections.org
- ◆ Public Justice Center
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