

VISTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Instruction

BOARD POLICY NO. 6173.1: EDUCATION FOR FOSTER YOUTH

The Governing Board recognizes that foster youth may face significant barriers to achieving academic success due to their family circumstances, disruption to their educational program, and their emotional, social, and other health needs. To enable such students to achieve state and district academic standards, the Superintendent or designee shall provide them with full access to the district's educational program and implement strategies identified as necessary for the improvement of the academic achievement of foster youth in the district's local control and accountability plan (LCAP).

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that placement decisions for foster youth are based on the students' best interests as defined in law and administrative regulation. To that end, he/she shall designate a staff person as the district liaison for foster youth to help facilitate the enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth.

The Superintendent or designee and district foster care liaison shall ensure that all appropriate staff, including, but not limited to, each principal, school registrar, and attendance clerk, receive training regarding the enrollment and placement and transfer of foster youth and other related rights.

The Board desires to provide foster youth with a safe, positive learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and that promotes students' self-esteem and academic achievement. The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies to build a foster youth's feeling of connectedness with his/her school, including, but not limited to, strategies that promote positive discipline and conflict resolution, the development of resiliency and interpersonal skills, and the involvement of foster parents, group home administrators, and/or other caretakers in school programs and activities.

To address the needs of foster youth and help ensure the maximum utilization of available funds, the Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with local agencies and officials including, but not limited to, the county placing agency, social services, probation officers, and juvenile court officers. The Superintendent or designee shall explore the feasibility of entering into agreements with these groups to coordinate services and protect the rights of foster youth.

At least annually and in accordance with the established timelines, the Superintendent or designee shall report to the Board on the outcomes for foster youth regarding the goals and specific actions identified in the LCAP, including, but not limited to, school attendance, student achievement test results, promotion and retention rates by grade level, graduation rates, and suspension/expulsion rates. As necessary, evaluation data shall be used to determine and recommend revisions to the LCAP for improving or increasing services for foster youth.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

32228-32228.5 *Student safety and violence prevention*

42238.01-42238.07 *Local control funding formula*

42920-42925 *Foster children educational services*

48645-48646 *Juvenile court schools*

48850-48859 *Educational placement of students residing in licensed children's institutions*

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48915.5 Suspension and expulsion; students with disabilities, including foster youth
48918.1 Notice of expulsion hearing for foster youth
49061 Student records
49069.5 Foster care students, transfer of records
49076 Access to student records
51225.1 Exemption from district graduation requirements
51225.2 Pupil in foster care defined; acceptance of coursework, credits, retaking of course
51225.3 High school graduation
52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan
56055 Rights of foster parents in special education
60851 High school exit examination
60851.5 Suspension of high school exit examination

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

1522.41 Training and certification of group home administrators
1529.2 Training of licensed foster parents
120341 Foster youth: school placement: immunization records

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

300 Children subject to jurisdiction
309 Investigation and release of child
317 Appointment of legal counsel
361 Limitations on parental or guardian control
366.27 Educational decision by relative providing living arrangements
602 Minors violating law; ward of court
726 Limitations on parental or guardian control
727 Order of care, ward of court
16000-16014 Foster care placement
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1415 Procedural safeguards; placement in alternative educational setting
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29
794 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42
670-679b Federal assistance for foster care programs
11431-11435 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Educating Foster Youth: Best Practices and Board Considerations, Policy Brief, March 2008

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

Mythbusting: Breaking Down Confidentiality and Decision-Making Barriers to Meet the Education Needs of Children in Foster Care, 2005

CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL

Partial Credit Model Policy and Practice Recommendations

CITIES, COUNTIES AND SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PUBLICATIONS

Our Children: Emancipating Foster Youth, A Community Action Guide

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

American Bar Association: <http://www.americanbar.org>

California Child Welfare Council: <http://www.chhs.ca.gov/Pages/CACChildWelfareCouncil.aspx>

California Department of Education, Foster Youth Services: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy>

California Department of Social Services, Foster Youth Ombudsman Office:

<http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov>

California Youth Connection: <http://www.cal-youthconn.org/site/cyc>

Cities, Counties and Schools Partnership: <http://www.ccspartnership.org>

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