

- ☐ Board Presentation
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- ☐ Action Agenda
- ☐ Discussion Agenda
- ☐ Confidential Agenda
- ☐ Information Item
- ☐ Announcement

**To: Dr. Jerry Oates, Superintendent**

**From: Meredith Lloyd, School Counselor Specialist**

**Date: July 19, 2022**

**Re: Interagency Agreement - ESSA Transportation Plan**

**Background Information:**

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the Public School Units (PSU), in collaboration with the Local Child Welfare Agency (CWA), to ensure transportation procedures are in place that outline the arrangement and funding of transportation when needed for children in Foster Care. The Every Student Succeeds Act requires the PSU and CWA agencies *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.* The agreement is designed to outline the funding responsibilities for additional costs incurred in transporting students.

**Current Status:**

Children and youth in foster care experience higher levels of home and school instability than their peers. The Every Student Succeeds Act seeks to reduce potential instability by requiring the Public School Unit and Local Child Welfare Agency promptly address transportation needs for students in Foster Care. The agreement currently exists to identify agency contacts, notification expectations for Best Interest Determination meetings, the provision of transportation services, and a dispute resolution process.

**Recommendation:**

Revisions to the previous agreement included the agency contact information. It is recommended that the agreement be approved with the current revisions in order to effectively continue the ESSA transportation requirements for students in Foster Care.

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## INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT – SY22-23

### Transportation Plan to Ensure School Stability for Students in Foster Care

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#### **Parties to the Agreement:**

Public School Unit (PSU): Brunswick County Board of Education

- ESSA Point of Contact: **Meredith Lloyd 910-782-5065**
- Transportation Office Contact: **Lloyd Willis 910-756-6998**
- Other: **Sherri Graham 910-756-6998**

Local Child Welfare Agency (CWA): Brunswick County Department of Social Services (Names may change)

- ESSA Point of Contact: **Naomie Kent 910-253-2105, Jacki Johnson 910-253-2112, & George Woodward 910-253-2126**
- Child Welfare Agency Director **Catherine Lytch 910-253-2113**
- Other: **Heather Patterson 910-253-2080 or Richard Ohmer 910-253-2195**

#### **Notification to PSU of Best Interest Decision and Identifying Students Who Need Transportation**

**Identification of Students in Foster Care:** The CWA will identify for the PSU when a child is attending or is to be enrolled at the PSU and is placed in foster care or changes a living placement while in foster care.

**Request to Participate in Best Interest Determination:** The CWA notifies the PSU immediately upon learning that a student attending the PSU has been placed in care or will be moved to a new home placement that is located outside the PSU attendance area and a best interest decision must be made.

CWA will provide enrollment form to ESSA point of contact within one (1) day of placement or placement change for a child in foster care.

- Email the PSU TEAM (Meredith Lloyd, Lloyd Willis & Sherri Graham) and deliver Foster Care Notification of Placement Change Form (DSS 5133) to Meredith Lloyd at the Board of Education Building within 24 hours of custody or change in placement.
- The CWA will schedule and notify the PSU of the Best Interest Determination Meeting within three (3) working days, unless policy exception applies.
- If policy exception applies, CWA will inform PSU that BID exception applies.

**Notice of Final Best Interest Decision:** If the team decides at the BID meeting that it is in a student's best interest to remain in his/her school of origin after changing foster care placement to a residence outside the home school district, the CWA and the PSU will collaborate under the agreement terms and procedures to establish the most safe and efficient transportation procedures available for the student.

#### **Definitions and Scope**

The parties agree to the following definitions as part of this agreement:

- PPAT – Permanency Planning Action Team
- BID – Best Interest Determination
- POC – Point of Contact
- ES – Educational Services
- SOC - School of Origin
- ESSA – Every Student Succeeds Act

## **Duration of Transportation**

1. Transportation will be provided for the duration of the child's time in foster care as long as it continues to be in the child's best interest.
2. If a child exits foster care before the end of a school year, the transportation arrangement will be maintained through the end of the school year or school break to maintain the child's educational stability if it is decided that it is in the child's best interest.

## **Preschool Students within the PSU**

Transportation needs of preschool students within the PSU will be addressed as follows:

- Brunswick County Board of Education only offers the Preschool Program for Exceptional Children's (EC) program.
- Best Interest Determination meeting will be held to determine if child should remain in current preschool site.
- If it is decided that the child should remain in current preschool, CWA will work with foster parents to arrange transportation.
- If foster parent is unable to transport child to and/or from preschool, PSU and CWA will work together to develop a transportation plan.

## **How Transportation Will Be Provided, Arranged, and Funded**

### **General**

1. The PSU will assess whether the child is entitled to transportation services under another entitlement, including experiencing homelessness or as a related service under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The PSU will provide transportation funded by the PSU if the student is eligible under the McKinney-Vento Act or the IDEA.
2. The fact that an PSU does not provide transportation for children who are not in foster care does not exempt the PSU from ensuring transportation to the child(ren's) school of origin when in their best interest.
3. The PSU will have 5 business days from the BID meeting to put transportation in place. During those 5 business days, the CWA will provide transportation during the interim.

### **No- or Low-Cost Options**

1. Transportation options will be discussed in the BID meeting. If it is decided that the PSU will transport the child to and from school, Brunswick County Board of Education – Transportation Department will examine existing transportation options available for the student, including incorporating the student into an existing bus route, modifying an existing bus route or other no-or low-cost options.

### **“Additional Costs”**

1. The parties will assess whether the child's transportation expenses may be covered by other state or local funds.
2. If the student is eligible for Title IV-E funds, the CWA will seek reimbursement for the allowable portion of those transportation costs.
3. The CWA will assess whether resources are available for foster parents to provide transportation with mileage reimbursement or other adult ride share to PSU or to a stop on an PSU existing route; provision of bus passes or public transportation vouchers; contract with private transportation service.
4. Other options as identified by the parties.

If remaining costs cannot be addressed above or through other cost-effective solution, one of the following options must be implemented:

☐ Child welfare agency agrees to pay additional costs.

☐ PSU agrees to pay additional costs.

☒ The CWA and PSU will share the additional costs in the following way.

Brunswick County Board of Education Transportation Department will pay and provide transportation if CWA is unable to make other arrangements. Brunswick County Schools will submit monthly invoice for half of the monthly transportation cost to Brunswick County Department of Social Services for children in the Department's custody and who are being transported to and from a school outside of their home school district by the PSU.

Once transportation arrangements have been made by the PSU, the PSU transportation coordinator will email DSS Director of the estimated daily miles, rate, and number of school days.

PSU POC will inform CWA POC's once transportation arrangements have been made and start date.

### Resolving Disputes

1. If the PSU and CWA cannot resolve a dispute about transportation costs, the following mechanism will be used, and these steps will be taken to ensure prompt School of Origin transportation: PSU will provide transportation if other options are not available.
  - \* PSU POC and CWA POC will inform DSS Director and School Superintendent or their Designees of the dispute. DSS Director and Superintendent will meet to resolve dispute.
  - \* If Superintendent and DSS Director are unable to reach an agreement, the issue will be brought before the state to resolve conflict.
  - DSS Director will contact DHHS DSS Director
  - Superintendent will contact North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
2. While a dispute is pending, the PSU must ensure transportation is provided or arranged for the child.

### Other Considerations

**How Parties Will Coordinate when other School Districts are Involved:**


- Brunswick DSS will collaborate with other school districts to ensure that the child's needs are met.

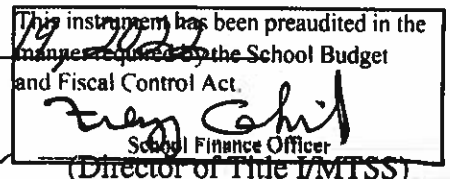
**How this Agreement Applies to Other Child Welfare Agencies with Students in the PSU:**

**PSU will collaborate with CWA who has custody of the child when transportation is needed.**

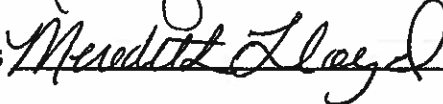
These transportation procedures were agreed to on the following date: July 17, 2013

Authorized Signature for Brunswick County Schools





Authorized Signature for Brunswick County Schools



(Foster Care Lead)

Authorized Signature for Brunswick County Department of Social Services

