

## FY21 Foster Care Transportation Plan

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Mountain Education Charter High School

Superintendent Name Wayne Lovell

Mailing Address 1963 Tom Bell Road

Physical Address (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_


City Cleveland, GA Zip 30528

Foster Care Point of  
Contact (POC) Name Callie Wood POC Email callie.wood@mymec.org

POC Mailing Address 1963 Tom Bell Road

City Cleveland, GA Zip 30528

POC Telephone 706-219-4664 POC Fax 706-219-4665

  
Superintendent Signature

6/15/2020

Date

C WAYNE LOVELL  
Print Name of Superintendent

## FY21 Foster Care Transportation Plan

The Georgia Department of Education (Department) is required to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care. (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(E)). In coordination with state and tribal child welfare agencies, the Department must ensure that its LEAs implement the Title I educational stability requirements for children in foster care, including ensuring that:

- A child in foster care remains in his or her school of origin, unless it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in that child's best interest;
- If it is not in the child's best interest to stay in his or her school of origin, the child is immediately enrolled in the new school even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment; and,
- That the new (enrolling) school immediately contacts the school of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records. (ESEA section 1111(g)(1)(E)(i)-(iii)). In fulfilling this role, the SEA should coordinate with the state or tribal child welfare agency to develop and disseminate uniform guidelines for implementing the Title I educational stability provisions. Developing uniform statewide policies and procedures for ensuring educational stability for children in foster care, as many States have already done under the Fostering Connections Act, will facilitate successful implementation at the local level. This is particularly important given the shared agency responsibility for educational stability under Title I and the Fostering Connections Act, and because a single LEA or local child welfare agency will likely have to collaborate with multiple partner agencies in implementing these provisions.

Additionally, the SEA must conduct regular monitoring and oversight to guarantee appropriate implementation of these provisions at the local level. (See 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.331(d), 200.328(a); 34 C.F.R. § 76.770).

On the state level, the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS), which houses the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) periodically sends a list of children in foster care that are flagged in the Department's student information system for information sharing and reporting purposes; however, on the local level, LEAs will be notified directly by foster parents, Court Appointed Special Advocate, DFCS case workers or Education Support Monitors (ESM), within the Educational Programming, Assessment and Consultation (EPAC) unit of DFCS. Once identified, LEAs must implement its plan to ensure educational stability for children in care. For the best interest of the children in care, LEAs should follow all mandated regulations under FERPA and keep the status of these children confidential.

As a result, the Department is requiring all LEAs, including virtual schools and charter schools that function as an LEA, to complete a Foster Care Transportation Plan. The plan should be completed in addition to the development and implementation of written transportation procedures and the identification of a Foster Care Point of Contact. Please complete this plan and return it by:

**Friday, July 31, 2020**

### Instructions for submission:

- After the LEA superintendent signs the assurances, scan the entire document as a PDF and save it as the "FY21 Foster Care Transportation Plan".
- Upload the signed PDF version of the document to the CLIP online portal via the Consolidated Application for FY21.



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**NOTE:** In order to answer the questions below, refer to the [Non-Regulatory](#)

[Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care.](#)

### I. Foster Care Transportation Plan: PLANNING

A. The LEA's role is to have a transportation plan in place for children in foster care to their school of origin. Describe your plan to:

1. Coordinate transportation with the local child welfare agency.
2. Implement steps to be taken if additional costs are incurred.
3. Execute the local dispute resolution process.

Include the roles of key players (e.g. LEA Foster Care Point of Contact, LEA Superintendent, LEA Federal Program Director, EPAC Unit Education Support Monitor, Case Worker, Court Appointed Special Advocate, Juvenile Court representative, etc.) *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

The DFCS Foster Care Supervisor will notify the LEA Foster Care POC of any child entering foster care and will make necessary requests for transportation. Upon determination that it is in the best interest of the child to remain in school of origin, the LEA Foster Care POC will coordinate with the local DFCS agency, Education Support Monitor POC, Foster Parents, & Court Appointed Special Advocates when applicable. If transportation is requested, all no cost or minimal cost plans will be explored first.

B. What steps should an LEA and local child welfare agency take to ensure that transportation is provided immediately, even if they face difficulty reaching agreement on how to pay for additional transportation costs? *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

LEA and DFCS will work cooperatively to ensure that transportation is not a barrier to the educational stability of children in foster care. To that end, the partners will follow the steps outlined below if they face difficulty reaching an agreement on how to pay for additional transportation costs:

1. As outlined in Section A, it is pre-determined that DFCS will assume financial responsibility for costs associated with reimbursing foster parents for travel or the cost of contracting with local transportation companies.
2. Initial transportation planning will occur at the lowest level and may include other key players. Disputes will be forwarded to the LEA Federal Program Director and DFCS County Director for resolution.
3. Every effort will be made by the LEA and DFCS to avoid disrupting the daily attendance of students in foster care due to transportation disputes. In accordance with ESEA section 1112(c)(5)(B)(i), the LEA will provide or arrange for adequate and appropriate transport

C. The LEA must designate a Foster Care Point of Contact that coordinates with the local child welfare agency. Describe the point of contact's role and responsibilities. *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

The LEA Foster Care POC will collaborate with local DFCS and other key players to ensure the smooth implementation of the provisions outlined in ESSA to include: best interest determinations, appropriate and timely transportation plans, managing disputes, training for LEA staff with regards to the unique



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Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent  
"Ensuring a bright future for every child"

challenges of children in foster care, and ensuring the monitoring of attendance and progress of foster children enrolled in the LEA.

### II. Foster Care Transportation Plan: GUIDING QUESTIONS

A. If a child is placed within the LEA's school attendance area and projected transportation cost are negligible, transportation should be immediately provided without supplemental assistance from the local child welfare agency. If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin, the LEA will provide transportation to the school of origin if:

	YES	NO	N/A
1. The local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the LEA for the cost of such transportation.	Yes		
2. The LEA agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation.	Yes		
3. The LEA and local child welfare agency agree to share the cost of such transportation.	Yes		

Describe the agreement the LEA has made with the local child welfare agency regarding transportation costs. *Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

MECHS has reached out to our Local DFCS agency. They are aware of our system and our current needs. MECHS offers gas cards to all students. Students in need of assistance will receive these accommodations. Further accommodations may require the needs of our local child welfare agency, of which they are aware and willing to help contribute services.

B. All LEAs must meet the requirement to provide transportation for children who are in foster care to their schools of origin (*Similar to the McKinney-Vento requirement for students experiencing homelessness*). Does your LEA currently provide transportation services? If no, describe your plan to meet this mandate.

No

*Please limit the response to 1,000 characters.*

Mountain Education Charter High School does not have a bus system/transportation system. However, a gas card system is in place and any student in need has access to these cards. As well, if a student does not have a vehicle, then steps are made to utilize the public bus system, taxi services, etc.



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### ASSURANCES

By checking the box beside each statement and by affixing my signature to these Assurances, I certify that I have read each and agree to be held accountable for the content of each of the following statements:

- ☒ The LEA will collaborate with state or local child welfare agency 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 time in foster care.
- ☒ The LEA ensures that children in foster care needing transportation to the school of origin promptly receive such transportation in a cost-effective manner.
- ☒ The LEA ensures that children in foster care remain in the school of origin while any disputes regarding transportation costs are being resolved.
- ☒ The LEA will collaborate with State or local child welfare agency to provide transportation if a child is placed in foster care placement across district, county, or State lines.
- ☒ In accordance to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Fostering Connections Act, the LEA will continue to provide transportation to children that exited foster care for the remainder of the school year, if it is in the best interest of the student.

I am authorized to sign and submit this application on behalf of the applicant. My signature certifies that all information included in the application is accurate. I understand that all information submitted is subject to verification.

Mountain Education Charter  
LEA Name

C. WAYNE LOVELL  
Printed Name of Superintendent

Superintendent  
Title

C. Wayne Lovell  
Signature of Superintendent  
(Please sign in blue ink only)

6/15/2020  
Date