# Foster Care and Educational Stability

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that students in foster care remain in their school of origin whenever it is in their best interest. In order to ensure compliance, school districts should be aware of the following:

Best Interest Determination Meeting

* When a student enters into foster care and their school of origin changes, the school should work with the Department of Children’s Services (DCS) to host a Best Interest Determination (BID) meeting to determine if it is in the student’s best interest to remain in their school of origin or enroll in the new school.
* **This meeting should occur within five days of notification that a student has entered foster care.**

Transportation

* If after the BID meeting it is determined that the student will remain in their school of origin, the school system should work with DCS to determine how to provide transportation for the student to their school of origin.
* Transportation should be arranged within five days of the BID meeting.

Documentation

* All districts are required to have transportation procedures in place that specify the process for ensuring educational stability for children in foster care, and these procedures should be uploaded in ePlan.

Coding

* The DCS provides to the Tennessee Department of Education’s office of school nutrition a list of students in foster care.
* The office of school nutrition provides this list to each district nutrition supervisor via email.
* The foster care point of contact for each district (or other designated personnel) must ensure that students in foster care are coded as “FOSO1” in the district’s student information system and in EIS.
  + Students in foster care should be coded as “J-Direct Cert.”

**Contact Information**

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| **Regions** | * Northwest * Southwest * MNPS | * Mid-Cumberland   (except MNPS)   * Upper Cumberland * South Central | * First * East * Southeast |
| **Contact Information** | Erin Christian  [Erin.Christian@tn.gov](mailto:Erin.Christian@tn.gov)  (901) 504-9627 | Jackie Jacobson  [Jackie.jacobson@tn.gov](mailto:Jackie.jacobson@tn.gov)  (615) 390-4549 | Daniel Froemel  [Daniel.Froemel@tn.gov](mailto:Daniel.Froemel@tn.gov)  (615) 351-1208 |