

As Local Education Agencies (LEAs) look to respond to individual student needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to consider the unique and individualized needs of students in foster care. Maintaining positive connections, ensuring educational continuity, expediting enrollment, and streamlining transitions in the event of a school move are paramount during this time.

Q1: Who in my LEA can help support students in foster care during COVID-19?

A1: Foster Care liaisons are available within each LEA to support school transitions for students in foster care and serve as the ESSA Foster Care Point of Contact (for child welfare organizations). Foster Care Liaison contact information is provided in [AskTed](#). For more information visit the [TEA Foster Care Liaison Webpage](#).

Q2: How can LEA Foster Care Liaisons or other LEA staff, such as school counselors, support students in foster care during COVID-19?

A2: LEA Foster Care Liaisons and other support staff should:

- Check in remotely on a regular basis to ensure educational support and continuity
- Ensure students in foster care have equitable access to adequate learning resources that best fit their environment
- Determine whether foster students have the appropriate resources (low tech or high tech) to meet their needs
- Provide tips, resources, and strategies for caregivers on promoting positive at-home learning environments
- Provide resources that link students with social and emotional supports
- Ensure there is a process in place for enrolling students while schools are closed

Q3: If an LEA wants to reach out and follow up with a student in foster care, where can they locate the contact information for the student?

A3: In addition to the LEA's data management system, information for the student's caregiver is found on the Department of Family and Protective Services Placement (DFPS) Authorization 2085 form. The school may also follow up with the student's Education Decision-Maker. This information is found on the DFPS Education Decision-Maker 2085 form. Both documents are required to be provided to the school and should be located in the student's file.

Q4: Who can the LEA contact from the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) if they have education related questions or concerns pertaining to students in foster care?

A4: DFPS has designated Education Specialists in each of the 11 DFPS Regions. For contact information and to look up by county, visit the [DFPS Education Specialist Webpage](#).

Q5: *Students in foster care are categorically eligible for the free school meals program. How can students receive meal benefits during this time?*

A5: Meal finder information can be found at [TXSchools.gov](#). Listed below are additional resources to assist with locating food pantries and food banks in your area.

- [FOODPANTRIES.ORG](#)
- [Aunt Bertha | The Social Care Network](#)

Q6: *Is there guidance available for students in foster care who are included in other Special Populations, such as students receiving Special Education services?*

A6: Yes. TEA created a [COVID-19 Special Populations Resources Webpage](#) for up-to-date guidance and information for Special Populations.

Q7: *Are there any resources available to help caregivers and parents talk to their children about COVID-19?*

A7: Yes. The [National Association of School Psychologists COVID-19 Webpage](#) contains valuable information to share with caregivers and parents.

Q8: *Are there resources available for families that do not have access to internet?*

A8: Yes. TEA compiled a list of cable providers who offer free broadband and internet services while schools are closed due to COVID-19. The list can be accessed through the following link: [Guidance to Districts on Providing Internet to Students](#)

Please submit any questions, concerns, and/or feedback to:

disasterinfo@tea.texas.gov

Feedback will assist TEA with technical assistance and planning.