Education for Foster Youth

The governing Board recognizes that foster youth may be at greater risk for poor academic performance due to their family circumstances, disruption of their educational program, and emotional, social, and other health needs. The district shall provide such students with full access to the district's educational program and other support services necessary to assist them in achieving state and district academic standards.

(cf. 5131.6 – Alcohol and Other Drugs)
(cf. 6145 – Extracurricular and Co-curricular Activities)
(cf. 6145.2 – Athletic Competitions)
(cf. 6164.2 – Guidance/Counseling Services)
(cf. 6173 – Education for Homeless Children)
(cf. 6179 – Supplemental Instruction)

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 a district liaison for foster youth to help facilitate the enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth.

The Superintendent or designee and district liaison shall ensure that all appropriate staff, including, but not limited to, principals, attendance clerks, and enrollment clerks, receive training regarding the enrollment, placement, and rights of foster youth.

(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)

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

(cf. 0410 – Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
(cf. 0450 – Comprehensive Safety Plan)
(cf. 5131 – Conduct)
(cf. 5137 – Positive School Climate)
(cf. 5138 – Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)
(cf. 5145.3 – Nondiscrimination/Harassment)
(cf. 5145.9 – Hate-Motivated Behavior)
(cf. 6020 – Parent Involvement)

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 including, but not limited to, the county placing agency, social services, probation officers, juvenile court officers, nonprofit organizations, and advocates.

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.

The Superintendent or designee shall regularly report to the Board on the educational outcomes of foster youth enrolled in the district including, but not limited to, school attendance, student achievement test results, promotion and retention rates by grade level, graduation rates, and suspension/expulsion rates.

(cf. 0500 – Accountability)
(cf. 5123 – Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)
(cf. 5144.1 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
(cf. 5144.2 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))
(cf. 6162.51 – Standardized Testing and Reporting Program)
(cf. 6162.52 – High School Exit Examination)

Legal Reference:
EDUCATION CODE
32228-32228.5 Student safety and violence prevention
42920-42925 Foster children educational services
48645-48646 Juvenile court schools
48850-48859 Educational placement of students residing in licensed children's institutions
49061 Student records
49069.5 Foster care students, transfer of records
49076 Access to student records
51225.3 High school graduation
56055 Rights of foster parents in special education
60851 High school exit examination
HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE
1522.41 Training and certification of group home administrators
1529.2 Training of licensed foster parents
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE
300 Children subject to jurisdiction
309 Investigation and release of child
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
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
Needs of Children in Foster Care, 2005
CITIES, COUNTIES AND SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PUBLICATIONS
Our Children: Emancipating Foster Youth. A community Action Guide

WEBSITES
CSBA: http://www.csba.org
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.fosteryouthhelpca.gov
http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov
California Youth Connections: http://www.calyouthconn.org/site/cyc
Cities, Counties and Schools Partnership: http://www.ccspartnership.org

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