BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

DCF places student in Foster Care OR DCF changes student’s Foster Care placement

DCF Initiates Best Interest Determination (BID) Goal: BID Completed within 5 school days The BID should include meaningful consultation with individuals who understand the student’s unique needs.

DCF Point of Contact (POC) or designee
- Student
- Social Worker
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
- Foster Parent(s)
- Attorney
- Educational Decision Maker (EDM) (court appointed)
- Special Education Surrogate Parent (SESP)

District of Origin (DOO) POC
- POC
- Teacher(s)
- Guidance
- Special Education
- School Adjustment Counselor

Local School District (LSD) POC
As soon as there is an indication of possible local enrollment, DCF must include the LSD (where student lives in foster care) in the BID process to ensure the LSD:
- Understands the needs of student
- Provides input on available program/services, etc.

Upon Completion of the BID:
- DCF Shares School Selection and Provides Notice to LEA

Remain in School of Origin (SOO)
DCF and DOO Develop Transportation Plan(s):
- Short term – for 1-2 weeks while long term plan is developed
- Long term – for duration of foster care OR until all grades in SOO are completed OR until BID will be revisited

Immediately Enroll in LSD
Transfer Records:
- LSD POC request from DOO on the day of enrollment
- DOO transfer within 2-3 days
# BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION FOR FOSTER CARE SCHOOL SELECTION – WORKSHEET

**Completed by:** ☐ LEA ☐ DCF

## STUDENT:

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY):</strong></th>
<th><strong>GRADE LEVEL:</strong></th>
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Does the student have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)? *(Yes/No)*  
Is the IEP signed? *(Yes/No)*  
If Yes, indicate by whom

Does the student’s IEP include transportation as a related service? *(Yes/No)*  
Does the student have a 504 Plan? *(Yes/No)*

## SCHOOL (& DISTRICT) OF ORIGIN:

**DISTRICT OF ORIGIN POINT OF CONTACT (POC):**

**LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT (LSD):**  
*(where student is living in foster care)*

**LSD POC:**

**DCF Area Office:**

**DCF POC, Social Worker and Education Coordinator:**

## FACTORS CONSIDERED

The following multiple factors related to the student’s unique needs should be considered when making the BID. Additional factors may be considered and should be included under Other Factor(s). Check all factors considered and make notes below for documentation. Attach other relevant documents as appropriate (e.g., IEP, 504 Plan, Report Cards, Progress Reports, etc.)

- Student’s preference (when age appropriate)
- Preferences of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or EDM(s)
- Distance/duration of travel to/from school
- Anticipated duration of time in placement
- Number of placements
- Duration of time in the current school
- Time of academic year
- Maintenance of family relationships
- Placement and/or school(s) of sibling(s) *(provide names of sibling(s) and school(s) attending in BID notes section)*
- Permanency and goal(s) of placement (e.g., reunification; adoption, etc.)
- Relationships to school staff and peers
- Engagement in extracurricular activities
- Current educational goals and services
- Clinical/behavioral issues
- Availability and quality of educational and SEL services
- Immediate availability of services to meet needs of IEP or 504 Plan
- Individual skills, needs, and social connections
- School climate and safety issues on student
- Academic performance and skills
- Other Factor(s)

## NOTES:

- The cost of transportation may not be factored when conducting the BID.
- Financial or programmatic responsibility for a student’s special education services are separate from enrollment and the BID process. After the best interest determination, requests for clarification of school district responsibility for a student’s special education services can be directed to DESE’s Office of Special Education Policy and Planning.

**NOTE:** This process and worksheet are not required, but are encouraged to facilitate and document the required BID.
**BID NOTES**

**COLLABORATORS IN THE BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION**

- Check box if attaching any relevant correspondences/comments.

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<tr>
<th>NAME &amp; CONTACT INFORMATION</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT</th>
<th>DATE(s) and METHOD(s) OF ENGAGEMENT IN BID</th>
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Upon completion of conversations with ALL individuals who understand the unique needs of the student, the following is the resulting BID. The student will:

- **REMAIN ENROLLED IN SCHOOL OF ORIGIN.** DCF will provide Notice to LEA to DOO.

If any specialized transportation is needed, please describe:

**Short-Term Transportation Plan:** (How will the student get to school while a permanent plan is established?)

- **DCF:**
- **District:**
- **Other (describe):**

**Long-term Transportation Plan:** (How will the student get to school?)

**Plan to revisit BID?**

- Is there a plan to revisit the BID? If so, describe the factors to be revisited, person responsible for follow-up, etc.

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<th>Person responsible for follow-up:</th>
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<td><strong>Approximate date to revisit:</strong></td>
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- **ENROLL LOCALLY (where the student is living in foster care).**
  - DCF provides Notice to LEA and initiate immediate enrollment.
  - Records transfer requested by LSD POC (on the day of enrollment).
  - DOO complete records transfer as soon as possible (within 2-3 days.)

Checkmarks below indicate acknowledgement that the BID process occurred, has been completed and is accurately represented in this document.

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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<td>DCF Representative:</td>
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<td>DOO POC:</td>
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<td>LSD POC:</td>
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