

Practice Alert

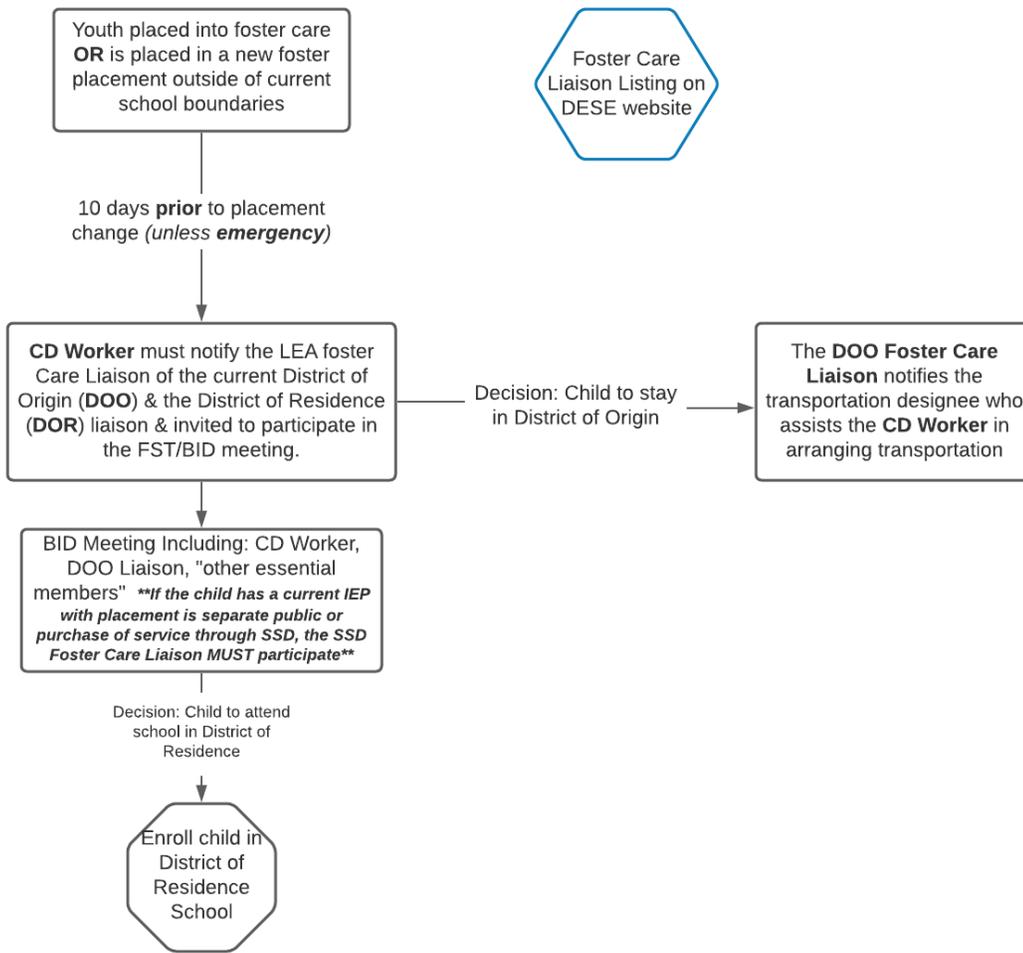
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Best Interest Determination Process

Education stability is an important factor in any child's resiliency. When youth enter foster care, or change placements, this used to mean they would most likely have to change schools. The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA, 2015) requires educational agencies to collaborate with child welfare agencies to ensure the educational stability of youth in foster care. There is a shared responsibility to work together to ensure youth in foster care remain in their school of origin, if remaining in the same educational setting is determined to be in the child's best interest.

The Child Welfare Manual, [Section 4, Chapter 4 \(Working with Children\) Subsection 2 – Educational Stability](#) outlines the process in detail. It is important to include the members of the Family Support Team as a part of this process, and to discuss education needs at every FST and document this on the Social Service Plan for the youth. Below is a flow chart to simplify the process:



Other Helpful Links:

[Department of Elementary & Secondary Education – Foster Care](#)

[School District Foster Care Liaisons](#)

[Best Interest Determination Placement Form](#)

