

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services	Effective Date: June 1, 2008
	Section 20: Educational Services	Version: 2

POLICY

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will assure that all children in out-of-home care are referred for an initial educational evaluation to determine if an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is needed to meet the child’s educational needs. The Child and Family Team (CFT) or Case Plan Conference will be utilized to review and discuss the educational needs of each child and to develop a plan to assist in the referral process and ensure that the child’s educational needs are met. See separate policy, [5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings](#).

DCS will encourage the child’s parent, guardian, or custodian to invite the child’s teacher, school social worker, and any other identified educational supports to participate as a member of the CFT.

DCS will assure that every school aged child in out-of-home care is enrolled in school full time, unless one (1) of the following circumstances exists:

1. The youth is eligible for and actively pursuing a General Education Development (GED) certificate;
2. An alternate education plan has been recommended by the child’s home school and approved by the court; or
3. The youth has graduated from high school or obtained a GED certificate.

DCS will make every effort to allow the child to remain in the same school that the child attended while living with his or her parent, guardian, or custodian.

DCS will not authorize children in out-of-home care to be home schooled without court authorization, except for homebound programs that are administered by a public or private school.

DCS will not pay for the costs associated with private schooling. See Related Information for suggestions on responding to requests for private schooling for children in out-of-home care.

DCS will encourage the child’s parent, guardian, or custodian to provide consent to release the child’s educational records to the resource parent to ensure that the child receives appropriate educational services. Per Indiana state law, the child’s educational records may only be provided to the resource parent after written consent is received from the parent, guardian, or custodian.

DCS requires that a child released from out-of-home care after his or her 18th birthday is provided, at no cost, with a copy of his or her educational record.

DCS will ensure that DCS wards in the 7th or 8th grade are enrolled in the 21st Century Scholars program.

See separate policies, [8.21 Special Education Services](#) and [8.22 School Transfers and Legal Settlement](#).

Code References

1. [IC 20-33-2: Compulsory School Attendance](#)
2. [511 IAC 7-231\(p\)](#)
3. [20 USC 1232g \(b\)\(1\)\(E\)](#)

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Work with school personnel to assure that the child is registered for school;
2. Assure that the appropriate school corporations are notified if the child transfers schools. See separate policy, [8.22 School Transfers and Legal Settlement](#);
3. Provide the resource family with any available educational information (e.g., the name of the school the child last attended, the child's current grade level, and a summary of academic progress);
4. Refer the child for testing to identify any special education needs and/or related services the child may need. See separate policy, [8.21 Special Education Services](#);
5. Assure that educational goals and issues are included in the child's [Case Plan](#);
6. Collaborate with the CFT to assess the effects of placement on the child's school attendance and academic performance and attempt to minimize school disruptions. See Related Information below and see separate policy, [5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings](#);
7. Recommend and encourage the child's parent, guardian, or custodian to include the child's school social worker, counselor, or another school representative to participate as a member of the CFT;
8. Assist the parent, guardian, or custodian, and/or resource parent (s) in the completion of forms for free or reduced lunch, and textbooks;
9. Provide children in the 7th and 8th grades with information about the 21st Century Scholar programs; and
10. Ensure that a completed application for the 21st Century Scholar program is submitted for all 7th and 8th graders in out-of home care by June 30th of the students 7th or 8th grade school year. Applications for the 21st Century program may be obtained by calling toll free 1-888-528-4719 or through the child's school and requires the FCM to:
 - a. Assist the child in completing the application or refer the child to school personnel who may also assist the child in enrolling in the program, and
 - b. Have the child sign a written acknowledgement of receipt of program information and place a copy in the child's case file.

Note: Currently applications can not be completed online, however you may request additional information online at www.scholars.in.gov.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

Minimizing School Disruptions

School disruption can cause extreme emotional stress for a child and may affect his or her academic performance, development, and/or overall well-being. There are ways the FCM can attempt to minimize the effects on the child, including:

1. Placing the child with a resource family living in the same school district;
2. Assisting the resource family living in a different district with arranging transportation for the child, so that he or she can continue to attend the same school;
3. Delaying a change in placement until the end of a school semester or year, so long as waiting does not endanger the child's safety and/or well being; and/or
4. Scheduling medical and court appointments during non-school hours, whenever possible.

Private Schools

The CFT should review requests for a child to attend private school. See separate policy [5.7, Child and Family Team Meeting](#). The team should consider whether any of the following conditions apply:

1. The child attended the private school prior to being removed from his or her home;
2. The child has documented educational, medical, and/or psychological needs that would be better served by a specific private school; and/or
3. The child is placed in a residential facility that runs an in-house school or educational program.

If private schooling is requested, the CFT should consider funding options including, but not limited to, payment of tuition by the child's parent, guardian, or custodian and scholarships offered by the school. See separate policy, [5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings](#).

GED Information and Eligibility

GED information and eligibility requirements can be obtained from any local school corporation, or the Department of Education website (www.doe.in.gov). On the website, type "GED" in the Search field to bring up information about pursuing a GED in Indiana.