



Foster Youth Policy

The Governing Board of **San Diego Cooperative Charter School** (the “Charter School”) desires to ensure that foster children are provided equal access to the same free, appropriate public education provided to other children and youth. Foster students will be given access to the education and other services that such students need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. Foster students will not be stigmatized or segregated in a separate school or program based on the student’s status as foster youth.

I. Definitions

Ø **Foster child/student/youth** means a child who has been removed from his or her home pursuant to Welfare and Institutions (“W&I”) Code section 309, is the subject of a petition filed under W&I sections 300 or 602, or has been removed from his or her home and is the subject of a petition filed under W&I Code sections 300 or 602.

Ø The Charter School is the **school of origin** when the student attended the Charter School when permanently housed or was last admitted at the initial detention or placement or subsequent change in placement of a foster child. If the school the foster child attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which the foster child was last admitted, or if there is some other school that the foster child attended with which the foster child is connected and that the foster child attended within the immediately preceding 15 months, the foster child liaison, in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, shall determine, in the best interests of the foster child, the school that shall be deemed the school of origin.

II. Foster Child Liaison

The School’s foster child liaison is: Sarah Saluta. The School’s foster child liaison is required to do all of the following:

Ø Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, admission in school and checkout from school of foster children.

∅ Assist foster children when transferring from one school to another school in ensuring proper transfer of credits, records and grades.

∅ The foster child liaison, in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, may recommend, in accordance with the foster child's best interests, that the foster child's right to attend the school of origin be waived and the foster child be admitted in a public school that pupils living in the attendance area in which the foster child resides are eligible to attend.

∅ Before making a recommendation to move a foster child from his or her school of origin, the foster liaison shall provide the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child with a written explanation stating the basis for the recommendation and how the recommendation serves the foster child's best interest.

∅ If the foster child liaison, in consultation with the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, agrees that the best interests of the foster child would best be served by his or her transfer to a school other than the school of origin, the foster child shall immediately be admitted in the new school.

III. Admission

All foster students are required to follow the school's process for admitting students, including filling out and submitting the school's admissions packet on time. As with all students, admission depends upon availability. In the event of an oversubscription in a grade, foster students will participate in the lottery as with any other student.

If the foster child seeking admission has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks or other items or moneys due to the school last attended or is unable to produce clothing or records normally required for admission, such as previous academic records, medical records, including, but not limited to, records or other proof of immunization history, proof of residency, other documentation or school uniforms, this will not serve as a basis for non-admission. Within two days of admission of the foster child, the foster child liaison will contact the school last attended by the foster child to obtain all academic and other records.

If a dispute arises regarding the request of a foster child to remain in [Name of School] as the school of origin, the foster child has the right to remain in [Name of School] pending resolution of the dispute. The dispute shall be resolved in accordance with the Uniform Complaint Procedures adopted by the School.

Admission in [School Name] as the school of origin will be allowed, unless a determination is made that it is not in the best interest of the foster child to attend [School Name]. Best interest

factors include, but are not limited to, appropriateness of the current educational setting and proximity to the school in which the child is admitted at the time of placement.

IV. Former Foster Children

If the jurisdiction of the court is terminated before the end of an academic year, San Diego Cooperative Charter School shall allow a former foster child who is in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 8, inclusive, to continue his or her education as the school of origin through the duration of the academic school year.

V. Course Work and Graduation

The Charter School will accept coursework satisfactorily completed by the foster child while attending another public school, a juvenile court school, a charter school, a school in a country other than the United States, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school even if the pupil did not complete the entire course and shall issue that pupil full or partial credit for coursework completed. The credits accepted shall be applied to the same or equivalent course, if applicable, as the coursework completed in the prior school. The Charter School will not require the foster child to retake a course if the pupil has satisfactorily completed the entire course in a public school, a juvenile court school, a charter school, a school in a country other than the United States, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school. If the pupil did not complete the entire course, the Charter School shall not require the pupil to retake the portion of the course the pupil completed unless the Charter School, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the pupil, finds that the pupil is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. When partial credit is awarded in a particular course, the foster youth shall be admitted in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, so that the pupil may continue and complete the entire course.

If the Charter School has knowledge that the transcript from the transferring local educational agency may not include certain credits or grades for the student, it shall contact the prior local educational agency within two business days to request that the prior local educational agency issue full or partial credits. The prior local educational agency shall issue appropriate credits and provide all academic or other records to the Charter School within two business days of the request.

VI. Transportation

If the foster student requires transportation to continue to attend the Charter School as the school of origin, the Charter School will ensure that the foster child receives transportation in a cost effective manner.

VII. Records

A foster family agency with jurisdiction over a currently admitted or former pupil, a short-term residential treatment program staff responsible for the education or case management of a student, and a caregiver who has direct responsibility for the care of the student, including a certified or licensed foster parent, an approved relative or nonrelated extended family member, or a resource family (as defined below), may access the current or most recent records of grades, transcripts, attendance, discipline and online communication on platforms established by schools for pupils and parents, and any individualized education programs (IEPs) that may have been developed, or any plan adopted pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 of a currently admitted or former foster pupil.

A foster family agency, short-term residential treatment program, or caregiver may review and receive pupil records pursuant to subdivision (a) for purposes of monitoring the pupil's educational progress, updating and maintaining the pupil's education records as required by Section 16010 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, and ensuring the pupil has access to educational services, supports, and activities. These purposes include, but are not limited to, admitting the pupil in school, assisting the pupil with homework, class assignments, and college and scholarship applications, and admitting the pupil in extracurricular activities, tutoring, and other afterschool and summer enrichment programs.

A “resource family” means an individual or family that has successfully met both the home environment assessment and the permanency assessment criteria necessary for providing care for a child placed by a public or private placement agency by court order, or voluntarily placed by a parent or guardian.