

Strategies to Support School Stability and Continuity:

Collaborating Across Systems– Working with Education and the Courts

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The Pathway of Cross System Collaboration

- ▶ **The need to be bi-lingual!**
 - The language of Education
 - The language of Child Welfare
- ▶ **Areas of mutual concern:**
 - Academic Achievement
 - School Attendance
 - Response to Discipline Concerns
 - Continuity of Special Education Services
 - Communication
 - Emotional/Behavioral Needs
 - Confidentiality

San Diego and California: An Overview:

▶ San Diego:

- Leadership from Juvenile Court
- Collaborative history
 - Regional collaboratives
- Cross system information sharing
 - Interagency Agreement/MOU
 - Foster Youth Student Information System(FY-SIS©)
- School Success Project
- The Tutor Connection Program

▶ California

- California Foster Youth Education Task Force
- Legislative changes
- Foster Ed Connect

Leadership from Juvenile Court :

- ▶ **History of Presiding Judges who took the lead**
- ▶ **Standing Court Orders**
- ▶ **Chair of Foster Youth Services Advisory Committee**
- ▶ **Creation of “I Can Go to College” Events**
- ▶ **Rules of Court**
 - Aligned with AB 490
 - Monitoring who holds Educational Rights and academic progress at every hearing

Collaborative History:

▶ Collaboratives

- Regional Collaboratives brings together:
 - School district and school site personnel
 - Child Welfare staff and administration
- Foster Youth Services Advisory Committee
- School District Foster Care and Homeless Liaison Meetings

▶ College Connection

- Brings together:
 - Local colleges and universities
 - County ILS staff
 - CBO ILS staff
 - Foundations
 - Community partners (EdFund, Cal Soap, Credit Unions, etc.)
- Events
 - College Connection Days
 - Career Fair

Cross System Information Sharing:

Agreement across all child serving systems that information can and should be shared when legally allowable and in the best interest if the child:

- ▶ Interagency Agreement
 - 49 signatories (soon to be 50)
 - Includes mandates as well as best practices and local policies
- ▶ MOU
 - Juvenile Court
 - HHSA, CWS
 - Probation
 - SDCOE
- ▶ Foster Youth Student Information System(FY-SIS©)
 - Web based secure database which houses the health and education information of children under the jurisdiction of Juvenile Court

School Success Project

- ▶ Collaborative effort focused on increasing cross system knowledge and awareness while increasing the education and stability and outcomes for students in foster care.
- ▶ Partners include:
 - Child Welfare, San Diego County Office of Education, Foster Youth and Homeless Education Services, The Stuart Foundation, QUALCOMM, Inc., Promises2Kids Foundation, Casey Family Programs, along with the 42 public school districts in San Diego County.
- ▶ Foster Youth Liaison team provides services to youth, serves as an interpreter or broker between child-serving systems, and provides assistance with all aspects of referrals for services:
 - Where school of origin and transportation issues are involved, these liaisons provide assistance in maintaining school stability during a placement change.
 - The Liaisons work closely with all stakeholders involved in the education of children and youth in foster care. This includes school site administrators and teachers, special education departments, district staff, school transportation departments, community partners, Wrap Around providers, caregivers including group home providers and foster family agencies, child welfare social workers, attorneys and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs).

The Tutor Connection Program

The Program:

- Collaboration between San Diego County Office of Education, Foster Youth and Homeless Education Services, California State University, San Marcos, College of Education, San Diego County, Health and Human Services, Child Welfare Services.
- Students in foster care receive tutoring that varies among subject specific, subject remediation and study skills/organizational methods.
- The tutors are future teachers, enrolled in CSUSM's College Of Education. Tutors receive course instruction that covers the child welfare and foster care systems as well as the impact of child abuse, neglect and trauma on academic development.
- SDCOE provides staff support to assist in program administration and curriculum instruction, conduct program orientation, facilitate tutor/student match, and respond to issues about the child welfare and foster care system's
- Child Welfare provides the majority of student referrals to and performs background checks on all tutors.

The Tutor Connection Program (cont'd)

- ▶ Achievement of the program's dual goals is expected to produce a systemic change that will positively impact future generations of students in foster care
Dual Goals:
 - to insure that all students in foster care have the educational support they need to succeed in school
 - to educate future teachers on the unique needs of these vulnerable students.
- ▶ Impact:
 - Over 1450 future teachers have participated in the program
 - Over 1800 students in foster care have received tutoring services.
 - Academic outcomes include
 - 68% of students improving their reading scores
 - 80% improving their performance in at least one subject area.
- ▶ The program has been recognized by the Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter Foundation Partnership Foundation as a certified community/university partnership and has received additional recognitions and awards locally, in California and Nationally.

California: California Foster Youth Education Task Force

The CA Foster Youth Education Task Force is dedicated to improving educational outcomes for foster youth in California by bringing together subject matter experts representing more than 35 organizations and agencies to engage in cross-systems collaboration. Membership is open to anyone interested in promoting improved educational opportunities and successes for California's foster youth.

<http://www.cfyetf.org/>

Legislation Relating to the Education of Students in Foster Care

- ▶ **AB 490 (2004):**
 - Defines mandates and responsibilities of all parties
 - School stability provisions (including right to school of origin)
 - Partial Credits
 - And more!
- ▶ **SB 1353 (2010)**
- ▶ **AB 1858 (2004)**
- ▶ **AB 167 (2010)**

FosterEd Connect

<http://fosteredconnect.org/>

This interactive meta-website is for all stakeholders involved in improving the educational outcomes for children and youth in foster care