Instruction

Education for Foster Youth

The Governing Board recognizes that foster youth may face significant barriers to achieving academic success due to their family circumstances, disruption to their educational program, and their emotional, social, and other health needs. To enable such students to achieve state and district academic standards, the Superintendent or designee shall provide them with full access to the district’s educational program and implement strategies identified as necessary for the improvement of the academic achievement of foster youth in the district's local control and accountability plan (LCAP).

(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)
(cf. 3100 - Budget)
(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)
(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)
(cf. 5149 - At-Risk Students)
(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)
(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)
(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)
(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)
(cf. 6173 - Education for Homeless Children)
(cf. 6179 - Supplemental Instruction)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that placement decisions for foster youth are based on the students' best interests as defined in law and administrative regulation. To that end, he/she shall designate a staff person as the district liaison for foster youth to help facilitate the enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth.

The Superintendent or designee and district liaison shall ensure that all appropriate staff, including, but not limited to, each principal, school registrar, and attendance clerk, receive training on the enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth and other related rights.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)
(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)
(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

The Board desires to provide foster youth with a safe, positive learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and that promotes students' self-esteem and academic achievement. The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies to build a foster youth's feeling of connectedness with his/her school, including, but not limited to, strategies that promote positive discipline and conflict resolution, the development of resiliency and interpersonal skills, and the involvement of foster parents, group home administrators, and/or other caretakers in school programs and activities.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)
(cf. 5131 - Conduct)
(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)
(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)
Education for Foster Youth (Cont.)

(cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)
(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)
(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)
(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

To address the needs of foster youth and help ensure the maximum utilization of available funds, the Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with local agencies and officials including, but not limited to, the county placing agency, social services, probation officers, and juvenile court officers. The Superintendent or designee shall explore the feasibility of entering into agreements with these groups to coordinate services and protect the rights of foster youth.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)

At least annually and in accordance with the established timelines, the Superintendent or designee shall report to the Board on the outcomes for foster youth regarding the goals and specific actions identified in the LCAP, including, but not limited to, school attendance, student achievement test results, promotion and retention rates by grade level, graduation rates, and suspension/expulsion rates. As necessary, evaluation data shall be used to determine and recommend revisions to the LCAP for improving or increasing services for foster youth.

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)
(cf. 5123 - Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)
(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))
(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)
(cf. 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination)

Legal Reference:
EDUCATION CODE
32228-32228.5 Student safety and violence prevention
42238.01-42238.07 Local control funding formula
42920-42925 Foster children educational services
48645-48646 Juvenile court schools
48850-48859 Educational placement of students residing in licensed children's institutions
48915.5 Suspension and expulsion; students with disabilities, including foster youth
48918.1 Notice of expulsion hearing for foster youth
49061 Student records
49069.5 Foster care students, transfer of records
49076 Access to student records
51225.1 Exemption from district graduation requirements
51225.2 Pupil in foster care defined; acceptance of coursework, credits, retaking of course
51225.3 High school graduation
52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan
56055 Rights of foster parents in special education
60851 High school exit examination

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE
1522.41 Training and certification of group home administrators
1529.2 Training of licensed foster parents
120341 Foster youth: school placement: immunization records
Education for Foster Youth (Cont.)

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE
300 Children subject to jurisdiction
309 Investigation and release of child
317 Appointment of legal counsel
361 Limitations on parental or guardian control
366.27 Educational decision by relative providing living arrangements
602 Minors violating law; ward of court
726 Limitations on parental or guardian control
727 Order of care, ward of court
16000-16014 Foster care placement
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1415 Procedural safeguards; placement in alternative educational setting
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29
794 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42
670-679b Federal assistance for foster care programs
11431-11435 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Management Resources:
CSBA PUBLICATIONS
Educating Foster Youth: Best Practices and Board Considerations, Policy Brief, March 2008
AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS
Mythbusting: Breaking Down Confidentiality and Decision-Making Barriers to Meet the
Education Needs of Children in Foster Care, 2005
CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL
Partial Credit Model Policy and Practice Recommendations
CITIES, COUNTIES AND SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP PUBLICATIONS
Our Children: Emancipating Foster Youth, A Community Action Guide
WEB SITES
CSBA: http://www.csba.org
American Bar Association: http://www.americanbar.org
California Department of Education, Foster Youth Services: http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy
California Department of Social Services, Foster Youth Ombudsman Office:
http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov
California Youth Connection: http://www.calyouthconn.org/site/cyc
Cities, Counties and Schools Partnership: http://www.ccspartnership.org

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Instruction

Education for Foster Youth

Definitions

Foster youth, foster child, or student in foster care means any of the following: (Education Code 42238.01, 48853.5)

1. A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 300, whether or not the child has been removed from the child’s home by the juvenile court pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 319 or 361.

2. A child who is the subject of a petition filed pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 602, has been removed from the child’s home by the juvenile court pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 727, and is in foster care as defined by Welfare and Institutions Code 727.4(d).

3. A non-minor who is under the transition jurisdiction of a juvenile court, as described in Welfare and Institutions Code 450, and satisfies the criteria specified in Education Code 42238.01.

4. A dependent child of the court of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization who is the subject of a petition filed in the tribal court pursuant to the court’s jurisdiction in accordance with the tribe’s law.

5. A child who is the subject of a voluntary placement agreement, as defined in Welfare and Institutions Code 11400.

Person holding the right to make educational decisions means a responsible adult appointed by a court pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 361 or 726.

School of origin means the school that the foster youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the foster youth was last enrolled. If the school the foster youth attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which the foster youth was last enrolled, or if there is another school that the foster youth attended within the preceding 15 months and with which the foster youth is connected, the district liaison for foster youth shall determine, in the best interests of the foster youth, which school shall be deemed the school of origin. This determination shall be made in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth. (Education Code 48853.5)

Best interests of a foster youth means that, in making educational and school placement decisions for a foster youth, consideration is given to, among other factors, the proximity to the school at the time of placement, appropriateness of the educational setting, educational stability, the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress, and the foster youth’s access to academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all district students. (Education Code 48850, 48853; 20 USC 6311)

District Liaison

The Superintendent designates the following position as the district’s liaison for foster youth: (Education Code 48853.5)
The liaison for foster youth shall:

1. Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of students in foster care. (Education Code 48853.5)

2. Ensure proper transfer of credits, records, and grades when students in foster care transfer from one school to another or from one district to another. (Education Code 48645.5, 48853.5)

When a student in foster care is enrolling in a district school, the liaison shall contact the school last attended by the student to obtain, within two business days, all academic and other records. When a foster youth is transferring to a new school, the liaison shall provide the student's records to the new school within two business days of receiving the new school's request. (Education Code 48853.5)

3. Notify a foster youth’s attorney and the representative of the appropriate county child welfare agency, when required by law for a foster youth who is undergoing any expulsion or other disciplinary proceeding including a manifestation determination for a foster youth who is a student with a disability, prior to a change in the foster youth’s placement. (Education Code 48853.5, 48911, 48915.5, 48918.1)

4. As needed, make appropriate referrals to ensure that students in foster care receive necessary special education services and services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

5. As needed, ensure that students in foster care receive appropriate school-based services, such as counseling and health services, supplemental instruction, and after-school services.

6. Develop protocols and procedures for creating awareness for district staff, including principals, school registrars, and attendance clerks, of the requirements for the proper enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster youth.

7. Collaborate with the county office of education, county placing agency, county child welfare agency, county probation department, juvenile court, and other appropriate agencies to help coordinate instruction, counseling, tutoring, mentoring vocational training, and other related services for the district’s foster youth.

8. Monitor the educational progress of foster youth and provide reports to the Superintendent or designee and the Governing Board based on indicators identified in the district’s local control and accountability plan.
Education for Foster Youth (Cont.)

The Superintendent or designee shall regularly monitor the liaison’s caseload, as well as additional duties outside of the foster youth program, to ensure that adequate time and resources are provided to meet the needs of foster youth in the district.

Enrollment

A student placed in a licensed children’s institution or foster family home within the district shall attend programs operated by the district unless one of the following circumstances applies: (Education Code 48853, 48853.5)

1. The student has an individualized education program requiring placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency or in another local educational agency.

2. The parent/guardian or other person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student determines that it is in the best interests of the student to be placed in another education program and submits a written statement to the district indicating that determination and an awareness of the following:
   a. The student has a right to attend a regular public school in the least restrictive environment.
   b. The alternate education program is a special education program, if applicable.
   c. The decision to unilaterally remove the student from the district school and to place the student in an alternate education program may not be financed by the district.
   d. Any attempt to seek reimbursement for the alternate education program may be at the expense of the parent/guardian or other person holding the right to make educational decisions for the student.

3. At the initial placement or any subsequent change in placement, the student exercises the right to continue in the school of origin, as defined above. In any such circumstance, the following shall apply:
   a. The student may continue in the school of origin for the duration of the court’s jurisdiction.
   b. If the court's jurisdiction over a grade K-8 student is terminated prior to the end of a school year, the student may continue in the school of origin for the remainder of the school year.
   c. If the court's jurisdiction is terminated while the student is in high school, the student may continue in the school of origin through graduation.
   d. If the student is transitioning between school grade levels, the student shall be allowed to continue in the district in the same attendance area to provide the student the benefit of matriculating with the student's peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school in the district. A student who is transitioning to a middle school or high school shall be allowed to enroll in the school designated for matriculation in another school district.
The role of the liaison shall be advisory with respect to placement decisions and determination of the school of origin. (Education Code 48853.5)

The district liaison may, in consultation with and with the agreement of the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth, recommend that the foster youth's right to attend the school of origin be waived and the foster youth be enrolled in any school that students living in the attendance area in which the foster youth resides are eligible to attend. All decisions shall be made in accordance with the foster youth's best interests. (Education Code 48853.5)

Prior to making any recommendation to move a foster youth from the school of origin, the liaison shall provide the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the youth with a written explanation of the basis for the recommendation and how the recommendation serves the youth's best interests. (Education Code 48853.5)

If the liaison, in consultation with the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth, agrees that the best interests of the foster youth would be served by a transfer to a school other than the school of origin, the principal or designee of the new school shall immediately enroll the foster youth, regardless of whether the foster youth:

1. Has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or monies due to the school last attended
2. Does not have clothing normally required by the school, such as school uniforms
3. Is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, proof of residency, and medical records, including, but not limited to, immunization records or other documentation

If the foster youth or a person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth disagrees with the liaison's enrollment recommendation, an appeal may be filed with the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall make a determination within 30 calendar days of receipt of the appeal. Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision, the foster youth or the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth may appeal that decision to the Board. The Board shall consider the issue at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board's decision shall be final.

If any dispute arises regarding the request of a foster youth to remain in the school of origin, the foster youth has the right to remain in the school of origin pending resolution of the dispute. (Education Code 48853.5)

Transportation

The Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with the local child welfare agency to determine how transportation will be provided, arranged, and funded in a cost-effective manner to enable a foster youth to remain in the school of origin, for the duration of the time spent in foster care, when it is in the foster youth's best interest to do so. Such transportation costs may be paid by either the child welfare agency or the district, or shared by both. (20 USC 6312)
**Education for Foster Youth (Cont.)**

**Effect of Absences on Grades**
The grades of a student in foster care shall not be lowered for any absence from school that is due to either of the following circumstances: (Education Code 49069.5)

1. A decision by a court or placement agency to change the student's placement, in which case the grades shall be calculated as of the date the student left school

2. A verified court appearance or related court-ordered activity

**Transfer of Coursework and Credits**

When a foster youth transfers into a district school, the district shall accept and issue full credit for any coursework that the foster youth has satisfactorily completed while attending another public school, a juvenile court school, or a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency and shall not require the foster youth to retake the course. (Education Code 51225.2)

If the entire course was not completed at the previous school, the foster youth shall be issued partial credit for the coursework completed and shall be required to take the uncompleted portion of the course. However, the district may require the foster youth to retake the portion of the course completed if, in consultation with the holder of educational rights for the foster youth, the district finds that the foster youth is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to graduate from high school. Whenever partial credit is issued to a foster youth in any particular course, the foster youth shall be enrolled in the same or equivalent course, if applicable, to enable the completion of the entire course. (Education Code 51225.2)

Partial credits shall be awarded on the basis of 0.5 credits for every seven class periods attended per subject. If the school is on a block schedule, each block schedule class period attended shall be equal to two regular class periods per subject. Partial credits and grades earned by a student shall be included on the student’s official transcript within two business days of the district’s notification of the student’s transfer, as required under Education Code 49069.5.

**Calculation Formula**

If 5 Credits/Grading Period, student earns 0.5 credits per subject earned per 7 class periods attended.

Formula:  \( \frac{\text{# of class periods attended}}{14} \) (round to nearest .5 credit)

Example:  \( 40 \text{ periods attended (60 min period)} \div 14 = 2.86 \) or 2.5 credits
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Class Period Attended Per Subject</th>
<th># of Credits Earned (Based on .5 grading period) Per Subject</th>
<th># Credits Earned (based on .1 grading period) Per Subject</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7-13 periods attended</td>
<td>.5 credits earned</td>
<td>.1 credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-20 periods attended</td>
<td>1.0 credits earned</td>
<td>.2 credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-27 periods attended</td>
<td>1.5 credits earned</td>
<td>.3 credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-34 periods attended</td>
<td>2.0 credits earned</td>
<td>.4 credits earned</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-41 periods attended</td>
<td>2.5 credits earned</td>
<td>.5 credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42-48 periods attended</td>
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<td>.6 credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49-55 periods attended</td>
<td>3.5 credits earned</td>
<td>.7 credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-62 periods attended</td>
<td>4.0 credits earned</td>
<td>.8 credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-69 periods attended</td>
<td>4.5 credits earned</td>
<td>.9 credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70+ periods attended</td>
<td>5.0 credits earned</td>
<td>1.0 credits earned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Length of Class Periods:** Periods lasting 89 minutes or less are counted as 1 period. Classes 90 minutes or longer are counted as 2 periods.

**Sending School Responsibility:** Sending school will issue check out grades upon receiving notification that the youth will transfer schools. Office will calculate partial credits for each subject that the youth is passing as of the last day of actual attendance. Include all courses, grades and partial credits earned on an official transcript within 2 business days of notification of the transfer.

**Receiving School Responsibility** When youth transfer schools mid-year, request and accept all check out grades and partial credits awarded by the sending school within 2 days of enrollment. Apply them to the same/equivalent courses on the school district’s official transcript. Immediately enroll the youth in same/equivalent courses so that they can complete a full grading period of credits.

**Credit Scale:** If the sending school uses a different scale than the receiving school, then the sending school should calculate and issue partial credit according to its own scale. The receiving school can convert the number of credits earned to match their own credit scale by using the conversion table.

In no event shall the district prevent a foster youth from taking or retaking a course to meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University or the University of California. (Education Code 51225.2)

**Applicability of Graduation Requirements**

To obtain a high school diploma, a foster youth shall complete all courses required by Education Code 51225.3 and fulfill any additional graduation requirements prescribed by the Board.
Education for Foster Youth (Cont.)

However, when a foster youth who has completed the second year of high school transfers into the district from another school district or transfers between high schools within the district, the foster youth shall be exempted from all district-adopted coursework and other district-established graduation requirements, unless the district makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the additional requirements in time to graduate from high school by the end of the fourth year of high school. Within 30 calendar days of the foster youth's transfer, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the foster youth, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth, and the foster youth's social worker of the availability of the exemption and whether the foster youth qualifies for it. If the Superintendent or designee fails to provide this notification, the student shall be eligible for the exemption once notified, even if the notification occurs after the student is no longer a foster youth. (Education Code 51225.1)

To determine whether a foster youth is in the third or fourth year of high school, the district shall use either the number of credits the foster youth has earned as of the date of the transfer or the length of school enrollment, whichever qualifies the foster youth for the exemption. (Education Code 51225.1)

The Superintendent or designee shall notify any foster youth who is granted an exemption and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth how any requirements that are waived will affect the foster youth’s ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution and shall provide information about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges. (Education Code 51225.1)

The district shall not require or request a foster youth to transfer schools in order to qualify for an exemption and shall not grant any request made by a foster youth or any person acting on behalf of a foster youth for a transfer solely to qualify the foster youth for an exemption. (Education Code 51225.1)

If a foster youth is exempted from local graduation requirements, the exemption shall continue to apply after the termination of the court’s jurisdiction over the student while still enrolled in school or if the foster youth transfers to another school or school district. (Education Code 51225.1)

Upon making a finding that a foster youth is reasonably able to complete district graduation requirements within the fifth year of high school, the Superintendent or designee shall:

(1) Inform the foster youth and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth of the option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the district’s graduation requirements and how that will affect the foster youth’s ability to gain admission to a postsecondary educational institution

(2) Provide information to the foster youth about transfer opportunities available through the California Community Colleges

(3) Upon agreement with the foster youth or, if under 18 years of age, the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster youth, permit the foster youth to stay in school for a fifth year to complete the district’s graduation requirements
Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

A foster youth whose residence changes pursuant to a court order or decision of a child welfare worker shall be immediately deemed to meet all residency requirements for participation in interscholastic sports or other extracurricular activities. (Education Code 48850)

Notification and Complaints

Information regarding the educational rights of foster youth shall be included in the annual uniform complaint procedures notification distributed to students, parents/guardians, employees, and other interested parties pursuant to 5 CCR 4622. (Education Code 48853, 48853.5, 49069.5, 51225.1, 51225.2)

Any complaint alleging that the district has not complied with requirements regarding the education of foster youth may be filed in accordance with the district’s procedures in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. If the district finds merit in a complaint, the district shall provide a remedy to the affected student. A complainant not satisfied with the district’s decision may appeal the decision to the California Department of Education (CDE) and shall receive a written decision regarding the appeal within 60 days of CDE’s receipt of the appeal. If CDE finds merit in an appeal, the district shall provide a remedy to the affected student. (Education Code 48853, 48853.5, 49069.5, 51225.1, 51225.2)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 CCR 4600-4670</td>
<td>Uniform complaint procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed. Code 32228-32228.5</td>
<td>Student safety and violence prevention</td>
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<td>Ed. Code 42238.01-42238.07</td>
<td>Local control funding formula</td>
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<td>Ed. Code 48850-48859</td>
<td>Education of foster youth and homeless students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed. Code 48915.5</td>
<td>Recommended expulsion; homeless student with disabilities</td>
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<td>Ed. Code 48918.1</td>
<td>Notice of recommended expulsion</td>
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<td>Ed. Code 49061</td>
<td>Definitions, directory information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed. Code 49069.5</td>
<td>Students in foster care; grades and credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed. Code 49076</td>
<td>Access to student records</td>
</tr>
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<td>Exemption from district graduation requirements</td>
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<td>Course credits</td>
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<td>Rights of foster parents pertaining to foster child's education</td>
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<tr>
<td>H&amp;S Code 120341</td>
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<td>Training of licensed foster parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>W&amp;I Code 366.27</td>
<td>Educational decision by relative providing living arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>W&amp;I Code 602</td>
<td>Minors violating law; ward of court</td>
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## Education for Foster Youth (Cont.)

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<tr>
<td>20 USC 1415</td>
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<td>29 USC 794</td>
<td>Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Section 504</td>
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<td>42 USC 11431-11435</td>
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<td>42 USC 670-679b</td>
<td>Federal assistance for foster care programs</td>
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