IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

P-16 Statewide Professional Development Conference

June 29, 2017
PRESENTERS

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- Kelly Kravitz
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- Carol Self
  - CPS Division Administrator for Permanency, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
SESSION GOALS

- Foster care 101
- Impact on education
- Legal overview
- Statewide efforts
- Additional resources
TEXAS CHILD WELFARE LANDSCAPE IN 2015

7.31 million children in Texas

1.7 million children in poverty

290,471 alleged victims of abuse and neglect investigated

75,328 children in cases opened for services

53,827 (71.5%) Family Preservation (no children removed)

21,501 (28.5%) Substitute Care (at least 1 child removed)

Child’s Journey Through Foster Care

Parent’s home
- Child not safe at home.

Report of child abuse or neglect.

Court
- Court determines where child will be placed.

Foster home
- Court sends child to foster home with services.
  - or
  - Court reviews progress and determines if:
    - the child will return home,
    - parental rights will be terminated so the child is free for adoption,
    - the child will live permanently with a relative, or
    - the child will stay in foster care longer.

Relative’s home
- Court sends child to a relative’s home with services.
  - or
  - Parent’s home
- Court sends child home with or without services.

Parent’s home
- Family completes reunification plan. Child returns home.

Permanent home
- Parental rights terminated. Child adopted or custody given to another caregiver.

Foster home
- Child remains in foster care while options for permanent family are explored.

This graphic is modified from Educating Youth in State Care, Initiative on Utah Children in Foster Care, May 2009, pg 5.
THE WHIRLWIND OF OUT-OF-HOME CARE

- Removed from home/parents/siblings
  - May not have had chance to say goodbye
  - Parents/siblings: Where are they? Are they ok?

- Living with strangers
  - In strange house/room/bed
  - Different customs/routine
  - Other children in home

- Few or none of your possessions
  - Uncertainty about future
  - Where will I live?
  - Will I return home?
  - Where will I go to school?
UNIQUE CHALLENGES FOR STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

• Multiple residential and school changes

• Missed school days for:
  • Visits with parents and siblings
  • Court appearances
  • Therapeutic or other case-related appointments

• When change schools, lose:
  • Records
  • Credits
  • Supports and services
FOSTER CARE: WHO ARE THE ADULTS INVOLVED?
In Texas

23,326 students in foster care attended Texas public schools during the school year.

Data sources for this report: Texas Education Agency’s Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and the Department of Family and Protective Service’s Information Management Protecting Adults and Children in Texas (IMPACT).

Dropout & Graduation Leavers

- 32% Graduated
- 39% Dropped Out
- 29% Left for other reason

(PEIMS 2012 School Leaver Codes)

The percentages above are not graduation or dropout rates. These numbers represent the students who graduated or dropped out during the year divided by the total number of leavers for that school year.

Source: Texas Commits to Transform Education Outcomes of Students in Foster Care: Findings from the Texas Blueprint Implementation Data Workgroup, November 2015
School Mobility

The percentage of students in foster care who attended 2+ schools in one school year (47%) was 6.5 times that of students not in care (7%).

Graduation Program

The Foundation High School Program replaces Minimum, Recommended, and Distinguished programs for students starting high school in 2014.
Disciplinary Actions

Percentage of students in foster care and not in care who received suspensions:

- In-school suspensions (ISS): 21%
  - 11% of students in care
  - 5% of students not in care

- Out-of-school suspensions (OSS): 16%
  - 5% of students in care
  - 5% of students not in care

Special Education

The percentage of students in foster care receiving special education services (24%) was 2.7 times that of students not in care (9%). Students in care were more often eligible under Emotional Disturbance:

- Emotional disturbance as primary disability: 34%
  - 6% of students in care
  - 6% of students not in care

http://tea.texas.gov/Curriculum_and_Instructional_Programs/Special_Education/
## LONG TERM OUTCOMES

### Employment and Earning at Age 26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alumni of Foster Care</th>
<th>vs.</th>
<th>National Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently employed</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean income</td>
<td>$13,989</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>$32,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home ownership</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic hardship</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>18%</td>
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### Education at Age 26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alumni of Foster Care</th>
<th>vs.</th>
<th>National Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No high school diploma or GED</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year college degree</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year college degree</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more year of graduate school</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)

- Bi-partisan legislation became law December 10, 2015.
- Reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and replaces No Child Left Behind (NCLB).
- The new law includes significant and historical changes for students in foster care.
  - School Stability
  - Collaboration
  - Transportation
  - Data reporting/Accountability

See Public Law 114-95

- Reinforces Texas School stability laws

See TEC §§25.001(g) – (g-1), 33.904, 25.007(b)
PROMOTING COMPLETION – STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

- Course Completion for Graduation –
  - Student previously enrolled in a course required for graduation;
  - Must be allowed the opportunity (to the extent practicable);
  - To complete the course at no cost;
  - Before the beginning of the next school year.

TEC § 25.007(b)(11)

- Course Credit Accrual and Personal Graduation Plan –
  - If a student is not likely to receive a high school diploma;
  - Within five years of entering Grade 9 (as determined by the district);
  - District must review the student’s course credit accrual and personal graduation plan.

TEC § 25.007(b)(12)
EARNING CREDIT –
STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

- Credit by Examination –
  - A school district shall provide opportunities for a student;
  - Who transfers to the district after the start of the school year;
  - To be administered credit by examination;
  - At any point during the school year.

19 TAC § 74.24(a)(2)

- Award of Credit –
  - A school district shall award credit proportionality;
  - To a student who successfully completes;
  - Only one semester of two-semester course.

19 TAC § 74.26(e)
HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION – STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

- Tuition and Fees Waiver and Dual Credit –
  - Must provide information in the 11th or 12th grade;
  - About the tuition and fees waiver under TEC § 54.366;
  - For dual credit or other courses provided by a public institution of higher education where a student may earn joint high school and college credit.

  TEC § 25.007(b)(13)

- Diploma from Previous School District –
  - 11th or 12th grade student transfers from district A to district B; and
  - The student is ineligible to graduate district B;
  - District A must award a diploma at the student’s request;
  - If the student meets the graduation requirements of district A.

  TEC § 28.025(i)
POSTSECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES

- Tuition Fee Waiver –
  - Available at any Texas state supported institution of higher education;
  - For eligible students formerly in foster care;
  - As long as the student enrolls in at least one college or dual credit;
  - Before turning 25.

  TEC §§ 54.366, 54.367

- Education Training Voucher –
  - Under federal law, eligible youth entitled to up to $5,000/year to cover education-related expenses.

  42 U.S.C. § 677
REGIONAL CONTACTS

- District/Charter School Foster Care Liaisons and ESC Foster Care Champions
  - [http://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess/liaisons/](http://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess/liaisons/)

- Foster Care Liaisons at Institutions of Higher Education

- Foster Care Liaison at Texas Education Agency
  - Kelly Kravitz, 512-463-9235, Kelly.Kravitz@tea.texas.gov

- Foster Care Liaison at Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
  - Natalie Coffey, 512-427-6227, Natalie.Coffey@THECB.state.tx.us

- DFPS Education Specialists
  - [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/State_Care/education_specialists.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/State_Care/education_specialists.asp)

- DFPS Preparation for Adult Living Coordinators
  - [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_protection/Youth_and_Young_Adults/Preparation_For_Adult_Living/PAL_coordinators.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_protection/Youth_and_Young_Adults/Preparation_For_Adult_Living/PAL_coordinators.asp)
School District Foster Care Liaison Information is maintained in AskTED:

- [http://tea4avholly.tea.state.tx.us/tea.askted.web/Forms/Home.aspx](http://tea4avholly.tea.state.tx.us/tea.askted.web/Forms/Home.aspx)

- Additional information available on TEA website:
  - [http://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess/liaisons/](http://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess/liaisons/)
THE STATE AS PARENT = THESE CHILDREN ARE “OUR” RESPONSIBILITY
TEXAS RESOURCES

TEA Foster Care & Student Success
- Foundational Resource Guide for School District Foster Care Liaisons
- http://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess

Foster Care & Education Infographic
- Encourages local, data-driven collaboration
- http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/46343/Texas-Blueprint-Data-Workgroup-Infographic.pdf

Texas CASA Educational Advocacy Toolkit
- Contains tools and resources for advocates
- http://texascasa.org/learning-center/resources/educational-advocacy-toolkit
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Information Sharing and Maintaining Privacy
- Clarifies confidentiality rules for CPS and educators

Transition Planning for Students in Foster Care
- CPS/ Special Education side by side comparison
NEW GUIDE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION LIAISONS

ADDITIONAL COLLEGE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Freshman Success Fund - $1,000 for Texas freshman only
  - https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/txyouth/education/scholarships.asp

- ED C Davis PAL Scholarship - $1,000 for former foster youth majoring in government, political science, history or pre-law field.
  - https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/txyouth/education/scholarships.asp

- FAFSA – All students who were in foster care 13 years and older file as an ‘independent’ and qualify for the maximum amount of federal and state grants.

- Higher Education Information & Resources for Current and Former Foster Youth Chart
Education Reach for Texans
8th Annual Convening
June 12 & 13
Texas A&M University-Commerce in Commerce, TX

We are thrilled that you plan to join us in June. Please visit our Convening Registration and Information Webpage to find out more information about the following:
Hotels
Airport
Addresses and important logistical information
Online registration with easy payment options
 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ABA Legal Center on Foster Care & Education
  - http://www.fostercareandeducation.org/

- CPS Policy Handbook, Education Section 15000
  - https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/handbooks/CPS/Files/CPS_pg_x15000.asp

- Child Welfare Information Gateway
  - https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/service-array/education-services/meeting-needs/educational-stability/

- Texas Child Protection Law Bench Book, Chapter on Education
  - http://benchbook.texaschildrenscommission.gov/

- Texas Foster Youth Justice Project
  - http://texasfosteryouth.org/
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THANK YOU!