Los Angeles County Office of Education

A TECHNICAL GUIDE TO

FOSTER YOUTH IDENTIFICATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Please use the provided QR code to access all links within this technical guide.

Why Definitions Matter
Funding vs. Rights and Services

Why are definitions important?

Different definitions of children and youth in foster care are used in relation to programs, services, educational entitlements and programmatic funding supporting foster youth in schools. These definitions can vary at both the state and federal levels. There are two definitions to consider in education: the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) definition and the broader, more general Assembly Bill 490 definition. The child welfare world considers foster youth as any open case, particularly if they are in out-of-home care. In the education world, only students who meet the LCFF definition are on state reports and generate funding.

Why is differentiation important?

Emphasis on funding sources and budgeting helps sustain local support. When allocating funds, a local education agency (LEA) must know where to locate its two unique numbers. Students who meet the LCFF definition of "foster" are automatically funded. However, if students' program eligibility is not tracked and maintained by the LEA, the students who do not meet the LCFF definition but meet the AB 490 definition will cost the LEA money to support without generating funding for their budget. Therefore, capturing as many students as possible who generate funding can financially sustain services provided to all students in care or involved in the juvenile justice system. Knowing which students fall under each category helps LEAs prepare for Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) preparation and funding allocation.

THE BALANCE BETWEEN
IDENTIFICATION & CONFIDENTIALITY

Key Considerations

- Handle sensitive information with care to avoid further stigmatization of youth.
- Most students in foster care (whether a ward of dependency or delinquency court) do not wish to be identified.
  - They may strongly fear being bullied or embarrassed by classmates and staff.
- Many students in foster care may not consider themselves as such.

  EXAMPLE: A youth removed from their home and placed with a relative caregiver may be resistant to being considered a student in foster care, even though they are, according to the LCFF definition.

Questions to Consider

- Who within the LEA should know about a student's foster care status, and how will that information be shared?
- How will this information be used, and where will it be stored?
- What ongoing professional development should be provided to all staff members?

Provide Ongoing Training

Site-level training that promotes respect, sensitivity and acceptance when supporting a student with foster care or juvenile justice involvement may buffer against unintended harm. If your district would like free training from LACOE FYSCP staff, please contact the office at 562-922-6469.

WHY TERMINOLOGY IS IMPORTANT

Oftentimes, identifying youth involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice system is based on the data matches that will be discussed later in this guide. Other times, this might be discovered through casual conversation with child welfare or probation staff, biological, adoptive, resource parents or the students themselves. Understanding the terms being used can help determine how the students should be identified in an LEA's student information system which ultimately ensures students' rights are honored and services are provided to them.

Term	Meaning
Dependent Ward of the Court	A child, or youth who has an open case in dependency or delinquency court. This does not include Voluntary Family Maintenance or Voluntary Family Reunification.
Family Maintenance (FM) Pre-placement	Child/youth is living at home receiving family maintenance services aimed at preventing removal of the child.
Family Maintenance (FM) Post-placement	Child/youth in the process of being permanently reunited with his/her family following an out-of-home placement. At home while the family receiving services aimed at keeping the child home.
Family Reunification (FR)	Child/youth is in an out-of-home placement receiving services aimed at reuniting the family.
Permanent Placement (PP)	Child/youth is in an out-of-home placement permanently and services to the family have been terminated.
Legal Guardian (KinGap)	A legal assignment by a court order naming a person(s) other than the biological parents, to make decisions over medical, educational and other decisions related to a child's wellbeing.
Supported Transitions	A non-minor dependent age 18–21 participating in a transitional independent living case plan.
Non-Minor Dependent (NMD)	Youth who opt into EFC, ages 18-21 (age increased to 22 if the student is in transition)
Extended Foster Care (EFC) or AB12	A program that allows eligible youth in the child welfare and/or probation to voluntarily remain in the foster care systems between the ages of 18 to 21. Court retains jurisdiction.
Tribal Youth	Under the jurisdiction of a tribal court as defined under EC Section 42238.01(b)

DEFINING STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

There are varying definitions of what defines a student in foster care. Each relating to their specific support or entitlement that all children and youth in care are provided. Below are the definitions of a student in foster care according to the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

Foster Youth Defined Under LCFF Definition Includes:

A child or youth who is the subject of a petition filed under WIC Section 300. This means that the court has taken jurisdiction over the child or youth and has declared the child/youth a dependent of the court due to the presence or risk of abuse or neglect. This includes children and youth who:

- Live at home while a dependent of the court
- Are living in an out-of-home placement (under the care, custody and control of a social worker)
- Are aged 18-21 and in high school, participating in a transitional case plan

A child or youth who is the subject of a petition filed under WIC Section 602. This means that the court has taken jurisdiction over the child or youth and has declared them as a ward of the court due to:
- The child or youth's violation of specific criminal law(s), and
- A court order to be removed from home pursuant to WIC Section 727 and placed in foster care as defined by WIC Section 727.4 (d), (suitable placement).

A youth between the ages 18 and 21 who is:
- Enrolled in high school, is a non-minor dependent under the placement responsibility of child welfare, probation or a tribal organization, participating in an agreement pursuant to WIC Section 10553.1 and is participating in a transitional living program.

DEFINING STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

Students defined as Tribal Foster Youth must meet the following:
- 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 tribal court's jurisdiction in accordance with the tribe's law as defined under EC Section 42238.01 (b).

A student meeting the definition under WIC 11400 is described as the following:
- Students under the placement and care of a child welfare agency and removed from the home through a voluntary placement agreement. The placement and care of a child welfare agency and removed from the home through a voluntary placement agreement.

Youth Not Considered "Foster Youth" Under LCFF
- A child or youth living with relatives or friends who are not dependents of the court, which means there is no WIC Section 300 filed.

- A child or youth that is a ward of the juvenile court pursuant to a petition filed under WIC Section 602 that is living at home or has been ordered to be placed in a corrective or rehabilitative facility but has not been ordered to be removed from their home into a foster care placement pursuant to WIC Section 727.4 (d)

As stated previously, there are different definitions for students in foster care. Table 1 identifies the classifications and delineates entitlements, supports and services afforded to each classification. The table was adapted from the Foster Youth Definitions table provided by the California Department of Education (CDE).

DEFINING STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE
CONTINUED

Per CDE, the Tables 1 and 2 are for reference purposes only and may not be comprehensive; the information is also subject to change depending on federal and state statutes and regulations. Please consult with your LEA/agency's legal counsel for any legal questions.

The categories of foster youth listed in Table 2 are not considered foster youth in California or under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Though they are not entitled to the same educational rights afforded to those who qualify under LCFF or ESSA, they still need guidance and resources. It is always best practice to assist these students so that they may flourish academically. Unlike the student categories in the following table, the four categories below will not be included on CALPADS or have an originating data source, minus Unaccompanied Refugee Minors, in which this data comes from the Refugee Arrival Data System (RADS). For more information on newcomer students, please visit the CDE website.

Categories of Youth **not** Considered Foster Youth (in California or per ESSA)

- Unaccompanied Refugee Minors
- Federally Identified Youth 45 CFR 400.116
- Voluntary Family Maintenance (not in court)
- Legal Guardianship (permanency) Kin-GAP (Guardian Assistance Program)
- Adoptions Assistance Program (AAP) - Provides financial and medical coverage to facilitate the adoption of children who otherwise would remain in long-term foster care.

Below are the originating data sources for each of the student categories.

Out-of-Home Child Welfare CWS/CMS	Non-Minor Depdendents (those enrolled in K - 12) CWS/CMS
Out-of-Home Probation Probation to CWS/CMS	Voluntary Placement Agreements County Social Services
In-Home Probation County Probation to LEAs	Tribal Foster Youth (AB 1962) Tribal Courts to LEAs
Family Maintenance CWS/CMS	Emergency Removals CWS/CMS as a referral but some counties convert it to a case

FOSTER YOUTH DEFINITION TABLE

CATEGORY OF FOSTER YOUTH	Included in LCFF	Included in ESSA	Included in CDSS' Definition of Care and Placement	CA Foster Youth Educational Rights	Available in CALPADS via Foster Match Process
OUT-OF-HOME CHILD WELFARE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
OUT-OF-HOME PROBATION	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
IN-HOME PROBATION	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Yes	Not Available
FAMILY MAINTENANCE	Yes	Not Included	Not Included	Yes	Yes
NON-MINOR DEPENDENTS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT AGREEMENTS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
TRIBAL FOSTER YOUTH (AB 1962)	Yes	Only for Title IV-E tribes	N/A	Yes	In CALPADS, but not via Foster Match process
EMERGENCY REMOVALS	Not Included	Does not differentiate between emergency removal and placement	Yes	Yes	Yes (if in placement more than 7 days)

Table 1 Categories of Foster Youth

CATEGORY OF FOSTER YOUTH	Included in LCFF	Included in ESSA	Included in CDSS' Definition of Care and Placement	CA Foster Youth Educational Rights	Available in CALPADS via Foster Match Process
UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE MINORS	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included
VOLUNTARY FAMILY MAINTENANCE (NOT IN COURT)	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included
LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP (PERMANENCY) KIN-GAP (GUARDIAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM)	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included
ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included

Table 2 Categories of Foster Youth - Not Considered Foster Youth in CA or Under ESSA

* - (Definition does not differentiate between emergency removal (temporary custody and detention and placement)

** - Indicates changes from the passage of Assembly Bill 181 (2022).
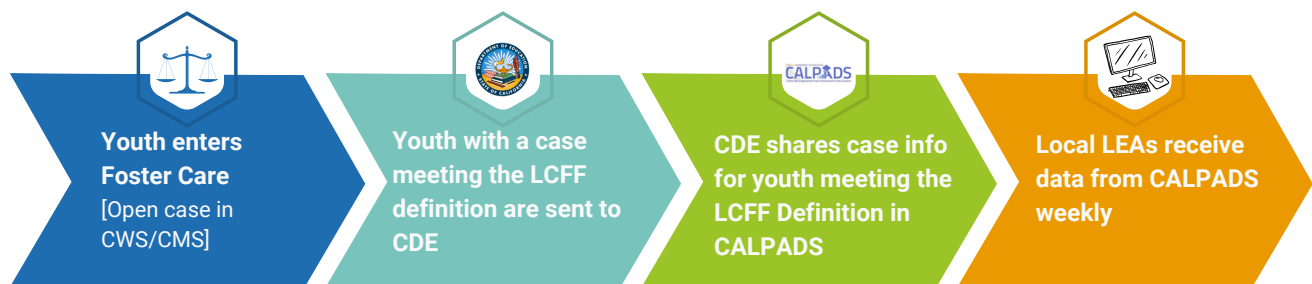
DATA SYSTEMS - STATE AND LOCAL

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is the authority on identifying children or youth who fall under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) definition of foster youth.

The Identification of Youth in Foster Care Relies Upon Four Types of Data Systems

County
CWS/CMS
Information System

State
CALPADS
Data System

LEA
Local Student
Information Systems
(SIS)

Shared Data System
EPS (LA County)
Foster Focus

Data from four data systems are involved in the state process for identifying youth in foster care meeting the LCFF definition. These data systems are defined in the next pages of this guide.

A Simplified View of the Statewide Process

Youth enters Foster Care
[Open case in CWS/CMS]

Youth with a case meeting the LCFF definition are sent to CDE

CDE shares case info for youth meeting the LCFF Definition in CALPADS

Local LEAs receive data from CALPADS weekly

DATA SYSTEMS - STATE AND LOCAL

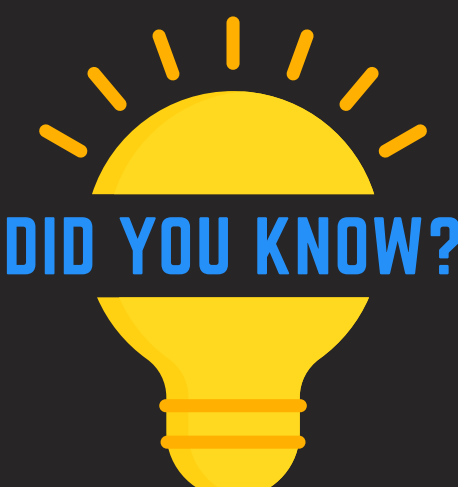**Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)**

The CWS/CMS is a statewide computer system that automates the case management services planning, and information-gathering functions of child welfare services. Governed by the CWS/CMS Oversight Committee, it links all 58 counties and the State to a common database that tracks each case from initial contact through termination of services and collects data for the purposes of State, county and federal reporting.

Visit the CWS/CMS webpage on CDSS.CA.gov for more information.

California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS)

The CDE developed the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) to maintain student demographics, course data, discipline, assessments, staff assignments and other data for state and federal reporting (CDE, n.d.).

CALPADS provides reports related to Foster Youth that can be used to support local identification and tracking practices by an LEA. See page 18 for information on each report.

DID YOU KNOW?

All-County Letter (ACL) 16-75

An All County Letter No. 16-75 dated September 27, 2016, was addressed to all County Child Welfare Directors and Chief Probation Officers to inform county child welfare and juvenile probation departments that the CDSS, since October 2014, shares child-specific data about youth in foster care with the California Department of Education (CDE). It goes on to explain that the CDE is using the CWS/CMS data to match with school enrollment data to help Local Education Agencies (LEAs) identify youth in foster care who are attending their schools so as to provide educational support services.

The passing of Senate Bill 91, now referred to as the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), is the reason the CDSS shares data regarding youth in foster care with the CDE (CDSS, 2016, pg. 1). The additional LCFF funds that schools receive are intended to support the needs of specific student groups, including students in foster care, to help them achieve academic success (CDSS, 2016, pg. 2).

Student Information System (SIS)

A Student Information System (SIS) is a digital hub for managing and organizing all the important information related to students. Imagine it as a comprehensive and user-friendly tool that helps local education agencies (LEAs) keep track of various aspects of student data. It includes features such as attendance records, grades, schedules, contact information and more.

For parents, it provides a way to stay informed about their child's academic progress, attendance and any important announcements from the school. Teachers use the system to input grades, take attendance and access information about their students. Administrators benefit from the SIS by having a centralized platform to manage school-wide data, track trends and generate reports.

Tribal Foster Youth

Starting the 2020-21 school year, the LCFF definition of foster youth expanded to include youth who are dependents under the jurisdiction of tribal courts that meet specific requirements.

California Education Code (EC) section 42238.01(b) specifies:
"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 tribal court's jurisdiction in accordance with the tribe's law, provided that the child would also meet one of the descriptions in Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code describing when a child may be adjudged a dependent child of the juvenile court."

Since tribal youth are not under the jurisdiction of a California court, and since CDSS is not required to collect or share this information with the CDE pursuant to subsection 49085 (e)(ii) above, LEAs will be responsible for collecting this information in order to ensure any students that might qualify as tribal youth are included in the expanded definition of foster youth for purposes of implementing the LCFF.

13

Educational Passport System (EPS)

The Los Angeles Educational Passport System (EPS) is a portal of secure online applications managed by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and was developed in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Visit the EPS webpage on LACOE.edu for more information.

Benefits of EPS:

- Secure management of youth demographic, academic and child welfare data

- Support the increase in collaborative and efficient information sharing between local education and child welfare agencies

- Support and maximize the coordination of services for youth in foster care and lessen duplication of efforts

- There is no cost to participating schools and districts within Los Angeles County

FEATURED EPS PORTAL APPLICATIONS:

- FOSTER YOUTH CORE: Access centralized data shared by participating local education and child welfare agencies.

- DOCUMENT LIBRARY: Access or store student documents in electronic cumulative records folders. Request student documents to be uploaded, if not available.

- ONLINE REPORTS: Access report tools designed to aid service providers with supporting students in foster care.

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN & YOUTH
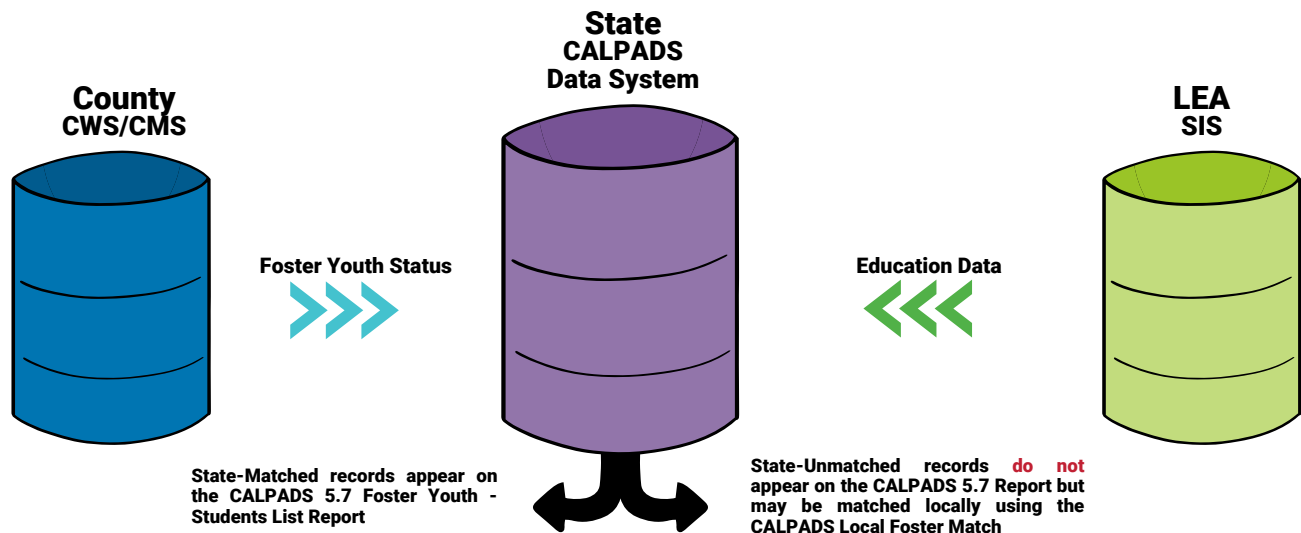
County CWS/CMS

Foster Youth Status >>>

State CALPADS Data System

LEA SIS

Education Data <<<

State-Matched records appear on the CALPADS 5.7 Foster Youth - Students List Report

State-Unmatched records **do not** appear on the CALPADS 5.7 Report but may be matched locally using the CALPADS Local Foster Match

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is the authority on identifying children or youth who fall under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) definition of foster youth. CDSS assigns each of these identified children or youth a unique set of IDs (i.e., Foster Client ID and Case ID) using the Child Welfare System/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and sends a weekly file to the California Department of Education (CDE) to match with enrollment data (i.e., name, birthdate and school enrollment or residence zip code) in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) made available by LEAs. Matching records appear on the CALPADS 5.7 Foster Youth - Student List report, accessible in CALPADS to LEAs and COEs.

Records not matched by the state foster match process may be matched by LEAs using the Local Foster Match feature in CALPADS.

CWS/CMS Information Included in the Weekly File to CALPADS:

- Foster ID (Ten-digit)
- Case Start Date
- Case End Date
- Case ID (19-digit)
- Episode Start Date (or the start of an out-of-home placement)
- Episode End Date (or end of an out-of-home placement)
- Social Worker Name
- Social Worker Phone Number
- Court Appointed Educational Representative Name and Phone Number
- Service Type (P - Placement, VP - Voluntary Placement Agreement, or FM - Receiving family maintenance services)
- County of jurisdiction
- Y or N to indicate limited parental rights
- C or P to indicate the responsible agency (Child Welfare or Probation)
- Last Updated Date of the Match

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN & YOUTH

The Alliance for Children's Rights Network (2021) found they were able to identify youth in foster care faster by increasing the frequency that they looked at and integrated their CALPADS foster youth data match from monthly to weekly and by quickly integrating this match into their student information system (SIS).

The Alliance for Children's Rights and a network of district staff collaborated to improve outcomes for foster youth and created a Best Practices Guide, which includes a chapter on Identification.
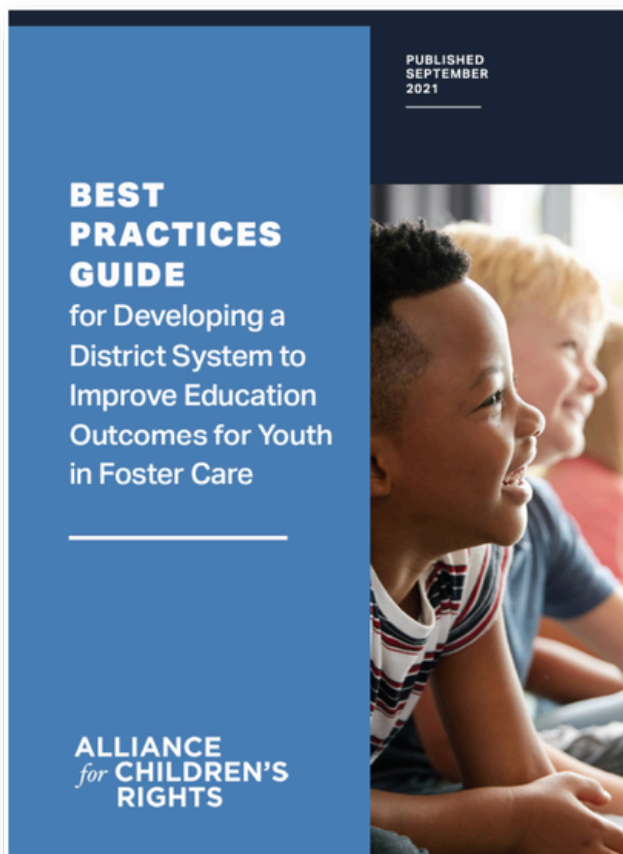
Alliance for Children's Rights (2021). Best Practices Guide for Developing a District System to Improve Education Outcomes for Youth in Foster Care.

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN & YOUTH

Unmatched Records and Local Foster Match
- Some students who meet the LCFF-defined foster youth definition and were included in the records shared by CWS/CMS will not be successfully matched to a CALPADS student record and, therefore, will not appear on the CALPADS 5.7 report through the statewide matching process.
- The unmatched records can be matched locally through CALPADS. Authorized CALPADS users within LEAs are encouraged to attempt a local foster match for any students believed to meet the LCFF definition, which does not appear on the 5.7 report.
- LEAS need to create a local process to monitor and identify student records that may require a local foster match.
- We recommend that LEA foster youth liaisons have access to CALPADS with the following user roles to perform a foster match at the local level:
  - Student Search
  - Foster Youth
  - Maintain Foster

A Glance at the CALPADS Local Foster Match

- Two identifiers for the student being matched are required to complete a local foster match:
  - Student statewide student identifier (SSID) that is assigned during school enrollment.
  - Either the 10-digit Foster Client ID or 19-digit Foster Case ID is assigned by the CDSS in CWS/CMS.

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN & YOUTH

CALPADS REPORTS

Foster Youth Reports in Calpads

CALPADS administrators and designated staff with the "Foster Youth" user role in CALPADS have access to the reports listed below, and districts can determine and develop policies determining who may access this information (e.g., Foster Youth Liaisons, Counselors).

LEAs Have Access to:

5.6 Foster Youth Enrolled - Count
Reports the count of students in foster care by school within an LEA.

5.7 Foster Youth Enrolled - Student List
Reports the list of students identified as foster youth under LCFF. Monitor this report regularly: use it to plan for appropriate support services and ensure accurate enrollment information. Support services and ensure accurate enrollment information.

5.8 Former Foster Youth Enrolled - Count
Reports the count of students who have an LCFF Foster End Date.

5.9 Former Foster Youth Enrolled - Student List
Reports the list of foster students who have an LCFF Foster End Date. These students will no longer appear on the 5.7 report. This report is purged every July 1. Use this list to add program end dates in your SIS.

1.17 FRPM-English Learner-Foster Youth Count
Reports the unduplicated count of students in categories (e.g., Free and Reduced Meal Program, English Learner, Foster Youth) eligible for local supplemental funding dollars based upon their demographics as of Fall 1 Census Day. This is the starting point for the LCFF supplemental and concentration grant calculations. Use counts to project funding levels for the LCFF.

1.18 FRMP-English Learner-Foster Youth - Student List

Reports the list of students in categories (e.g., Free and Reduced Meal Program, English Learner, and Foster Youth), that are eligible for local supplemental funding dollars based upon their demographics as of fall Census Day (the first Wednesday in October).

These reports are a point-in-time list as of the date it is accessed and are not cumulative for the current academic year.

Additionally, County Offices of Education have access to:

- C/A 5.6 Foster Youth Enrolled - Count
- C/A 5.7 Foster Youth Enrolled - Student List
- C/A 1.17 LCFF Unduplicated Pupil - Count

OTHER MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION

There are other means of identification at the local level that may serve to bridge the gap in the CDSS/CDE identification process:

DCFS 1399 Form: The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) utilizes this form to notify LEAs of a student's involvement with DCFS and dependency court. It contains useful information, including the student's current educational rights holder's name and attorney. Other jurisdictions may use something similar.

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Education Unit, or their Youth Education Support (YES) Inbox (youth.education.support@dcfs.lacounty.gov) will respond to questions regarding a youth's status.

Local Tribal Partners: Tribal youth in foster care are not identified in the typical match process. Information-sharing agreements with local tribal partners or other identification forms used at enrollment can support the identification of these students.

Self-Identification: Students, caregivers, or family members may self-disclose to school staff.

Student Housing Questionnaire (SHQ): Though this affidavit addresses the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act, an LEA may also utilize it to determine a youth's foster care status.

Screening Questionnaire

Date of Enrollment: _____

Name of Student: _____   Date of Birth: _____

School: _____   Grade: _____

Please provide the following information.
Note that disclosure is not required but may entitle the youth to additional rights and services at school.

	Yes	No
Is the student enrolling with a DCFS Form 1399?** *If yes, attach copy of the form to this Screening*	☐	☐
Is the youth you are enrolling in foster care?	☐	☐
Does the youth receive visits from a social worker or probation officer?	☐	☐
Does the youth live in a Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (also referred to as a group home)?	☐	☐
Does the youth regularly attend court?	☐	☐
Does the youth have an attorney or other court representative who helps determine who they will live with or where they live?	☐	☐
Has the youth ever been in foster care? If so, when was the case closed? _____	☐	☐
Does the youth live with someone other than their parents?	☐	☐
Do you believe the youth you are enrolling is a dependent of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization?	☐	☐

*** If the answer to any of these questions is "YES" please send the form to:
_____
District Foster Youth Liaison***

Enrollment Staff Name: _____

BELOW FOR FY LIAISON USE ONLY

FHY Liaison: _____   Date Received: _____

☐ Foster Youth Status   ☐ Not Foster Youth Status

School Contract: _____   Date Notified: _____

21

BEST PRACTICES FOR
LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES

Identification

Upload student enrollment data to CALPADS weekly
The statewide LCFF foster youth identification process requires student enrollment records in order to match those records to CDSS child welfare records. If LEAs do not begin uploading enrollment data promptly at the start of the school year and update on at least a weekly basis, it will delay the identification of eligible students.

Maintain identification data in the local Student Information System (SIS)
It is vital to use the CALPADS 5.7 and 5.9 reports to identify current and former youth in care in the local SIS. This practice allows the many staff who serve the student locally to know the student's status and support their needs and educational rights. It also allows the LEA to track outcomes for youth in foster care over time.

Use the CALPADS Local Foster Match process to match students who CDE does not match. LEAs must utilize the local foster match process to identify youth not accurately identified through the CDSS/CDE state match process. Variability in a student's records (e.g., spelling of name and incorrect birthdate) may prevent an automatic match.

Create a local process to identify Tribal Foster Youth
Tribal Foster Youth are eligible for the same entitlements and services as LCFF Foster Youth. LEAs must work directly with local tribal courts to identify eligible students in foster care and ensure they are identified in CALPADS for these students to be counted as Foster Youth for purposes of funding and accountability (e.g., to be included in unduplicated LCFF funding allocations).

Use other data sources to identify foster youth
Use alternatives to the CALPADS 5.7 list to identify youth in foster care meeting the LCFF definition who may not have matched through the automated state system (see page 20). Be aware that some students will not meet the LCFF definition (sometimes called "non-LCFF Foster Youth" or "AB 490 youth") but have educational rights defined in ED code. These students will not be identified through CALPADS and require other identification sources to be identified locally.

Data Governance

Define staff roles and access

The data governance policy outlines how an LEA uses and manages data. It identifies the staff roles that require access to student data and the responsibilities related to using that data. The LEAs local policy would outline which staff have access to what data, including records for students in foster care. For example, it may also designate specific staff members responsible for identifying youth in foster care within the local student information system (SIS).

Data Privacy Training

All staff with access to student data should be trained regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and basic data security best practices. Please consult your LEA training platform or Human Resources department for available training. The United States Department of Education's website provides a series of trainings for your convenience.

Online Training Modules

Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)
- FERPA 101: For Local Education Agencies
- FERPA 101: For Colleges & Universities
- FERPA 201: Data Sharing under FERPA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: I am a new Foster Youth Liaison in my district, how do I gain access to CALPADS?

A: If you are a new Foster Youth Liaison in your district and would like to gain access to CALPADS, contact your district's CALPADS Administrator. If you do not know who your CALPADS Administrator is, contact the CALPADS Service Desk via e-mail at calpads-support@cde.ca.gov or 916-325-9210.

Question: How can I find out who in my district has access to Foster Youth lists in CALPADS?

A: The CALPADS Administrator for each LEA is responsible for creating CALPADS user accounts and assigning roles for each user. To find out who your designated CALPADS administrator is, visit the California School Information Services (CSIS) website. For further details regarding the roles required to support the local identification process, please refer to page 17 of this guide.

Question: Which CALPADS report provides the count of all LCFF foster youth at my LEA?

A: LEA staff with appropriate security roles have access to the CALPADS 5.6 Foster Youth Enrolled Count report which provides the count of students enrolled by school and grade level. Additionally, the CALPADS 5.7 Foster Youth Student List Report provides a student level list that includes various information on foster youth who have been identified through the CDE-CDSS weekly match process.

Question: What is a Local Foster Match? How do I do a Local Foster Match?

A: The "Local Foster Match" is a process to identify youth who could not be matched through the state match process. Variability in a student's records (e.g. spelling of name, incorrect birthdate) may prevent an automatic match (see page 17 of this guide). To access detailed guidance on conducting a Local Foster Match visit the Calpads Local Foster Match Maintenance website.
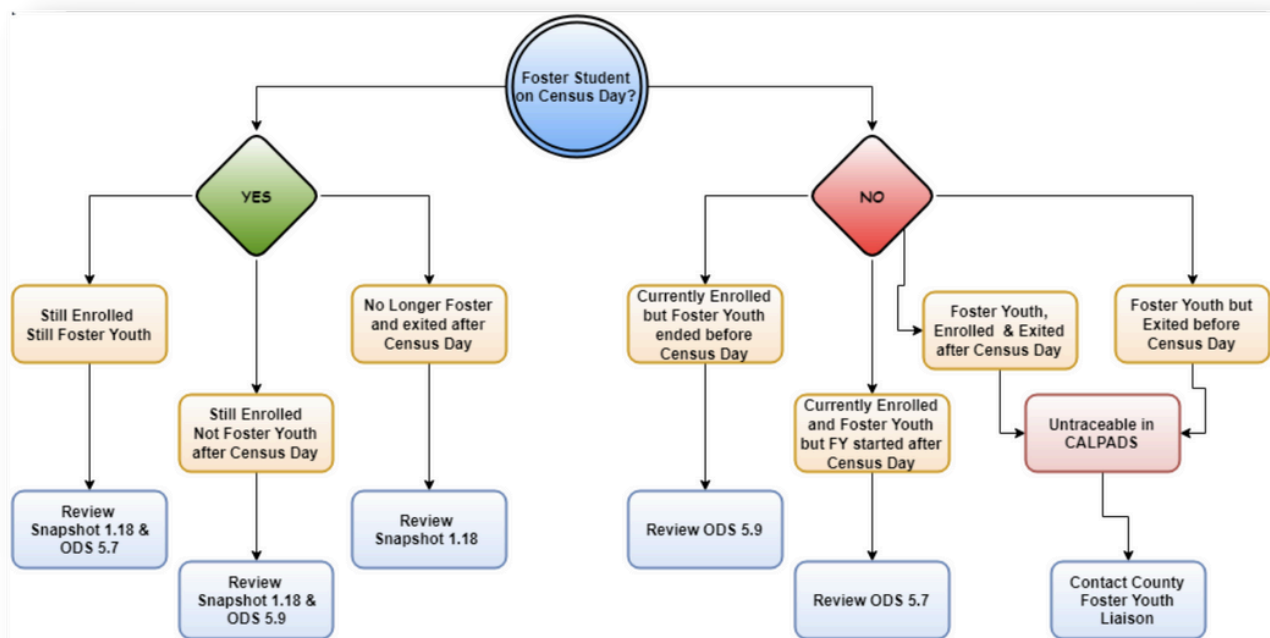
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: Why might foster students in our district SIS system not come up on the CALPADS 5.7 or the CALPADS 1.18 lists?

A: The definition of foster youth under LCFF is strict and determines the youth to be included in the file sent to CDE CALPADS based on the data in CWS/CMS at the time of the matching cycle. Consult your LEA Student Information System administrator regarding the local process for identifying students in foster care and what definition of students in foster care is being applied (E.g., LCFF foster youth, AB 490).

If an LEA allows manual identification of students as youth in foster care, local staff with knowledge of the dependency case may have identified the student before the next statewide update, which occurs weekly. If it has been longer than one week, you should attempt a local foster match (see page 17) because the statewide match may have failed to match the student due to inconsistencies between the CWS/CMS and CALPADS data.

Some LEAs may have decided locally to track all AB 490 eligible students using the same local identifier. In this case, do not expect the local data to match publicly reported data for the "foster youth" student group, such as on DataQuest or CA Schools Dashboard.

The CALPADS flow chart below is helpful for understanding when a student appears on the many available reports.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: Who can provide support with the local match process at my LEA?

A: Your LEA CALPADS and EPS administrators are a great source of support! To find out which staff member at your LEA has been designated as EPS administrator contact EPS Support at epssupport@lacoe.edu. To find out which staff member is designated as your CALPADS administrator, visit the California School Information Services (CSIS) website.

Question: Why are there students marked as foster youth on the CALPADS 1.18 Unduplicated Pupil List who are not included in the CALPADS 5.7 Foster Youth Enrolled – Student List?

A: The CALPADS 1.18 will also include students identified as Tribal Foster Youth under educational program code 193. These students are included in the LCFF definition, but will not show on the 5.7 report. For any other situations, please email the details in question to your regional FYSCP staff (Coordinator I and Senior Program Specialist) and FYSDataTeam@LACOE.onmicrosoft.com.

Question: Why might foster students in our district SIS system not come up on EPS?

A: There may be different reasons why a student record may not appear in an EPS student search including but not limited to the following:
- The student record may not be included in your district's data file to EPS or the district file may not have been imported into EPS.
- The student record may be restricted by DCFS as sensitive or confidential or may not have an SSID linked to the DCFS student record.
- The student may not have been matched by CDSS and CDE in the statewide match.

Individual cases may be investigated with support from the EPS Help Desk by emailing HelpDesk@lacoe.edu.

Question: How frequently does EPS receive Child Welfare data?

A: Twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays. Please see page 12 for additional information about the Education Passport System.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: Is there CALPADS documentation for LEAs regarding the collection and submission of data for CALPADS?

A: Visit CDE's CALPADS System Documentation webpage for the latest link to the CALPADS Data Guide.

Question: Where can I find CALPADS quick start guides and other online training resources?

A: Visit the online CALPADS User Manual provided by CDE.

Question: How do I find the historical count of foster youth in my district?

A: DataQuest is an online reporting system provided by CDE that includes a district-level Count of Matched Foster Students report and enrollment reports that can be filtered for program subgroup "Foster Youth". Visit the DataQuest webpage on the CDE website for more information.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Please use the provided QR code to access all links within this technical guide, including the resources and supports.

LACOE: Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP)

Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services

California Department of Education

California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System

DataQuest

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Los Angeles County
Office of Education

Click here to learn more about the Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program.

Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program Administrators
La Shona Jenkins: Project Director III
Jason Gutierrez: Coordinator III, Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program
Loretta Ledezma: Coordinator III, Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program
Larry Canter: Coordinator III, Direct Services Program
Jennifer Rios-Zambrano: Coordinator III, Education Specialist Program
Michelle de Castro, Supervising Business Systems Analyst - Data Team
Ani Aharonian, Research and Evaluation Coordinator

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