

Marengo County Foster Care Team

2020-2021

Name	Position	Signature
Kathy Pritchett	Marengo County POC	Kathy Pritchett
William Martin	ALJ Principal	William Martin
David Miller	MHS Principal	David Miller
Becky Williams	SW Principal	Becky A. Williams
Tracy Mitchell	ALJ Counselor	Tracy Mitchell
Amanda Compton	MHS Counselor	Amanda L.Compton
Courtney Taylor	SW Counselor	Courtney Taylor
JB Qualls	Marengo County Transportation Supervisor	jb qualls
Dawn Hewitt	DHR POC	Dawn Hewitt

Signature: Kathy Pritchett
Kathy Pritchett (Aug 27, 2020 13:47 CDT)
Email: kpritchett@marengo.k12.al.us

Signature: David Miller
David Miller (Aug 31, 2020 14:15 CDT)
Email: dmiller@marengo.k12.al.us

Signature: Tracy Mitchell
Tracy Mitchell (Sep 1, 2020 10:21 CDT)
Email: tstacy@marengo.k12.al.us

Signature: Courtney Taylor
Courtney Taylor (Sep 3, 2020 09:01 CDT)
Email: courtneytaylor@marengo.k12.al.us

Signature: Dawn Hewitt
Dawn Hewitt (Sep 8, 2020 09:27 CDT)
Email: dawn.hewitt@dh.alabama.gov

Signature: William Martin
William Martin (Aug 27, 2020 14:39 CDT)
Email: wmartin@marengo.k12.al.us

Signature: Becky A. Williams
Becky A. Williams (Sep 1, 2020 09:57 CDT)
Email: beckywilliams@marengo.k12.al.us

Signature: Amanda L. Compton
Amanda L. Compton (Sep 1, 2020 10:52 CDT)
Email: acompton@marengo.k12.al.us

Signature: jb qualls
jb qualls (Sep 8, 2020 09:30 CDT)
Email: marengocounty784@bellsouth.net

**Alabama Education Stability for Foster Students
LEA Plan Template**

LEA Student in Foster Care Overview
Number of Students in Foster Care SY 2019- 2020 (Enrolled for Previous School Year): 0
Number of Students in Foster Care SY 2020- 2021 (Currently Enrolled): 2
List Agencies in Collaboration: Marengo County Schools Marengo County Department of Human Resources
Policy Review and Revision (Describe how each agency in collaboration reviewed policies and the revisions made to policies as a result of reviews.) The Marengo County School System and the Marengo County Department of Human Resources will work collaboratively to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws in providing proper service to children in foster care. Each participating agency reviewed enrollment and transportation policies currently in place. A transportation plan for students in foster care was developed jointly by the participating agencies. Each agency will be responsible for transporting students to the attendance boundary if it is determined to be in the child's best interest to remain in his/her school of origin. Every school in the Marengo County System will have training regarding enrollment policy and procedures for children in foster care to ensure that they are enrolled immediately with or without the regular required documentation.
Describe Collaboration and Coordination with Agencies (Include a list of team members, positions, signatures, and agencies.): Kathy Pritchett, Marengo County Schools Federal Programs Coordinator and Foster Care Point of Contact William Martin, Amelia L. Johnson Principal David Miller, Marengo High School Principal Becky Williams, Sweet Water High School Principal Tracy Mitchell, Amelia L. Johnson Counselor Amanda Compton, Marengo High School Counselor Courtney Taylor, Sweet Water High School Counselor JB Qualls, Marengo County Transportation Supervisor Dawn Hewitt, Marengo County DHR Point of Contact

LEA(s) Point(s) of Contact: Kathy Pritchett

DHR(s) Point(s) of Contact: Dawn Hewitt

2 C. F. R. §§ 200.331(d), 200.328(a); 34 C.F.R. §76.770; ESSA SECTION 1111(1)(e) - LEAs must implement the Title I educational stability requirements of children in foster care, including ensuring that:

- A child in foster care remains in his or her school of origin, unless it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in that child's best interest;
- If it is not in the child's best interest to stay in his or her school of origin the child is immediately enrolled in the new school even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment; and
- That the new (enrolling) school immediately contacts the school of origin, to obtain relevant academic and other records.

Describe procedures for implementing the above provisions.

The Marengo County School System and the Marengo County Department of Human Resources will work collaboratively to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws in providing proper service to children in foster care. A team approach will be utilized to make best interest decisions for said children. Foster Care Team composition will include persons who have the best interest of the child at heart (e.g. school system and DHR points of contact or designee, school administration and counselor, social workers, select teachers, coaches, transportation supervisor, the child, education decision maker, other individuals who have intimate knowledge of how placement decisions might impact the child). Designees will be knowledgeable of ESSA requirements for children in foster care. The team will be responsible for developing Individual Service Plans for children in foster care.

The school system POCs will arrange training for school office personnel regarding enrollment policy and procedures for children in foster care to ensure that they are enrolled immediately with or without the regular required documents and that school counselors immediately request/send student records from school of origin to enrolling schools. The DHR point of contact will assist in records acquisition and serve as the liaison between the school system and various child welfare departments.

ESSA Section 1111(g)(1)(E)(i) – A description of how the LEA in collaboration with the local child welfare agency will ensure that in determining whether it is in the child's best interest to remain in his or her school or origin, and LEA takes into consideration all factors relating to a child's best interest.

Description of how the LEA will work with child welfare agencies to develop a clear policy or protocol on how to make best interest determinations including making every effort to gather meaningful input from relevant parties, in addition to required child welfare and school representatives, in deciding what school placement is in a child's best interest. Include a description of protocols in this description.

ALSDE best interest determination guidance will be used to guide decision making of the Foster Care Team. The team will consider the following:

Child's preference

Views of the parents or the person with education decision-making rights

Child's attachment to school, including meaningful relationships with staff and peers

Placement of the child's siblings

Whether the child has an identified disability under IDEA or Section 504 and if required services and related aids are available in potential schools

Whether the child is an English Learner and is receiving language services and if so, the availability of service in potential schools

Availability and quality of services in the current and potential schools to meet the child's educational and social-emotional needs

Influence of school climate on the child including safety

History of school transfers and how they have impacted the child

and

Length of commute to the school of origin and its impact on the child, based upon the child's developmental stage.

Potential supporting documents for best interest determination may include but are not limited to: report cards, IEP, 504 Plan, EL Plan, progress reports, test scores, attendance data, email correspondence from individuals consulted during the determination process.

ESSA Section 1112(c)(5)(B) Description of transportation protocols and procedures to include how additional costs for transportation will be calculated and funded as well as a policy for LEAs to resolve best interest disputes and interagency disputes related to transportation costs. Description must include how transportation and transportation costs will be monitored. (Include LEA and welfare responsibilities for providing transportation.)

Description of Dispute Resolution Policy

When the school of origin is determined to be in the best interest of the child, the school system POC will work with its Transportation Supervisor and DHR POC in providing transportation. Strategies will include but are not limited to the following methods:

The school district will provide in-county transportation via traditional bus service, including route adjustments and team transport from one attendance zone to another, where feasible,

Foster parent transportation from one attendance zone to another for school attendance, and

Bus transportation and/or foster parent transportation to out-of-county schools.

Dispute Resolution – Education Decision Maker

An education decision maker must request resolution in writing by submitting a dated appeal letter specifying the school in which enrollment is sought and the basis for seeking enrollment in that school should he or she disagree with the best interest placement decision. The letter must be submitted within five (5) days of receiving the school district's written notice of the right to dispute the decision and it must include the contact information (phone, email and mailing address) for the education decision maker. The appeal letter may be submitted by any of the delivery systems listed below:

scan and emailed to kpritchett@marengo.k12.al.us with the subject "Foster Care Appeal,"

return the paper form to any Marengo County school to the Attention of Federal Programs Department, and

submit a paper form directly to the Central Office at 101 North Shiloh Street Linden, AL.

The school district POCs will arrange a timely conference with the education decision maker, the student (if appropriate), and DHR POC. Within five (5) business days of the conference the school district POC will provide the education decision maker with a written appeal decision that includes:

a copy of the complete Level I appeal packet,

the Level I decision and explanation for the decision, and

instructions on how to file a Level II dispute to the State Foster Care Point of Contact, Julie Turner, via email at jturner@alsde.edu or via telephone 334-242-8199.

The state decision will constitute final resolution. Educational services will be provided throughout the dispute process.

Dispute Resolution – Interagency Transportation

Marengo County School System and the Marengo County Department of Human Resource are committed to providing education stability to children in foster care. To that end, should a transportation dispute arise, Marengo County School System will provide transportation to the pre-determined school without disruption. The agency that had been paying for transportation prior to the dispute will continue to pay until the dispute is resolved. If transportation was not provided previously, the LEA will arrange and provide transportation while payment disputes are being resolved by the Alabama State Department of Education. The school system or DHR may submit a dispute resolution request to the State Foster

Care Point of Contact, Julie Turner, via email with the subject "Foster Child Transportation Dispute" at jturner@alsde.edu or via telephone 334-242-8199. The dispute resolution request must include:
a complete explanation of the basis of the dispute, with all pertinent facts,
the name and contact information of the people who have been addressing the dispute thus far on behalf of both the school system and DHR (phone, email and mailing address), and
details of how the agencies have attempted to resolve the dispute at the local level prior to appealing to the state.
The state agency will make a final decision within thirty (30) days of receiving all information related to the dispute. The decision shall be the final resolution.

ESSA Section 111(g)(1)(E)(ii)-(iii) Describe protocol for a child in foster care to be immediately enrolled in a new school.

Upon initial enrollment, students identified as being in foster care will immediately be enrolled even if enrollment documents are not presented. The Foster Care POC will schedule a BEST INTEREST DETERMINATION meeting. Student fees, books, or equipment return will not be a barrier to record release. Applicable school personnel will be trained on the law and local procedures to ensure compliance.

ESSA Section 1112(c)(5)(B) Description of transportation protocols and procedures to include how additional costs for

transportation will be calculated and funded as well as a policy for LEAs to resolve best interest disputes and interagency disputes

related to transportation costs. Description must include how transportation and transportation costs will be monitored. (Include

LEA and welfare responsibilities for providing transportation.)

Description of Dispute Resolution Policy

When the school of origin is determined to be in the best interest of the child, the school system POC will work with its

Transportation Supervisor and DHR POC in providing transportation. Strategies will include but are not limited to the following

methods:

- The school district will provide in-county transportation via traditional bus services, including route adjustments and team transport from one attendance zone to another, where feasible,
- Foster parent transportation from one attendance zone to another for school attendance, and
- Bus transportation and/or foster parent transportation to out-of-county schools.

Dispute Resolution – Education Decision Maker

An education decision maker must request resolution in writing by submitting a dated appeal letter specifying the school in which enrollment is sought and the basis for seeking enrollment in that school should he or she disagree with the best interest placement decision. The letter must be submitted within five (5) days of receiving the school district's written notice of the right to dispute the decision and it must include the contact information (phone, email and mailing address) for the education decision maker. The appeal letter may be submitted by any of the delivery systems listed below:

- scan and emailed to kpritchett@marengo.k12.al.us with the subject "Foster Care Appeal,"
- return the paper form to any Marengo County school to the Attention of Federal Programs Department, and

MARENGO COUNTY DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY FOR FOSTER CARE

- submit a paper form directly to the Central Office at 101 North Shiloh Street Linden, AL.

The school district POCs will arrange a timely conference with the education decision maker, the student (if appropriate), and DHR POC. Within five (5) business days of the conference the school district POC will provide the education decision maker with a written appeal decision that includes:

- a copy of the complete Level I appeal packet,
- the Level I decision and explanation for the decision, and
- instructions on how to file a Level II dispute to the State Foster Care Point of Contact, Julie Turner, via email at jturner@alsde.edu or via telephone 334-242-8199.

The state decision will constitute final resolution. Educational services will be provided throughout the dispute process.

Dispute Resolution – Interagency Transportation

Marengo County School System and the Marengo County Department of Human Resource are committed to providing education stability to children in foster care. To that end, should a transportation dispute arise, Marengo County School System will provide transportation to the pre-determined school without disruption. The agency that had been paying for transportation prior to the dispute will continue to pay until the dispute is resolved. If transportation was not provided previously, the LEA will arrange and provide transportation while payment disputes are being resolved by the Alabama State Department of Education. The school system or DHR may submit a dispute resolution request to the State Foster Care Point of Contact, Julie Turner, via email with the subject "Foster Child Transportation Dispute" at jturner@alsde.edu or via telephone 334-242-8199. The dispute resolution request must include:

- a complete explanation of the basis of the dispute, with all pertinent facts,
- the name and contact information of the people who have been addressing the dispute thus far on behalf of both the school system and DHR (phone, email and mailing address), and
- details of how the agencies have attempted to resolve the dispute at the local level prior to appealing to the state.
-

The state agency will make a final decision within thirty (30) days of receiving all information related to the dispute. The decision shall be the final resolution.