



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Foster Care Education: Basics

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Objectives

Participants will...

- become familiarized with the statutory requirements to supports students in foster care within their LEA
- be able to utilize the tools derived from this training to collaborate with the child welfare agency to see school stability become a reality for our students in foster care



Pre-Assessment

Pre-Assessment

- 1. Children in foster care are considered 'homeless' or McKinney-Vento eligible.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

Pre-Assessment

- 2. The school of origin is the school the child is enrolled at when entering foster care or if already in foster care, the school the child is enrolled at the time of a foster care placement change.**
- a. True**
 - b. False**

Pre-Assessment

- 3. Which school should a student in foster care attend during the BID process?**
- a. New school
 - b. School that the biological parents choose
 - c. School of origin
 - d. School that the student in foster care chooses

Pre-Assessment

- 4. Which party is responsible for transporting a student in foster care to their school of origin?**
- a. School of origin
 - b. New school
 - c. School of origin & new school splits responsibility
 - d. Child welfare agency
 - e. Foster caregiver
 - f. School of origin & child welfare agency share the responsibility

Pre-Assessment

- 5.** If the outcome of the BID is that it is not in the best interest of the student in foster care to remain at their school of origin, then the new school should enroll that student as soon as all the typically required paperwork is turned in by the foster caregiver.
- a. True
 - b. False



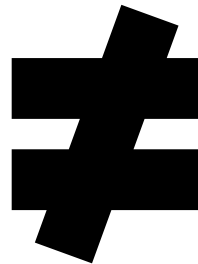
Setting the Stage

Definition of Foster Care

Foster
Care

- Away from parents
- With child welfare agency

Foster
Care



Homeless

Foster Care Definition Joint Letter

Appendix A- Foster Care Scenarios

Scenario A: Student is brought to school by his grandmother who reports that DCS* is assessing her son's home, and the student will be staying with her for the time being. Is this child in foster care? **No.** Children may temporarily stay with a responsible adult such as a relative or other responsible adult while a family is participating in an assessment** if DCS agrees with the arrangement (typically for a period of up to two weeks for the purpose of DCS completing the assessment). School staff may wish to check in with DCS on the status of the assessment (i.e. to ensure nothing has changed, such as DCS taking custody).

Scenario B: Student is brought to school by his grandmother who reports DCS is working with her son, who will be released from jail in a couple of months. Her son has voluntarily agreed for his child to be in foster care for 90 days or less. She provides a Notice to Provider or "NTP." Is this child in foster care? **Yes.** The child is in DCS custody and placed with the grandmother through a temporary "Voluntary Foster Care" agreement.

Scenario C: Student is brought to school by his grandmother. She reports that her son is having some difficulty right now so her grandson is staying with her for a while. DCS is not involved. Is this child in foster care? **No.** DCS is not involved. The living arrangement is between the child's parent and grandparent.

Scenario D: Student is brought to school by his grandmother who reports that DCS and the court are involved and her son is not currently allowed any unsupervised contact. She provides a Notice to Provider or "NTP." Is this child in foster care? **Yes.** The grandmother has an NTP and DCS has been awarded placement care and responsibility by the court.

Scenario E: Student is brought to school by his grandmother who reports that DCS and the court are involved. DCS placed her grandchild with her and she has a Notice to Provider or "NTP." DCS has agreed that her son may also reside in her home, however he does not have custody and she supervises all contact between them. Is this child in foster care? **Yes.** DCS and the court are involved. DCS has custody and placed the child with the grandmother. The parent's presence in the home is not relevant to the custody of the child.

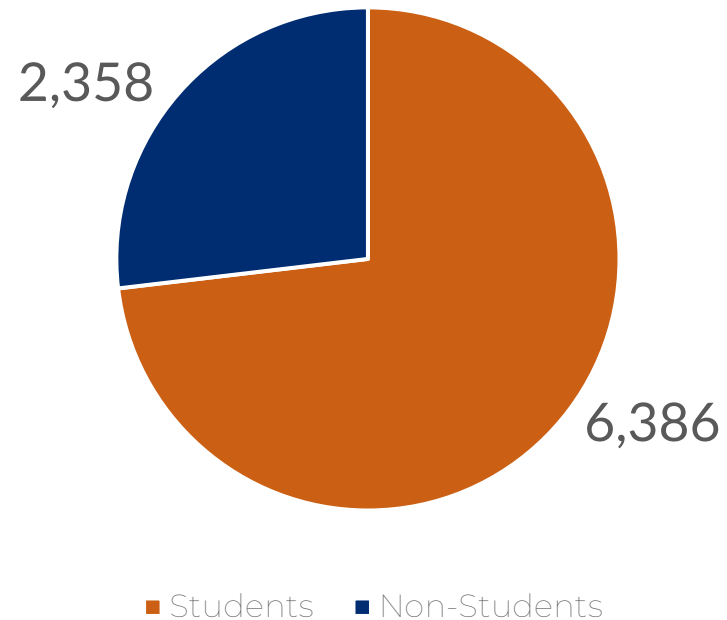
Scenario F: Student is brought to school by his grandmother. She provides paperwork showing that she has been awarded guardianship through her local county court but DCS is not involved. Is this child in foster care? **No.** The school may wish to verify with DCS whether or not they are involved. A person may be appointed as a permanent guardian through the dependency court process without ongoing involvement of DCS. A person may also petition their county court to obtain temporary guardianship of a minor child. It is always good to double check!

Scenario G: Student has turned age 18 and has been living in a foster home (or another foster care living arrangement). Is this student still in foster care? It depends. If the student signed a voluntary agreement to remain in the Extended Foster Care (EFC) program, then the student is still in foster care. If the student opted to have their DCS case closed, then the student is no longer in care. Students may reside in a foster home, group home, kinship home or be living on their own while in EFC. Please note that the federal guidance does recommend prioritizing school stability for students as they exit foster care. "For example, SEAs and LEAs should consider adopting policies that allow a child that exited foster care during the school year to continue in the school of origin through at least the end of the academic year, if appropriate."****

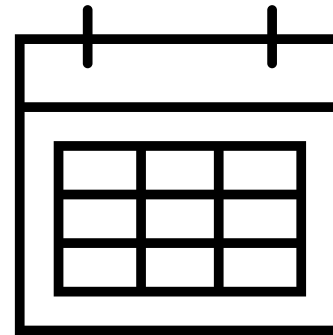
Scenario H: Student has turned age 18 and is participating in DCS transitional living services. Is this student in foster care? **No.** The ADCS has "aftercare" services and support available to youth 18 and older who were in foster care at age 16 or older. (If you are unsure about the student's status, just call us and check!)

Foster Care Data

Children in Department of Child Safety
(Total- 8,744)



Foster Care Mobility

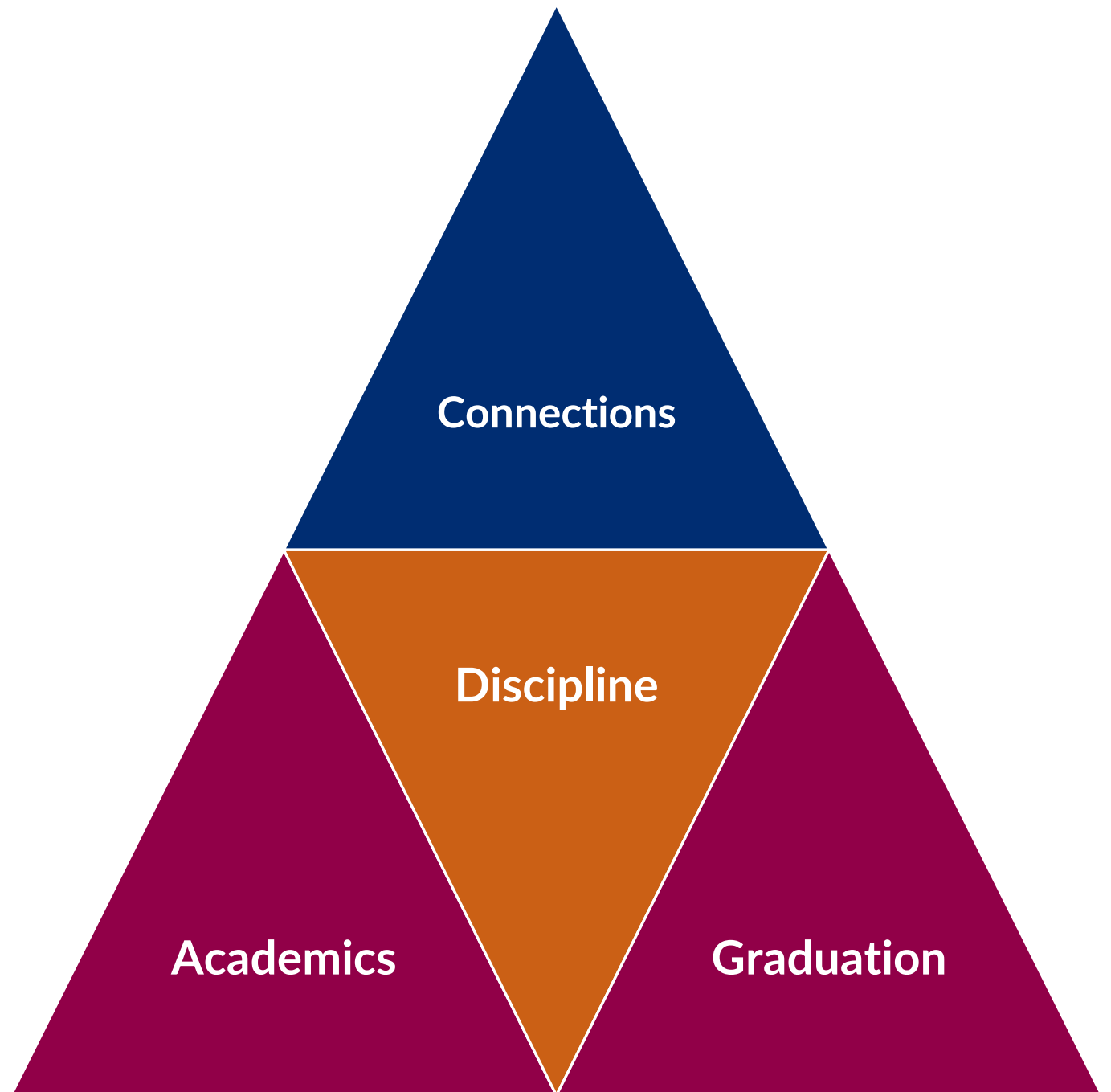


20,300 Moves a year
55.58 Moves a day



2.20 Moves per child

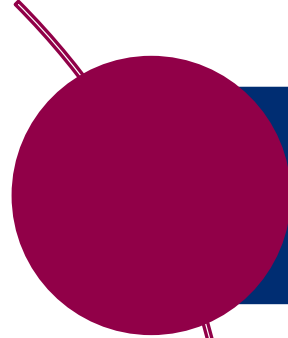
School Stability Rationale



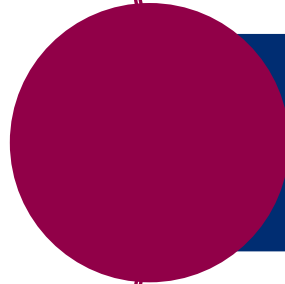


Federal Child Welfare Law

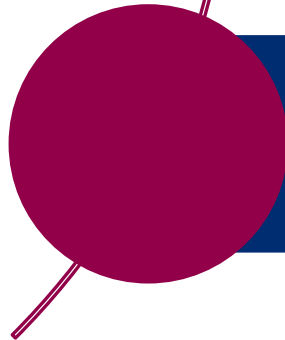
Fostering Connections Act



Proximity to School



Remain in School



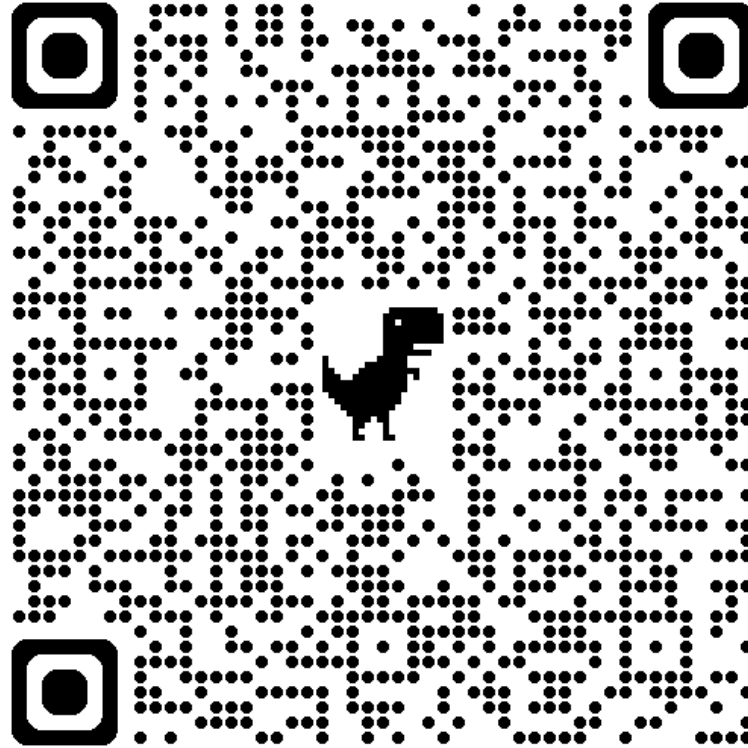
If Not Best, New School

PL 110-351 Sec. 204



Federal Guidance

New Guidance



Nov. 15, 2024

Supersedes Previous

Major Collaboration

<https://www.ed.gov/media/document/non-regulatory-guidance-ensuring-educational-stability-and-success-students-foster-care-november-15-2024>

Question



How many schools did you attend from Kindergarten – 12th grade?



School of Origin

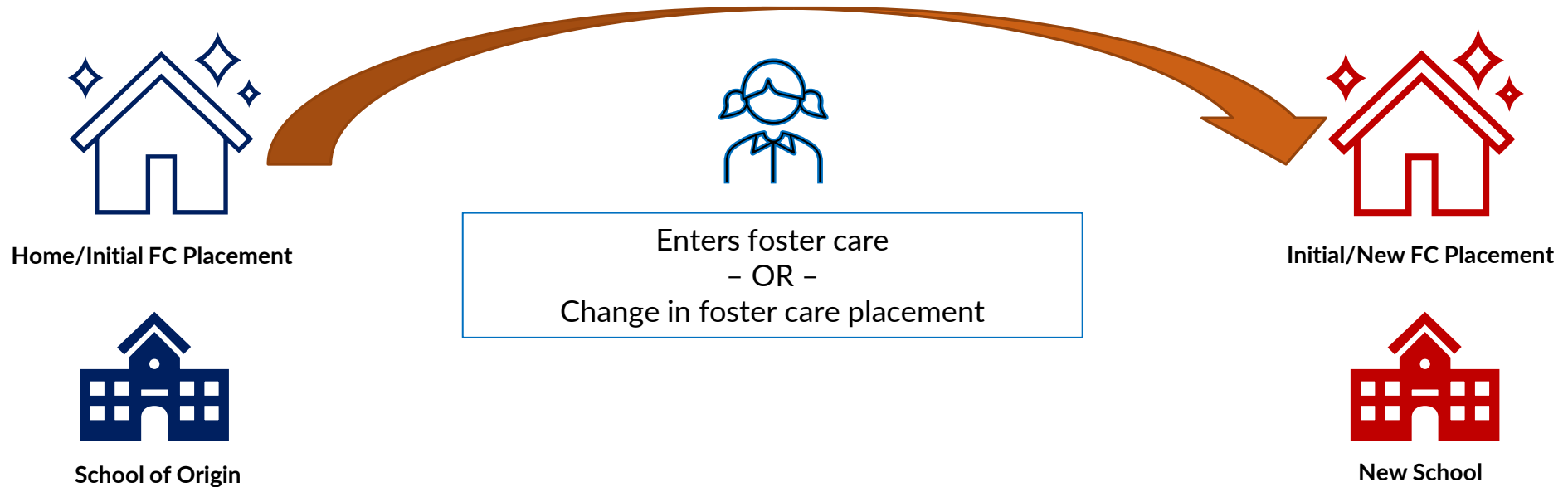
School Stability

Children in foster remain in their school of origin.

*“(i)... remains in such child’s school of origin, unless a determination is made that it is **not** in such child’s **best interest**;*” -- 1111(g)(1)(E)(i)

School of Origin

A child in foster care is to enroll or remain in the school of origin



School of Origin

- The school in which a child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care, including preschool
- OR –
- The school in which the child is enrolled at the time of change in foster care placement

Withdrawal

Caregiver tries to withdraw



No withdrawal, notify point of contact



Best Interest Determination process



Best Interest Determinations

Best Interest Determination Process

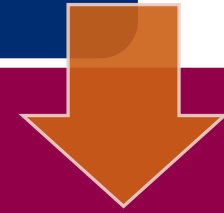
Student-centered, context specific, holistic assessment.

*“A **BID** is a process through which educational agencies and child welfare agencies **partner** with important people in a student’s life to determine whether it is in a student’s best interest to remain at their school of origin or change schools.” -- Joint Federal Guidance*

Best Interest Determination

Should the student in foster care
remain in their school of origin?

During the Best Interest
Determination Process...
YES!



Best Interest Determination Prep Form

School of Origin BID Preparation Form

Date: [Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Information

LEA Name: _____

School Site: _____

LEA Foster Care Point of Contact: _____ Email: _____

School Address: _____

Child in Foster Care Information

Child Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ State Student ID: _____

Date of FC Move: _____ Grade: _____

Residence School Address: _____

School of Origin Input for BID

- **How well connected is the child to the school and/or school staff?**
(i.e., how long attending the school, positive relationships with school staff, any sense of belonging or fitting in, etc.)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- **How is the child performing academically?**
(i.e., passing/failing classes, reading/writing/math at grade level, etc.)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)



Transportation

Transportation Plan



“(B) ... clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin... for the duration of the time in foster care...

“(i) ... promptly receive transportation in a cost-effective manner...” -- 1112(c)(5)(B)

Foster Care Transportation Procedure

Foster Care Transportation Procedure Document

Once a child in foster care is identified, the Local Educational Agency's (LEA) Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) shall be notified. The LEA Foster Care POC will execute the procedure for ensuring children in foster care that need transportation to their school of origin will promptly receive transportation in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with section 475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 675(4)(A)) & how that transportation will be provided, arranged, and funded. Transportation to the school of origin for children in foster care is a shared responsibility between the child welfare agency & the school of origin. This collaboration requires great partnership, creative problem-solving skills, and a student-focused mindset so children in foster care would be affirmingly supported by all foster care education stakeholders.

Local Educational Agency [[Click here to enter text.](#)]

- School (Name and Contact Info): [[Click here to enter text.](#)]
- LEA Foster Care POC (Name and Contact Info): [[Click here to enter text.](#)]
- Transportation Office contact (Name and Contact Info): [[Click here to enter text.](#)]
- Student(s) (Name and DOB): [[Click here to enter text.](#)] Grade: [[Click here to enter text.](#)]
- Placement/Caregiver (Name and Contact Info): [[Click here to enter text.](#)]
- Child Welfare Agency (CWA) POC (Name and Contact Info): [[Click here to enter text.](#)]
- CWA Specialist (Name and Contact Info): [[Click here to enter text.](#)]
- CWA Specialist's Supervisor (Name and Contact Info): [[Click here to enter text.](#)]

Foster Caregiver Address: [[Click here to enter text.](#)]

School Address: [[Click here to enter text.](#)]

Procedure

Is the child in foster care placed in this LEA's district boundaries (if applicable)?

YES ☐ **NO** ☐

- If yes, this LEA shall transport this child in the same manner as the rest of their students. If this LEA does not have boundaries or does not transport their students continue with this procedure.
- If no, continue with this procedure.



Immediate Enrollment

Immediate Enrollment



*“(ii)... **not** in such child’s **best interest** to remain in the school of origin, the child is **immediately enrolled** in a **new school**...”* -- 1111(g)(1)(E)(ii)

New Enrollment

Caregiver tries to enroll



Notify school of origin point of contact



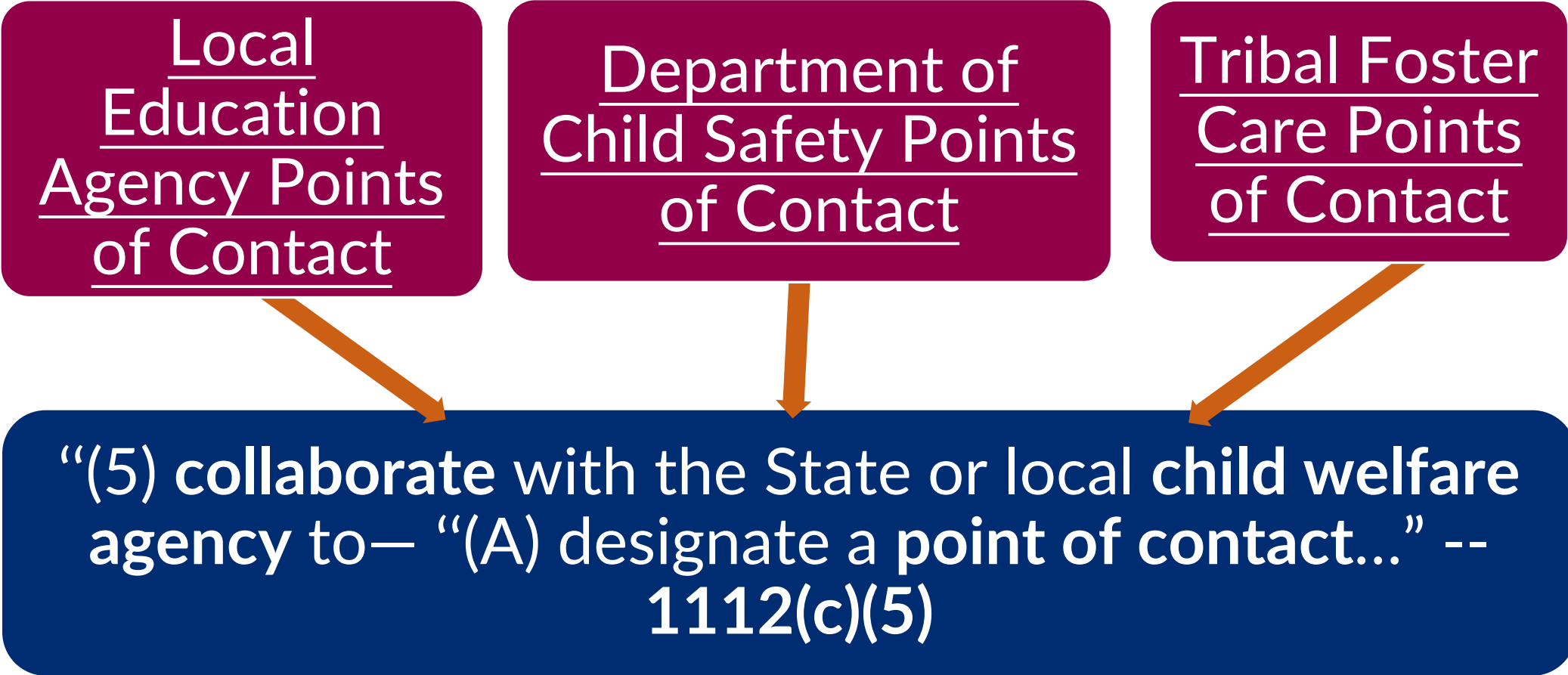
Best Interest Determination process



Points of Contact

Points of Contact

Local
Education
Agency Points
of Contact



```
graph TD; A["Local Education Agency Points of Contact"] --> D["“(5) collaborate with the State or local child welfare agency to— “(A) designate a point of contact...” -- 1112(c)(5)"]; B["Department of Child Safety Points of Contact"] --> D; C["Tribal Foster Care Points of Contact"] --> D;
```

Department of
Child Safety Points
of Contact

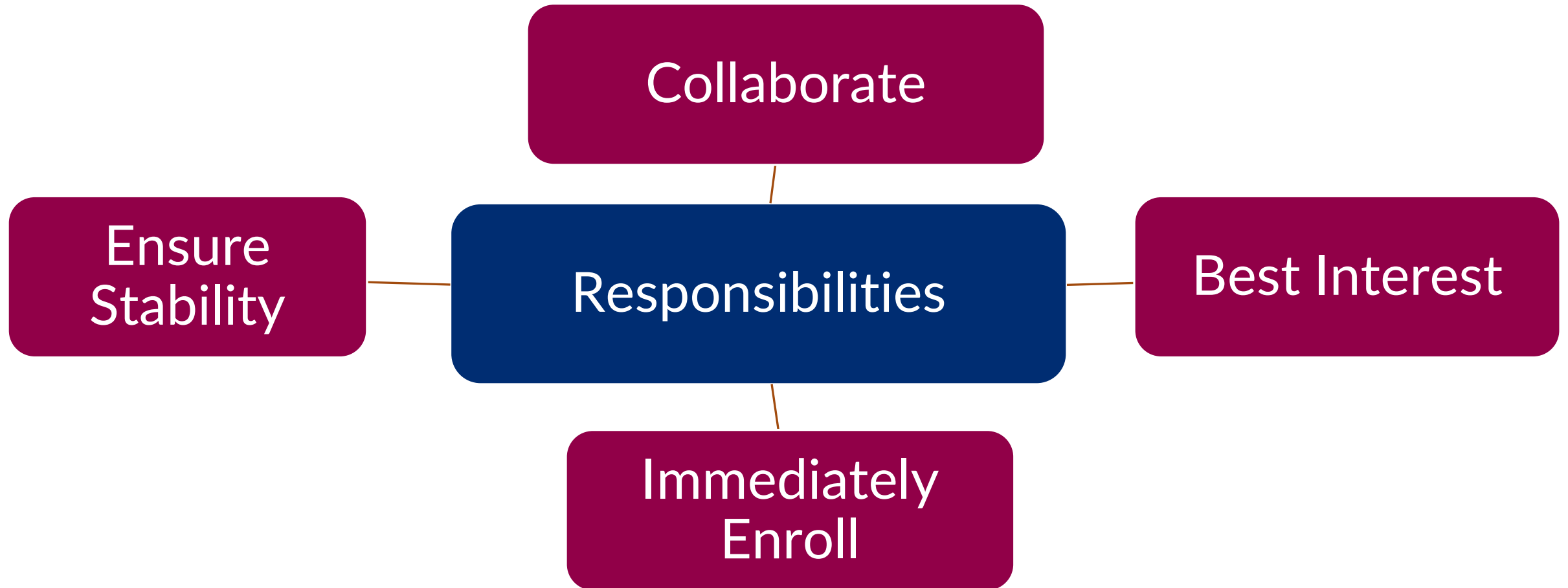
Tribal Foster
Care Points
of Contact

“(5) collaborate with the State or local child welfare agency to— “(A) designate a point of contact...” --
1112(c)(5)

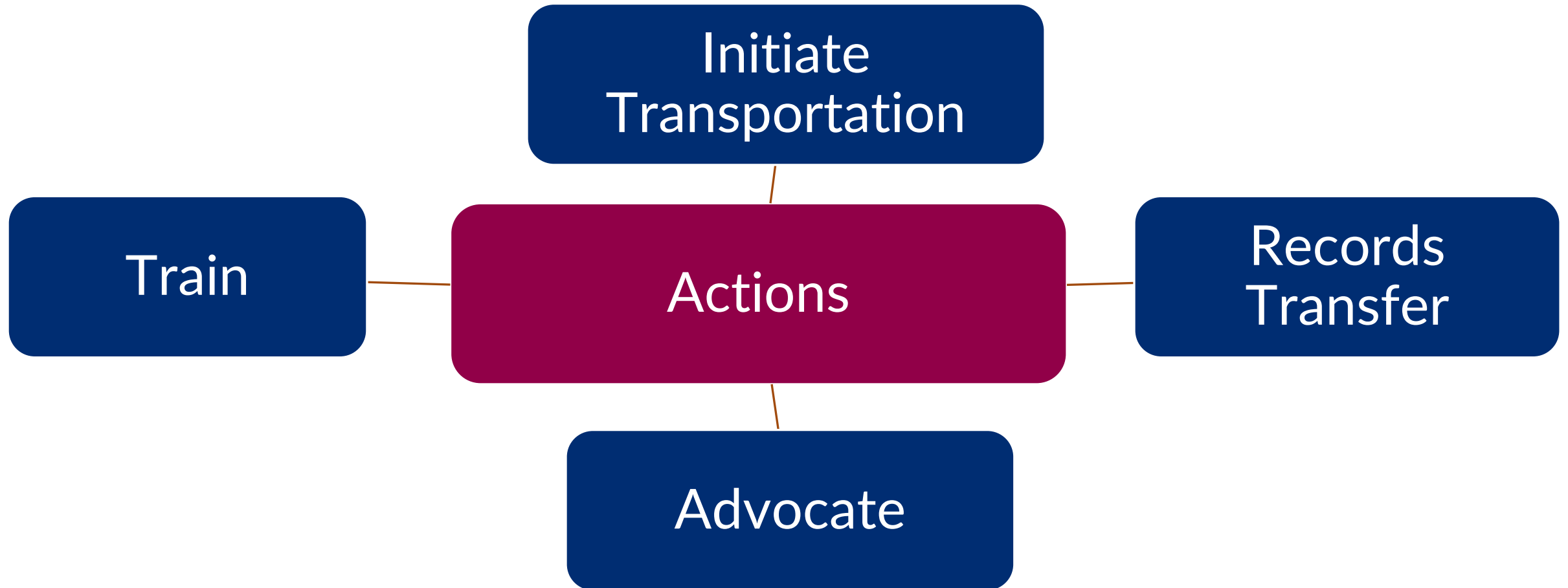


Roles & Responsibilities

LEA Foster Care Points of Contact Responsibilities



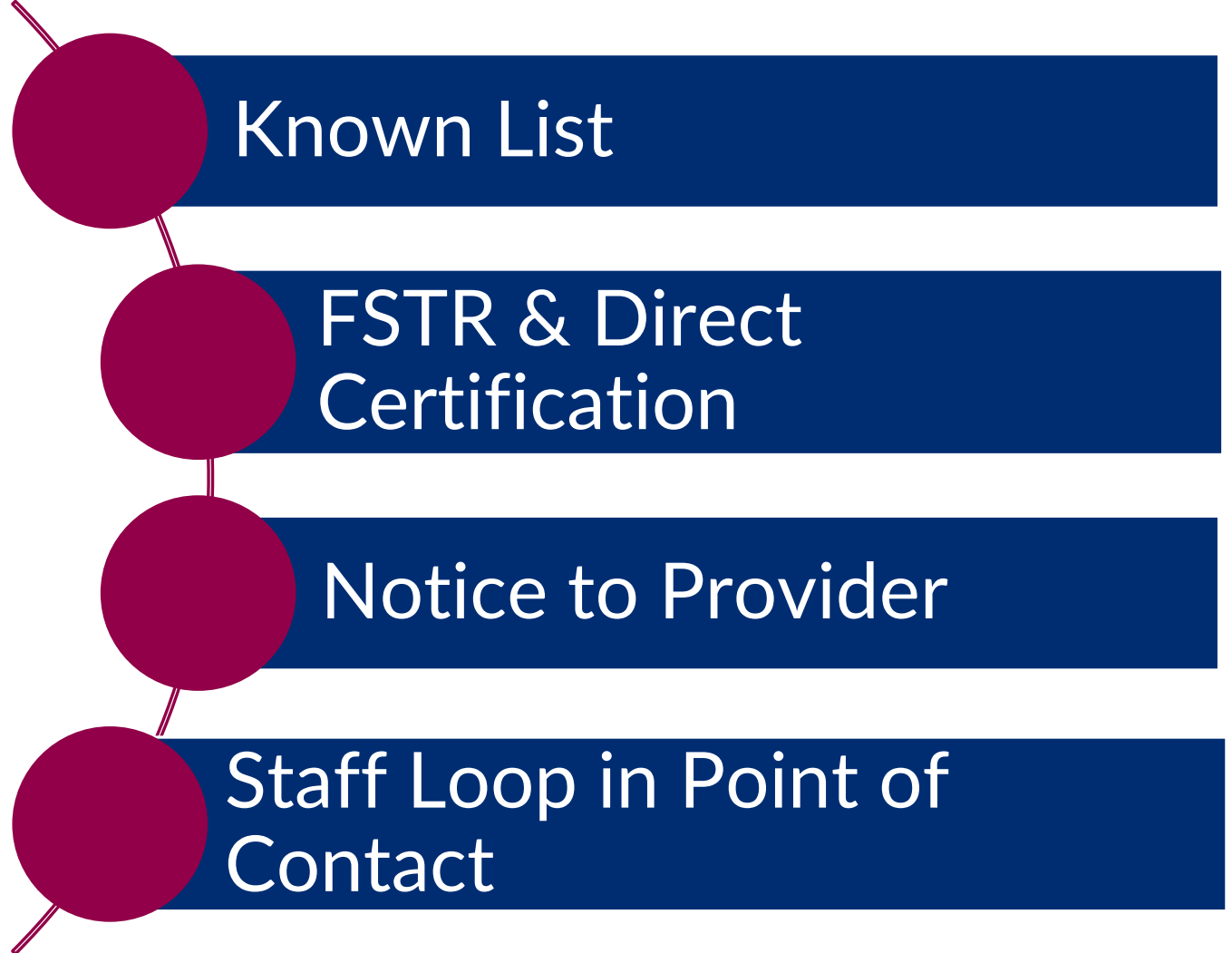
LEA Foster Care Points of Contact Actions





Identification

Identifying Students in Foster Care





Special Education

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Parent

PARENT

- Bio Parent
- Foster Parent
- Guardian Authorized
- Acting in Place
- Surrogate Parent

CHILD WELFARE

Department of Child Safety may **attend IEP** meetings but may **not sign IEPs, act** as the IDEA Parent, or officially request an **evaluation**.



Lasting Takeaway

Foster Care School Stability Steps

Student enters foster care or has a change in foster care placement

Student remains at the school of origin while the Local Education Agency & child welfare agency execute the Best Interest Determination process

Best Interest
Determination

Best Interest Determination
Outcome: Stay in School of
Origin

Local Education Agency & child
welfare agency collaborate on
transportation

Best Interest Determination
Outcome: Do Not Stay in School of
Origin

The new school immediately enrolls the
student, even without all paperwork.



Foster Care Education



Post-Assessment

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- 1. Children in foster care are considered 'homeless' or McKinney-Vento eligible.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

Post-Assessment

- 2.** The school of origin is the school the child is enrolled at when entering foster care or if already in foster care, the school the child is enrolled at the time of a foster care placement change.
- a.** True
 - b.** False

Post-Assessment

- 3. Which school should a student in foster care attend during the BID process?**
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Post-Assessment

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- a. True
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Closing & Next Steps

Feedback Survey & Certificates

Feedback survey

- Must complete survey to receive PL certificate in APLD Blackboard & receive credit for attending the mandatory training

Recording and slides

- The recording & slides will be posted on ADE's [Foster Care webpage](#)

Survey Link

Foster Care Education: Basics
2024-2025 Exit Survey



<https://forms.office.com/r/Wwss3waCWJ>

Questions



Thank You!



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