

Fostering Forward

A monthly tip sheet to navigate through foster care

The educational system can be confusing for anyone, but particularly when it comes to children in foster care. Here are a couple of insights to help make the back-to-school transition a little easier for everyone.



Back to School

What You Need to Know as a Foster Parent

-Why the School of Origin?

According to DMCPs and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a child is required to remain in the school they are enrolled in at the time he or she is placed in out-of-home care (**school of origin**), unless it is determined to be in the child's best interest to change schools. The purpose for keeping a child enrolled in his or her school of origin is to provide some stability and familiarity for a child during a time of significant change.

-Educational Passport System

An Educational Passport is able to be filed with the child's school within 2 business days of either a placement change or after a court has granted Temporary Physical Custody of the child with DMCPs. The Educational Passport triggers a request with Milwaukee Public Schools to **change the child's transportation plan if/when necessary**. The transportation change, if able to be accommodated, should take no more than 14 calendar days. *If the child does not attend MPS, the case manager should initiate a change in the student's transportation plan by contacting the school district or private school directly.*

-Best Interest Determination

A Best Interest Determination is able to be held if a party or parties feel it is in the child's best interest to change schools. Factors that can be considered when determining if it is in the child's best interest are **proximity to the school of origin** and **appropriateness of the educational setting**. If a school change is being considered, the following parties must be consulted: a DMCPs community liaison, the child's biological parent/legal guardian, the child (if age and/or developmentally appropriate), the foster parents, and supportive school staff (i.e. school social worker, guidance counselor, etc.). If the parties come to a consensus regarding the change, the case manager may change the school after seeking approval from the case management supervisor. If a consensus is not able to be reached, a DMCPs community liaison will schedule a Best Interest Determination meeting within five business days. All of the above listed parties must be invited to attend the meeting. If a consensus is still not able to be reached, the DMCPs community liaison will make a final decision regarding the school change within two business days following the meeting.

Tips for Back-to-School Success

1. Inform your children of the changes about to occur before you implement them. Consider holding a family meeting!
2. Reset sleep patterns at least 7-10 days before school begins.
3. Set eating schedules throughout the day to mimic a child's eating schedule during school.
4. Hold a playdate with other students from your child's class to help ease anxiety over "Will I know anyone?"
5. Try to keep one evening a week activity-free to allow both you and your child time to relax and recharge.
6. Create a single space, such as a bulletin board, or a spot on the fridge, where everyone can hang their permission slips, newsletters, etc.

Sources: Women's Day & Huff Post

MPS School Calendar: Early Start or Traditional Start Date?

Within the last couple years, some Milwaukee Public Schools have begun running an early start calendar, as opposed to a traditional start date after Labor Day. Follow the link below to see if your child's school begins on August 12, 2019, or on September 3, 2019. Please note, private schools or charter schools may follow their own separate calendar.

<https://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/en/home/Calendar/Early-Start.htm>

Upcoming Back-To-School Events

- **Anxiety & ADHD Back to School Success Workshop for Parents**
Thursday, August 8th, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Absolute Chiropractic & Wellness
11300 75th St., Kenosha
- **Back to School Health Fair**
Friday, August 9th, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Journey House, 2110 W. Scott St., Milwaukee
- **Back to School Fair**
Saturday, August 10th, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
UMOS, 2701 S. Chase Ave., Milwaukee
- **Run Back to School 5K/1.5 mile-walk**
Saturday, August 24th, 9 a.m.
Wick Playfield, 4929 W. Vliet St., Milwaukee
- **Fall Fest**
Friday, September 6th - Sunday, September 8th
St. Charles Parish, 313 Circle Drive, Hartland

