



San Bernardino County

Legislation Text

File #: 4047, Agenda Item #: 25

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO AND RECORD OF ACTION

May 4, 2021

FROM

MARLENE HAGEN, Director, Children and Family Services

SUBJECT

Non-Financial Cooperative Agreement Template for use of the Foster Focus System by School Districts

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Approve a standard non-financial Cooperative Agreement Template for Children and Family Services to collaborate with San Bernardino County school districts to exchange education information for foster youth using the Foster Focus System, for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2026.
2. Authorize the Assistant Executive Officer of Human Services, the Deputy Executive Officer of Human Services, or the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services to execute the individual Cooperative Agreements on behalf of the County.

(Presenter: Marlene Hagen, Director, 387-2792)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

Pursue County Goals and Objectives by Working with Other Agencies.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Cooperative Agreements between Children and Family Services (CFS) and San Bernardino County school districts are non-financial; therefore, they do not impact Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CFS has entered into non-financial Cooperative Agreements since 2012 with San Bernardino County school districts allowing school districts countywide to share up-to-date education information on foster youth in a timely matter. The recommended standard non-financial Cooperative Agreement Template will allow CFS to continue to work with school districts countywide to securely exchange, confirm, and maintain foster youth education and enrollment information through the Foster Focus System (Foster Focus).

In 2003, Assembly Bill 490 (AB 490) passed removing barriers foster children face in the educational system and emphasizing the need for data sharing procedures and protocols. The bill authorized the release of educational records for students in out-of-home care to Child Welfare Agencies (CWA) to assist with the transfer or enrollment of the student, or for the purpose of compliance with case management responsibilities required by Juvenile Justice Agencies (JJA).

Children who are declared dependents or wards of the juvenile court (foster and probation youth) face barriers to educational success due to frequent disruptions in their school placements. AB 490 addressed those barriers by making school districts and CWAs or JJAs jointly responsible for the timely transfer of foster children and their education information and records from the school of origin to the new school within two business days of receiving a request from a CWA or JJA. In 2009, CFS partnered with San Bernardino County Foster Care Youth Services, a branch of San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, to begin using Foster Focus to securely manage and share foster youth/student educational information.

Foster Focus is a web-based data system developed and maintained by the Sacramento County Office of Education. Foster Focus addresses the challenges that result from foster youth frequently changing placements by sharing education and enrollment information in real-time. Foster Focus matches data from local CWAs, school district information systems, and the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System in a secure environment. The system has multiple safeguards to ensure protection of foster and probation youths' privacy, including password protection, encryption, and limited numbers of authorized users who must sign confidentiality agreements. CFS currently partners with 30 San Bernardino County school districts to improve academic outcomes for foster youth through the sharing the education records.

The recommended standard non-financial Cooperative Agreement template will allow CFS and San Bernardino County school districts to facilitate timely and appropriate school enrollment of foster and probation youth, as required by AB 490.

PROCUREMENT

Not Applicable.

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by Human Services Contracts (Jennifer Mulhall-Daudel, Contracts Manager, 388-0241) on March 25, 2021; County Counsel (Julie Surber, Principal Assistant County Counsel, 387-5455) on March 30, 2021; Finance (John Hallen, Administrative Analyst, 388-0208) on March 31, 2021, and County Finance and Administration (Tanya Bratton, Deputy Executive Officer, 388-0332) on March 31, 2021.