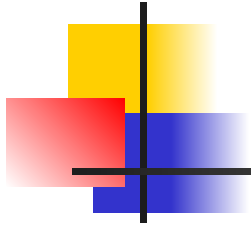


# EDUCATION:



## Court Reports:

What to include  
related to the  
Child's Education



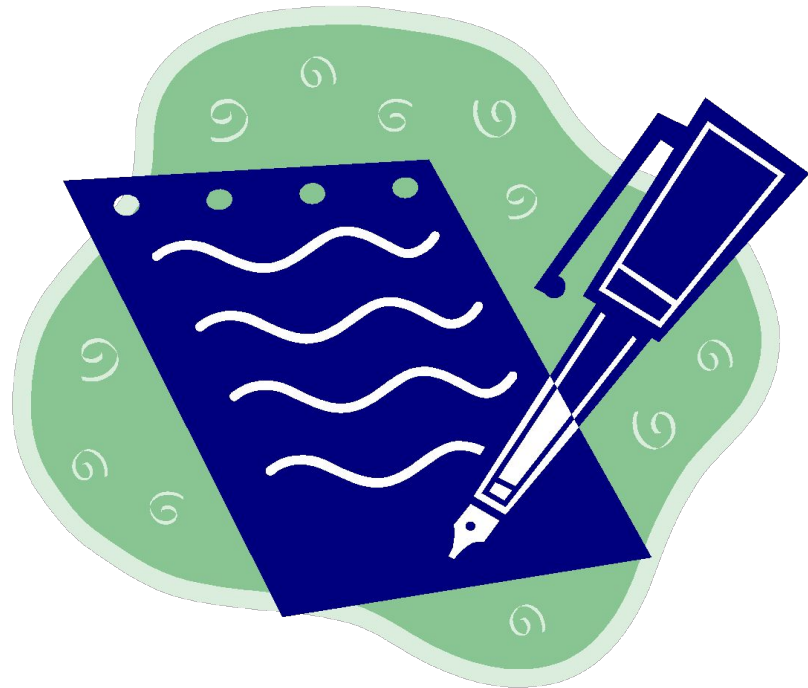
# Education in Every Court Report

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- In an effort to improve the educational outcomes for foster youth, Dependency Court Judges will be asking numerous questions regarding the child's education at **EVERY HEARING.**
- To prepare, the following information is being provided to assist the CSW in writing the court report...

# Judges Education Checklist

- The Court will inquire at each regular hearing for all children:
  - Is the child in school?
  - Is the child attending daily / all classes?
  - Does the child have basic literacy skills?
  - What is the academic improvement in the past 6 months?



# Judges Education Checklist continued



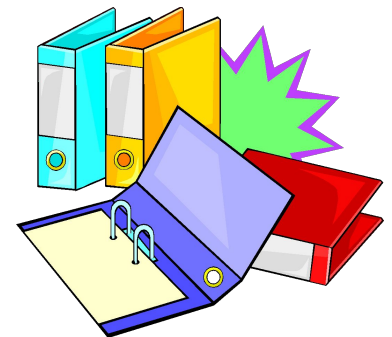
- Does the child have a place to do homework daily? Who helps?
- Is the child participating in extra curricular activities?
- Has the child experienced suspension, expulsion, or an involuntary transfer?
- Does the child have a library card?
- Who has educational rights?



# CSW's Responsibilities

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- Respond to the Court's list of inquiries in every court report.
- Attach the school records for grades, attendance, and an IEP (if appropriate).





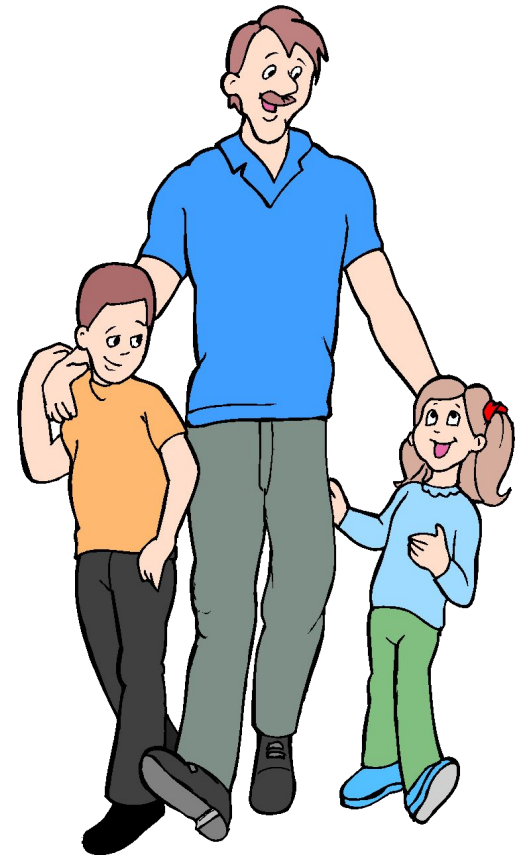
## CSW's Responsibilities continued

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- Provide explanations for:
  - All information related to the Judge's checklist that is not included and the efforts made to obtain the information
  - Rationale for transferring the child from the school of origin
  - Rationale for child transferring to or remaining in a nonpublic school (NPS).

# Who usually has the educational rights?

- The parent always has the educational rights until the court makes a legal determination to limit the educational rights. This is also true for children in DCFS care.



# If the parent's education rights are limited who is then authorized?



- If the court limits the parent's educational rights, who is appointed?
  - A relative
  - Guardian
  - Foster Parent
  - CASA
  - "Responsible Adult" as designated by the court
  - Surrogate Parent as designated by the school district



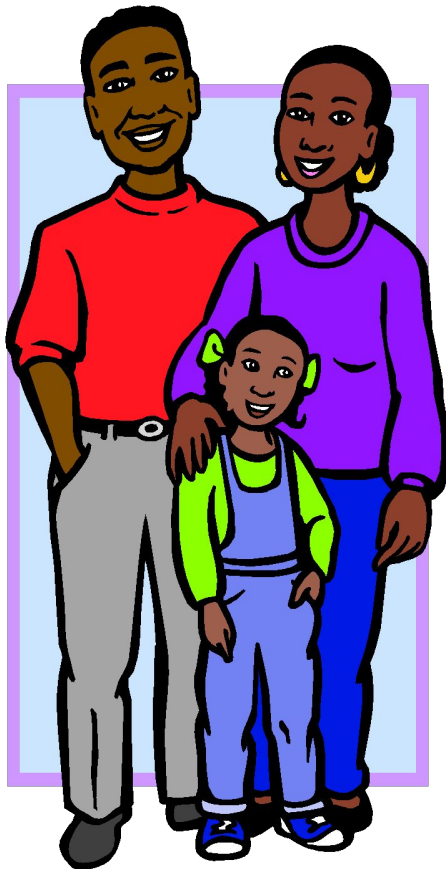


# Why is it important to know who has the education rights?

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- Laws protect the child's privacy through the parent or the person with education rights.
- This is the person who can give DCFS and the school districts authorization to receive school records.
- This is the "only" person who can give permission for a child to have a psycho educational assessment, which can lead to the IEP meeting.
- This is the person who agrees to and signs the IEP document.

# Where does the CSW record the information identifying the person with education rights?



- On many of the revised DCFS forms there is now an inquiry to include:
  - Education Rights held by:
    - \_\_\_ Parent
    - \_\_\_ Other
    - If Other, Whom:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- In the Court report



# What is the foster parent's role related to education rights?

The foster parent can only represent the educational interest of **the child when the child is placed in a planned permanent living arrangement** and the juvenile court has limited the rights of the parent to make educational decisions.

If the parent's education rights have not been limited by the court, the foster parent may attend the IEP meeting to share and glean information related to the child's education, However the foster parent is not authorized to sign the IEP document.



# What is the purpose of accessing school records?

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- To provide educational information that will:
  - Enable those responsible for the child's welfare, including the Court, to make informed decisions.
  - Enhance case management.
  - Provide current information for the child's Health and Education Passport (CWS/CMS entry) and binder for caregiver.

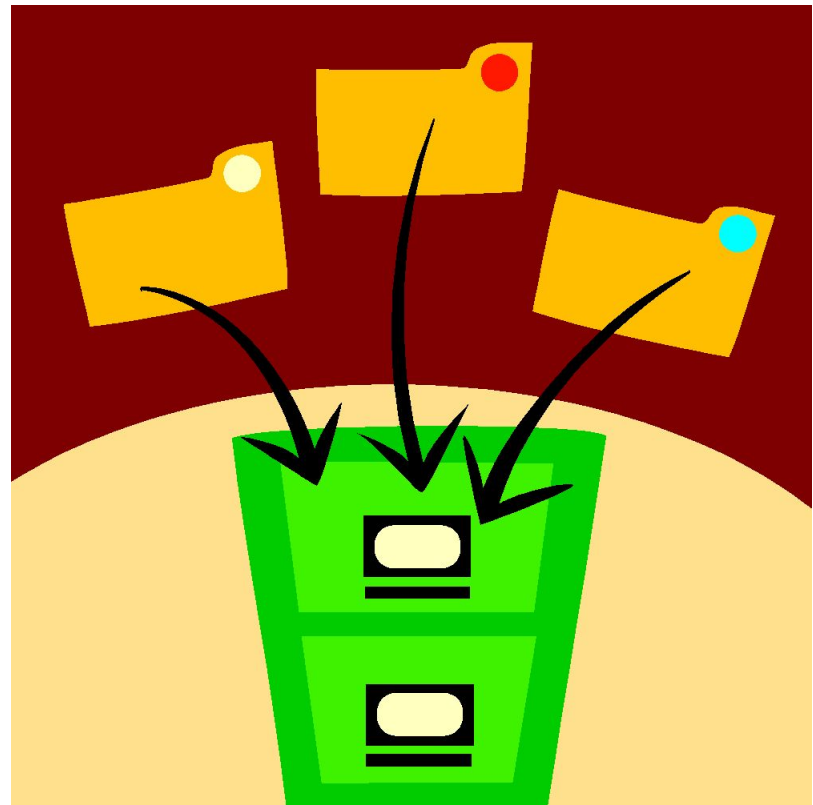
# How does the CSW access school records?

- AB 490 Gave authority to the “County Placing Agency” (Child Welfare and Probation) to receive certain school records without parental consent and without a court order, however,
  - Some school districts may still require a parental or the person with educational rights authorization or a court order.
  - In these cases . . .
    - **Encourage the parent or person with educational rights to sign DCFS 179.**
    - **Attach the 179 form to all requests of the school for records/information.**



# What are the records the CSW can receive?

- The CSW can receive the following records?
  - Grade / credit transcript
  - Attendance record
  - Immunization record
  - IEP or 504 Plan (if the child is receiving special education services)





## Of Particular Interest to the Court

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- **School Stability – Goal to remain in the School of Origin until the end of the school year.**
  - Whenever a child changes placement, be sure to include in the court report if the child remained in the school of origin.
  - If the child was transferred to a new school, what were the reasons for that decision and who was involved in making the decision.



## Of Particular Interest to the Court

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- Attending a Non Public School (NPS) – Goal to have youth attend public schools (even for partial day).
  - CSW attend the IEP meeting to participate in the decision making for the best educational, least restrictive environment to meet the child's needs.
  - Advocate for a transition plan to a public school.
  - Visit the NPS quarterly, meeting with the teacher and/or principal to discuss the child's academic and behavioral progress.





# School District Educational Liaison for Foster Children

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- If you or the person with educational rights needs help with a school issue, contact the Educational Liaison for Foster Children at the school district.
- Include in the court report any input you receive from the Educational Liaison.

# Court and DCFS Collaboration

- The Court and DCFS have joined other agencies to work collaboratively to ensure stable school placement and meaningful opportunities for foster children to meet state academic achievement standards to which all students are held.





# For Additional Information

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- List of LEA Education Liaisons for foster children
- List of Los Angeles County Schools
- List of Los Angeles Unified Schools
- LAKids – go to Health and Education icon for forms, policies, School of Origin DCFS PowerPoint, etc.