

# Ready for Another School Year?

## Social Worker's Role in Monitoring the Education of Children in Care

### CFSA Blueprint Strategy

August 2015

### Factsheet #1

Social workers are key to the education success of children in CFSA custody.

A little advocacy can go a long way to avoid more complex education issues later in the year.

**Use this checklist** for each client to be sure things are in line for a successful school year.

**Office of Well Being staff** are here to help. Contact us with questions:

**Early Education:** Sabine Campbell, 202-727-7511, [sabine.campbell@dc.gov](mailto:sabine.campbell@dc.gov)

**Grades K-5:** Timothy Fitzgerald, 202-727-8028, [timothy.fitzgerald@dc.gov](mailto:timothy.fitzgerald@dc.gov)

**Grades 6-8:** Charlotte Williams, 202-715-7787, [charlotte.williams2@dc.gov](mailto:charlotte.williams2@dc.gov)

**Grades 9-12:** Cortni Mitchell-Colston, 202-727-4951, [cortni.mitchell-colston@dc.gov](mailto:cortni.mitchell-colston@dc.gov)

**General Questions:** Megan Dho, Education Supervisor, 202-727-1303; [megan.dho@dc.gov](mailto:megan.dho@dc.gov)



For more information, visit <http://cfsa.dc.gov/page/educationresources>

### Before the School Year Begins, Make Sure:

- ✓ The **child is enrolled** in an appropriate school and **all registration paperwork is complete**.
- ✓ **To ask about any orientations or welcome sessions**.
- ✓ The child has the required school uniforms, supplies, etc. to fully participate in school.
- ✓ The **school has a copy of the child's IEP or 504 plan**, if applicable.
- ✓ **The child has transportation to and from school**, if needed.

**NOTE:** If the child is receiving special education transportation through the District of Columbia Public Schools, call the Parent Resource Center (202-576-5000) a few days before the start of the school year to confirm your child's route number and pick-up time.

- ✓ **The child has a plan for before or after care**, if needed.  
**NOTE:** for help identifying an appropriate before or after care program, call CFSA's Early Education Specialist, Sabine Campbell at 202-727-7511.
- ✓ **To record reminders for key school year dates** on your calendar (i.e., the first day of school, end of advisory periods or quarters, when progress reports and report cards are issued).
- ✓ **To get a copy of the student's transcript** (high school-aged) and determine how many credits are needed to graduate. For help determining graduation credits for District of Columbia Public Schools and Prince George's County Public Schools refer to the Children's Law Center's toolkit. (<http://www.childrenslawcenter.org/resource/practice-kit-06-education-toolkit>)

## Early in the School Year:

- ✓ **Ensure you or the caretaker attend Back-to-School Night** to meet the child's teachers and service providers and learn the best way to communicate with them throughout the year.
- ✓ **Get a copy of the child's class schedule** and review its appropriateness (i.e., proper classes/credits to meet graduation requirements, appropriate special education hours, etc.).
- ✓ **Make sure caretaker has secured all supplies needed** for each child's class (e.g., special notebooks, equipment, or calculators). For assistance in obtaining a school uniform for the school year, please contact [cfsa.vouchers@dc.gov](mailto:cfsa.vouchers@dc.gov) to submit a request.
- ✓ **Schedule a school visit** and/or ask to observe your child in one or more classes to monitor the child's progress and services.
- ✓ **Request a 30-day IEP review meeting** if the child receives special education and is in a new school.
- ✓ **Investigate and request tutoring services** and supports within the school and in the community to provide the child with more support in any areas of weakness.

**NOTE:** You may also request in-home tutoring services from CFSA's vendors if no school or local tutoring resources can be found by submitting a Universal eReferral form to [cfsa.wellbeing@dc.gov](mailto:cfsa.wellbeing@dc.gov).

## Mid-Year

- ✓ **Start considering school options for next year.** Investigate application processes for schools outside your neighborhood, if necessary.

**NOTE:** Both DC and PG County Public Schools administer lotteries to apply to slots at out-of-boundary, specialized, or public charter schools December – March of each year. See the school systems' websites for information and watch for communications from the Office of Well Being about important deadlines.
- ✓ **Start requesting annual IEP review meetings** and consider whether **Extended School Year (ESY) services** are needed for the summer.

## Throughout the Entire Year:

**Ensure the child attends school every day**, on time. **Monitor the child's school attendance** to ensure the child is where he/she is supposed to be each day.

**Obtain copies of all progress reports and report cards** as soon as they are issued and follow up with the child and the school about any concerns.

Think about whether the child could use **more academic support** (i.e., tutoring).

**Attend all school meetings** (parent-teacher conferences, IEP review meetings, etc.) to get more information about how the child is performing in school and address any concerns.

If the child is not making progress and attends DCPS, **consider requesting an Student Support Team (SST) or Student Intervention Team (SIT) meeting** or requesting the child be **evaluated to determine the source of the child's learning difficulties**.