

New Foster Care Student Transportation Reimbursement Program

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Topics

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Background Information//Project Introduction

- Under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), children in foster care are required to remain in their School of Origin as long as it is deemed to be in the best interest of the child. The School of Origin is responsible for funding the cost of this transportation
- EOHHS, in a partnership with DCF and DESE, has developed a methodology that could reimburse a share of these transportation costs through Title IV-E (a section of the Social Security Act that provides federal reimbursement to states for services provided to children in foster care)
- This voluntary program allows LEAs to report their eligible transportation expenditures for children in foster care to the state to be claimed for federal reimbursement
- It is estimated that LEAs will receive about 20% of reported costs in reimbursement
- Reimbursement for transportation expenditures covered by any other federal funding source is not allowable (e.g., special education, homeless, Title I, etc.) even if that transportation is for a child in foster care in order to avoid potential duplication of claiming



This slide provided by the Mass. Exec. Office of Health and Human Services

Example Situations


- #1: A student who lives in a Foster Care Home in Worcester moves to a new Foster Care Home in Shrewsbury.
 - If it were determined to be in best interest of student, then Worcester Public Schools [WPS] would allow retention of that student in the WPS and WPS would be responsible for transportation coordination and costs to transport that student back to their “school of origin”. *No impact on Shrewsbury Public Schools.*
- #2: A student who lives in a Foster Care Home in Shrewsbury moves to a new Foster Care Home in Holden.
 - If it were determined to be in best interest of student, then Shrewsbury Public Schools [SPS] would allow retention of that student in the SPS and SPS would be responsible for transportation coordination and costs to transport that student back to their “school of origin”. *SPS would bear these costs and submit for reimbursement under this new program.*

Eligibility Requirements

- In order to be eligible for partial reimbursement [estimated at 20%] for such costs:
 - Town Meeting must vote affirmatively to approve the Memorandum of Understanding [see related document]
 - The District must separately keep track of students and specific costs related to providing this service
 - The District must report such costs on the annual End of Year Report

Recent Historical Costs & Estimated Reimbursement

Fiscal Year	Students Eligible	Annual Eligible Costs	Reimbursement
FY18	5	\$15,487	NA
FY19	1	\$10,446	NA
FY20 YTD	0	\$0	NA
FY21	TBD	TBD	\$0



The reimbursement program affords **approximately 20% reimbursement** of eligible costs in the succeeding fiscal year after expense.

Next Steps

- The recommended Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] was sent to the Town Manager along with a message about the program. *(The Town Manager may opt for a legal review of the MOU.)*
- A warrant article must be drafted for the next Town Meeting [likely the Annual Town Meeting in May 2020].
- If approved, then the District will report any/all costs for FY20 with expectation that partial reimbursement would be sent in FY21.
- The reimbursement money would be a General Fund receipt subject to future appropriation by the Town Meeting as part of the annual budget process.

Questions?