



Home	Bill Information	California Law	Publications	Other Resources	My Subscriptions	My Favorites	
------	------------------	----------------	--------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------	--

**AB-373 Intersession programs: foster children and homeless youth: priority access.** (2023-2024)

SHARE THIS:  

Date Published: 10/09/2023 02:00 PM

**Assembly Bill No. 373**

**CHAPTER 327**

An act to amend Sections 48850 and 48853.5 of the Education Code, relating to intersession programs.

[ Approved by Governor October 07, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State October 07, 2023. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 373, Gipson. Intersession programs: foster children and homeless youth: priority access.

Existing law states the intent of the Legislature to ensure that all pupils in foster care and those who are homeless, as defined, have a meaningful opportunity to meet the challenging state pupil academic achievement standards to which all pupils are held. Existing law requires educators, county placing agencies, care providers, advocates, and the juvenile courts to work together to maintain stable school placements and to ensure that each pupil is placed in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all pupils, as provided.

Existing law authorizes the governing board of any school district to initiate and carry on any program, activity, or to otherwise act in any manner that is not in conflict with or inconsistent with, or preempted by, any law and that is not in conflict with the purposes for which school districts are established.

This bill would require a school district, county office of education, or charter school, if the local educational agency operates an intersession program, as defined, to grant priority access to foster children and homeless youth, as provided. The bill would, notwithstanding any other law, provide that if a foster child or homeless youth will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's parent, guardian, educational rights holder, or Indian custodian, as defined, in the case of an Indian child, or, if there is no parent, guardian, educational rights holder, or Indian custodian, the unaccompanied homeless youth, as applicable, shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable.

This bill would incorporate additional changes to Section 48853.5 of the Education Code proposed by AB 723 to be operative only if this bill and AB 723 are enacted and this bill is enacted last.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 48850 of the Education Code is amended to read:

**48850.** (a) (1) It is the intent of the Legislature to ensure that all pupils in foster care and those who are homeless, as defined by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.), have a meaningful opportunity to meet the challenging state pupil academic achievement standards to which all pupils are held. In fulfilling their responsibilities to these

pupils, educators, county placing agencies, care providers, advocates, and the juvenile courts shall work together to maintain stable school placements and to ensure that each pupil is placed in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities that are available to all pupils, including, but not necessarily limited to, interscholastic sports administered by the California Interscholastic Federation. In all instances, educational and school placement decisions shall be based on the best interests of the child and shall consider, among other factors, educational stability and the opportunity to be educated in the least restrictive educational setting necessary to achieve academic progress.

(2) A foster child who changes residences pursuant to a court order or decision of a child welfare worker or a homeless child or youth shall be immediately deemed to meet all residency requirements for participation in interscholastic sports or other extracurricular activities.

(3) (A) Pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.), public schools, including charter schools, and county offices of education shall immediately enroll a homeless child or youth seeking enrollment except where the enrollment would be in conflict with subdivision (e) of Section 47605.

(B) The department and the State Department of Social Services shall identify representatives from the department, the State Department of Social Services, and other state agencies that have experience in homeless youth issues to develop policies and practices to support homeless children and youths and to ensure that child abuse and neglect reporting requirements do not create barriers to the school enrollment and attendance of homeless children or youths, including, but not limited to, ensuring that a pupil who is a homeless child or youth is not reported to law enforcement by school personnel if the sole reason for the report is the pupil's homelessness. The selected representatives shall present the policies and practices to the Superintendent and the State Department of Social Services to be considered for implementation or dissemination, as appropriate.

(C) (i) If a local educational agency operates an intersession program, the local educational agency shall grant priority access to a homeless child or youth.

(ii) Notwithstanding any other law, if the homeless youth will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's parent, guardian, educational rights holder, or Indian custodian in the case of an Indian child, or, if there is no parent, guardian, educational rights holder, or Indian custodian, the unaccompanied homeless youth, shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable.

(b) Every county office of education shall make available to agencies that place children in licensed children's institutions information on educational options for children residing in licensed children's institutions within the jurisdiction of the county office of education for use by the placing agencies in assisting parents and foster children to choose educational placements.

(c) For purposes of individuals with exceptional needs residing in licensed children's institutions, making a copy of the annual service plan, prepared pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 56205, available to those special education local plan areas that have revised their local plans pursuant to Section 56836.03 shall meet the requirements of subdivision (b).

(d) For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) "Homeless child or youth" and "homeless children and youths" as they are defined in Section 11434a(2) of Title 42 of the United States Code.

(2) "Indian custodian" as it is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

(3) (A) "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by a local educational agency on nonschooldays, including, but not limited to, summer school.

(B) An intersession program does not include an extended school year program for individuals with exceptional needs established pursuant to Section 3043 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations and Section 300.106 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(4) "Local educational agency" means a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

(5) "Pupils in foster care" has the same meaning as "foster child," as that term is defined in subdivision (a) of Section 48853.5.

(6) "Unaccompanied homeless youth" has the same meaning as "unaccompanied youth" in Section 11434a(2) of Title 42 of the United States Code.

**SEC. 2.** Section 48853.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:

**48853.5.** (a) This section applies to a foster child. "Foster child" means any of the following:

(1) A child who has been removed from their home pursuant to Section 309 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(2) A child who is the subject of a petition filed under Section 300 or 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, whether or not the child has been removed from their home.

(3) A dependent child of the court of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization who is the subject of a petition filed in the tribal court pursuant to the tribal court's jurisdiction in accordance with the tribe's law.

(4) A child who is the subject of a voluntary placement agreement, as defined in subdivision (p) of Section 11400 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(b) The department, in consultation with the California Foster Youth Education Task Force, shall develop a standardized notice of the educational rights of foster children, as specified in Sections 48850 to this section, inclusive, and Sections 48911, 48915.5, 49069.5, 49076, 51225.1, and 51225.2. The notice shall include complaint process information, as applicable. The department shall make the notice available to educational liaisons for foster children for dissemination by posting the notice on its internet website. Any version of this notice prepared for use by foster children shall also include, to the greatest extent practicable, the rights established pursuant to Section 16001.9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. In developing the notice that includes the rights in Section 16001.9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the department shall consult with the Office of the State Foster Care Ombudsperson.

(c) Each local educational agency shall designate a staff person as the educational liaison for foster children. In a school district that operates a foster children services program pursuant to Chapter 11.3 (commencing with Section 42920) of Part 24 of Division 3, the educational liaison shall be affiliated with the local foster children services program. The educational liaison shall do both of the following:

(1) Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of foster children.

(2) Assist foster children when transferring from one school to another school or from one school district to another school district in ensuring proper transfer of credits, records, and grades.

(d) A foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child's, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information.

(e) This section does not grant authority to the educational liaison that supersedes the authority granted under state and federal law to a parent or legal guardian retaining educational rights, a responsible adult appointed by the court to represent the child pursuant to Section 361 or 726 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, a surrogate parent, or a foster parent exercising the authority granted under Section 56055. The role of the educational liaison is advisory with respect to placement decisions and determination of the school of origin.

(f) (1) At the initial detention or placement, or any subsequent change in placement of a foster child, the local educational agency serving the foster child shall allow the foster child to continue the foster child's education in the school of origin for the duration of the jurisdiction of the court.

(2) If the jurisdiction of the court is terminated before the end of an academic year, the local educational agency shall allow a former foster child who is in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 8, inclusive, to continue the former foster child's education in the school of origin through the duration of the academic school year.

(3) (A) If the jurisdiction of the court is terminated while a foster child is in high school, the local educational agency shall allow the former foster child to continue the former foster child's education in the school of origin through graduation.

(B) For purposes of this paragraph, a school district is not required to provide transportation to a former foster child who has an individualized education program that does not require transportation as a related service and who changes residence but remains in the former foster child's school of origin pursuant to this paragraph, unless the individualized education program team determines that transportation is a necessary related service.

(4) To ensure that the foster child has the benefit of matriculating with the foster child's peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school districts, if the foster child is transitioning between school grade levels, the local educational agency shall allow the foster child to continue in the school district of origin in the same attendance area, or, if the foster child is transitioning to a middle school or high school, and the school designated for matriculation is in another school district, to the school designated for matriculation in that school district.

(5) (A) Paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) do not require a school district to provide transportation services to allow a foster child to attend a school or school district, unless there is an agreement with a local child welfare agency that the school district assumes part or all of the transportation costs in accordance with Section 6312(c)(5) of Title 20 of the United States Code, or unless otherwise required under federal law. This paragraph does not prohibit a school district from, at its discretion, providing transportation services to allow a foster child to attend a school or school district.

(B) In accordance with Section 6312(c)(5) of Title 20 of the United States Code, local educational agencies shall collaborate with local child welfare agencies to develop and implement clear written procedures to address the transportation needs of foster youth to maintain them in their school of origin, when it is in the best interest of the foster youth.

(6) The educational liaison, in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, may recommend, in accordance with the foster child's best interests, that the foster child's right to attend the school of origin be waived and the foster child be enrolled in a public school that pupils living in the attendance area in which the foster child resides are eligible to attend.

(7) Before making a recommendation to move a foster child from the foster child's school of origin, the educational liaison shall provide the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child with a written explanation stating the basis for the recommendation and how the recommendation serves the foster child's best interests.

(8) (A) If the educational liaison, in consultation with the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, agrees that the best interests of the foster child would best be served by the foster child's transfer to a school other than the school of origin, the foster child shall immediately be enrolled in the new school.

(B) The new school shall immediately enroll the foster child even if the foster child has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or moneys due to the school last attended or is unable to produce clothing or records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, including, but not limited to, records or other proof of immunization history pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 120325) of Part 2 of Division 105 of the Health and Safety Code, proof of residency, other documentation, or school uniforms.

(C) Within two business days of the foster child's request for enrollment, the educational liaison for the new school shall contact the school last attended by the foster child to obtain all academic and other records. The last school attended by the foster child shall provide all required records to the new school regardless of any outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or moneys owed to the school last attended. The educational liaison for the school last attended shall provide all records to the new school within two business days of receiving the request.

(9) If a dispute arises regarding the request of a foster child to remain in the school of origin, the foster child has the right to remain in the school of origin pending resolution of the dispute. The dispute shall be resolved in accordance with the existing dispute resolution process available to a pupil served by the local educational agency.

(10) The local educational agency and the county placing agency are encouraged to collaborate to ensure maximum use of available federal moneys, explore public-private partnerships, and access any other funding sources to promote the well-being of foster children through educational stability.

(11) (A) If a local educational agency operates an intersession program, the local educational agency shall grant priority access to a foster child.

(B) Notwithstanding any other law, if the foster child will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's educational rights holder, or Indian custodian in the case of an Indian child, shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable.

(12) It is the intent of the Legislature that this subdivision shall not supersede or exceed other laws governing special education services for eligible foster children.

(g) For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) "Indian custodian" as it is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

(2) (A) "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by a local educational agency on nonschooldays, including, but not limited to, summer school.

(B) An intersession program does not include an extended school year program for individuals with exceptional needs established pursuant to Section 3043 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations and Section 300.106 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) "School of origin" means the school that the foster child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the foster child was last enrolled. If the school the foster child attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which the foster child was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster child attended with which the foster child is connected and that the foster child attended within the immediately preceding 15 months, the educational liaison, in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, shall determine, in the best interests of the foster child, the school that shall be deemed the school of origin.

(h) This section does not supersede other law governing the educational placements in juvenile court schools, as described in Section 48645.1, by the juvenile court under Section 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(i) (1) A complaint of noncompliance with the requirements of this section may be filed with the local educational agency under the Uniform Complaint Procedures set forth in Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

(2) A complainant not satisfied with the decision of a local educational agency may appeal the decision to the department pursuant to Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations and shall receive a written decision regarding the appeal within 60 days of the department's receipt of the appeal.

(3) If a local educational agency finds merit in a complaint, or if the Superintendent finds merit in an appeal, the local educational agency shall provide a remedy to the affected pupil.

(4) Information regarding the requirements of this section shall be included in the annual notification distributed to, among others, pupils, parents or guardians of pupils, employees, and other interested parties pursuant to Section 4622 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

**SEC. 2.5.** Section 48853.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:

**48853.5.** (a) This section applies to a foster child. "Foster child" means any of the following:

(1) A child who has been removed from their home pursuant to Section 309 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(2) A child who is the subject of a petition filed under Section 300 or 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, whether or not the child has been removed from their home.

(3) A dependent child of the court of an Indian tribe, consortium of tribes, or tribal organization who is the subject of a petition filed in the tribal court pursuant to the tribal court's jurisdiction in accordance with the tribe's law.

(4) A child who is the subject of a voluntary placement agreement, as defined in subdivision (p) of Section 11400 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(b) The department, in consultation with the California Foster Youth Education Task Force, shall develop a standardized notice of the educational rights of foster children, as specified in Sections 48850 to this section, inclusive, and Sections 48911, 48915.5, 49069.5, 49076, 51225.1, and 51225.2. The notice shall include complaint process information, as applicable. The department shall make the notice available to educational liaisons for foster children for dissemination by posting the notice on its internet website. Any version of this notice prepared for use by foster children shall also include, to the greatest extent practicable, the rights established pursuant to Section 16001.9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. In developing the notice that includes the rights in Section 16001.9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the department shall consult with the Office of the State Foster Care Ombudsperson.

(c) Each local educational agency shall designate a staff person as the educational liaison for foster children. In a school district that operates a foster children services program pursuant to Chapter 11.3 (commencing with Section 42920) of Part 24 of Division 3, the educational liaison shall be affiliated with the local foster children services program. The educational liaison shall do both of the following:

(1) Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of foster children.

(2) Assist foster children when transferring from one school to another school or from one school district to another school district in ensuring proper transfer of credits, records, and grades.

(d) A foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child's, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information.

(e) This section does not grant authority to the educational liaison that supersedes the authority granted under state and federal law to a parent or legal guardian retaining educational rights, a responsible adult appointed by the court to represent the child pursuant to Section 361 or 726 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, a surrogate parent, or a foster parent exercising the authority granted under Section 56055. The role of the educational liaison is advisory with respect to placement decisions and determination of the school of origin.

(f) (1) At the initial detention or placement, or any subsequent change in placement of a foster child, the local educational agency serving the foster child shall allow the foster child to continue the foster child's education in the school of origin for the duration of the jurisdiction of the court.

(2) If the jurisdiction of the court is terminated before the end of an academic year, the local educational agency shall allow a former foster child who is in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 8, inclusive, to continue the former foster child's education in the school of origin through the duration of the academic school year.

(3) (A) If the jurisdiction of the court is terminated while a foster child is in high school, the local educational agency shall allow the former foster child to continue the former foster child's education in the school of origin through graduation.

(B) For purposes of this paragraph, a school district is not required to provide transportation to a former foster child who has an individualized education program that does not require transportation as a related service and who changes residence but remains in the former foster child's school of origin pursuant to this paragraph, unless the individualized education program team determines that transportation is a necessary related service.

(4) To ensure that the foster child has the benefit of matriculating with the foster child's peers in accordance with the established feeder patterns of school districts, if the foster child is transitioning between school grade levels, the local educational agency shall allow the foster child to continue in the school district of origin in the same attendance area, or, if the foster child is transitioning to a middle school or high school, and the school designated for matriculation is in another school district, to the school designated for matriculation in that school district.

(5) (A) Paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) do not require a school district to provide transportation services to allow a foster child to attend a school or school district, unless there is an agreement with a local child welfare agency that the school district assumes part or all of the transportation costs in accordance with Section 6312(c)(5) of Title 20 of the United States Code, or unless otherwise required under federal law. This paragraph does not prohibit a school district from, at its discretion, providing transportation services to allow a foster child to attend a school or school district.

(B) In accordance with Section 6312(c)(5) of Title 20 of the United States Code, local educational agencies shall collaborate with local child welfare agencies to develop and implement clear written procedures to address the transportation needs of foster youth to maintain them in their school of origin, when it is in the best interest of the foster youth.

(6) The educational liaison, in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, may recommend, in accordance with the foster child's best interests, that the foster child's right to attend the school of origin be waived and the foster child be enrolled in a public school that pupils living in the attendance area in which the foster child resides are eligible to attend.

(7) Before making a recommendation to move a foster child from the foster child's school of origin, the educational liaison shall provide the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child with a written explanation stating the basis for the recommendation and how the recommendation serves the foster child's best interests.

(8) (A) If the educational liaison, in consultation with the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, agrees that the best interests of the foster child would best be served by the foster child's transfer to a school other than the school of origin, the foster child shall immediately be enrolled in the new school.

(B) The new school shall immediately enroll the foster child even if the foster child has outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or moneys due to the school last attended or is unable to produce clothing or records normally required for enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, including, but not limited to, records or other proof of immunization history pursuant to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 120325) of Part 2 of Division 105 of the Health and Safety Code, proof of residency, other documentation, or school uniforms.

(C) Within two business days of the foster child's request for enrollment, the educational liaison for the new school shall contact the school last attended by the foster child to obtain all academic and other records. The last school attended by the foster child shall provide all required records to the new school regardless of any outstanding fees, fines, textbooks, or other items or moneys owed to the school last attended. The educational liaison for the school last attended shall provide all records to the new school within two business days of receiving the request.

(9) If a dispute arises regarding the request of a foster child to remain in the school of origin, the foster child has the right to remain in the school of origin pending resolution of the dispute. The dispute shall be resolved in accordance with the existing dispute resolution process available to a pupil served by the local educational agency.

(10) The local educational agency and the county placing agency are encouraged to collaborate to ensure maximum use of available federal moneys, explore public-private partnerships, and access any other funding sources to promote the well-being of foster children through educational stability.

(11) (A) If a local educational agency operates an intersession program, the local educational agency shall grant priority access to a foster child.

(B) Notwithstanding any other law, if the foster child will be moving during an intersession period, the pupil's educational rights holder, or Indian custodian in the case of an Indian child, shall determine which school the pupil attends for the intersession period, if applicable.

(12) It is the intent of the Legislature that this subdivision shall not supersede or exceed other laws governing special education services for eligible foster children.

(g) For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) "Indian custodian" as it is defined in Section 1903 of Title 25 of the United States Code.

(2) (A) "Intersession program" means an expanded learning program offered by a local educational agency on nonschooldays, including, but not limited to, summer school.

(B) An intersession program does not include an extended school year program for individuals with exceptional needs established pursuant to Section 3043 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations and Section 300.106 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) (A) "School of origin" means the school that the foster child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the foster child was last enrolled. If the school the foster child attended when permanently housed is different from the school in which the foster child was last enrolled, or if there is some other school that the foster child attended with which the foster child is connected and that the foster child attended within the immediately preceding 15 months, the educational liaison, in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child, shall determine, in the best interests of the foster child, the school that shall be deemed the school of origin.

(B) For a foster child who is an individual with exceptional needs as defined in Section 56026, "school" as used in the definition of "school of origin" in subparagraph (A) includes a placement in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school as defined in Section 56034, subject to the requirements of Section 56325.

(h) This section does not supersede other law governing the educational placements in juvenile court schools, as described in Section 48645.1, by the juvenile court under Section 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(i) (1) A complaint of noncompliance with the requirements of this section may be filed with the local educational agency under the Uniform Complaint Procedures set forth in Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

(2) A complainant not satisfied with the decision of a local educational agency may appeal the decision to the department pursuant to Chapter 5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations and shall receive a written decision regarding the appeal within 60 days of the department's receipt of the appeal.

(3) If a local educational agency finds merit in a complaint, or if the Superintendent finds merit in an appeal, the local educational agency shall provide a remedy to the affected pupil.

(4) Information regarding the requirements of this section shall be included in the annual notification distributed to, among others, pupils, parents or guardians of pupils, employees, and other interested parties pursuant to Section 4622 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

**SEC. 3.** Section 2.5 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 48853.5 of the Education Code proposed by both this bill and Assembly Bill 723. That section of this bill shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2024, (2) each bill amends Section 48853.5 of the Education Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after Assembly Bill 723, in which case Section 2 of this bill shall not become operative.