



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Foster Care Education: Best Interest Determinations

Joey Taylor, Foster Care Education Coordinator

Arizona Department of Education

602.542.3569

fostercare@azed.gov

Objectives

- Better collaboration during the Best Interest Determination process.
- Utilizing Best Interest Determination tracking data to inform your practices.



What is the Best Interest Determination Process

Best Interest Determination Process

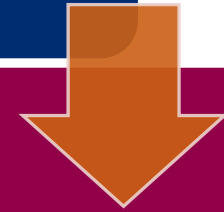
Student-centered, context specific, holistic assessment.

*“A **BID** is a process through which educational agencies and child welfare agencies **partner** with important people in a student’s life to determine whether it is in a student’s best interest to remain at their school of origin or change schools.” -- Joint Federal Guidance*

Best Interest Determination

Should the student in foster care
remain in their school of origin?

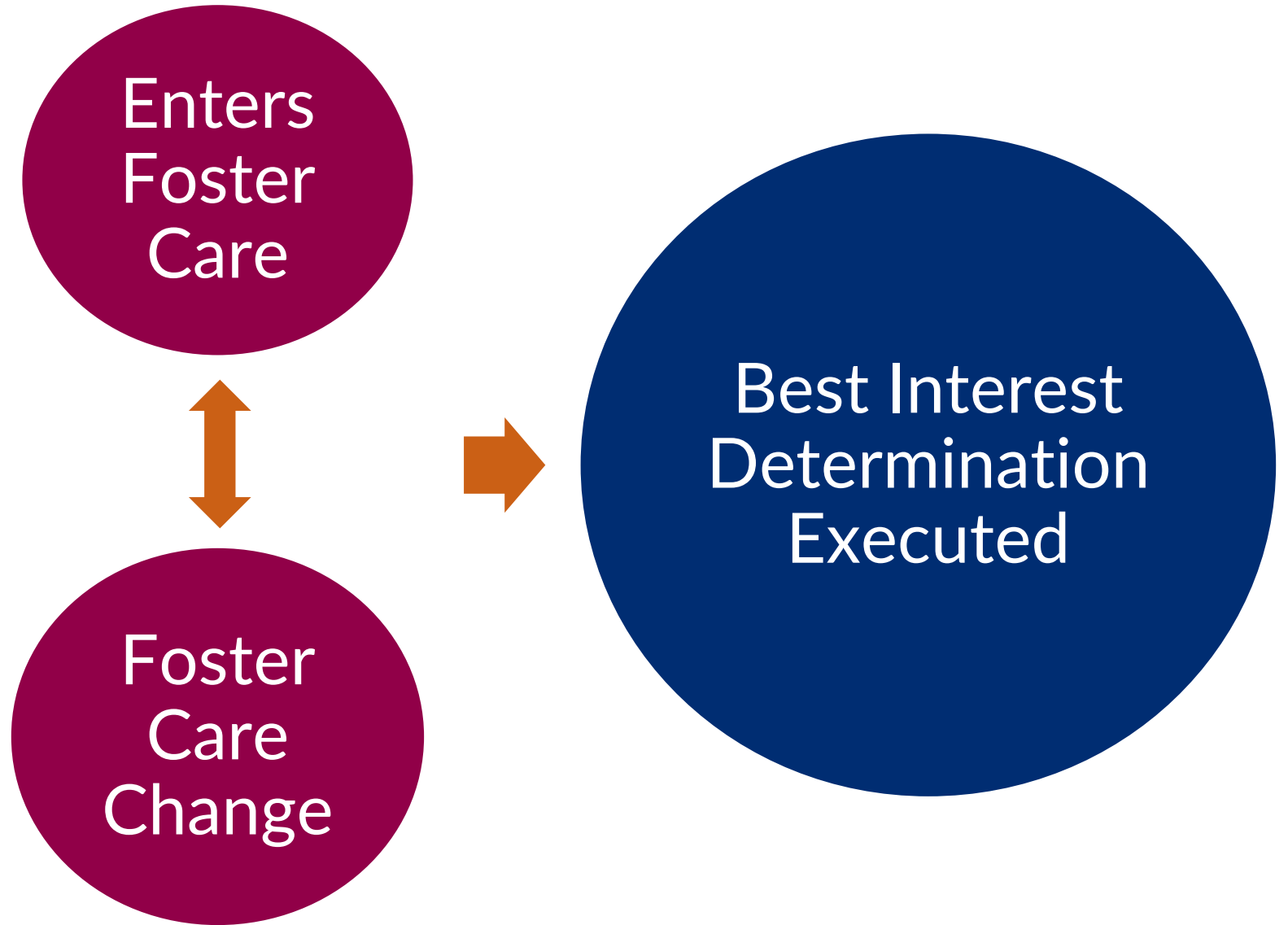
During the Best Interest
Determination Process...
YES!





When does the Best Interest Determination Process Happen?

When to do the Best Interest Determination Process?





Prep for Best Interest Determination Process

Best Interest Determination Prep Form

School of Origin BID Preparation Form

Date: [Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Information

LEA Name: _____

School Site: _____

LEA Foster Care Point of Contact: _____ Email: _____

School Address: _____

Child in Foster Care Information

Child Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ State Student ID: _____

Date of FC Move: _____ Grade: _____

Residence School Address: _____

School of Origin Input for BID

- **How well connected is the child to the school and/or school staff?**
(i.e., how long attending the school, positive relationships with school staff, any sense of belonging or fitting in, etc.)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

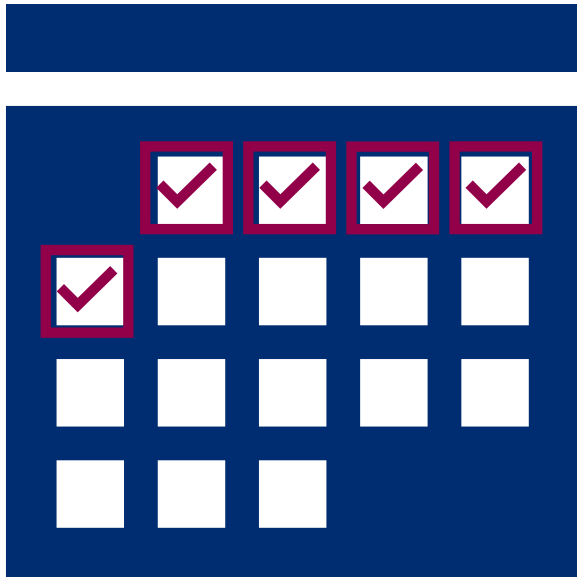
- **How is the child performing academically?**
(i.e., passing/failing classes, reading/writing/math at grade level, etc.)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)



Best Interest Determinations Timeline

5 Days for Best Interest Determination Process



*“A. Within **five days** after a child enters foster care or if a child's placement changes... shall determine if it is in the child's **best interest** to remain in the child's **school of origin...**” --*
ARS 8-530.04(A)

Arbitration Process



“A. The department of child safety and the department of education shall... prompt **resolution of disputes**

B. ... **ensure transportation** to the school of origin... until the dispute is resolved.

C. A decision... within **ten business days...**” -- **ARS 8-530.05**



Child Welfare Agency Leading the Way

Department of Child Safety Best Interest Determination Meeting Table in Email

Student's Name / Parents' Name(s)	Student's Living Situation & Name		Potential Meeting Dates & Time
Student: Parent(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Foster Family: <input type="checkbox"/> Kinship Family: <input type="checkbox"/> Group Home: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:		
Current Enrollment & School Name	School & District of Origin	School & District of Residence	IEP/504
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes School Name: Grade: <input type="checkbox"/> No Last School:			<input type="checkbox"/> IEP <input type="checkbox"/> 504 <input type="checkbox"/> IDEA Parent (if different than parent):



Department of Child Safety Best Interest Determination Process Document

Instructions

The Every Student Succeeds Act/ESSA directs that youth experiencing foster care are to be maintained in their school of origin unless it is in the student's best interest to enroll in a new school. The school of origin is the school in which a student is enrolled at the time of entry into foster care. When the foster care living arrangement changes and the student (after a best interest determination is made) enrolls in a new school, the new school becomes the school of origin. Discuss and summarize the following topics with the student, parent, IDEA or surrogate parent (if assigned), school of origin, and caregiver. Discuss concerns and make efforts to reach consensus by the conclusion of the BID. Representatives from a proposed new school may be invited when circumstances indicate a higher potential for a change in school enrollment. Examples include when the student is entering or returning from an out-of-state living arrangement, entering a prospective permanent living arrangement, or exiting a juvenile justice or behavioral health setting. Note: Additional space available for comments on page four (4).

Participants Invited

	Attendance
Student Name (Last, First, M.I.) *PLEASE PRINT*	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
DCS Specialist	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
LEA Foster Care POC (School of Origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Parent(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
IDEA Parent (if different from Parent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Current Caregiver Relationship	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other (LEA Foster Care POC School of Residence)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Current School

Grade

School Address

City State ZIP

Date Entered the Home

Meeting Date

**LEA Foster Care POC is the designated point of contact at the District or School level. Additional school staff (current or proposed school, including ESS staff as appropriate) may be listed as "Other."*

Discussion

- 1 Living Arrangement:** Describe the permanency of the current living arrangement. (Include the anticipated length of stay, whether or not the caregivers are anticipated to be temporary or permanent, time to reunification or another permanency plan, etc. Provide the Notice to Provider form as needed.)

- 2 Student Input:** Describe the preference(s) of the student. Describe how the current school setting impacts the student's safety (physical environment, peer relationships, sibling connections, etc.), and how a change in school enrollment will better support safety.



Who is Involved?

Best Interest Determination Participants

REQUIRED

- Child Welfare Agency
- School of Origin

AMELIORATING

- New School
- Surrogate
- Caregiver
- CASA
- Student
- Parents

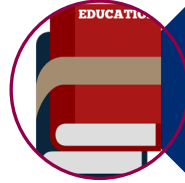


What are We Talking About?

Factors of a Best Interest Determination



Foster Care Plan



Academics



School Credits



Safety



Student, Parent,
Caregiver



Distance & Commute



Unique Best Interest Determination Scenarios

Best Interest Determination Process – Canyon State Academy

Canyon State Academy- Can they still attend their school of origin?

Placed by Department of Child Safety



Placed by delinquency court



Best Interest Determination Process – Residential Treatment Center

Residential Treatment Center- What school is the school of origin?

School attended before residential treatment center.

Best Interest Determination Process – Level D Placement

Level D Placement/Private Day School- What school is the school of origin?

Public school that placed the student.

Best Interest Determination Process – No Arizona Public School

No Arizona Public School- How is the Best Interest Determination executed?

School of origin



Immediately enroll at new school





Withdrawal & New Enrollment

Withdrawal

Caregiver tries to withdraw



No withdrawal, notify point of contact



Best Interest Determination process

New Enrollment

Caregiver tries to enroll



Notify school of origin point of contact



Best Interest Determination process



Mesa Public Schools

BID & Data Tracking Process

Overview

Foster Care Case Number Assignments 2016-2025

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Extensions Help

Search Menus

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X32

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W
1							3.272988506			220			244					90	406				
2	Name / DOB / Gr	SOO to SOR	1st Request	2nd Request	3rd Request	Meeting Date	Days to Schedule	NTP	School Invited	IEP	IEP Rec'd + Shared	SpEd Invited	No IEP	FC Emails	Enroll/ Remain	Withdraw/ Not MPS	School Outcome	Keep SOO	Enroll SOR	In Synergy/ Done	MPS FC Transport	Request Submitted	Checklist Done
3																							
4																							
5	S C /	Leading Edge to Hughes	3/21/25																				
6	L C?																						
7	A L / 7-4-18 / Gr K	Hale to ?	3/21/25																				
8	A L / 1-1-17 / Gr 1	Hale to ?	3/21/25																				
9	R G @ Welcome Center																						
10	A V	Adams	3/18/25																				
11	A M / Gr 2	Adams	3/18/25																				
12	A B / Gr 10	Vista Peak to MPS	3/18/25																				
13	V K / Gr 9	Westwood	3/12/25																				
14	N V	Superstition to GPS	3/3/25																				
15	A E / 8-25-07 / Gr 10					3/26/25																	
16	S S / 11-1-09 / Gr 10	RMHS to Mesa High	3/18/25			3/20/25	2										RMHS						
17	M S / 5-1-12 / Gr 8	Shepherd to Taylor	3/18/25			3/20/25	2										Shepherd						
18	D F / Gr 7	Tucson to Poston	3/19/25			3/20/25	1										Poston						
19	K W / 4-2-18 / Gr 11	CSA to Mesa High	3/11/25			3/20/25	3										Mesa High						
20	L M / 1-4-07 / Gr?	Cave Creek to MVT	3/6/25			3/19/25	4										MVT						
21	D A / 1-3-08 / Gr 10	Adobe Mountain to Skyline	3/17/25			3/18/25	1										Skyline						
22	J H / 6-11-08 / Gr 10	Marcos to Westwood	3/6/25			3/17/25	2										Westwood						
23	K W / 12-15-10 / Gr 9	Apache Junction to Mesa High	3/4/25			3/4/25	1										Mesa High						
24	A S / Gr 1	Stevenson to Litchfield	3/18/25			3/20/25	2										Litchfield-Park						
25	A S / Gr 6	Stevenson to Litchfield	3/18/25			3/20/25	2										Litchfield-Park						
26	A S / Gr 6	Stevenson to Litchfield	3/18/25			3/20/25	2										Litchfield-Park						
27	A E / 8-2-09 / Gr 10	Superstition to GPS	3/6/25																				
28	B K	East Valley High to Skyline				email											East Valley High						

+

≡

BID Schedule 24-25

Copy of BID Schedule 24-25

Case Assignments Since 2016

FC Transportation

24-25 10 Day Drops

23-24 10 Day Drops

DropDownContents

BID Schedule 23-24

<

>

Student Information

Student Unique Identifier Search

Search By

☒ Person Information

☐ Unique ID

Legal Name

Last*

First*

Personal

Birth date*

Gender*

+ Advanced Search (optional)

Search

Reset

* required fields

Name / DOB / Gr	SOO to SOR
S C /	Leading Edge to Hughes
A L / 7-4-18 / Gr K	Hale to ?
A L / 1-1-17 / Gr 1	Hale to ?
R G @ Welcome Center	
A V	Adams to Copper Basin
A M / Gr 2	Adams to Copper Basin
A B / Gr 10	Vista Peak to MPS
V K / Gr 9	Westwood to OE McClintock
N V	Superstition to GPS
A E / 8-25-07 / Gr 10	Superstition to Canyon State
S S / 11-1-09 / Gr 10	RMHS to Mesa High
M S / 5-1-12 / Gr 8	Shepherd to Taylor
D F / Gr 7	Tucson to Poston

-Column A) It is vital to have as much information as possible for the student

-Column B) It is also important to have the correct school of origin on the BID meeting

-AzEDS Identity search can be very helpful

Meeting/Discussion Scheduling

C	D	E	F	G
				3.272988506
1st Request	2nd Request	3rd Request	Meeting Date	Days to Schedule
3/21/25				
3/21/25				
3/21/25				
3/18/25				
3/18/25				
3/18/25				
3/12/25				
3/3/25				
3/7/25	3/21/25		3/26/25	
3/18/25			3/20/25	2
3/18/25			3/20/25	2

Per ARS 8-530.04, a BID determination needs to be made within 5 days

Steps Before Meeting

H	I	J	K	L	M
		220			244
NTP	School Invited	IEP	IEP Rec'd + Shared	SpEd Invited	No IEP
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Steps After the Meeting

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	
				90	406					
FC Emails	Enroll/ Remain	Withdraw/ Not MPS	School Outcome	Keep SOO	Enroll SOR	In Synergy/ Done	MPS FC Transport	Request Submitted	Checklist Done	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	RMHS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shepherd	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poston	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mesa High	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MVT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Skyline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Westwood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mesa High	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	East Valley High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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Data

R	S
90	406
Keep SOO	Enroll SOR

24-25
22%

R	S
80	466
Keep SOO	Enroll SOR

23-24
17%

R	S
26	150
Remain at SOO	Enroll at SOR

22-23
17%

Ideas for Further Data

Reason for NOT
maintaining school of
origin

Number of total
school moves for
student

Number of students
enrolling with credit
deficiencies

Chronic
absenteeism

Graduation rates

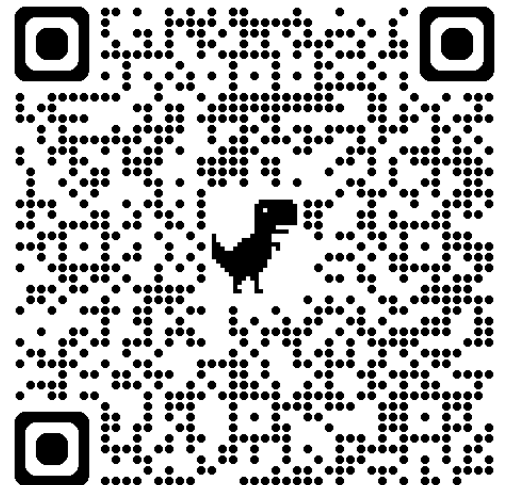
School of origin
transportation (rate,
cost, etc.)

How long it takes for
full enrollment and
attendance

Educational
discontinuity (length
of school missed
due to placement)

Tracking Sheet Walk-Through

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1a-g0wj8a43jVFOK7C9qUlfu_8G8avq-mBeZGsm_BgHs/





McKay Smith

*Title I, McKinney-Vento, &
Foster Care Liaison*

480.472.0484

fostercarepoc@mpsaz.org



Closing & Next Steps

Feedback Survey & Certificates

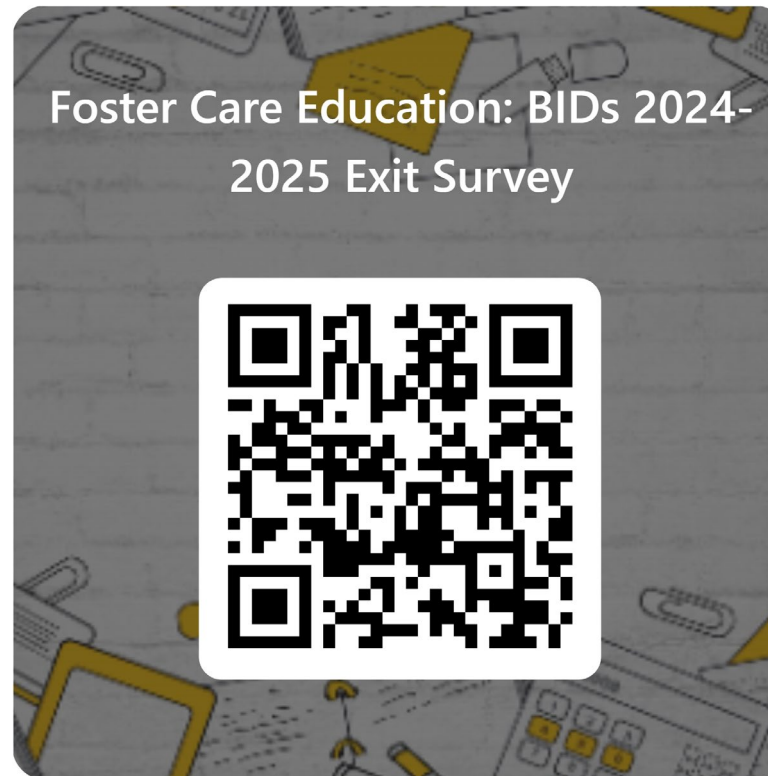
Feedback survey

- Must complete survey to receive professional learning certificate in Arizona Department of Education Professional Learning and Development Blackboard & receive credit for attending the mandatory training

Recording and slides

- The recording & slides will be posted on Arizona Department of Education's [Foster Care webpage](#)

Survey Link



<https://forms.office.com/r/TpA1Hm2eQt>

Questions



Thank You!



Joey Taylor, Foster Care Education Coordinator

Arizona Department of Education

602.542.3569

fostercare@azed.gov