

Department of Children and Families

School Attendance Questionnaire for Children in Foster Care during COVID-19 Issued: October 2, 2020

If you are Educational Decision Maker (EDM) for a child in your home, it is anticipated that you and the child's Social Worker/Supervisor will discuss and evaluate the school options for that child and decide which is best to meet the child's needs. While Foster Parents are the EDM in most cases, the EDM may also be the child's biological parent, a special education surrogate parent, or an Educational GAL appointed by the court. In the event that you are not the EDM for a child in your home, the child's Social Worker/Supervisor will facilitate a discussion with you, your Family Resource Worker, and the EDM to consider options and determine which is best for the child.

Below are some of the questions that should be considered in making the decision about what type of learning is best for a child.

Who is the child's Education Decision Maker?

What is the child's school district plan regarding reopening?

Who is the key school contact for the child?

Is there a choice regarding in-school or at-home learning?

Have the parent(s)/guardian(s) expressed any concern or opinion about school reopening plans?

Does the child or anyone they come in regular contact with fall into a category which [places them at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19?](#)

Does the child receive special education services?

- If so, what is the school district's plan for providing the child required education services? If remote learning is preferred, can the child's needs be met via this option?
- If the child receives specific services such as physical therapy or counseling at school, how will that service be provided? Will the child be able to engage and benefit in this format?

Does the child have any medical, developmental or mental health conditions that would make it difficult for them to properly wear a cloth face covering (aka mask) for long periods of time?

Will the child be able to maintain social distancing during the school day?

How will the child be transported to school?

What are identified challenges for supporting the child's learning this year? (for example, internet access, technology concerns, transportation, etc.)

- Can the school district, DCF, or other resources help with any of these concerns?

If you have not done so, please contact your Family Resource Worker to discuss these considerations regarding the educational programming for the children in your care as well as any impact that program options may have on your family. The Family Resource Worker will coordinate with you and the child's Social Worker to identify the most appropriate plan for the children in your home and steps to be taken to inform the school and the children's parents/guardians.

Additional Resources

[DCF List of School District Fall Learning Plans](#)

[DESE COVID-19 Guidance](#) Documents (Including Comprehensive Special Education Guidance for the 2020-21 School Year)

[Special Education Surrogate Parent Program](#)