

Foster Care Policy and Plan

● ***QUEST ACADEMY***

2024- 2025



1 CONTENTS

QUEST ACADEMY	1
2 About QUEST ACADEMY	3
2.1 School Mission Statement	3
2.2 School Vision Statement	3
2.3 School Website and School Performance Plan	3
3 Introduction	3
3.1 Purpose	3
3.2 Legal Requirements	3
3.3 Board Approval	4
3.3.1 Board Approval	4
3.3.2 Stakeholders	4
3.4 Description	4
3.5 Definitions and Acronyms	4
4 School of Origin and Best Interests Determination	6
5 Enrollment	6
5.1 Immediate Enrollment	6
5.2 Recording Foster Care Status in Infinite Campus	7
6 Identification and Tracking of Foster Care Students	7
6.1 Identification	7
6.2 Tracking of Foster Care Students	8
6.3 Data Validation	8
7 Transportation	9
8 Foster Care Liaison	9
9 Educational Records and Confidentiality	9
9.1 Local Family Service Agency Request of Education Records:	10
9.2 Local Family Service Agency Use of Educational Records:	10
9.3 Student Confidentiality	10
9.4 Designation of the local family service agency as School Official	10
10 Full or Partial Credit Requirements	10
11 References	11
12 Appendix A: Links	11

2 ABOUT QUEST ACADEMY

Quest Academy is a public charter school in the northwest Las Vegas valley serving students in grades K-8. Quest is a Leader in Me school that supports students being a leader of themselves and leader of others.

2.1 SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Quest Academy is an academic institution that is dedicated to growth, perseverance, and academic achievement. We foster students' personal and intellectual growth so that they are prepared to be positively productive and engaged citizens of their communities. We pride ourselves on our familial environment, and caring and committed teaching, leadership, and support staff.

2.2 SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

Quest Academy provides a uniquely designed, academically rigorous, caring and nurturing learning experience in a tuition-free, public school setting. We are a close-knit community of teachers, leaders, and families, committed to providing our diverse student population with the high-quality educational experience that they deserve.

2.3 SCHOOL WEBSITE AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE PLAN

For additional information about Quest Academy, please refer to the website at www.questlv.com. You may also wish to review the School Performance Plan: <https://www.questlv.com/school-performance-plan.html>

3 INTRODUCTION

This manual serves as a reference for Quest Academy regarding the topic of Foster Care.

3.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Foster Care Policy and Plan is to define procedures and specify program elements to ensure equal participation in all education programs for Foster Care students. An effective policy, plan, and program, ensures that all students have been provided with the necessary support and have been given the opportunity to meet all requirements for high school graduation.

3.2 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

[Nevada's Assembly Bill \(AB\) 491 of 2017](#) describes educational legal requirements for students in foster care that are codified in [Nevada Revised Statute \(NRS\) Chapter 388E](#). Additionally the [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) of 2015 \(20 U.S.C. § 6311\)](#) led to states being required to have procedures for children in foster care to remain in their school of origin.

Programs must be in compliance with [NRS Chapter 385](#) and [NRS Chapter 388](#) and the components that govern public schools, along with [NRS chapter 388A](#) which are the provisions that govern charter schools. Nevada's [Senate Bill \(SB\) 147 \(2019\)](#) resulted in additional provisions for homeless, unaccompanied, and foster care pupils that are codified in [NRS388.205](#), [NRS388A.489](#), and [NRS389.320](#).

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ([20 U.S.C. § 1232g](#); [34 CFR Part 99](#)) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records is also referenced in this manual.

3.3 BOARD APPROVAL

3.3.1 Board Approval

Each SPCSA school is required to have the Foster Care Policy and Plan approved by their school board.

This manual was approved on: **July 16, 2024**

3.3.2 Stakeholders

The following stakeholders participated in the review and approval process of this plan:

- Janelle Veith, Principal
- Jackie Working, Student Support Director
- Katie Secord, Academic Facilitator
- Sharon Maynard, Counselor
- Linda Williams, Student Success Facilitator
- April Hornsby, Teacher

3.4 DESCRIPTION

This manual contains information regarding:

- Definitions relevant to McKinney-Vento and homeless youth
- Information regarding School of Origin and Best Interests Determination
- Enrollment
- Identification and Tracking of Foster Care Students
- Transportation
- Foster Care Liaison
- Educational Records and Confidentiality
- Full or Partial Credit Requirements
- References
- Links

3.5 DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Throughout this manual you will encounter a variety of terms that are relevant to this process. Additionally, some items may be referred to using acronyms. Please review the following items to familiarize yourself with the terminology and acronyms used throughout this manual.

- Best Interests Determination:
 - When a child enters foster care or changes placement while in foster care, the agency which provides child welfare services to the child shall determine whether it is in the best interests of the child for the child to remain in his or her school of origin. In making this determination, there is a rebuttable presumption that it is in the best interests of the child to remain in his or her school of origin ([NRS 388E.105](#))
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA):
 - is the federal K-12 education law of the United States. ESSA was signed into law in 2015 and replaced the previous education law called “No Child Left Behind.” It is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965.
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):
 - The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ([20 U.S.C. § 1232g](#); [34 CFR Part 99](#)) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Additional information about FERPA may be reviewed at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.
- Foster Care:
 - Based on [NAC 432B.017](#), the term “foster care” means any out-of-home placement of a child. The term includes:
 1. The placement of a child into:
 - (a) A family foster home, as that term is defined in NRS 424.013;

- (b) A group foster home, as that term is defined in NRS 424.015; or
 - (c) Any other similar institution having the appropriate qualifications and facilities to provide the necessary and desirable degree and type of care to the child.
- 2. The placement of a child with a relative other than the relative who had a legal responsibility for providing a home for the child before the child was placed into the custody of the agency which provides child welfare services.
- 3. An independent living arrangement approved by the agency which provides child welfare services in accordance with NAC 432B.410, made by the agency which provides child welfare services for a child in the custody of the agency which provides child welfare services pursuant to NRS 127.050 or 432B.550, or for whom the agency which provides child welfare services is responsible pursuant to NRS 432B.360. (Added to NAC by Div. of Child & Fam. Services by R221 97, eff. 6 5 98; A by R045 02, 7 23 2002)
- Infinite Campus (IC):
 - Infinite Campus is the Student Information System (SIS) used by all public schools in Nevada.
- Nevada Department of Education (NDE):
 - The Nevada Department of Education or NDOE, autonomous of the governor and the Nevada State Legislature, administers primary and secondary public education in the state of Nevada.
- Nevada Revised Statute (NRS):
 - The Nevada Revised Statutes are all the current codified laws of the State of Nevada. Nevada law consists of the Constitution of Nevada and Nevada Revised Statutes.
- Participating school:
 - A charter school that is sponsored by the State Public Charter School Authority.
- School of Origin:
 - The public school in which a child was enrolled at the time that the child was placed in foster care or the school in which a child who is in foster care is enrolled at the time of the most recent change in the placement of the child.
- State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA):
 - The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) authorizes public charter schools across Nevada and is responsible for the oversight and monitoring of those schools to ensure positive academic outcomes for students and strong stewardship of public dollars.
- US Department of Education (USED):
 - The U.S. Department of Education is the agency of the federal government that establishes policy for, administers, and coordinates most federal assistance to education.

4 SCHOOL OF ORIGIN AND BEST INTERESTS DETERMINATION

The school of origin is the public school in which a child was enrolled at the time that the child was placed in foster care or the school in which a child who is in foster care is enrolled at the time of the most recent change in the placement of the child.

When a child enters foster care or is moved to a new foster home, a best interests determination is conducted to determine if the student should remain in the school of origin or enroll in a different public school. The best interests determination should occur in conjunction with the relevant schools (school of origin and potential new school), the SPCSA foster care liaison, and the local family services agency to determine the appropriate placement.

Per [NRS 388E.105 \(2\)](#):

In determining whether it is in the best interests of a child in foster care to remain in his or her school of origin, the agency which provides child welfare services, in consultation with the local education agency and the educational decision maker appointed for the child pursuant to [NRS 432B.462](#), must consider, without limitation:

- (a) The wishes of the child;
- (b) The educational success, stability and achievement of the child;
- (c) Any individualized education program or academic plan developed for the child;
- (d) Whether the child has been identified as an English learner;
- (e) The health and safety of the child;
- (f) The availability of necessary services for the child at the school of origin;
- (g) Whether the child has a sibling enrolled in the school of origin; and
- (h) A plan for the continued education of the child, developed pursuant to [NRS 432B.60847](#), if the child is admitted to a psychiatric hospital or facility which provides residential treatment for mental illness.

The costs of transporting the child to the school of origin must not be considered when determining whether it is in the best interests of the child to remain at his or her school of origin.

Once the best interests determination has been conducted, if a dispute arises regarding the placement, the local family services agency will make the final decision regarding the child's school which will be subject to court approval if any party objects.

Additionally, upon exit from foster care, the child may remain in the school of origin until the child enters a grade level that is no longer served by the school, or reaches an age where they are no longer eligible to attend the level of school.

5 ENROLLMENT

5.1 IMMEDIATE ENROLLMENT

In accordance with subsection 2 of NRS 388A.453, when it is determined that it is in the best interests of the child to change schools, immediate enrollment means the school's legal requirement to immediately enroll the child into the new school regardless if the new school has received all the child's educational records; school transfer records, immunization records or any other unmet educational or academic requirements. Enrollment for a child in foster care cannot be denied or delayed. The enrolling school shall immediately contact the school of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records and those records will be promptly transferred.

5.2 RECORDING FOSTER CARE STATUS IN INFINITE CAMPUS

Foster Care status will be recorded in Infinite Campus by the Registrar.

Foster Care students must be correctly entered in Infinite Campus for a variety of purposes including grant eligibility and desktop monitoring. SPCSA must be able to accurately obtain data regarding the numbers of Foster Care students for reporting to NDE via Infinite Campus. Please use the instructions below to accurately identify Foster Care students in Infinite Campus.

1. In the Campus Tools menu on the "Index" tab, choose "Student Information" then click "Program Participation", then choose "Foster Care" from the index that appears.
2. Locate the student using the search tab.
3. Once you have pressed "Go" to locate the student, press "New" to enter the information for the Foster Care student. You must enter:

- Placement type
 - “Start Date”
 - “End Date” should be entered if available from the department of family services if the expected end date is known. If the student exits foster care status during the school year, you should update the end date when notified.
 - Enter the social worker name.
 - Enter the school name for the “Owner”.
4. Return to the “Index” tab and select “General”. It will display the student “Summary” tab. Click the “Flags” tab.
 5. On the “Flags” tab, press the “New” button to add the Foster Care flag for the student. You should enter a “Start Date” and “End Date”.

6 IDENTIFICATION AND TRACKING OF FOSTER CARE STUDENTS

6.1 IDENTIFICATION

Quest identifies foster care students during the enrollment process. The registrar will review various enrollment documents, which may include basic personal information, proof of address, previous school records, and legal guardianship information. Foster care students may have unique circumstances, and their enrollment documents might contain additional information indicating their foster care status. This includes documentation of legal guardianship or custody for enrolled students. In the case of foster care students, this documentation may come in the form of court orders, custody agreements, or guardianship papers provided by the local child welfare or foster care agency. Quest also ensures communication channels with the local Department of Family Services. This collaboration ensures that the school receives relevant information about foster care students and can provide appropriate support. School staff may contact the agency to verify a student's foster care status, discuss specific needs or challenges, and seek guidance on supporting the student's educational journey.

Quest has a designated point of contact, the counselor or designee, and registrar to act as points of contact for foster care students. These individuals facilitate communication between the school, the student, and the Department of Family Services. They may also collaborate with other school personnel to address the unique needs and challenges faced by foster care students.

It's important to note that foster care student information is typically treated with confidentiality and privacy. Quest adheres to relevant laws and regulations, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in the United States, to protect the privacy of student records, including those related to foster care status.

6.2 TRACKING OF FOSTER CARE STUDENTS

Quest tracks the progress of foster care students using a variety of metrics. Quest uses a Student Support Team to monitor foster care students. The SST meets weekly and foster care students are reviewed monthly to identify progress and any growth or challenges. The student success facilitator monitors communication with caseworkers and caregivers as well as academic assessments, attendance tracking, and collaboration with support services on a weekly basis.

Communication with Caseworkers and Caregivers: Quest maintains open lines of communication with caseworkers from the local child welfare agency and foster care caregivers. Regular meetings, phone calls, or email exchanges provide updates on the student's progress, behavior, and any additional support needed. This collaborative approach helps track the student's academic and social-emotional development.

Academic Assessments: Quest utilizes the MAP Growth assessments and SBAC, to foster care students, like all other students. These assessments help track the student's academic progress and identify areas of strength or areas where

additional support may be needed. The results of these assessments contribute to the overall monitoring of the student's progress.

Attendance Tracking: Regular attendance is crucial for academic success. Quest tracks the attendance of foster care students, recognizing that these students may face unique challenges that can impact their attendance. Consistent attendance monitoring allows schools to identify patterns, intervene if necessary, and provide appropriate support to ensure the student's continued educational progress.

Collaboration with Support Services: Quest collaborates with support services, such as school counselors, social workers, or psychologists, to monitor and address the social and emotional well-being of foster care students. These professionals provide ongoing support, counseling, and interventions when necessary, helping to track the student's emotional progress and overall adjustment within the school environment.

It's important to note that tracking the progress of foster care students should be done with sensitivity and an understanding of their individual circumstances. Each student may have unique needs and challenges, requiring personalized approaches to monitoring and support.

6.3 DATA VALIDATION

The preparation, submission, and validation of required Foster Care student data reports involves multiple staff members and Quest utilizes the following processes needed for report completion.

Data Collection and Compilation: The registrar collects data related to enrollment status and attendance records and is accessible in the student information system. The student success facilitator gathers data related to academic progress, disciplinary actions, and other relevant details.

Designated Staff: The Registrar notifies staff, monitors completion, and submits all reports uploaded to Epicenter and sent to NDE. The preparation of reports will be completed by the Student Success Facilitator working in conjunction with the counselor. The Student Support Director validates the report.

Submission to NDE: Once the reports are prepared, they need to be submitted to the appropriate entity, such as the State Department of Education or the designated education agency responsible for foster care reporting. Submission methods can vary, including online portals or email based on the requirement for the report.

Report Validation: After submission, the education authorities or the designated agency will review and validate the foster care student data reports. If any discrepancies or issues are identified, the school may be contacted for clarification or to address any necessary corrections.

It's important to note that specific reporting requirements and processes may vary depending on the specific guidelines provided by the National Department of Education (NDE) or the relevant education authorities. Quest consults the official documentation, guidelines, and reaches out to the NDE or local education agencies for the most accurate and up-to-date information on preparing, submitting, and validating foster care student data reports.

7 TRANSPORTATION

Transportation procedures are determined according to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Interlocal agreements with the local family services agencies in the state of Nevada.

In addition to ESSA and Fostering Connections, NRS Chapters 388 and 388E provides guidance on addressing school transportation in the rural school districts. The SPCSA, each Participating School and the local family service agency will regularly monitor compliance with ESSA, the Fostering Connections Act, state law and this Memorandum of Understanding.

8 FOSTER CARE LIAISON

Every school is required to have a Foster Care Liaison. It is the job of the Liaison to ensure that foster care students have the same opportunities as all other students, which includes ensuring that foster care students are able to attend school, arranging for transportation in a timely manner, keeping the school staff informed of the rights of foster care students, communicating with the parents/guardians of foster children and youth, and communicating with the local family services agency.

The foster care liaison may communicate and provide information through a variety of methods including but not limited to:

- Email.
- Phone.
- Professional Development for school staff.
- Informational materials such as flyers and posters regarding the rights of foster care students.
- Distribution of internet-based resources regarding foster care matters.

The foster care liaison at our school is:

Sharon Maynard
(702) 631-4751
s.maynard@questlv.com

9 EDUCATIONAL RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The policies for sharing educational records and confidentiality for students in foster care determined according to current the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Interlocal agreements with the local family services agencies in the state of Nevada.

In January 2013, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) was amended in the U.S. Department of Education through the enactment of the Federal Uninterrupted Scholars Act (USA). The USA made key revisions to FERPA that permits educational agencies to disclose a student's education records, without parental consent, to a caseworker or other representatives of child welfare agencies.

9.1 LOCAL FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY REQUEST OF EDUCATION RECORDS:

The local family service agency caseworker requesting the records will provide a badge identifying the caseworker as a local family service agency employee and proof of custody of the student with the one of the following:

- A written notification on the local family service agency letterhead indicating that the agency has legal custody or is otherwise legally responsible for the care and protection of the child or
- A court order.

9.2 LOCAL FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY USE OF EDUCATIONAL RECORDS:

The manner in which the local family service agency may use a child's education records, including, without limitation, electronic education records maintained by the school and/or Participating School:

- To ensure the child's education needs are met.
- Effectively implement a child's case plan.
- Maintain the child's educational stability.
- Provide services to address a student's educational needs.
- Monitor a child's educational outcomes and promote success.

9.3 STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Consistent with the MOU/Interlocal and with state and federal law, the SPCSA, each Participating School and the local family service agency shall protect confidential information from re-disclosure unless specifically authorized by state or federal law. The SPCSA, each Participating School and the local family service agency shall report any unauthorized releases of exchanged data to the other party and cooperate in taking appropriate corrective action.

The local family service agency, the SPCSA and each Participating School acknowledge that each entity has a legal obligation to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of student records and information identifying a student or child being in foster care. Parties agree to maintain compliance with the Uninterrupted Scholars Act, FERPA and with any other federal and state laws protecting the rights of children who are in the protective custody of a child welfare agency. The local family service agency, the SPCSA and each Participating School agree to safeguard all such information.

9.4 DESIGNATION OF THE LOCAL FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY AS SCHOOL OFFICIAL

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ([20 U.S.C. §1232g](#) and [34 C.F.R Part 99](#)), the Participating School shall designate the local family service agency as a School Official.

10 FULL OR PARTIAL CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Nevada's [Senate Bill \(SB\) 147 \(2019\)](#) resulted in additional provisions for homeless, unaccompanied, and foster care pupils that are codified in [Nevada Revised Statute \(NRS\) 388.205](#), [NRS388A.489](#), and [NRS389.320](#).

Per this legislation, schools may not deny homeless students or unaccompanied youth credit for a course due to attendance. Regardless of the number of hours of classroom instruction, students should still receive credit for the coursework that has been satisfactorily completed. Evidence that may be considered in determining how much credit should be awarded for the coursework may include:

- (a) Demonstration of competency by a pupil;
- (b) Performance by a pupil on an examination;
- (c) Successful completion of a program of independent study, or any part of such a program, by the pupil;
- (d) Full or partial credit for coursework completed by a pupil at an accredited public or private school located within or outside of this State that is sought to be transferred;
- (e) Full or partial credit for coursework completed by a pupil at a summer school conducted by an accredited public or private school or institution of higher learning located within or outside of this State that is sought to be transferred;
- (f) Completion by a pupil of a correspondence or distance education course provided by a high school which is nationally accredited or by an entity which appears on the list published by the Department pursuant to NRS 388.834;

- (g) Completion of an apprenticeship program by a pupil;
- (h) Completion of a program by a pupil at a trade or vocational school which is accredited;
- (i) Work experience of a pupil;
- (j) Community service performed by a pupil; and
- (k) Any other evidence or method which is determined to be appropriate by the board of trustees of a school district or sponsor of a charter school, as applicable, and approved by the Department.

Additionally, A pupil who receives partial credit for coursework or a course of study pursuant to subsection 1 or 2 must be allowed to appropriately combine the partial credit, including, without limitation, for the purposes of the total number of credits required for graduation from high school or the minimum number of units of credit required in a core academic subject pursuant to NRS 389.018.

11 REFERENCES

Additional reference materials have all been linked in within the text of this manual, and will be listed in “Appendix A: Links” of this manual.

12 APPENDIX A: LINKS

A variety of links have been provided throughout this manual and are listed below in the order that they appear in this manual:

- AB491 of 2017:
 - <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/79th2017/Bills/AB/AB491.pdf>
- NRS Chapter 388E:
 - <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-388E.html>
- ESSA:
 - <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/6311>
- NRS Chapter 385:
 - <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/nrs-385.html>
- NRS Chapter 388:
 - <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/nrs-388.html>
- NRS Chapter 388A:
 - <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-388A.html>
- NRS Chapter 388E:
 - <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-388E.html>
- SB147 of 2019:
 - https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/80th2019/Bills/SB/SB147_EN.pdf
- FERPA:
 - 20 U.S.C. § 1232g: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1232g>
 - 34 CFR Part 99: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-A/part-99?toc=1>
- NRS Chapter 388E:
 - <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-388E.html>
- General information about FERPA:
 - <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>
- NAC 432B.017

- <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nac/NAC-432B.html#NAC432BSec017>