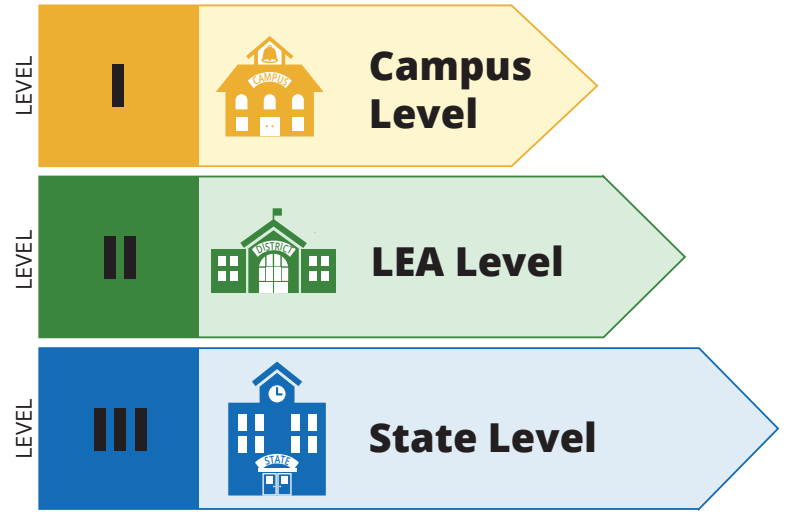


# HOW ARE ESSA FOSTER CARE DISPUTES RESOLVED?

Fostering Connections Act and the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) require coordination among agencies at the State and local level to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care. The local education agency (LEA) and Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) should make every effort to reach an agreement regarding the appropriate school placement and transportation coordination of students in foster care. The dispute resolution process should be fair to all parties and reached in an expeditious manner. This chart provides guidance on disputes with students in foster care.



## LEVEL I - Campus Level

- ▶ School staff, administrators and the caseworker attempt to resolve an ESSA related issue.
- ▶ LEA Foster Care Point of Contact should be informed of the dispute at the campus level.



### Next steps if no resolution:

**Recommend escalate to LEA level** immediately or no later than 7 to 10 business days.



## LEVEL II - LEA Level

The dispute should be sent to the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact, the DFPS Regional Education Specialist, and the DFPS Program Administrator.

- ▶ Seek guidance from your LEA regarding dispute resolution process.
- ▶ LEA Foster Care Point of Contact communicates, with DFPS Regional Education Specialist; or
- ▶ DFPS Regional Education Specialist contacts LEA Foster Care Point of Contact.

# HOW ARE ESSA FOSTER CARE DISPUTES RESOLVED?

## Local Coordinated Meeting:

- ▶ Request a coordinated meeting with the appropriate local child welfare and education staff – including but not limited to, the foster care liaison, transportation management, school administrators, the student’s DFPS Regional Education Specialist, caseworker, caregiver or other assigned child welfare representative, and/or education decision maker.
- ▶ These parties will convene to discuss logistics and costs around transportation provisions, education decision making or other ESSA related concerns.
- ▶ Recommend contact no later than 7 to 10 business days once the LEA Foster Care Point of Contact and/or DFPS Regional Education Specialist is made aware.



### Next steps if no resolution:

**Recommended immediate escalation to State Level.**



## LEVEL III - State Level

If the issue still remains unresolved, the TEA Foster Care Point of Contact and DFPS Regional Education Specialist at State Office must reach a resolution, in consultation with each respective agency’s leadership.

- ▶ LEA Foster Care Point of Contact sends the following information to TEA’s Foster Care Point of Contact, [fostercareliaison@tea.texas.gov](mailto:fostercareliaison@tea.texas.gov).
- ▶ DFPS Regional Education Specialist sends the following information to DFPS State Office Education Program Specialist/ ESSA point of contact.
  - ▷ A complete explanation of the basis of the dispute, with all pertinent facts.
  - ▷ The name and contact information of the people who have been addressing the dispute thus far on behalf of both the LEA and the local child welfare agency (job title, phone, email, and mailing address).
  - ▷ Details of how the agencies have attempted to resolve the dispute at the local level prior to appealing to the state.
- ▶ TEA Foster Care Point of Contact and DFPS State Office Education Program Specialist coordinate a review of the information and issue a resolution. Recommended resolution to be issued as soon as possible but, no later than 15 business days.