



**Division of Family and Children Services  
Educational Programming, Assessment and Consultation (EPAC)**

## Educational Stability Checklist

**Guidance:** This checklist provides a guide to child welfare practitioners that will assist in ensuring educational stability when determining the appropriateness of the educational setting for children and youth in foster care. It is important to engage other child welfare professionals, educational experts, and legal personnel (when appropriate) during this assessment and planning process. WHEN APPROPRIATE, THE CHILD/YOUTH MUST BE ENGAGED IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS.

**Notes:**

- (1) It is imperative current and accurate academic information is maintained for each youth on the *Education Detail Page* in Georgia SHINES.
- (2) Refer to the DFCS Policy 10.13 “*Educational Needs*” and the *Educational Stability DFCS Field Practice Guide* for additional guidance and support.

Practice Issues	Actions/ Comments	
<b>Educational Needs Assessment</b>	Yes	No
Has the child/youth been referred to the Education Programming Assessment and Consultation (EPAC) Unit for a diagnostic educational assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the youth have an Educational Action Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you performed a search in GA SHINES via the GaDOE “EDU tab” to locate longitudinal education profile on the child/youth? <b>Note: Use the child/youth’s Georgia Testing Identification (GTID) number to search</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>School of Origin</b>	Yes	No
Will the child/youth remain in his/her school of origin with no additional supports beyond EPAC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What are the considerations and services needed to keep the child in his/her school of origin?  Consider these additional Considerations:  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the youth in his/her 11 <sup>th</sup> or 12 <sup>th</sup> year of school? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the youth have more than (5) unexcused absences in current school year? <input type="checkbox"/> Has the child recently been released /discharged from the follow settings: <div style="margin-left: 40px;">                     (1) Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facility                      (2) Psychiatric Residential Treatment facility (PRTF)                      (3) Child Caring Institution (CCI)                 </div>		
If a child cannot remain in his/her school of origin, what were the considerations and barriers? What is the best interest determination?  <input type="checkbox"/> Were there safety issues/concerns that could not be resolved? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the permanency goal impact the educational stability/setting of the child/youth? <input type="checkbox"/> Was it the child’s/youth’s/family’s preference not to remain in the school of origin? <input type="checkbox"/> Was proximity to current placement not reasonable or conducive to learning (For example: travel time, resources, educational programming, and etc.)?		

Practice Issues	Actions/ Comments	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other outstanding issues?		
<b>School of Origin</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<p>Did you engage the school of origin and/or the family/caregiver to obtain the following educational information?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School reports and records</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Current Grades/ Achievement data (test scores)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher and support team meetings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discipline and Attendance Records</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parental documentation registration forms</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Resident information</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> "Student Pass codes" and/or Georgia Identification Testing Number (GTID) to parent portals to obtain student information</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Educational Services and Entitlements</b>		
<p>What planning and or processes have you engaged in to ensure the following parties/entities are informed of the educational services and entitlements available for the child/youth? Did you include the following entities and processes?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The court process?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The assessment and case planning process (EPAC, ILP, Roundtables)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The roles and responsibilities of caregivers for the educational well-being for the child/youth placed in their care?</p>		
<b>Educational Well-being and Permanency</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<p>Have you considered the educational well-being of the child/youth while developing permanency goals and making placement arrangements? Consider the following:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Expected length of the child's foster care placement, considering whether the child is likely to be returning home after a brief stay in foster care, or whether a change in placement is anticipated in the near future. How would this impact educational instruction and academic performance?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The child's permanency goal and plan (updated and accurate).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The expected date for achieving the permanency goal.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The number schools the child has attended. The number of schools the child has attended this year.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The affects the moves have had on the child emotionally, socially, academically, and physically.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The placement with siblings or relatives is feasible.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The resources that are available to help the child academically, socially, and physically.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The child's feelings about any upcoming move.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Practice Issues	Actions/ Comments
<p>Have you identified additional educational/emotional needs of the student including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The child's need for proximity to the family</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The child's actual age, maturity level, and grade level</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The number of schools the student has attended</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The schools that all siblings attended</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Child's preference to change schools or remain in the current school</li> </ul>	
Educational Settings	Comments
<p>Determining factors for a suitable educational setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the current academic performance trends of the student?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Does the child participate in additional instruction? (e.g., gifted program, career and technical programs)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the student's career and academic goals? Does the school have programs that meet the needs of the student that other schools may not have?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Does the child have ties to his/and her current school and how? Especially ties in regards to relationships with teachers, administrators, coaches, and support staff.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Would the move affect the student's ability to earn full academic credit and hinder the child from participating in sports? Also, would this move impede the student from transitioning to the next grade, or graduate on time and if so how?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider the point of time in the school year and how the timing of any school transfer would coincide with a logical juncture such as standardized testing and/or grade report periods.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What Special Education entitlements have been identified to assist with academic achievement and protections for the student (if applicable)?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) if applicable</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The student's 504 plan if applicable</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Special Education Laws:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).</li> <li>(2) The Americans with Disabilities</li> <li>(3) Amendment Act (ADAAA).</li> <li>(4) Section 504 Rehabilitations Act (including Free and Appropriate Public Education – FAPE)</li> </ol>	
<p>Have you identified and integrated information from multiple sources to make key case plan decisions regarding appropriate educational settings? Consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify the schools all sibling groups attend that reside in the foster home.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Include Input from representatives of the child's current school at the time of removal or move.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Proximity of the placement home to the child's current school.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The number of schools the child attended (throughout academic career). The number of schools</li> </ul>	

Practice Issues	Actions/ Comments	
<p>the child attended this year?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> What is the parent's preference to have the child change schools or remain in the current school of origin?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The appropriateness of educational programs in the current school or another school, and how each school serves or can serve the child's needs (including special education and other interests).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Number of school disruptions the child has already experienced due to medical and discipline issues.</p>		
<b>Educational Transportation Services</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<p>Have you considered any of the following transportation options when determining the type of transportation to ensure educational stability for the child/youth?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/caregiver – Can the foster parent/caregiver provide transportation?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local transportation options – Are there local transportation options available? See options listed below. These options include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Public transportation/Mass Transit</li> <li>○ Van pools</li> <li>○ Taxis (<i>DFCS does not necessarily encourage the use of taxis however, in some instances this may be the only option. Be sure to consult with your Supervisor/Director before using taxis.</i>)</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are wrap transportation services available?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Have you considered the following determining factors when deciding on the most appropriate transportation option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Age of child/youth</li> <li>○ Location of placement and distance from school of origin</li> <li>○ Child/youth's physical and cognitive abilities</li> <li>○ Child/youth's developmental abilities</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>