| **Vision**  ***LCS will provide an engaging, safe and respectful learning environment that fosters***  ***effective communication, collaboration and critical thinking while creating productive citizens who value diversity and positively***  ***contribute to society.***  **Mission**  ***The mission of LCS is to educate, inspire, and empower all students to become responsible and engaged citizens who are equipped with the critical thinking skills needed to thrive in our global society.***  Leon County Schools Logo | **Nondiscrimination Notification**  **and Contact Information**  “No person shall on the basis of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, color, pregnancy, disability, military status or genetic information be denied employment, receipt of services, access to or participation in school activities or programs if qualified to receive such services, or otherwise be discriminated against or placed in a hostile environment in any educational program or activity including those receiving federal financial assistance, except as provided by law.” No person shall deny equal access or a fair opportunity to meet, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society. An employee, student, parent or applicant alleging discrimination with respect to employment, or any educational program or activity may contact:  **Tonja Fitzgerald, Divisional Director**  Equity Compliance Officer (Students)  Leon County School District  2757 West Pensacola Street  Tallahassee, Florida 32304  (850) 487-7309  [fitzgeraldt@leonschools.net](mailto:fitzgeraldt@leonschools.net)  **Wallace Knight, Director**  Equity Compliance Officer (Employees)  Title IX Compliance Officer  Leon County School District  2757 West Pensacola Street  Tallahassee, Florida 32304  (850) 487-7210  [knightwa@leonschools.net](mailto:knightwa@leonschools.net)  A student or parent alleging discrimination as it relates to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act may contact:  **Jennifer Benton, 504 Specialist**  (850) 487-7317  [bentonj@leonschools.net](mailto:bentonj@leonschools.net) | Foster Care Program  The District recognizes the importance of limiting educational disruption for students in foster care and will collaborate with the Florida Department of Children and Families, and Big Bend Community Based Care points of contact to promote stability for students in foster care and to ensure compliance with applicable Federal Laws and State Statutes. | |
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| **ESSA** The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 defines foster care as “24 hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility.” This includes in foster family homes, shelter, relatives, nonrelatives, group homes, and residential facilities. Students in foster care should remain in their “school of origin” under ESSA, unless it is determined not to be in their best interest during the ESSA staffing or conference call. “School of origin” is defined as the school the child is currently attending. | “Building Our Future” **Educational Rights** A staffing or conference call will be facilitated within 72 business hours of being notified of a child’s removal into foster care or a change of placement to determine if it is in the student’s best interest to remain in the school of origin. The District shall collaboratively discuss school placement options. This is based on an individualized process that places emphasis on the best interest of the student. **Transportation**  The District is committed to meeting the transportation needs of students in foster care in a cost-effective, efficient, and collaborative manner. The District will work with stakeholders to develop, implement, and monitor the effectiveness of transportation procedures of students in foster care. | | Factors When Determining Best Interest include but not limited to:  * Age, maturity, and behavioral capacity of student * Proximity of placement * Influence of school climate on the student * Length of anticipated time in the current foster care placement * History of previous school transfers and their impacts on the child’s success * Level of academic and behavioral success in the current school * Attachment to the school * Preference of the student * Preference of parent/guardian or education decision makers * School placement of siblings * Need for specialized instruction  **Contact Us** Office of Health, Wellness, and Student Services – Foster Care  Marsha Sanders, Ph.D.  725 S. Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301 \* 850-561-8376 | |