

Promoting School Success for Youth in Foster Care

Desired Outcomes

Reduce the significant barriers that youth in foster care face in obtaining post-secondary education. Increase opportunities for job readiness or further education beyond high school for this population through the establishment of statewide institutional supports, coordination, and/or scholarship.

The Ohio legislature has introduced a pair of bills aimed at addressing two distinct challenges these youth face, and Adoption Network Cleveland encourages lawmakers to support both initiatives:

- **Sub. House Bill 25 - Fostering Student Success Act, Sponsors Reps. Ray and Jarrells**
 - Requires each school district, community school & STEM school to provide resources and supports aimed at youth in foster care, including a designated foster care education liaison and a foster family navigator.
 - Enhances coordination and information sharing amongst state agencies responsible for supporting these students.
 - Emphasizes outcomes by requiring schools to notify the Department of Education and Workforce when a student placed in foster care enrolls and to track both high school graduation rates and postsecondary education enrollment.
 - Status of Sub. HB 25 - passed the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee and passed on the Floor of the House on Wednesday, March 4, 2026.
- **Senate Bill 13 - Foster to College Scholarship Act, Sponsor Sen. Reynolds**
 - Provides scholarships for youth who have spent time as teens in foster care to attend Ohio colleges and universities.
 - Includes training programs such as trades in addition to college.
 - Provides “Last Dollar” funding to cover the remaining balance after all other awards, to ensure coverage of the full cost of attendance, including tuition, room, and board.
 - Supports up to 1,000 students with an annual estimated cost of \$7.5 million.
 - Establishes a Liaison and a Navigator position to assist qualifying prospective students.
 - Status of SB 13 - pending in the Senate Finance Committee.

Current Situation

More than 3,500 children are waiting to be adopted from foster care in Ohio right now, and nearly 1,000 young people will age out this year. College or adequate job training is too often an unattainable goal for youth in foster care who face enormous challenges, including housing and food insecurity, when aging out of the foster care system. Ohio trails the nation in outcomes for teens who were in foster care—according to national data, Ohio youth were less likely to graduate high school or obtain a GED, secure employment, or be enrolled in school, and were more likely to be justice-system involved than their peers across the nation. Ohio is in the bottom 10% of states across each of these measures. Scholarships and other institutional supports for youth with experience in foster care can address these negative trajectories by giving students hope and footing for a fulfilling future.



For More Information

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