



Los Angeles County  
Department of Children  
and Family Services



Los Angeles County  
Office of Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Shiara Davila-Morales  
DCFS Office of Public Affairs  
[davils@dcfs.lacounty.gov](mailto:davils@dcfs.lacounty.gov)  
(213) 739-6448

Margo Minecki  
LACOE Communications Department  
[Minicki\\_margo@lacoedu](mailto:Minicki_margo@lacoedu)  
(562) 500-4000

**\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

## SOCIAL WORKERS HAVE NEW TOOL TO SUPPORT EDUCATIONS NEEDS OF STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

**Los Angeles – July 21, 2020** – Los Angeles County social workers now have improved connectivity to youth in foster care, something especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic, thanks to a partnership between the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Foster youth often change residences and school districts. Schools and agencies require centralized access to student records so they can provide seamless, comprehensive educational services. LACOE developed the Educational Passport System several years ago to provide all 80 county K-12 districts and DCFS with a free centralized database of demographic and academic information for foster youth, promoting quick transfer of vital student records and the ability for social workers to connect with students out in the field.

Now, mobile and web versions of the Passport System are available, allowing the department's more than 7,800 social workers to easily view school records on their cell phones while out in the field. The app was developed by LACOE's Technology Services team in collaboration with DCFS.

"I'm deeply concerned about the pandemic's impact on our young people in foster care," said LACOE Superintendent Debra Duardo, head of the nation's largest regional education agency that supports 80 K-12 districts and some two million preschool and school-age students.

Promoting Child Safety and Strengthening Families

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“These young people were already dealing with the negative effect of trauma, which has only been made worse by school closures and social distancing,” she said. “Addressing their needs requires collaboration between educators and social workers, and I am proud to partner with DCFS to provide this vital new tool.”

The Los Angeles County Educational Passport System mobile app empowers social workers in the field to use their department-issued cell phones to easily view school information about youth on their caseload before visiting with them or foster families without having to return to the office to do so.

“We are grateful for LACOE’s leadership and collaboration in developing a robust and well-designed system that will provide real time information to help our social workers address educational needs of youth in foster care,” DCFS Director Bobby D. Cagle said. “We expect the system will help us achieve better education outcomes for youth and will assist them in reaching their full potential.”

Using the mobile app, social workers can add new youth assigned to their caseload and remove those no longer assigned to them. They can view student demographics, enrollment history, attendance records and progress reports.

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### About Los Angeles County Office of Education

The Los Angeles County Office of Education, based in Downey, provides a range of programs and services to support the region’s 80 K-12 school districts and two million preschool and school-age children. LACOE is dedicated to improving the lives of students and the educational community through service, leadership and advocacy. For more information, visit <https://www.lacoe.edu/>

### About the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services

The Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) promotes child safety and well-being by partnering with communities to strengthen families, keeping children at home whenever possible, and connecting them with stable, loving homes in times of need. As the largest child protective services agency in the nation, DCFS is responsible for ensuring the safety of more than two million children across 88 diverse cities in Los Angeles County. Established in 1984 to keep children safe and support families in crisis, it is one of the 35 Los Angeles County Departments governed by the five-member Board of Supervisors with nearly 9,000 staff across 20 regional offices, specialized bureaus, and administration that cover a broad array of services and programs. The department is led by Director Bobby D. Cagle - a former foster child and longtime social worker. For more information, visit <http://dcfs.lacounty.gov>.