

These steps are designed to guide ERHs, including those with and without their own attorneys. If you are represented by an attorney, please consult with that attorney prior to speaking with other parties, attorneys, or the court.

ISSUE	DESCRIPTION OF WORK
Before Every Court Hearing	
Investigate Education Needs	Meet with the youth, investigate the youth’s education needs, and determine if they are being met. Investigation includes requesting and reviewing education records (use the <u>Requesting Education Records: Step-by-Step Guide Tool</u>), speaking with the youth’s caregiver (if the caregiver is not also the ERH), school staff, and other relevant adults (e.g., tutor), and attend education meetings at school and with the county placing agency to gather information about the youth’s education needs. Determine whether the youth: (1) is in their school of origin; (2) is attending the least restrictive education setting that can meet their needs; (3) has appropriate special education services, if needed; and (4) has an appropriate graduation plan, if the youth is in high school. <u>See Making Education Decisions for Children Involved with the Dependency Court.</u>
Make Best Interests Decisions	On an ongoing basis, act in the youth’s best interests, make decisions and take actions to protect the education interests of the youth.
Appointment of Education Attorney	If you need support in protecting the youth’s best education interests, consult with the Attorney for Youth and CSW/PO and/or request the appointment of an education attorney using the <u>317(e) Referral Form.</u>
School of Origin: Request a Hearing Following a Placement Change	Request a hearing by filling a <u>JV-539 form</u> if: (1) the new home placement is too far from the School of Origin (“SOO”) for transportation to be feasible (this is a youth-specific question as different distances/modes of transportation may be appropriate based on the age and developmental needs of the youth); (2) the school district, CSW/PO, and caregiver cannot establish a transportation plan; (3) there is an alternative home placement option that is more accessible to the school of origin; (4) there is a different school of origin that should be considered that would require a different home placement; (5) the timing of the school year requires it (e.g., if there are only a few weeks left in the semester); and (6) any other reason that there may be a question about the move, or its impact on the youth’s ability to attend the school of origin.
School of Origin: Make Best Interest Determination Decision at Child and Family Team (“CFT”) Meeting	Attend and participate in the CFT held right before or after a home change. Discuss school stability needs with the youth, new caregiver, CSW/PO, and AB 490 Foster Youth Liaisons from the prior and new school districts. Identify all potential schools of origin, gather input from CFT members, and then make the final decision whether remaining in any potential schools of origin is in the youth’s best interests utilizing the <u>School of Origin Best Interests Determination Procedures & Worksheet.</u> Work with the CFT to develop an appropriate transportation plan. If there is a dispute about whether the youth should continue to attend their SOO or about the transportation options, the youth has a right to remain in their SOO pending the results of the dispute. If the dispute is solely between the school district and the ERH, it may be appropriate for the ERH to file a <u>Uniform Complaint Procedures Act Complaint Form</u> with the school district.
School of Origin: Prepare Statement to Court	After any home placement change, prepare a statement to the court, utilizing the <u>School of Origin Best Interests Determination Procedures & Worksheet,</u> indicating whether the proposed change of school placement is in the youth’s best interest and whether any efforts have been made to keep the youth in the SOO.