



State Headquarters:
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**All children have the
potential to succeed.**

Barriers to Education: Enrollment

Roadmap

- Overview of Laws that Impact Enrollment
- Troubleshooting Enrollment
- Solutions Using Creativity and Persistence



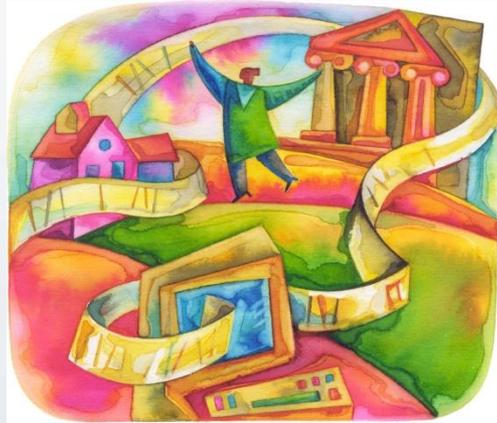
Objectives

- Understand Laws that Impact Enrollment
- Identify Common Problem Areas
- Learn How to Persist, Use Chain of Command and Be Creative



Enrollment Barriers

What are the barriers you as advocates have faced getting kids into school?



“Did you bring all of your school records? I can’t enroll you if I don’t have your transcript.”

“You were kicked out in the last school year. You can’t enroll through the regular process. You need to set up a meeting with the principal from your old school.”

“Seattle School District enrolled you while you were in detention, so you aren’t enrolled in the district anymore. You are not going to be able to go back to your school right now.”

“I’m so far behind
never going to finish
by 15



“Where are you living? I need proof that you live in the district, like a light bill. Where are your parents? Why aren’t they here to enroll you?”

“Oh, you’re already 17 years old. Have you thought about getting a GED?”

“Your last school was in Echo Glenn? What was your crime? We don’t allow students with criminal history at our regular schools. Maybe you could try an alternative school or online school.”

“It’s the middle of the semester and you’ve already missed most of the year. Why don’t you enroll when school starts next semester?”



What Did the Enrollment Office Say?

Clearly documented information:

- Official action by school?
- Enrollment policies?
- Correspondence to the family?
- Advocate documents communications he/she observed.

Undocumented/Unclear information:

- Different enrollment staff give different instructions.
- Youth or family recall previous conversations.
- Each contact with enrollments results in different reason for delay.
- No contact from school after enrollment.



Homeless Youth have Special Rights

- Don't need to provide mail or proof of residence
- Homelessness is broadly defined to include couch surfing, living with relatives, living away from your parents (unaccompanied minor)
- Typical Rules of Enrollment do not apply



Criminal History

- School districts are not allowed to discriminate based on
 - Previous arrest
 - Previous incarceration
- Schools might impose disciplinary action against students with criminal history
- Schools might force a youth with juvenile justice history into an alternative school program
- Juvenile Justice involved youth often have great information to present about their ability to be successful in school



Safety Planning

- Clarify if school wants **safety plan** or **safety assessment**
- Request school policies or protocols in advance
- Ask the school what information they want to do safety planning or assessment
- Develop ideas with the youth and family about how to stay safe



Out of District Discipline

New school district should not uphold old school district's discipline

Discipline rules must have a **real** and **substantial** relationship to the lawful maintenance and operation of the school district. (preserving the health and safety of students and employees and preserving an educational process which is conducive to learning).

Assert that there is no relationship between past behavior in previous school district and current school district's maintenance of their schools



Records and Transcripts

- Help youth obtain as many records as possible before enrollment to expedite the process
 - Proof of residence
 - Special Ed records
 - Transcripts
 - Credit summaries
 - Discipline history
- Youth will be placed in high school based on credit accrual
- Transcripts can be withheld due to fines
- Immunization records and birth certificates may be required



Issue Spotting/Frequent Barriers

- Mid-year or semester enrollment
- Required records
- Delayed decision-making
- Partial Credit
- Outstanding discipline in the current district
- Past or prior discipline in another district
- Fines uphold transfer of records
- Non attendance for 20 days triggers disenrollment
- Underestimating youth's efforts to get into school



Advocates' Role

- Bring information about educational history
- Try to collect credit history
- Discuss placement options with youth ahead of time
- Identify special needs right up front
- Anticipate transportation issues
- Review school policies when in doubt



Tips for Advocates

- Find someone at the school or enrollment office that you can build a relationship with.
- Write down all contacts with district: name, date, agreements and next steps.
- Clarify who will accomplish each step- school, youth, parent, advocate.
- Has the school made a mistake? Use it as leverage for the youth - extra credit?



Trends/Developments

- If the District delays for more than one week - contact TeamChild
- Districts sometimes restrict enrollment to alternative programs for court involved youth - check school policies
- Districts do investigate residency questions



Resources

- TeamChild, Statewide Headquarters: (206) 322-2444
- CLEAR (888) 201-1014 (outside King Co)
(Coordinated Legal Education Advice and Referral)
- National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (512) 475-8765
www.naehcy.org
- Office of Education Ombudsman (866) 297-2597
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction - Education Advocates (360) 725-6000





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“Treat people as if they were what they
should be, and you help them become what
they are capable of becoming.”
-Goethe

Thank You

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LEAP

Learning, Employment and Achieving Potential for
Youth with Juvenile Justice Involvement

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