

# FOSTER CARE DATA EXCHANGE POLICIES AND PRACTICES: Indiana



Students in foster care<sup>1</sup>

**Nearly 14,500**



Graduation rate

**54%** students in foster care

**87%** all students



Academic achievement<sup>2</sup>

ILEARN Assessment passing rates	Students in	
	foster care	All students
English/language arts	<b>19.2%</b>	<b>40.5%</b>
Mathematics	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>36.9%</b>

## Data Exchange at a Glance

**Formal agreement<sup>3</sup> established between SEA and CWA:**  
Yes, in 2018

**Frequency of data exchange:**  
Monthly

**Direction of exchange:<sup>4</sup>**  
Bidirectional between SEA and CWA in 2023 (currently mainly from CWA to SEA) and from SEA to LEAs



**Data categories shared:**  
Demographic and education information

## Data Exchange Process

Indiana’s data-sharing agreement is between the Indiana Department of Education, the State educational agency (SEA), and the Indiana Department of Child Services, the child welfare agency (CWA). The original purpose of the data-sharing agreement was to document eligibility for free and reduced-price lunch from the National School Lunch Program. More recently, Indiana’s agreement has been supported by State legislation championed by a foster care advocacy group, Foster Success.

**The Indiana data exchange process occurs once a month and takes less than 0.01 FTE to implement during the academic year. The current exchange process, which will be replaced with a new system in 2023, occurs as follows:**



**The CWA prepares the data.** The CWA Division Director of Education Services generates a dataset of children in foster care. The dataset is combined with a food and nutrition database using Biztalk, a Microsoft data integration product.



**The CWA shares data with the SEA.** The SEA then merges the combined CWA/Food and Nutrition Service dataset with SEA enrollment data using Biztalk. The match is based primarily on the child’s name and date of birth, but in some instances, it is also based on the school attended, according to the CWA.



**The SEA shares data with local educational agencies (LEAs).** After the data are matched, users can log into a portal to obtain their data.

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## Drivers of Success

Some key facilitators that support the implementation of Indiana's data-sharing agreement include:

1. The data-sharing agreement is governed by a strong MOU and is executed by the Indiana Management Performance Hub. This State agency is responsible for implementing all interagency data-sharing agreements.
2. The use of an automated data exchange minimizes required resources. Indiana also uses practices to ensure high-quality data, such as a tracking system for child name changes, which can occur due to changes in child custody arrangements.
3. The data-sharing agreement is facilitated by a strong partnership between the SEA and the CWA. The CWA has solicited input from the SEA and LEAs on how to structure the CWA forms (e.g., best interest determination) to ensure data fields can be shared with educators in an accessible way.

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## Future Opportunities

Several opportunities related to the implementation of the data-sharing agreement include:

1. Working with staff responsible for ensuring legal compliance to overcome legal barriers that arise in the data agreement development process.
2. Including current education data, beyond outcomes, in the data exchange, which Indiana's new data exchange, set to be released in 2023, intends to do.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The number of students in foster care enrolled in school on October 1, 2020, available at <https://www.in.gov/children/files/2020-2021-SBOE-Final-report.docx.pdf#:~:text=Graduation%20and%20Diploma%20Earning%20of%20the%2067%20foster,3%20percentage%20points%20lower%20than%20the%20prior%20year.>

<sup>2</sup> Graduation and academic achievement rates for 2021 are available in the report mentioned above.

<sup>3</sup> An MOU or other formal agreement.

<sup>4</sup> Data in the exchange can flow from one agency to another or be bidirectional.

## Additional Information

### Data provided by the CWA to the SEA:

- Department of Child Services child welfare person ID
- first name
- last name
- date of birth
- address
- name of the caregiver
- contact info of Family Case Manager

### Data provided by the SEA to the CWA:

- school enrolled ID/name
- enrollment start date/end date
- grade
- attendance
- discipline
- transfers and natural transition
- standardized testing and assessment results
- credits registered
- assessment
- grades for each term
- SEA student testing number (STN)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about students in foster care, please visit:

**U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education:**

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/students-foster-care/>

**Indiana Department of Education:**

<https://www.in.gov/doe/students/school-safety-and-wellness/school-counseling,-guidance,-psychology,-social-work-and-foster-youth/>

The State snapshot is developed based on publicly available information and information provided by the State.

