

# FOSTER CARE DATA EXCHANGE POLICIES AND PRACTICES: Michigan



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

**About 9,000**



Graduation rate<sup>2</sup>

**40%** students in foster care

**80%** all students



Academic achievement<sup>3</sup>

Meeting or exceeding academic standard

Students in

foster care

All students

**English/language arts**

**26%**

**49%**

**Mathematics**

**16%**

**39%**

## Data Exchange at a Glance

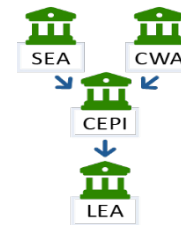
**Formal agreement<sup>4</sup> established between SEA and CWA:**

Yes, around 2011

**Frequency of data exchange:**  
Every 2 weeks

**Direction of exchange:<sup>5</sup>**

One way from CWA and SEA to CEPI and from CEPI to LEAs



**Data categories shared:**

Identification information

## Data Exchange Process

Michigan’s data-sharing agreement is between the Michigan Department of Education as the State educational agency (SEA) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services as the child welfare agency (CWA). The data-sharing agreement was created around 2011 to provide children in foster care with free and reduced-price lunch via the National School Lunch Program.

**The data exchange process takes place every two weeks. The steps of this exchange are as follows:**



**The CWA prepares the data.** The CWA uses MI Bridges as a case management system for social services for children in foster care. The data include information about the name and unique identifier code (UIC).



**The SEA and CWA exchange data.** The merging of the CWA and SEA data is completed by the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), a Michigan government agency. CEPI staff use the UIC and name to merge the CWA data with student enrollment information from the Michigan Student Data System.



**The SEA shares data with local educational agencies (LEAs).** CEPI maintains the direct certification report (csv file)<sup>6</sup> for each LEA that contains information on the number of children in foster care who are enrolled in school. Each LEA can then download its report. LEAs are required to do this at least three times a year but are instructed by the SEA to do it every two weeks.

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## Drivers of Success

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

1. The data exchange with the CWA is part of a larger set of data exchanges on student participation in social services. CEPI uses this larger data-sharing process to support direct certification for the National School Lunch Program due to participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Temporary Aid for Needy Families program.
2. The CEPI also has internal staff dedicated to monitoring and improving data quality.

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## Future Opportunities

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

1. Requiring LEAs to include foster care status in their local student information systems and allowing foster care liaisons to have access to the aggregated foster care report.
2. Ensuring that students who move during the school year are accurately reflected in the direct certification report.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The number of children 3 years old and above in foster care in 2020, calculated by using the number of children in care and the age of the children, available at <https://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/cwodatasite/inCareSeptemberThirty/index>.

<sup>2</sup> Graduation rate for the 2020-2021 school year, available at <https://www.mischooldata.org/>.

<sup>3</sup> 2018-19 school year data, available at <https://eddataexpress.ed.gov/>.

<sup>4</sup> A n MOU or other formal agreement.

<sup>5</sup> Data in the exchange can flow from one agency to another or be bidirectional.

<sup>6</sup> The Direct Certification Report identifies the students who qualify for free school meals for each school. More information is available at <https://www.michigan.gov/cepi/pk-12/msds/direct-cert>.

## Additional Information

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

- unique identifier code
- name of student

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

- unique identifier code
- name of student

**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/>

**Michigan Department of Education Foster Care page:**

<https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/school-performance-supports/educational-supports/programs/foster-care/foster-care>

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

