



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE
P.O. BOX 2675
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17105-2675

Richard J. Gold
Deputy Secretary
Office of Children, Youth
And Families

PHONE: (717) 787-4756
FAX: (717) 787-0414

September 28, 2010

Dear Colleague:

As we continue strengthening our collaborative efforts, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and the Pennsylvania Department of Education have partnered to assure that all children served by the child welfare system have their educational needs assessed and are provided appropriate educational services.

The education of all children receiving children and youth services is one of the well-being factors considered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) during the Federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) process. The 2008 CF SR revealed that while Pennsylvania did well in assessing children's educational needs, an area that needed improvement was assuring that appropriate services were provided or arranged. One of the ways that this finding is being addressed is through the issuance of Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF) Bulletin 3130-10-04 entitled "Educational Stability and Continuity of Children Receiving Services from the County Children and Youth Agency (CCYA) Including the Use of an Education Screen". Through the issuance of this bulletin, which is effective immediately upon issuance, with the exception of the accompanying education screen, which is effective January 1, 2012, it is expected that a greater emphasis will be placed on assessing the educational needs of all children served within the child welfare system and assuring follow through with needed services in order to improve outcomes for the children of Pennsylvania. Please refer to the attached document entitled "Implementation Timeline for Education Screening" for specifics regarding the use of the screen.

In addition, proposed Juvenile Court Rules have been published and if they are issued in final form, they will require judges to inquire and make specific findings regarding education matters including school stability and ensuring the designation of education decision-makers. The implementation of the Education Screen will ensure staff are prepared to answer the inquiries of the Judge.

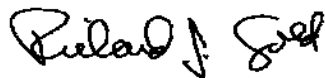
In addition, two federal laws, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento) and Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections), an amendment to Title IV-E of the federal Social Security Act, require both county child welfare agencies and local education agencies to collaborate to ensure that school changes are minimized, and that children in placement

who do change schools are promptly enrolled. Research and practice clearly demonstrate that a successful, uninterrupted educational placement promotes more successful child welfare placements, greater permanency and better life outcomes.

We are asking for your assistance in continuing this collaboration at the local level by enjoining together with your local partners, county children and youth agencies and local education agencies to assure all school-aged children receiving services through the local county children and youth agency have their educational needs met and when coordinated efforts are needed, they are provided.

We appreciate your efforts in continuing to assure children have their educational needs assessed and that we strengthen our efforts to assure they receive services to meet their identified needs. We are hoping that this screen will enhance the efforts currently being conducted within your agency and will assist in supporting best practice moving forward.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Gold". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Richard J. Gold

Attachments