



Kentucky can...  
**Ensure quality and equitable learning for children in the care of state agencies**

All children deserve a quality education that helps prepare them for adulthood, whether they seek higher education or employment following high school. In Kentucky, A6 schools provide on-site alternative school education for children and youth in residential settings under the care of the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) and Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). We must ensure these programs offer a high-quality education for all youth placed in child welfare, juvenile justice, and behavioral health residential settings.

**To give children in state care a quality education, we need to understand what is and is not working to put them on a path toward success.**



**Guarantee a quality education now so the children in state care can have a brighter future.**

- Students who interact with child welfare, juvenile justice, or behavioral health system are likely to have educational challenges due to trauma, changing schools, or transitions that keep them from consistent participation.
- Between 32 to 45 percent of foster youth pursue higher education after graduating from high school. Only 3 to 11 percent attain a bachelor's degree. With access to college tuition, youth in care have an opportunity to attend higher education yet are unprepared for success at a college or university.
- In a recent study by Kentucky Youth Advocates, young adults with experience in A6 programs reported that they did not feel as if they received the same quality education in these programs as their peers in public schools. The study participants discussed classrooms where they were given the same work, regardless of the grade level they were in; were given busy work like coloring pages or packets unrelated to the course; and that their credits didn't transfer or were not able to graduate due to missing credits.



**In residential you're in 10th grade but sometimes sitting in a room with 5th and 6th graders.**

- Study Participant with Residential Foster Care Experience

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**Streamline statewide accountability for A6 programs.**

- Currently, the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC) – along with Kentucky School Board Association, Kentucky Department of Education, local school districts, Department for Community Based Services, and Department of Juvenile Justice all play roles in the educational outcomes of children in these programs.
- A single state agency needs to be responsible for ensuring strong educational outcomes of the children in the A6 programs and effective fiscal oversight of these programs.
- In reality, when there are multiple entities accountable, both the individual children and the goals of the program can be forgotten.



**Ensure residential facilities have the supports necessary to provide quality education.**

- To achieve academic success within residential foster care facilities, a young person needs qualified and engaged teachers, high-quality support staff, sufficient supplies, and adequate facilities.
- Many agencies struggle to address those key elements within their facilities due to various challenges outside of their control.

**Blueprint for Kentucky's Children Policy Solution:**

Perform a program review to ensure that A6 educational programs for youth in the care of the Department for Community Based Services and Department of Juvenile Justice are accountable and equitable in terms of learning outcomes, finance, and governance

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