Foster Youth Education Toolkit

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OVERVIEW

Overview

- Toolkit 2.0 Updates

- Dissemination and Trainings

- Bonita Unified School District Pilot Project

- Next Steps: Toolkit 3.0 Updates

TOOLKIT 2.0 UPDATES

New Section: Addressing Trauma Related Needs of Foster Youth

- Trauma that affects our children
  - Initial abuse, neglect, or abandonment that brought them into the child welfare system
  - Trauma of being removed from their family
  - Trauma of repeated home placement changes while in the system

- Impact of Trauma on Learning
  - Decreased intellectual functioning
  - Decreased reading ability
  - Lower grade-point average
  - Increased school absences
  - Decreased rates of high school graduation

- Resources Addressing Trauma

Toolkit pages 26-28

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Other Updates

- Introduction: addition of foster youth specific LCAP goals (pg 3)

- Education Evaluation: modified based on feedback to be more user friendly (pg 24)

- AB 167/216 Graduation (pgs 49-55)
  - No impact on military application
  - Application to all schools operated by the school district, including adult schools
  - Duty to determine eligibility retroactively
  - Removal of CAHSEE references
  - Notification Letter
    - Addition of 'already certified' option
    - Modification of impact on 4 year university application

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DISSEMINATION AND TRAININGS

Dissemination

- Creation of email distribution list with more than 2,100 persons receiving Toolkit updates and notices about webinars

- Recipients include:
  - All AB 490 Liaisons
  - All County FYS Coordinators
  - All School District Directors of Student Services
  - Anyone who has received a training on the Toolkit

- Partner agencies distribute to their membership as well (e.g., CWC, CDE, CSBA, CCSESA, ACSA)

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Trainings

- Trainers
  - Alliance for Children's Rights
  - Partner Agencies including Lisa Guillen from CDE and Teri Burns from CSBA
  - Team of 30 volunteer attorneys from Latham & Watkins

- The numbers: 3,100 +
  - Partial Credit Model Policy: 1036
  - AB 167/216 Graduation: 683
  - Toolkit Overview: 1173

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Audience: In-Person Trainings

- CSBA Conferences: 2013, 2014, 2015

- Foster Youth Education Task Force Ed Summit: 2014, 2015, 2016

- LA County Partnership Conference

- San Diego Foster Youth Summit

- John Burton Blueprint Conference

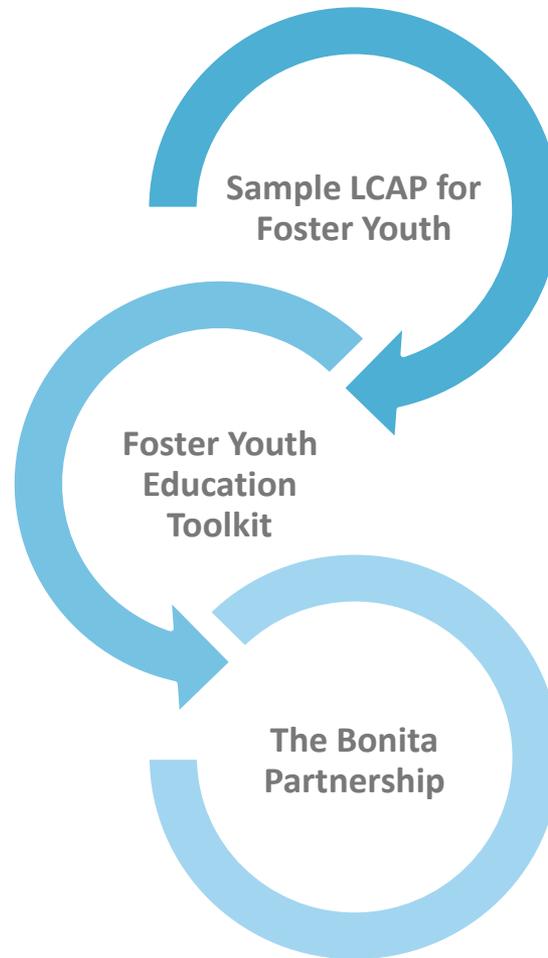- 50+ school districts and county offices of education across the state

Audience: Webinars

- Fall series covered the basics
  - Foster Youth and their ERHs
  - Immediate Enrollment
  - School of Origin
  - Partial Credit Model Policy
  - AB 167/216 Graduation
  - Disciplinary Needs
  - Recordings and materials available on our website (www.kids-alliance.org/edtoolkit)

Audience: Webinars

- Spring series covers special topics
  - Early Education Needs
  - Writing LCAP Goals
  - Transition Planning
  - Trauma Needs
  - Education Evaluation
  - Special Education Needs
  - AB 379 Complaints
  - Register on our website (www.kids-alliance.org/edtoolkit)

BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT PILOT PROJECT

Bringing the Toolkit to Life

- Utilization of Toolkit in a real life setting in order to learn even more about what districts need to build a meaningful foster youth education program

The Bonita Partnership

Bonita Unified School District
o San Dimas + La Verne
o 10,000 students
o 500+ foster students served each year, 50% of which reside in group homes
o Schools
  o 8 elementary schools
  o 2 middle schools
  o 2 comprehensive high schools
  o 1 alternative /continuation high school

Implementation Challenges

School Instability

- Lack of Control: school districts are not in control of foster youth placement changes
- Lack of Information: how often are students changing schools/districts? where are they coming from and where are the going to?
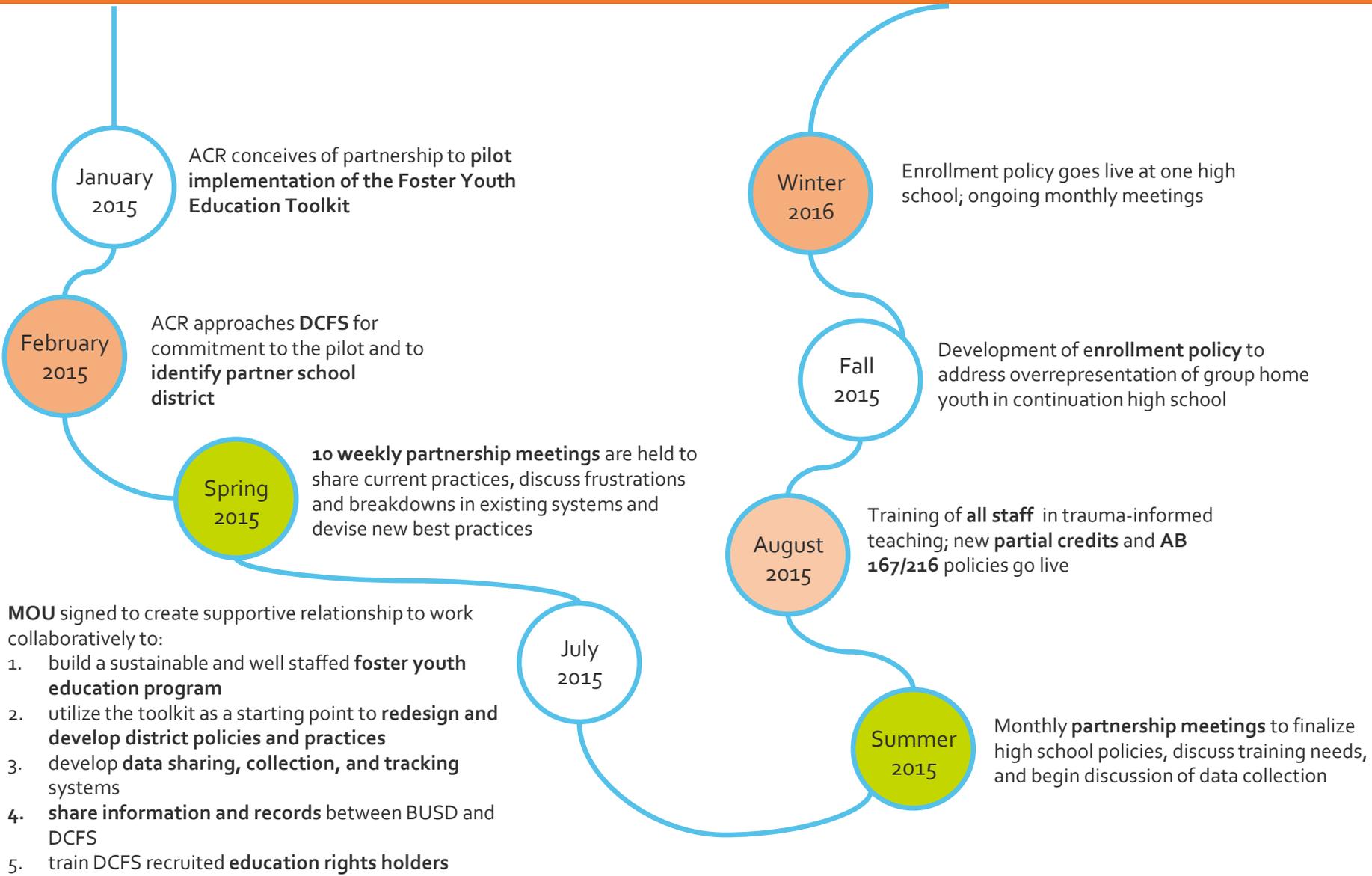- Partial credits and AB 167/216 graduation certification

Lack of a Consistent Education Decision Maker

- Information access and sharing
- Lack of clear lines of decision-making authority
- Communicating with other agencies, caretakers, parents, and providers

Trauma

- Training, policies and practices to support "trauma-informed teaching"
- Accessing and leveraging non-academic services and supports

January 2015
ACR conceives of partnership to **pilot implementation of the Foster Youth Education Toolkit**

February 2015
ACR approaches **DCFS** for commitment to the pilot and to **identify partner school district**

Spring 2015
10 weekly partnership meetings are held to share current practices, discuss frustrations and breakdowns in existing systems and devise new best practices

MOU signed to create supportive relationship to work collaboratively to:
1. build a sustainable and well staffed **foster youth education program**
2. utilize the toolkit as a starting point to **redesign and develop district policies and practices**
3. develop **data sharing, collection, and tracking** systems
4. **share information and records** between BUSD and DCFS
5. train DCFS recruited **education rights holders**

July 2015

Summer 2015
Monthly **partnership meetings** to finalize high school policies, discuss training needs, and begin discussion of data collection

August 2015
Training of **all staff** in trauma-informed teaching; new **partial credits** and **AB 167/216** policies go live

Fall 2015
Development of e**nrollment policy** to address overrepresentation of group home youth in continuation high school

Winter 2016
Enrollment policy goes live at one high school; ongoing monthly meetings

Key Components of Partnership

Shared Purpose

to utilize the **Foster Youth Education Toolkit** to help develop **policies and practices** in BUSD in furtherance of LCFF goals for foster youth.

Investment and Commitment of Leadership

from Superintendent Kurt Madden, Assistant Superintendent **Nanette Hall**, Director of Student Services **Mark Rodgers**, and Foster Youth Liaisons Maureen Williams and Tiffany Merrill

Trust + Open Communication

between partners facilitated by **memorandum of understanding**

Flexibility + Patience

in understanding practical challenges and identifying **solutions that work in the community and context of BUSD**

Engaging the Community

including probation, group homes, Foster Youth Services, and other stakeholders to **problem solve and make changes that work**

Lessons Learned So Far

- Trauma Informed Educators Training
  - At all three high schools and middle schools
  - All staff were required to attend
  - Had a meaningful impact
- Lack of education rights holders is a huge barrier
  - Need to involve the courts and children's attorneys to address the problem
- Education Evaluation: need to be more user friendly
- Utilization of social work interns is a cost effective way to increase staff
- Partial Credit Model Policy: semesters of different length

NEXT STEPS: TOOLKIT 3.0 UPDATES

What's Next?

- Increased focus on needs of 3-5 year olds

- AB 379: Enforcement of foster youth education rights through the uniform complaint procedures act

- Youth/Caregiver Materials/Trainings

- LCAP Activities

QUESTIONS?
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