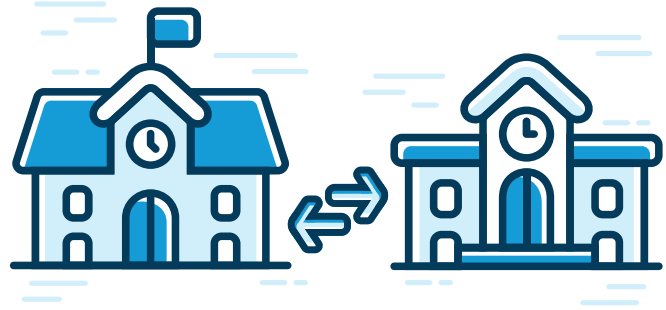


Where California Students in Foster Care Move Schools

Nearly 40,000 students enrolled in California public schools were in foster care at some point in 2023–24.

Data from the 2017–18 to 2023–24 school years show that **nearly 1 in 3 students changed schools midyear**, with 67% of the moves linked to changes in residence. Frequent moves disrupt learning and are linked to lower academic achievement, reduced employment opportunities, and a higher risk of justice system involvement.

31% of students in foster care change schools midyear.



Of all students in foster care ...



16% move between districts.

12% move between counties.

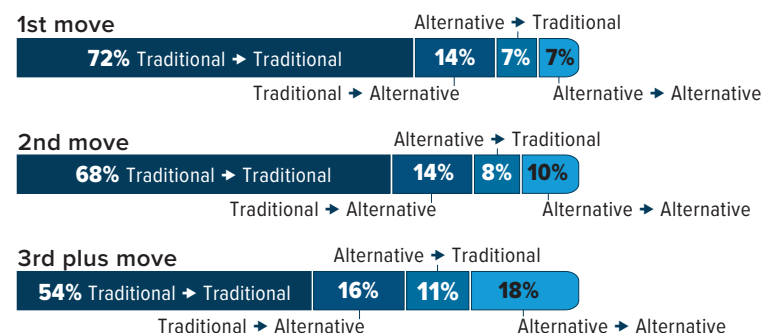
9% move within districts.

Students in foster care are more likely to **transfer to schools outside their district or county** than to stay within the same district.

This holds true regardless of how little or often a student moves. On average, **students move 22 miles away during their first residential move**. This span increases to 27 miles and 30 miles for the second and third residential moves, respectively.

Frequent movers are more likely to move **between alternative education settings**.

Among students in foster care who change schools three or more times a year, **nearly 1 in 5 switches between alternative education settings**, which are often linked to lower academic outcomes.



Source: CALPADS, 2017–18 to 2023–24

Some students move to **better-resourced schools**.

Moving out of high-poverty schools (≥75% eligible for **free/reduced lunch**) or high-need schools (≥55% **low income, multilingual learners, or students in foster care**) can increase access to stronger academic support, mental health services, and wraparound resources.



30% of moves are from **high-poverty to affluent schools**.

and

15% of moves are from **high-need to lower-need schools**.

For more information, please see [School Mobility for Students in Foster Care](#).

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