



CREATING PATHWAYS & REMOVING BARRIERS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS  
WITH EXPERIENCE IN FOSTER CARE



# BUILDING BRIDGES: HOW STATE POLICIES CAN SUPPORT POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SUCCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH EXPERIENCE IN FOSTER CARE

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# Welcome

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OPENING REMARKS & LOGISTICS

# Lead Author & Panelists



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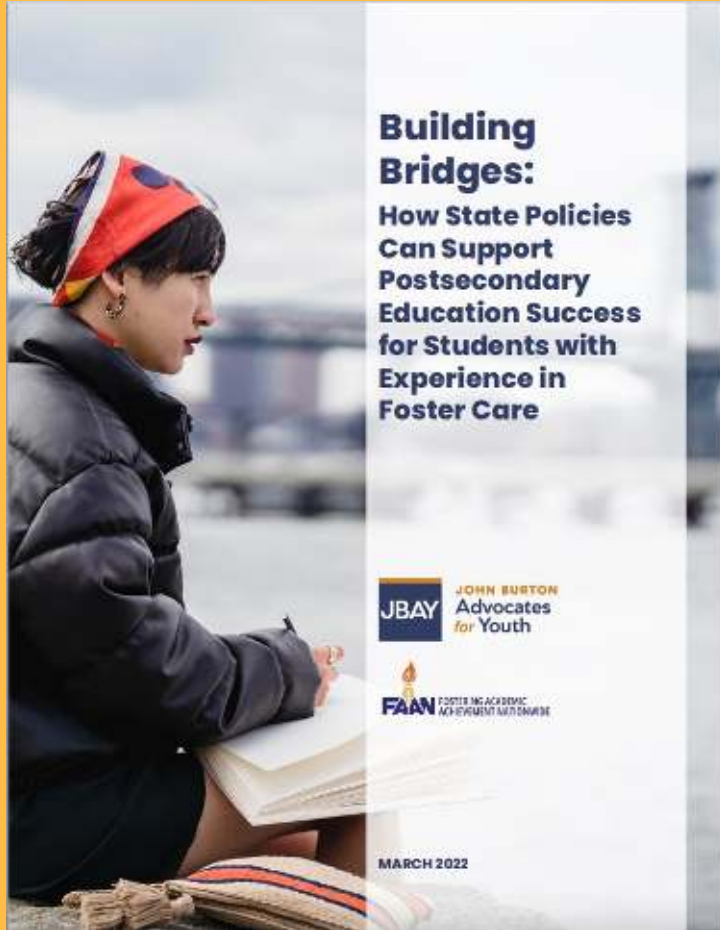
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Youth Advocate



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Foster Success



*Facilitated by: Maddy Day, MSW*



Federal measures are limited

State policies have emerged to fill these gaps

Documenting policies to facilitate replication

Not an exhaustive list

For details regarding tuition waiver policies, see <https://jbay.org/resources/tuition-waiver-programs/>

# Why This Work Matters: Centering Lived Experience



Karen Lopez

# Key Support Levers & State Policy Examples

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# Postsecondary Access & Supports



Academic mobility



College-going culture



Outreach & admissions





# Postsecondary Access Supports

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## Pennsylvania

- ✓ Tuition waiver program with single point of contact to help eligible students **identify and apply for services** such as financial aid and scholarships, gather verification documents, and access campus and community resources and support services

## California

- ✓ **Priority registration to SEFC** for courses at all public colleges and universities
- ✓ **Social work case-management priority** to identify a person to assist young people in foster care aged 16 and older with college applications and financial aid

## Nevada

- ✓ Requires schools to **identify students living in foster care** or who are homeless and to **review these students' academic plans** as appropriate to maximize the pupil's accrual of credits and progress towards graduation. and applications

# Postsecondary Persistence & Supports



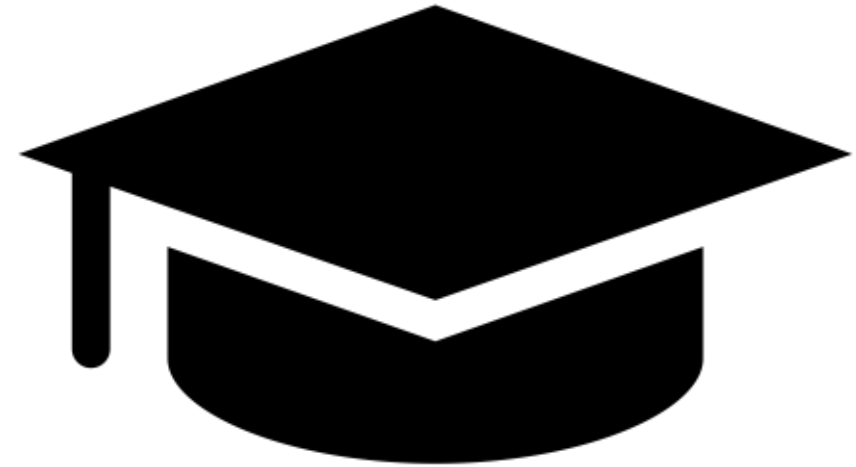
Financial & residential stability



Self efficacy & sense of belonging



Wrap around resources



# Financial Supports

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## Minnesota

- ✓ Fostering Independence Higher Education Grant (FIG) that waives tuition and **covers the full cost of attendance** (including housing, food, books, transportation and personal expenses) for up to five years

## Arizona

- ✓ Use supplementary Chafee Education and Training Voucher funds provided under the Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic Act (2020) to **pay off financial enrollment holds**, so that these students could attend their programs of study

# Financial Supports cont.

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## California

- ✓ Allows use of **Chafee ETV grant** for up to **two years** before losing access due to inadequate academic progress.
- ✓ **Safeguards students' funding** from being used at institutions that have unsatisfactory graduation or loan default rates.
- ✓ Offers every low-income K-12 student a **college savings account seeded with \$500** and provides an additional \$500 for SEFC

## Nevada

- ✓ Individual Development Account (IDA) Program that includes **savings account with up to a 5-to-1 matching program** for up to \$3,000 in savings that can be used for postsecondary education and financial literacy

# Campus-Based Supports

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## Virginia

- ✓ **System-wide community college model** that provides coaching, **academic and career guidance, and financial literacy** support to students with foster care experience on campus

## New York

- ✓ Establish Foster Youth College Success Initiative (FYCSI) which offers a **combination of support services and financial resources** that can be used to cover SEFC's tuition expenses, housing, transportation, medical costs and personal expenses.
- ✓ Establish Foster College Success Initiative (FCSI-NYC); a year-round program that provides **housing, tutoring, coaching and financial support** to students in NYC foster care

## California

- ✓ SEFC postsecondary support programs at community colleges that include broad education-specific services such as **academic and career advising and transfer guidance, and additional wrap around supports**

# Single Points of Contact Supports

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## Texas

- ✓ Require public postsecondary institutions to appoint at least one employee to serve as a **foster care liaison** to disseminate information about available support services and other resources available to SEFC

## Michigan

- ✓ Implement **Independent living campus coaches** who assist students entering college after exiting the foster care system and assist with independent living skills, including education, employment, housing, parenting, mental health, budgeting/financial management and daily living

## Florida

- ✓ Provide postsecondary **educational campus coaching positions** that are **embedded into Florida College System** to provide SEFC with dedicated, on-campus support

# Housing Supports

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## California

- ✓ Create the Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus) to provides **safe, affordable housing and supportive services** for up to 36 months and up to age 25. As of Fiscal Year 2021/22 the state provides \$51.9 million annually for this program
- ✓ Require public universities to give SEFC **priority for uninterrupted, year-round on-campus housing** including housing that is available during academic breaks at no extra charge

# Workforce Development

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## Washington

- ✓ Expanded Passport to College program to include **registered apprenticeships**. Offers case management, planning, institutional support, financial assistance, career development and wraparound services.
- ✓ **Data sharing agreement** between the WSAC and the Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) to verify foster care status

## Ohio, Nevada, California

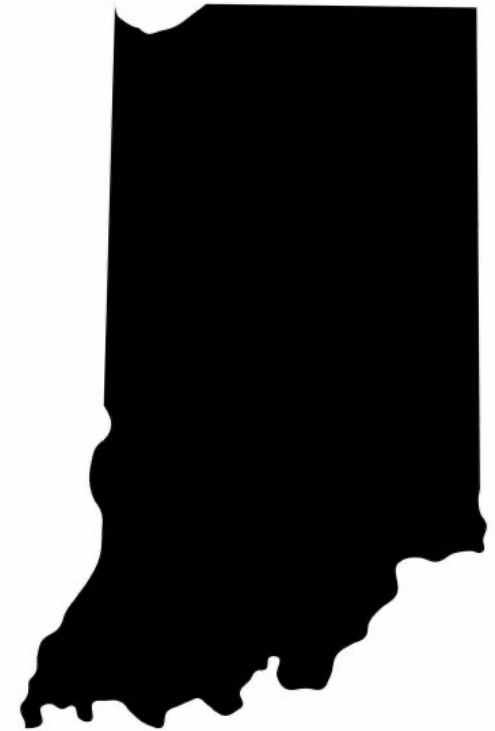
- ✓ Waiver from Department of Labor to reduce the percent of funding that a local Workforce Development Board must spend on out-of-school youth in order to **allow these programs to serve a greater number of youth with experience in foster care**, juvenile justice systems or homelessness who are in school.



# State Spotlight

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INDIANA





Foster Success's mission is to hear, empower, and support teens and young adults transitioning out of foster care on their journey to self-sufficiency.

## INFRASTRUCTURE & ADVOCACY SUPPORT

- ✓ Education Outcomes Reporting and Data Sharing
- ✓ Inclusion of Individuals with Lived Experience on Indiana's Commission on Improving the Status of Children (CISC)
- ✓ Foster Care State Tax Credit
- ✓ Insuring Foster Youth Fund

# TIPS AND TRICKS FOR GETTING IT DONE

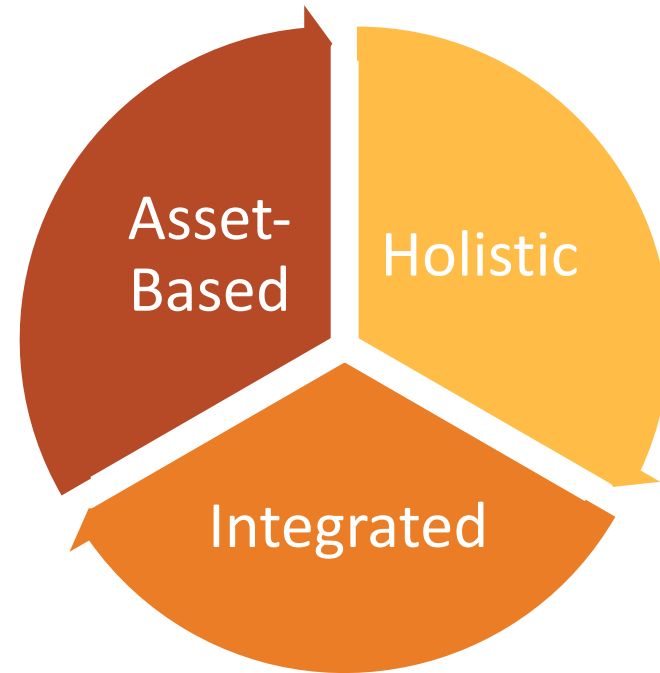
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- ✓ Let lived experience guide your work.
- ✓ The work doesn't start when session starts.
- ✓ Find your allies and champions.
- ✓ Know your challengers.
- ✓ Collaborate Always. Compromise Sometimes.
- ✓ When possible - hire support.
- ✓ Know that it's a marathon and not a sprint.

# Best practices & looking ahead

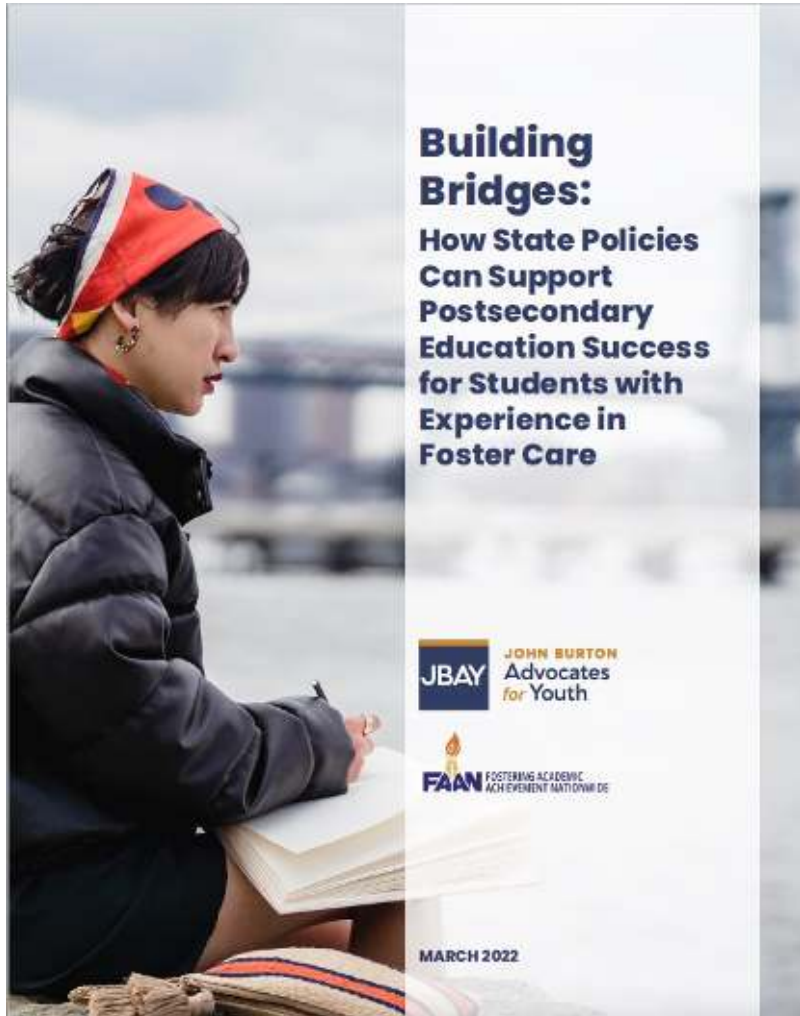
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Students are the experts of their own histories and policies and programs should center their voices and resiliency



A policy agenda should both account for the broad needs of students, gaps in support and should be well-articulated, adequately funded, and have some measure of accountability.

Policies should be created with an interdisciplinary approach that considers other complementary initiatives and collaborates across sectors



Access the full report at:

<https://jbay.org/resources/building-bridges/>

# Q & A

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PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS VIA THE ZOOM Q&A FUNCTION