Changes to the CONNECTIONS Family Services Stage (FSS) – Phase 2 Education Module

Quick Start Guide

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Family Services Stage (FSS) - Phase 2
Education Module

Introduction

This guide is intended for workers who are familiar with the CONNECTIONS Family Services Stage (FSS) and whose responsibilities include maintaining education information in CONNECTIONS. It summarizes changes to the *Education* and associated *Individualized Education Plan (IEP)* windows as part of the modernization of the FSS. In addition to introducing you to these modernized windows, this guide will remind you of some of the programmatic requirements related to OCFS Education Policy. Please note that any visible identifying data in this document is fictitious and used for training purposes only.

The Family Services Stage Modernization

Modernization of the FSS is occurring in several phases. The implementation of Phase 1 in May 2015 replaced the tabbed *Family Services Stage* window with separate windows accessed via the NAVIGATION PANE. Phase 1 also included replacement of the **Stage Composition** tab with the *Person List* window, modernization of the Bridges to Health (B2H) windows and various supporting windows and introduced the new *FSS Stage Summary*. These modernized windows have the same "look and feel" as other parts of CONNECTIONS that have been modernized, such as the CPS Investigation (INV) stage, and the Family Services Intake (FSI) stage, among others.

What's Staying the Same?

The *Education* window within the FSS will continue to be where caseworkers and support staff enter information concerning a child's education status and plans. The same information will be recorded in the same manner as in the current windows. Likewise, the security rules for accessing and modifying education information in an FSS, and the paths to access those windows, will not change, including for those staff who have the Maintain Education business function.

Policy Reminders

OCFS Education policy requires the recording of education information for all children in foster care and recommends, as a best practice, that it be recorded for all children removed under Article 10 of the Family Court Act and placed in the direct custody of a relative or other suitable person. Recording education information is optional for children in receipt of preventive or protective services who are living at home with a parent or guardian; however, local districts or agencies may choose to require their staff to record it.

Education information should be recorded in the *Education* window as early in the academic school year as possible, but no later than October 1. If a change (such as a school transfer) occurs during the school year, the change should be recorded at the time of the change as a new entry on the *Education* window.

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) requires entry of school information for the full academic year. It may therefore be necessary to enter school information that pre-dates a child's entry into foster care or into a specific placement program, back to the beginning of the school year. NYTD also requires that a grade be entered for each foster child. If a child is in an ungraded program, it is necessary to choose the closet applicable grade.

The Modernized *Education* Window

The basic organization of the modernized *Education* window is very similar to what had existed. There are, however, a few noteworthy changes:

- when you enter the window, only the Child List grid will display. Up to three children will be displayed. You can use the vertical scroll bar to view other children or drag the grid separator under the Child List grid to increase or decrease the number of rows displayed in the grid.

- the History grid will display when a child in the Child List grid is selected. If no record exists for the child, a blank History grid will display;

- when you select a record in the History grid the detail section for that record will display directly underneath the grid (not as a separate window). Use the vertical scroll bar and/or grid separator to display more of the detail data fields;

- The **New** button replaces the **Add** button to create a new education record. When you click the **New** button, a blank detail section will display directly underneath the history grid. As now, the Effective Date will default to the System Date and the Academic Year will default to the current Academic Year.
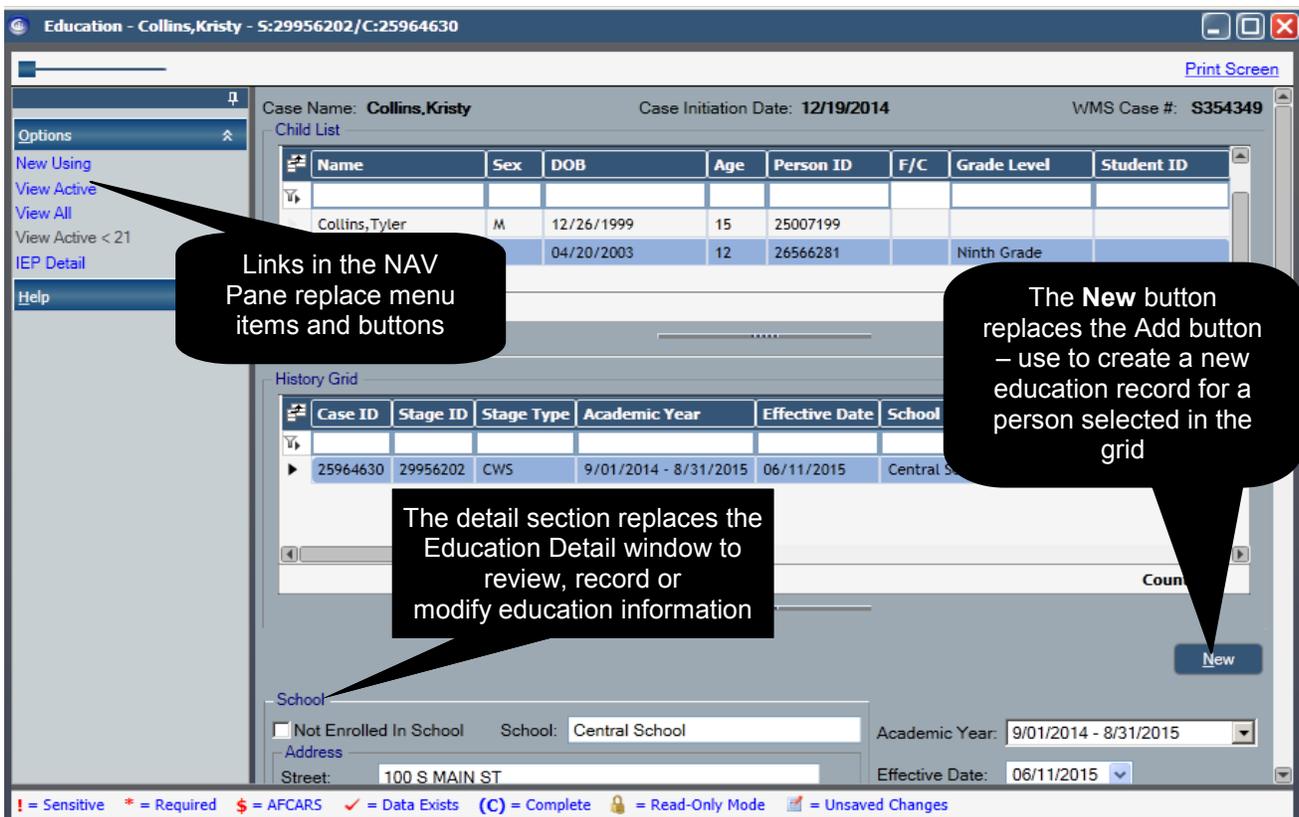
Also note that the Child List grid headers switch the order of DOB and Age from the current window and the window header may include a Welfare Management System (WMS) identifier. This is a technical identifier and does not affect most casework staff.

The *Education* Window
NAVIGATION PANE
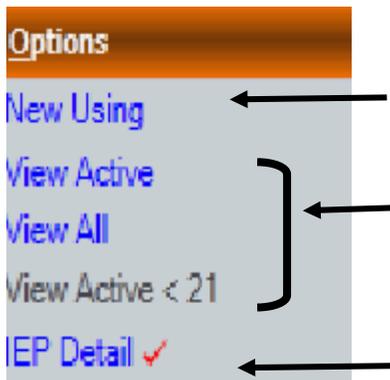
New Using link (a new function) will create a new education record using data from a selected history record. Step by step instructions are below.

These links replace the current radio buttons at the top of the Child List grid. By default, the children in the View Active < 21 sort will display (as now).

IEP Detail link replaces the current **IEP Detail** button to access the *IEP Detail* window. The current **IEP Completed** radio button will be removed. Instead, any education record where the IEP Date field is blank will be considered that the IEP has not been completed.

The **Data Exists** ✓ indicator will display adjacent to the **IEP Detail** link when information exists in the *IEP Detail* window. This replaces the current message in the IEP section on the current *Education* window.

New Using

New Using on the *Education* window functions as it does in other places in CONNECTIONS. When you select an education record in the History grid and then click the **New Using** link, a new record will be created with data from the selected record, including any corresponding IEP Detail information associated with that record except that:

        I. Effective Date will default to System Date
        II. Academic Year will default to current Academic Year
        III. Grade level will default to Unknown

Creating an education record using the New Using function

1. Select the person in the **Child List** grid for whom you wish to enter education information.
   The History grid displays.

2. Select a record in the History grid.
   The detail section displays.

3. Click the **New Using** link**.**
   A new education record for the selected child will be created with the data from the selected record, except as noted above..
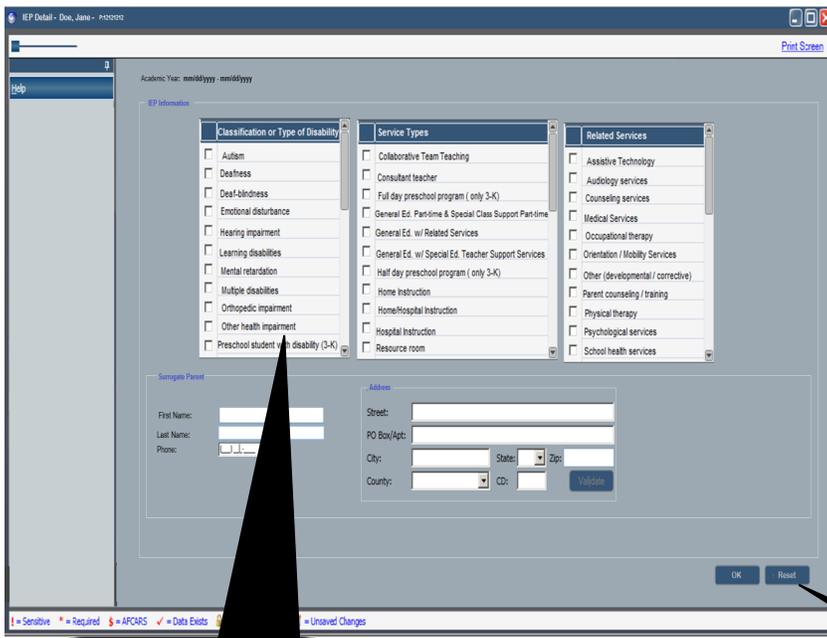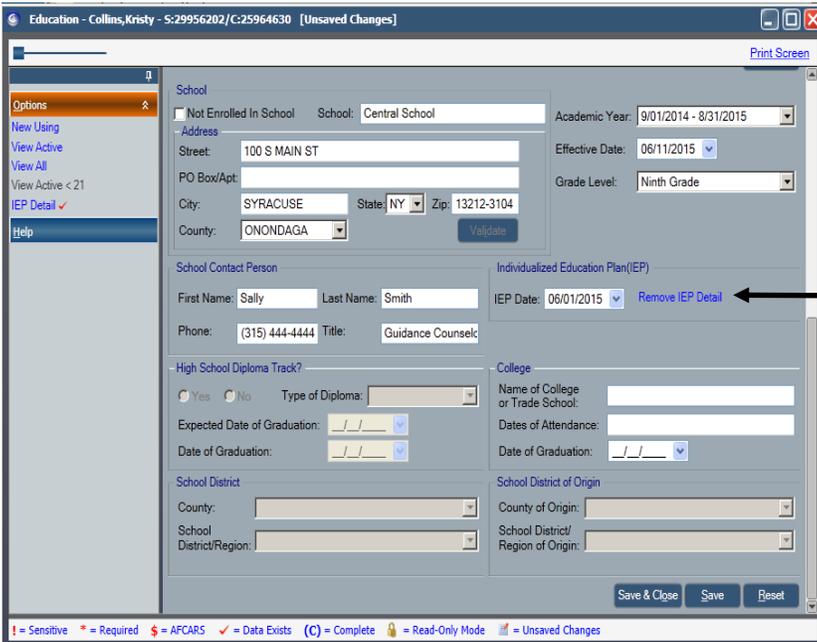
REMINDER:

Update the Student ID on the **Identifiers** tab on the *Person List* window. Select Student ID in the **Type** dropdown and enter the student ID number in the **Number** field.

Entering *IEP Detail*

In New or New Using mode, when you enter an IEP Date the **IEP Detail** link in the NAVIGATION PANE will be enabled. Clicking the link will open the *IEP Detail* window as a pop-up

A new **Remove IEP Detail** link will be enabled when information exists on the *IEP Detail* window whether saved or unsaved. Selecting this link will clear all IEP detail information upon save of the *Education* window. The IEP Date will remain populated with the date previously entered

Removing the IEP date and saving the *Education* window will also remove any IEP detail information entered, Doing so will result in the same warning message received when the IEP Completed field is changed from "Yes" to a "No" on the current window.

As now, data on the *IEP Detail* window cannot be saved by itself. IEP data will be saved when the education record is saved on the *Education* window. If you, for example enter IEP information and then cancel out of the corresponding *Education* window, then the IEP will not be saved to the database.

Column header renamed to Classification or Type of Disability

Reset button replaces Cancel button

Available Resources

OCFS Intranet Site: CONNECTIONS Help/Training

Many resources are available for you on the **CONNECTIONS Help/Training** page of the OCFS intranet site (http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect_help/Default.asp). There you will find resources such as these:

- How Do I? documents

- Job Aids

- Tip Sheets

- other Quick Start Guides

These documents and others will provide you with the most up-to-date information on CONNECTIONS. When you are working in CONNECTIONS, an easy way to access the intranet site is by clicking the **Help/Training** link on the toolbar of the main CONNECTIONS window.

OCFS Internet Site: CONNECTIONS Implementation

Many of the same resources noted above are available on the **Implementation** page of the OCFS internet site (http://ocfs.ny.gov/connect/imp/).

CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff

If you cannot find the answer to your question(s) within the documentation mentioned above, you can contact one of the many statewide CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff members. The current list of members is always available on the OCFS CONNECTIONS Internet and intranet sites:

On the **Internet**:
http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/connect/contact.asp

On the **intranet**:
http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/contact.asp

Application Help Mailbox

You can directly contact the NYS CONNECTIONS User Support/Triage staff for help with complex application issues. Questions, problems, and concerns can be emailed to:

ocfs.sm.conn_app@ocfs.state.ny.us

NYS ITS Enterprise Service Desk

The New York State Office for Information Technology Services (ITS) Enterprise Service Desk is available to answer basic questions related to your equipment, or to solve problems you are having with CONNEC-TIONS. If they cannot solve your problem, they will record your information and forward it to others who can. The Service Desk is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The telephone number and email address are:

Phone: 800-697-1323

Email: FixIT@its.ny.gov