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Plan for Providing Educational Services to Expelled Youth in Tuolumne County

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Overview:

Every three years, the county superintendent of schools, in conjunction with superintendents of the school districts within the county, develops a plan for providing educational services to expelled pupils in Tuolumne County and submits the plan to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Reference Ed Code 48926)

The plan must:

1. Enumerate existing educational alternatives for expelled students;
2. Identify gaps in educational services to expelled students;
3. Identify strategies for filling the service gaps;
4. Identify alternative placements for students who are expelled and who (as determined by the district governing board) failed to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plan or who pose a danger to other students.

Plan for Tuolumne County:

Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools Office serves eleven public school districts, (eight K-8 school districts, two 9-12 high school district, one K-12 unified school district) and one community college. Tuolumne County is home to approximately 6,000 public school students. These young people have special talents, interests, and needs as diverse as the county in which they live.

Both traditional and alternative educational programs are offered within the county. While all of the school districts offer traditional environments, some also make alternatives such as Independent Study options. The County Superintendent of Schools Office operates a Pregnant Minor and Teen Parent Program (Cal-SAFE) and a Community School/Independent Study program.

All school districts within Tuolumne County provide early intervention strategies which include, but are not limited to: individual and group counseling; student study teams; academic and emotional assessment; special education; parent support meetings; in school suspension; off-campus suspension; after school activities; conflict resolution training; and student behavioral contracts. Students in need of educational alternatives access these programs through a district and/or County referral process.

Districts within Tuolumne County do not typically expel large number of students. However, Education Code 48916.1 requires each of the eleven governing boards to insure that an educational program is provided to the expelled pupil for the duration of the expulsion.

Existing Educational Alternatives:

School districts located within the county offer the following options for expelled youth:

- a) Suspended expulsion in which the student is placed on the same school campus under the directives of a plan specified by the local school board;
- b) Suspended expulsion with placement in a district Independent Study Program or Alternative Education Program, if the parents agree and the strategy is appropriate.
- c) Expulsion with a referral to the Tuolumne County Community School under the directives of a rehabilitation plan for grades 6 – 8 and 9 – 12.

Gaps in Educational Services:

None of school districts within Tuolumne County operate District Community Day Schools and few operate Opportunity Programs. Consequently, as a way to pool resources for expelled youth in grades 6 – 8 and 9 – 12, all school districts collaborate to fund a County Community School model for district expelled youth and refer eligible Type A, B, C, and/or D students, in grades 6 – 8 and 9 – 12, for alternative program placement at the Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools Office Community School. Qualifying pupils are categorized as follows:

- a) Type A – Expelled for less serious offenses
- b) Type B – SARB (Student Attendance Review Board) referred
- c) Type C – On probation, on parole, expelled for serious offenses and probation referred under Section 300, 601, 602, and 654 of the Welfare and Institutions Code
- d) Type D – Homeless children

School Attendance Review Board (SARB):

The Tuolumne County SARB has aligned its practice with the State SARB guidelines. All districts in Tuolumne County have been trained in the SARB process and a consistent set of forms, practices, and hearing procedures have been established. In an effort to reduce truancy and behavior issues, the County SARB coordinates its activity with the Inter-agency Resource Committee. The Inter-agency Resource Committee is a team whose representation includes all the social, welfare, mental health, law enforcement and educational agencies in the County. The committee meets monthly to establish intervention plans for individual or families referred by any of the agencies or SARB.

Students going through SARB are referred to the most appropriate agencies that can provide a variety of interventions prior to placement in any alternative education program. Interventions may include counseling, parenting, health care, educational assessment or mental health assessment. In some instances, placement in alternative education occurs simultaneous with agency referrals. The District Attorney works with the SARB to ensure compliance with the directives establishing these interventions.

The following gaps exist in respect to providing educational services to expelled youth:

1. Students who are expelled vary by age, grade level, and the nature of the offense that led to their expulsion.
2. There are significant geographical distances between local districts. Transportation to the Community School is not provided and is too costly for the program to absorb which makes it difficult for parents to transport.
3. The school districts have closed their Community Day Schools;
4. There is no program in the county or at school districts for expelled students in the TK – 5 grade span;
5. A Juvenile Hall in Tuolumne County for serious juvenile offenders and/or probation placed students will be built and functional within 18 months;
6. State funding sources may not be sufficient or reliable limiting the ability for districts to operate alternative education setting.

Strategies for Addressing Identified Gaps in Service

The strategies for addressing the identified gaps in education alternative service for expelled youth are:

1. Use the district Community Day School model as a source of service for TK - 5 students in districts;
2. Provide a modified program at the school district that meets the needs of the students through a change in hours of attendance or any range of educational options unique to the student's needs;
3. Refer expelled students, grades 6 – 8 and 9 – 12, to the Tuolumne County Community School and/or Independent Study Program for districts not operating a district-sponsored alternative;
4. Consider Independent Study as an instructional alternative for those students not on probation who pose a danger within the Community Day School setting, or those whose parents agree that this instructional strategy fits the expelled student's needs and a rehabilitation plan is developed showing this; no individual with exceptional needs as defined in section 56206 may be placed in an independent study program unless his or her individualized education program (IEP) developed pursuant to Article 3 commencing with Section 56340 or Chapter 4 of Part 30 specifically provided for such participation;
5. Adhere to the established intake/exit procedures for all students attending any district operated or county operated program, including accountability of the rehabilitation plan requirements;
6. Include within the rehabilitation plan clear behavioral and social-emotional goals;
7. Adhere to a transition plan that will assist students in the return to the regular education program.

Placement/Rehabilitation Plans:

A Rehabilitation Plan shall be developed by the district for every expelled student grade 6 – 8 and 9 – 12 who is referred to the County Community School Program or a District Community Day School. Part of this plan will include a review of district rehabilitation directives to be completed prior to readmission to the school district of residence including goals related to behavior and social-emotional concerns.

School districts will maintain responsibility for developing, directing, and implementing rehabilitation plans for students attending Community Day Schools and for students with suspended expulsions, including readmission approval/hearing at the conclusion of the expulsion period. School districts will provide for the special education needs of students living in their respective districts and attending non-district programs.

Staff from the County Superintendent of Schools Office, in conjunction with the County Probation Department and the referring school district will collaboratively develop alternate strategies for those Community School students who have difficulty meeting the terms of their rehabilitation plan or who continue to pose a danger to other students.

References:

Education Code 48926

Each county superintendent of schools in counties that operate community schools pursuant to Section 1980, in conjunction with the superintendents of school districts within the county, shall develop a plan for providing education services to all expelled pupils in the county.


Education Code 48916.1(a)

At the time an expulsion of a pupil is ordered, the governing board of the school district shall ensure that an educational program is provided to the pupil who is subject to the expulsion order for the period of the expulsion. Except for pupils expelled pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 48915, the governing board of a school district is required to implement the provisions of this section only to the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose in the annual Budget Act or other legislation, or both.

SIGNATURES:


Ms. Marguerite D. Bulkin, County Superintendent



Dr. Mike McCoy, Sonora Union High School District


Mr. Robert Griffith, Summerville Union High School District


Mr. Jeff Winfield, Twain Harte School District


Dr. John Pendley, Columbia Union School District


Ms. Sharon Johnson, Curtis Creek School District


Mr. Jeff Winfield, Soulsbyville School District


Dr. Brenda Chapman, Jamestown School District


Mr. Leigh Shampain, Sonora School District


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Mr. Dave Urquhart, Big Oak Flat Groveland School District


Dr. John Pendley, Belleview School District

