

ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Students in an Alternative Education Program for Disruptive Students will be provided educational opportunities available in accordance with West Virginia Code §18-2-6 and §18-5-19, and West Virginia Board of Education WVBE Policy 4373. An alternative education program is a temporary authorized departure from the regular school program designed to provide educational and social development for students whose disruptive behavior places them at risk of not succeeding in the traditional school structures and in adult life without positive interventions. The purposes of these programs are to:

- (1) provide a safe and orderly learning environment for the education of all students in McDowell County, and
- (2) meet the educational needs of disruptive students through the development of alternative education programs.

Alternative education programs for disruptive/non-traditional students encompass a range of program options such as:

- in-school suspension;
- a separate part-time or full-time alternative education classroom;
- a school-within a school;
- a school on an alternative site;
- Mountaineer Challenge Academy;
- Option Pathway;
- an after school class/night school program;
- blended (face to face and online) program delivery; or
- a combination academic/work-based program.

McDowell County Board of Education shall have broad flexibility in developing the type or types of alternative education program options needed to meet the needs of disruptive/non-traditional students in McDowell County. Program flexibility does not extend to modifying the provisions of Policy 2419: Regulations for the Education of Exceptional Students in providing alternative education programs for students with exceptionalities or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Program Goals

- Assist students in developing self-discipline and sense of personal responsibility.
- Provide students a safe learning environment.
- Provide students a flexible curriculum.
- Assist students in improving academic grades.
- Encourage students to develop a positive self-concept.
- Assist students in recognizing the barriers that inhibit learning.
- Enable students to obtain re-entry into the traditional educational setting.

Eligibility

Students may be considered for placement in an alternative education program for

- Violations of the Expected Behavior in Safe and Supportive Schools (Policy 4373) in accordance with the provisions of West Virginia Codes §18-5A-1a.
- Repeated violations of the county's discipline policy and/or repeated violations following 9 weeks of documented, unsuccessful behavioral interventions (**SAT Team**); and
- Continuation of educational services during periods of suspension.

Students who have been expelled may be placed in an alternative education program and students who have been suspended or expelled from a public or private school in West Virginia or another state, currently found within the county, may not be denied enrollment unless determined to be a "Dangerous student" under the procedures set forth in West Virginia Code §18A-5-1a.

Upon receipt of the referral and recommendation of the School SAT Team or IEP Team, or superintendent/designate the Alternative Educational Placement Team will convene within ten (10) days to determine placement of the student in the alternative setting. A written notification will be sent to the referring school.

The SAT Team shall develop a written Individual Alternative Education Plan (IAEP), which includes academic, behavioral, social and re-entry criteria to the home school. There will be a periodic review of the student's progress as needed. The IAEP for students exhibiting discipline problems will stand in place of the written plan.

The parent/legal guardian of a participant will be made aware of the educational program being offered and the responsibilities of the student, parent, and school.

Student Responsibilities

Students receiving services in an Alternative Education Program are responsible for:

- Completing all assignments;
- Participating in all educational activities;
- Taking examinations as required by the teacher;
- Behaving in accordance with McDowell County Schools Discipline Policy 11-028, Expected Behavior in Safe and Supportive Schools and/or the program based behavior improvement plans; and
- Fulfilling all course requirements.

Teacher Responsibilities

The educator with instructional responsibilities for students placed in an alternative setting is responsible for

- Delivering an educational program consistent with curricular requirements and modified or Individualized Education Plans and inclusive of pro-social life skills in a blended (computer-based with teacher support) environment;
- Assessing each student's educational status and progress by reviewing previous educational records, observing student performances, utilizing various appropriate educational activities and interventions, preparing information regarding educational findings and recommendations, and using instructional materials that are age appropriate, functionally appropriate, and of a high interest level for students;
- Assisting facility staff members with transition planning, linkages to service providers and the transfer of student records, and providing individualized instruction designed to accommodate the entry and exit of students;
- Maintaining appropriate educational records; and exhibiting instructional practices that reflect high expectations for students;
- Delivering the instructional program in a climate conducive to learning; ensuring that sufficient instructional materials, supplies, and equipment are available to deliver the instructional program;
- Demonstrating and maintaining qualifications and competencies as designed in West Virginia Board of Education WVBE Policy 4373: Regulations for Alternative Educational Programs for Disruptive Students.

Parental Responsibilities

It is important that parents realize that learning is a continuous process and occurs at every state in their child's life. It is important the parent(s) realize their role in helping their child become successful. Parents are required to attend all meetings held to discuss their child's progress. The Alternative Education Program staff will work with the parent(s) and keep them informed concerning their child(s) progress in the program.

The parent or legal guardian of any student receiving instruction in an alternative education program is responsible for:

- Cooperating with county, school, and alternative education officials;
- Meeting, as necessary, with officials;
- Encouraging student course completion, positive work habits, and homework completion; and
- Notifying officials of student related concerns.

Counselor Responsibilities

McDowell County Counselors are responsible for

- Participating as a member of the Alternative Education Placement Team and assisting with the development of the IAEP;
- Providing assistance with the transition to the Alternative Program;
- Assisting with the transition back to the school setting;
- Coordinating support services such as school social work or psychological services as indicated in the student's written plan; and
- Coordinating the state assessment program.

Board of Education Responsibilities

The Board of Education is responsible for

- Assigning appropriately trained and certified staff in appropriate ratios to students enrolled in those institutions according to enrollment numbers;
- Establishing educational programs designed to deliver appropriate curricular requirements;
- Providing adequate instructional supplies;
- Establishing instructional time requirements for face to face and online meetings between students and instructors;
- Completing an evaluative review of the program; and
- The Director of Pupil Services will advise students who have not made progress at the Alternative Education Program to take the next best step and recommend the TASC program.

Referral and Intervention

Referrals for alternative placement from expulsions and Safe Schools Act violations will be provided by the superintendent upon results of student disciplinary hearing.

The principal at each school will be a member of the School SAT Team to assist in the planning of the student's educational plan.

Intervention is a process managed by a trained school-based team. The process begins when a concerned person makes a referral to the School's SAT Team after observing behavioral/academic/social changes that are negatively affecting the student's academic achievement or personal development.

The intervention involves a series of specific steps that result in a formal plan to address the student's needs. The steps are as follows:

- The (home school) **School SAT Team** shall be the first step in the placement process for the referral of a student for alternative placement.
- The **SAT Team** will use the student's current individualized educational plan (IEP) when referring a special needs student for alternative placement.
- Daily interventions logs and behavioral documentation **must** be attached to the referral application.
- Referral for the Alternative Educational Placement must include all the necessary paperwork which includes documentation of school interventions for a 9-week period of time in the area/areas of concern.
- At the conclusion of 9 weeks of intervention, if referral is still necessary then this should be indicated on the referral form. **The School SAT Team** shall indicate referral to Alternative Program placement.
- A copy of the referral will be sent to the Assistant Superintendent for review and approval for alternative placement.

Special Education Placement

The process of placement for special education students in the Alternative Educational Program shall be as follows:

- Manifestation determination (if warranted);

- IEP Meeting and written recommendation from IEP team;
- School documentation that a Behavioral Management Plan has been in place for a 9-week period of time and has been unsuccessful;
- Documentation must be submitted for lack of academic progress.

Placement

The process of placement for regular students in the Alternative Educational Program shall be as follows:

The student's home School SAT Team which consists of principal, classroom teacher, counselor (6-12), parent, special educator, community agencies when applicable, will complete the appropriate referral form and submit to the Assistant Superintendent over Alternative Education. When appropriate a nurse, psychologist, attendance director and social worker may be present at the School SAT Team meeting. All referral documents completed by the School SAT Team will be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent for approval. Once the referral has been approved, the Assistant Superintendent will contact the alternative education site principal to schedule an intake meeting with the parent/guardian and student.

Students exhibiting behaviors including, but not limited to, the following may be considered for placement in the Alternative Education Program:

- History of truancy, skipping school, running away
- Fighting
- Anti-social attitudes (hates school, defies authority, delinquent behavior)
- School phobia
- Processed through the court system/institutions
- Frequent suspensions
- Academic failure

Exit and Re-Entry Criteria

Students shall demonstrate the appropriate skills necessary to function in the traditional education setting prior to being considered for exit from the Alternative Education Program. The student shall have completed his/her written plan satisfactorily. Upon satisfactory completion of the written plan the alternative placement teacher will meet and review the progress of the student. The staff will then make a recommendation as to whether the student should return to the regular school setting. **The principal at the school will request a(n) School SAT Team or IEP meeting at the student's home school to discuss and create a support plan for re-entry into the traditional school setting.**

Appropriate skills and/or benchmarks to function in the traditional education setting include but are not limited to:

- Self-discipline,
- Academic success,
- Positive self-concept,
- Completion of any counseling needed,
- Improved attendance, and
- Satisfactory completion of the written plan.

Parent Request for Exit and Re-Entry

A parent or student may request reassignment to the traditional school setting based upon the following:

- Significant improvement (academically/behaviorally);
- Improved social adjustment;
- Improved attendance; and
- Significant progress toward fulfillment of course requirements.

Guidelines for Dismissal from the Alternative Education Program

The alternative program staff, with the principal, shall review the records of the students being considered for dismissal

from the Alternative Education Program. Should the decision be made for dismissal, notification will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s). The designated administrator will need to begin those proceedings. Reasons for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to display reasonable effort during the probationary period,
- Repeated violation of school rules,
- Reasonable steps taken to produce a positive student response have failed (e.g. counseling, tutoring, parent conferences).

Curriculum

McDowell County Board of Education shall have a written curriculum for the alternative education program based upon the State Board of Education approved content standards using a blended model in providing board-approved online curriculum delivery platform under a supervision of a certified teacher. The curriculum shall include a component for teaching and learning responsible behavior. The Alternative Educational Program shall include staff members who are appropriately certified in special education and the core subject areas, as needed. The curriculum shall include the basic 4 core subjects with elective opportunities. Students will have access to a variety of elective course offerings as well.

State Assessment Program

Students enrolled in the Alternative Educational Program shall participate in the State Assessment Program, in accordance with State Board Education Policy 2340 West Virginia Measures of Academic Progress Program. The test scores for these students will be counted in the results of the home county school of referral.

Support Services

Students in the McDowell County Alternative Program shall receive counseling services and/or other support services as indicated in the student's written plan.

Special Education

McDowell County Alternative Education Program shall comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations in the education of exceptional students placed in the alternative education program.

Personnel

It is the responsibility of the McDowell County Board of Education to select the most qualified applicant(s) to implement the alternative education program. In a manner consistent with WV law, classroom teachers shall be selected on the basis of demonstrated competence and/or specialized training in the following areas:

- Any West Virginia professional teaching certificate;
- Ability to effect positive behavior in disruptive students;
- Effective leadership and/or mentoring skills in working with troubled and/or disruptive youth;
- Successful experience in providing education to troubled and/or disruptive youth;
- Specialized training or experience in non-traditional programs;
- Specialized training in behavior management skills.

Licensure required for Alternative Education Program Teaching Staff

- West Virginia Professional Teaching Certificate in any area.
- Temporary Authorization – valid for one year shall be granted to the successful candidate(s) for the alternative education program position(s). The employing county superintendent must verify that the applicant possesses the required competencies. The temporary authorization may be renewed each year based on the applicant's continued employment in an alternative education program.

Home-Based Programs for Disruptive Students

County board of education will provide home-based programs for students expelled under the Productive and Safe Schools Act (West Virginia Code §18A-5-1), for students who have repeated serious violations of the county's discipline

policy following documented multiple behavioral interventions and out-of-school suspensions, or for disruptive students who meet the eligibility criteria for Home/Hospital Instruction under WVBE Policy 2510-Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs. McDowell County Alternative Education Program will be offered through a blended delivery model using a board-approved online curriculum platform under a supervision of a certified teacher.

Units of Credit

McDowell County Alternative Educational Program shall grant units of credit for work satisfactorily completed in an alternative education program. Units of credit based upon mastery of performance criteria may be granted as an alternative to the standard units of credit.

Program Completion

Students may complete an alternative education program in one of the following manners:

- Fulfillment of the criteria for re-entry into the regular school program;
- Completion of regular high school graduation requirements and awarding of a regular high school diploma from the home school;
- Completion of identified performance criteria leading to a high school diploma; or
- Completion of a GED in accordance with WVBE Policy 2444.4
- Issuance of State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma Based Upon Passage of the TASC Tests.

Grades

Grades shall be reported using the same schedule as the home school. All grades will be calculated according to McDowell County grading scale. Report Cards will be distributed each 9 weeks. Parents may contact the after school alternative placement teacher concerning academic progress. Report cards will be mailed home at the end of every nine week periods.

Student Records

Copies of student grades and West Virginia Statewide Assessment scores are kept in the student files. The enrollment form is also on file. The after school program will keep a student folder for each student enrolled. This record is confidential and not accessible to unauthorized individuals. The home school is also to keep a set of records on the student which may be released should the student enroll in another school facility or institution.

Evaluation

McDowell County Board of Education shall conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the Alternative Education Program.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the alternative education program shall focus upon the impact of the program on student performance and results using indicators such as: academic gains; reduction in dropout rates; reduction in incidences requiring disciplinary action; improvement in attendance rates; rates of successful program completion and return to the regular school program; rates of successful completion of vocational training programs; rates of successful completion of high school graduation or attainment of a High School Equivalency Diploma and rates of successful job placement and job retention.

The WVDE shall review compliance with alternative education requirements and the effectiveness of alternative education programs through monitoring and review of McDowell County's Strategic Plan. The alternative education program shall be evaluated on the basis of its stated goals and the provision of Policy 4373. Contracts, Enrollment Forms and Referral Forms can be found in the Alternative Placement Procedures Manual.

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