Hickman County Board of Education

	Descriptor Term: **Alternative Education**	Descriptor Code: **6.319**	Issued Date: **08/02/21**
		Rescinds: **6.319**	Issued: **03/01/21**

General

The Board shall operate an alternative school program for students in grades 6-12 who have been suspended or expelled from regular school programs, or in lieu of suspension or expulsion for students who display inappropriate behavior (Grade 6 - Zero Tolerance only).[1] Attendance in alternative school programs shall be mandatory and students attending an alternative school located other than at their home school shall provide their own transportation.

An alternative school is a short-term intervention program designed to provide educational services outside the regular school program for students who have been suspended or expelled. The alternative school is located in a separate facility from the regular school program.

Alternative school programs shall be operated in accordance with state laws and the rules of the State Board of Education and instruction shall proceed as nearly as practicable in accordance with the instructional programs at the student's home school.[2]

The director of schools shall develop procedures that provide appropriate educational opportunities for all students assigned to an alternative education program. These educational opportunities shall utilize Tennessee's academic standards, incorporate innovative teaching strategies, deliver research-based instructional techniques, and provide the resources necessary to foster student learning and achievement.

Annually, the director of schools/designee shall submit the following information to the Department of Education:

1. Alternative school(s) or program(s) currently in operation in the district;

2. Number and grade level of students served in an alternative education program;

3. Primary reason for student assignment to an alternative education program; and

4. Number of faculty and staff serving each alternative education program.

ASSIGNMENT[3]

The Director of Schools/designee is not required to assign a student to the alternative school or program if the student committed one of the following:

1. A zero tolerance offense;[4] or

2. ~~An offense of violence or threatened violence, or an offense that threatened the safety of other students at the school, if the location of the alternative school or program is on the same grounds as the school from which the student was disciplined.~~[5] An offense of violence or threatened violence, or an offense that threatened the safety of other students at the school if the location of the alternative school or program is on the same grounds as the school from which the student was disciplined or assigning the student to that location would endanger the safety of the students or staff.[5]

Prior to the assignment of the student to an alternative school program, the director of schools/designee shall provide written notice to the student's parent/guardian stating the reason for the student's placement.[6]

Placement in an alternative education setting shall be reserved for students who significantly disrupt the educational process. If a student has an active Individualized Education Plan, a 504 plan, or is suspected of having a disability, all state and federal laws, rules, and regulations related to special education shall be followed. The director of schools/designee shall develop procedures regarding placement of students in the program, taking in to consideration the impact of exclusionary discipline practices.[7]

Attendance in alternative school programs shall be mandatory, and students attending an alternative school located outside of the school district shall provide their own transportation.

The director of schools/designee shall monitor and regularly evaluate the academic progress of each student enrolled in an alternative education program.

REMOVAL[8]

A student may be removed from the alternative school or program if:

1. He/she violates the rules of the alternative school or program; or

2. He/she is not benefitting from the assignment and all interventions have been exhausted unsuccessfully.

ADDITIONAL OFFENSES[9]

Any new disciplinary offense committed during a student's original suspension or expulsion period shall be treated as a new and separate offense. These offenses shall not constitute an extension of the original suspension or expulsion.

TRANSITION PLANS[10]

The director of schools/designee shall develop procedures regarding the implementation of transition plans for the integration of students entering and exiting the program.

Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3402;TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(a)
3. TCA 49-6-3402(c)(1)(A)
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(6)(a); TCA 49-6-3402(c)(1)(B)
5. Public Acts of 2021, Chapter No. 229; Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 279
6. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(i)
7. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(h)
8. TCA 49-6-3402(c)(2)(A)
9. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(g)(2)
10. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(m)

Cross References
Special Education 4.202
Suspension 6.316
Student Disciplinary Hearing Authority 6.317
Special Education Students 6.500