

Policy JCD: Alternative School Program

Status: DRAFT

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The Jackson County School District shall establish, maintain and operate, in connection with the regular programs of the district, an alternative school program. The alternative school program shall be operated as part of and in accordance with the regulations applicable to the regular school program and with all requirements of federal and state law (MS Code of 1972 Section 37-13-91, et al) and the guidelines of the State Department of Education.

1. The alternative school program shall serve compulsory school-age children:

- a. Whose presence in the classroom, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, is a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the students and staff of the school as a whole;
- b. Who have been suspended for more than ten (10) school days or expelled from school, except that such placement may be denied when the expulsion was for possession of a weapon or other felonious conduct;
- c. Who are referred for placement based on documented need by the parent, legal guardian, or custodian because of disciplinary problems;
- d. Who are referred by order of a chancellor or youth court judge, but only with the consent of the school superintendent or principal.

2. No school district is required to place a child returning from an out-of-home placement in the mental health, juvenile justice or foster care system in alternative school. Placement of a child in the alternative setting shall be done consistently, and for students identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), shall adhere to the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004. If a school chooses to place a child in alternative school, the district will make an individual assessment and evaluation of that child in the following time periods:

- a. Five (5) days for a child transitioning from a group home, mental health care system, and/or the custody of the Department of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services;
- b. Ten (10) days for a child transitioning for a child transitioning from a dispositional placement order by a youth court pursuant to Section 42-21-605; and
- c. An individualized assessment for youth transitioning from an out-of-home placement to an alternative school shall include:
 - i. A strength needs assessment.
 - ii. A determination of the child's academic strengths and deficiencies.
 - iii. A proposed plan for transitioning the child to a regular education setting at the earliest possible date.

Alternative Education Setting The Jackson County Alternative School is established for the purpose of providing continued educational services to students whose behavior prevents them from continuing to attend their home school environment.

1. Evidence of intervention attempts at home school shall be documented. (Discipline forms are acceptable, if information is recorded that a parent contact was attempted. Administrators are encouraged to record notes of parent conference on discipline form or any other record utilized in the recording of information.)
2. The student should have been enrolled in the home school for nine (9) weeks or until intervention has been

attempted and failed, or probation terms, as specified by school board, have been violated.

Categories for Placement

1. Placement of a student enrolled in the Jackson County School District by order of a chancellor or youth court judge can be done only with the consent of the Superintendent.
2. Placement in the alternative education setting will be at the discretion of the school board.

Procedures for Placement in Alternative Education Setting

1. The administrator will refer students who have reached Step 5 (Secondary Handbook) or Step 6 (Middle School Handbook) to the alternative education setting. The administrator will complete the **Alternative Education Setting Referral Form** and submit it to the superintendent or his/her designee for his/her review. The parent or guardian may waive their right to appeal the recommendation of the principal to the District Discipline Appeal Committee and the student shall be placed directly in the alternative setting. Students involved with drugs, alcohol, or weapons will be recommended to the school board for expulsion.
2. Student placed in alternative education setting remains in alternative education setting according to schedule described in "criteria to return to home school section."
3. Student referred back to home school. Remains in home school on probation as prescribed by the school board/school administrator. The student remains in his home school as long as behavior is acceptable. If student's behavior worsens, the administrator may refer the student back to the alternative school if he/she is still serving his/her probationary period as prescribed by the school board/school administrator. If student's behavior worsens, the administrator may refer the student to the school board for the third offense for expulsion if he/she is still serving his/her probationary period as prescribed by the school board/school administrator. The student will not be allowed to return to the alternative education setting more than twice during the same school year. If a student is expelled from school he/she will be allowed to return to his/her home school the following year, after completing the remainder of the first offense at the alternative education setting.
4. The home school will complete the necessary information in the referral packet and send it to the principal at the time the student is referred to the alternative education setting. The principal will send copies to the school board secretary.
5. Students with special education rulings may be placed at the alternative education setting after an IEP review/revision. All due process procedures mandated by IDEA and the State Plan are to be followed. These procedures include giving written notice and Procedural Safeguards to parents, verifying receipt by parents and conducting an IEP meeting to recommend placement. IEP and other assessment data are then forwarded to the special education director at the Central Office.

The Jackson County Alternative School Setting is designed to meet the educational needs of the students while they are assigned to the alternative education setting. The employment of certified teachers and competent teacher assistants and a computer-assisted instructional program provide the means to accomplish this goal. As a result of the low enrollment at the school, students will receive small group instruction and will communicate regularly with home school teachers regarding academic work. Counselors will be available to counsel students with psychological needs. Local mental health professionals will be brought in to work with the students and parents when necessary. Positive behavior intervention specialists will also be available to work with students, as needed.

Criteria to be Reviewed for Return to the Home Schools Environment

1. The student will exhibit improvement while in the alternative setting. The home school personnel will maintain home/school correspondence. Progress reports and report cards will be given to students in the alternative education setting on the same schedule as all other students. Personnel of the alternative education setting or home school will notify parents as needed, in addition to progress reports and report cards, to keep them informed of the student's academic and behavioral progress.
2. A student must attend (be present) in the alternative education setting for up to forty-five (45) school days. After attending the alternative education setting for up to 45 school days and having shown improvement (while attending the alternative education setting) with acceptable behavior, the student may return to his/her home school environment. If the student has not made improvement in his/her behavior, he/she will remain in the alternative education setting. Students may have two excused absences, as described in the district's Students Handbook, without adding days to the original assignment. Students can reenter the home school environment only after they have met conditions as specified by the school board and the criteria listed above.
3. The home school principal, after consultation with teachers and other personnel involved with the students, may refer the student back to the home school environment.
4. When the home school principal approves for the student to return to his/her home school environment, the

parent is to contact the principal of the home school and make an appointment to meet with him/her. This conference must be held prior to the student's returning to class. The parents, principal, and student must be present in the conference.

Reasons for Expulsion from Alternative Education Setting

1. Students enrolled in the Jackson County alternative education setting who are involved in any criminal activity, display violent behavior, or have in their possession a weapon on campus as defined by Section 97-37-17, MS Code, shall be expelled from the alternative education environment for the remainder of the school year. Students expelled for possession of a weapon may be expelled from school for a period of up to one year.
2. Failure to follow rules prescribed in the Student Handbook and terms of placement in the alternative education environment.

Terms of Assignment to the Alternative Education Setting Student's

Name _____
School _____
Principal's Name _____
Date of Hearing _____

The following behaviors must be adhered to while your child is assigned to the alternative education setting. Failure to comply with these terms may result in your child being expelled from school for the remainder of the semester.

1. Absences – shall not miss school, except for medical reasons.
2. Tardies – shall not be late to school unless brought to school and checked in by the parent/guardian.
3. Shall not create any disturbances/distractions, which would interfere with a teacher's right to teach and the other pupil's right to learn.
4. Shall be prepared each day for class. Each day the student will report to class with the materials designated by the teacher.
5. Shall not participate in or attend any extra-curricular activities during the time the student is assigned to the alternative education setting. This includes any (proms, dances, plays, etc.) activities held on the school's campus or school-sponsored activities, which may be held off campus.
6. Shall not drive a vehicle to the home school or to the alternative education setting while assigned to the alternative education setting. Middle school students shall ride the bus to the home school and transfer to the alternative education setting bus at designated pick-up place. Misbehavior on the bus to the home school and to and from the alternative education setting may result in expulsion from school.
7. Shall provide restitution to the school district for damages and/or theft prior to the end of the current school year. If restitution is not made in the time designated by the school, the student will not be allowed to enroll for the succeeding school year.
8. Discipline – The student shall follow the rules of conduct established for the alternative education setting. Failure to do so shall result in a recommendation for expulsion for the remainder of the semester. This includes misbehavior on the school bus to the home school and to and from the alternative education setting.
9. The parent shall meet with the alternative education setting staff after the student's assignment to plan cooperative interventions for the student.
10. The parent shall attend parenting workshops, if the principal and counselors deem it necessary.
11. The student and/or parent will participate in the services provided by the professional counselors on a periodic basis.
12. Upon return to your child's home school environment, he/she will be on probation for the remainder of the _____ school year.

The earliest date this student can return to his/her home school environment is _____. Failure to comply with the rules and regulations of the alternative education setting will result in the extension of time the student is assigned to the alternative education setting.

If the student transfers, drops out, or is expelled from the alternative education setting School, he/she will be reassigned to the alternative education setting upon his/her re-entry into the school district and will complete the time for which he/she was originally assigned to the alternative education setting.

Parent's Signature Student's Signature

Principal's Signature School Board Chairman

Comments:

Alternative Education Setting Referral Form

Student's Name: School:

Principal Making Referral:

Student's Grade: Sex: Race: Age:

Number of referrals to the office for disciplinary action:

Attach the student's behavior intervention plan (BIP). (All students should have a BIP prior to referral to the alternative education setting, unless the student is a danger to him/herself and it was an isolated incident.)

Summary of reasons for referrals to the office:

Number of times placed in ISS:

Number of times placed in OSS:

Other disciplinary action taken:

Student referred to counselor prior to referral to alternative education setting.

Yes No Previous contact with parents: Yes No

Principal's Signature:

Copy to Assistant Superintendent at Central Office and School Board Secretary.
