

POLICY

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The board endeavors to provide an educational program adjusted to the needs of the individual child within the financial means of the district. Grouping enables a more efficient use of staff in meeting these needs. Program adaptations provide another means of using staff efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of many children.

When the needs of special individuals or groups cannot be met through adaptation or independent study, the chief school administrator shall investigate and propose to the board for approval alternative programs and facilities.

Home Schooling

The board acknowledges the right of parents/guardians to educate their children at home. At the board's request, parents/guardians who choose this option shall submit adequate evidence that they are providing a curriculum that is equivalent to that provided by this district.

Disruptive/Disaffected Children

The board of education recognizes that the active engagement of each pupil is a primary requisite for sound teaching and learning to take place. When a child is unable to benefit from the educational program because he/she is either disruptive or disaffected, then the educational goals of the district for that child will not be realized and the efforts of other pupils may be impeded.

In an effort to optimize the educational experience for each child, the chief school administrator or designee shall develop procedures to identify and work with disruptive/disaffected pupils.

When it is determined by the child study team that a disruptive/disaffected pupil is not classifiable, the board shall consider some other program as an alternative to regular classroom attendance. When the district does not have a suitable alternative program available, the chief school administrator or designee shall recommend to the board placement in a program of another district. Home instruction may be offered as an option for 30 days with County approval.

In accordance with state law and board policy, disruptive pupils whose continuing attendance interrupts the educational program and/or threatens harm to themselves and others may be suspended and considered for expulsion (see policy 5114).

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS (Continued)

Removal for Weapons Offenses or Assault

Any general education pupil who is convicted or found to be delinquent for the following offenses shall be immediately removed by the principal from the district's regular education program for a period of not less than one calendar year and placed in an interim alternative educational setting (special education students may be placed in an interim alternative education setting for 45 days, as per New Jersey Special Education Regulations) pending a hearing before the board of education to remove the pupil:

- A. Possessing a firearm on any school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function; or
- B. Committing a crime while possessing a firearm.

The chief school administrator or designee shall determine whether the pupil is to return to the district's regular education program, in accordance with procedures established by the Commissioner of Education.

Any pupil who assaults a pupil, teacher, administrator, board member, or other district employee with a weapon other than a firearm on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function must be immediately removed from the school's regular education program and placed in an alternative school or program. The chief school administrator shall determine when the child shall return to the regular education program.

Potential Dropouts

While statute requires attendance of each pupil only until 16 years of age, it is in the best interests of both pupils and the community that they complete the educational program that will equip them with skills and increase their chances for a successful and fulfilling life beyond the schools.

The board directs that whenever a pupil wishes to withdraw, or has been identified as a potential withdrawal, effort shall be made to determine the underlying reason and the resources of the district shall be used to assist the pupil in furthering his/her education.

The chief school administrator or designee shall develop procedures for withdrawal from school that:

- A. Make counseling services available to any pupil who wishes to withdraw;
- B. Make every effort to satisfy the pupil's future educational needs;
- C. Help the pupil define his/her own educational life goals and help plan the realization of those goals.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (Continued)

- Legal References:** N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 General mandatory powers and duties
N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq Discipline of pupils
See particularly:
N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2.2
N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1, -25 Attendance at school free of charge ...
N.J.S.A. 18A:54-20 Powers of board (county vocational schools)
N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.1 et seq. Pupil Behavior
See particularly:
N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.2
N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1 Graduation requirements
N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2 High school diplomas
N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.1 et seq. Special Education
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.5 Removal of students from general education for firearms offense
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.6 Removal of students from general education for assaults with weapons
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1 et seq Alternative Education Programs
See particularly:
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.3
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-9.1 et seq Home or Out-of-School Instruction for General Education Students
N.J.A.C. 6A:24-1.4 Responsibilities of local district
N.J.A.C. 6A:24-6.1 Implementation of required programs in secondary schools
N.J.A.C. 6A:30-1.4 Evaluation process for the annual review

State v. Vaughn, 44 N.J. 142, 1965

State v. Massa, 95 N.J. Super. 382, 1967

20 USCA Section 8921 Gun Free Schools Act

Manual for the Evaluation of Local School Districts (August 2000)

- Cross References:** 5113 Absences and excuses
5114 Suspension and expulsion
5119 Transfers
5131 Conduct/discipline
5131.7 Weapons and dangerous instruments
5134 Married/pregnant pupils
6142.2 English as a second language; bilingual programs
6142.12 Career education
6164.2 Guidance services
6164.4 Child study team
6171.4 Special education
6173 Home instruction

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (Continued)

Key Words

Alternative Educational Programs, Home Schooling, Dropouts, Disruptive Pupils, Disruptive Students, Disaffected Pupils, Disaffected Students, At-risk Pupils

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Second Reading and Final Adoption – May 24, 2005

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[Return to Section Index](#)
[Return to Main Index](#)