

# Tulare County Office of Education

*Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools*

## TULARE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS' PLAN FOR SERVING EXPELLED STUDENTS

The Tulare County Superintendent of Schools and the Governing Boards of each school district within Tulare County believe that all students are entitled to a public education. Access to educational services will assist students achieve their educational, life, and career goals, and maximize the opportunity for a higher quality of life.

The school districts in Tulare County acknowledge that not all students can succeed on a comprehensive school campus. Students who are expelled from school for the reasons cited in the Education Code may (depending on the nature of the offense) be permitted school placement in another district; placed on suspended expulsion and allowed to remain in their school of attendance; placed on suspended expulsion with placement in the district independent study program if the parent agrees; referred to a District Community Day School Program; referred to a Tulare County Community School; or placed in another alternative school. The Tulare County Superintendent of Schools and the Governing Boards of the School Districts shall make every effort to keep all students in a school where an appropriate education can be provided, including those students who are expelled.

To mitigate expulsion the expanded role of early intervention services intends to attack the root problem of lack of school success. Through a coordinated effort to maximize available resources, various prevention programs have been successfully implemented in addition to countywide character education extended through Character Counts! Early Intervention officers, educational resource service manuals, after-school programs such as HEART (Homework Enrichment Acceleration Recreation Teamwork), and CAHSEE-focused academic tutorials indicate the range of interventions being offered. Reconnecting Youth and Teen Peer Courts have been established to redirect at-risk students.

Since the 2003 triennial review, progress has been made in implementing service gaps and expanding educational options. Innovative programs have been structured into newly-established charter schools and Community Day Schools, doubling the number of sites operating three years ago. While some programs offer distance learning, others have instituted vocational academies. Having such a variety of options has assisted in eliminating the service gaps of determining appropriate educational placement. Because district governing boards or review panels are reviewing and revising expulsion rehabilitation plans, making necessary adjustments, they can redirect failing students. If eligible, the option of referral to the County Community School given failure or commission of another expulsion-type offense exists.

Regional articulation is facilitated through various avenues including the Tulare County Educational Options Coalition, consisting of those administering alternative educational settings, district supervisors, and superintendents. Through its communication with the Juvenile Court and Probation, investigation of programmatic practices and shared

information, this educational resource can also support smaller districts in addressing the needs of their expelled youth. A previous gap was overcome through the coordination between the Tulare County Court/Community Schools and district schools to develop educational options for those students failing those programs. Servicing younger expelled students continues to be difficult for small districts.

The Tulare County Superintendent of Schools and the Governing Boards of the School Districts shall meet the educational needs of all expelled students by providing alternative educational services as described below. These services shall be provided to the extent funding is available.

1. Plan for providing alternatives to students prior to expulsions:

Students may be offered counseling, academic intervention, transfer to another school or program within the district, or placement in another school district with the mutual consent of both districts and the approval of the parent. At the high school level, students may be transferred involuntarily to the continuation school for one year.

2. Plan for providing services to students after expulsion:

The following services shall be available to students following an expulsion. The determination of which service(s) shall be based on the reason for the expulsion and individual needs of the student.

A. The following services are available to students who are expelled for less serious offenses:

1. Service Option: Suspended Expulsion<sup>1</sup>

Enforcement of the student's expulsion is suspended, and the student is allowed to remain in the comprehensive school or another program in the district on a behavior contract. While a student is on a suspended expulsion, the district may require participation in available services such as counseling, drug rehabilitation, tutoring, after school or weekend guided study program, or parent counseling.

2. Service Option: Enrollment in another district

Attendance in another district under a behavior contract is determined by the receiving school district (EC 48915.1(d)(3)).

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<sup>1</sup> It is important for the written terms of the suspended expulsion order to include a referral to either the District Community Day School Program or the TCOE Community School Program so that there will be a placement if the expulsion order is reinstated.

3. Service Option: Independent Study Program<sup>2</sup>

Districts may provide this educational option to students if their parents consent to the placement. An individual learning plan can be designed to meet the particular academic needs of each student so that educational progress can be maximized in this setting.

4. Service Option: Placement in a district-operated Community Day School or a Community Day School Program operated by another district

The development of consortiums is encouraged in order to accommodate expelled students from small districts.

B. For students who are expelled based on Education Code 48915(a) or (c), the following programs are available:

1. Placement in a district-operated Community Day School or a Community Day School Program operated by another district.
2. Placement in the Tulare County Community School Program (48915(c) only). The rehabilitation plan to be developed by the district is to include the Community School requirement of community service.
3. Placement in juvenile court school or camp (EC 48915.2).
4. Independent Study Program<sup>2</sup>.

3. Identifying gaps in educational services available to expelled students.

A. There continues to be a need for alternative placement for elementary students who are expelled and who vary in age, grade level, and severity of offense.

The strategy for addressing this gap:

Districts will need to develop appropriate educational opportunities on a case by case basis. Local districts are best suited to develop individualized and appropriate programs to meet the needs of their mandatory expulsion students (48915c) of elementary school age. Cooperative efforts among districts will continue in an effort to address the needs of this student population that is sparsely distributed throughout the county.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note the Education Code on Independent Study states that a parent who places his/her student in independent study can request instruction at any time and must be notified of his/her right to do so (EC51747(c) (7).