

CALAVERAS COUNTY PLAN FOR EXPELLED YOUTH

Calaveras County is served by four public school districts, including one high school district, one unified K-12 school district and two K-8 school districts. Calaveras County is home to approximately 6,500 students who attend public schools. These young people have special talents, interests and needs as diverse as the county in which they live.

Educational programs within Calaveras County provide numerous opportunities for students who are in need of traditional and/or alternative education programs. School districts operate educational alternatives and the County Office offers community school programs and a community day school program.

A student who is simply in need of an educational alternative may access these programs through a designated referral process.

Education Code §48916.1

Each county superintendent of schools in counties that operate community schools pursuant to §1980, in conjunction with superintendents of school districts within the county, shall develop a plan for providing education services to all expelled pupils in that county.

Education Code §48916.1

At the time an expulsion of a pupil is ordered, the governing board of the school district shall ensure that an educational program is provided to the pupil who is subject to the expulsion order for the period of the expulsion, but only to the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose in the annual Budget Act or other legislation or both.

Overview

School districts within Calaveras County are limited in respect to providing educational alternative to expelled youth. All school districts have experienced many of the student behaviors that were once attributed only to students who attended schools in large urban school districts. Our school districts, however, are not experiencing large numbers of students who are exhibiting behaviors which result in expulsion.

The fact that large numbers of students are not being expelled from small school districts is naturally quite positive; however, it does create a situation where the development of either district or county specific classes or programs for such students is difficult financially and/or geographically.

Early intervention strategies or pro-active strategies are the major focus of the small district programs and the subsequent student success. Small school districts within Calaveras County provide early intervention strategies which include, but are not limited to, one-on-one counseling, student study teams, academic and emotional assessments, parent support meetings, in-school suspension, off-campus suspension, special education services, after-school activities, community day schools, conflict management, peer court and student behavioral discipline contracts.

Existing Educational Alternatives for Expelled Youth

School districts located within Calaveras County offer the following options for expelled youth:

1. Suspended expulsion with placement on the same school campus under the directive of a rehabilitation plan;
2. Suspended expulsion with placement on district or county contracted independent/home study, if the parent agrees; or
3. Suspended expulsion with placement in a district community day school available in the Calaveras Unified, Mark Twain and Vallecito Union School Districts.
4. Expulsion with referral to the Calaveras County Office of Education Court/Community School or Community Day School.

Gaps in Educational Services

There are five major gaps that exist in respect to providing educational services to expelled pupils:

1. A student could be expelled from a district under Education Code §48915 and referred to either a community day school or court and community school program. The student could then commit another violation of Education Code §48915, or simply not attend and ultimately be referred back to the original district.
2. School districts within Calaveras County generally expel very few students during the course of a school year; so that having a special class or program for such students at each district is not financially possible (especially community schools which are funded based on ADA).

3. Students who are expelled by individual small school districts and by the combined school districts within Calaveras County vary as to age, grade level and expulsion offenses. The age and grade span alone, under current California Education Code, would require separate community day school sites for the limited number of expelled students in grades K-6 and 7-12.
4. There are significant geographical distances between local districts, thus district or county operated classroom sites/programs for school districts would require either extensive busing, which is financially difficult for the district, or parent provided transportation, which is often impossible for the parents.
5. The community day school option for expelled students, as described in current California Education Code, is difficult for the following reasons:
 - (a) The six (6) hours or 360 minute day exceeds the required hours that a regular third, fourth, fifth or sixth grade student is directed to attend school by California Education Code.
 - (b) Access to the additional funding is restricted by having the student complete six hours for hour-by-hour attendance accounting in order for the district to receive the additional funding and requiring additional attendance bookkeeping and recordkeeping.
 - (c) The community day school program limits the available instructional strategies which can be used, such as contracted independent/home study, which limits the program flexibility required for student success.
 - (d) The separation of students in grades K-6 from students in grades 7-12 also creates boundaries that can be financially and/or geographically difficult.
 - (e) It may be difficult to meet the needs of expelled students who are on active IEP's due to limited special education resource services available to our programs.

Strategies for Addressing Identified Gaps in Services

The strategies for addressing the identified gaps in educational service for expelled youth are:

1. To refer expelled students to the Calaveras County Court and Community School. Community school will be an option for those students who have transportation to school sites and contracted independent/home study may be an option for those students who cannot arrange transportation. Calaveras County Office of Education also operates a community day school for student in grades 9-12.
2. To continue to use existing district educational strategies to meet the needs of students who are under suspended expulsion.

Placement/Rehabilitation Plans

Students who are expelled (and then the expulsion is suspended) will be provided with the following educational options: The school district of residence continues to maintain responsibility for developing a rehabilitation plan for the student, referring the student to an appropriate educational setting and ensuring that an educational program is provided to the student.

Expelled students who are referred to the Calaveras County Office of Education's Community School or Community Day School Program will have an Individual Learning Plan developed with staff. Part of this plan will include a review of what is needed to return to the school district of residence. Student study teams, alternative placements and alternative strategies will be developed with the court and community school staff for those students who have difficulty meeting the terms and conditions of their district directed rehabilitation plan.

WASC Accreditation

The Calaveras County Office of Education's Community School and Independent Study Programs are WASC accredited.