

Policy 224 – Alternative Delivery of Educational Programs

Revised policy effective upon passage

1st reading July 11, 2019

2nd reading

3rd reading

Statutory authority West Virginia Code 18-2A

Administrative Guidelines

- i. Placement in Alternative Learning Programs
- ii. Adult Education Programs

The Board of Education recognizes the need to provide alternative means by which students achieve the goals of the County.

A. Extended Student Learning

1. Extended student learning may include but is not limited to: extended day or year; mini-courses; summer school or an alternative calendar that allows for year-round schooling; and experiential learning that may take place outside of the regular school calendar.
2. Extended student learning opportunities may be provided by the school system, community agencies, institutions of higher education (IHE's), businesses or other entities under agreements authorized by the county board or West Virginia State Board of Education. These agreements may include payment specifications for those parties using the facilities.
3. Students may elect to participate in extended learning opportunities and may receive elective credit when approved by the county board or WVBE.
4. West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4373 shall be adhered to including, but not limited to, the provision of behavioral components in addition to academic coursework.

B. Summer School – (see Policy 220)

C. Alternative Settings for Disruptive Students

Students whose disruptive behavior places them at risk of not succeeding in the traditional school structure may be eligible for placement in an alternative education program as authorized by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4373.

D. West Virginia Virtual School Options – (see Administrative Guidelines under Policy 223)

E. West Virginia Option Pathway

The Option Pathway is a blend of the Career Technical Education (CTE) Pathway and the High School Equivalency Assessment. This pathway provides an opportunity for the high school students behind their ninth-grade cohorts a second opportunity to graduate on time rather than dropping out of school.

All alternative delivery of programs for K-12 must meet the standards and safeguards set forth in West Virginia Board of Education and local policies related to curriculum, instruction, and student support services.

The Superintendent shall develop the administrative guidelines necessary to implement this policy.

Homebound / Hospital Instruction Program

The Board of Education shall provide home/hospital instruction to a student who is temporarily unable to attend classes for a period that has lasted or will last for more than three (3) consecutive weeks or more due to an injury or illness as certified in writing by a licensed physician who specializes in the health condition that may temporarily confine a student to home or a hospital.

Written documentation of the medical condition shall be provided by a licensed physician which written documentation shall include the:

- A. specific reasons and period of time that the student must remain at home or in the hospital; and
- B. criteria or conditions under which the student will return to school and the expected date of return.

Applications must be approved by the Director of ~~Special Education~~ Student Support Services.

A written statement by a licensed physician who specializes in the health condition of the student must be resubmitted at least every three (3) months if a student's temporary home/hospital instruction is prolonged. The Board may require that the parent/guardian obtain an opinion from a second licensed physician who specializes in the health condition of the student at the expense of the Board.

Home/Hospital services must be designed to provide the student adequate opportunity to continue learning toward mastery of grade level content standards while they are temporarily confined to home or a hospital. These services may not replace full time instruction on an ongoing basis. The expectation is that the student will return to the regular classroom. The schedule for home/hospital services must include adequate instructional time and be provided at a location determined by the County (not necessarily the student's home) when a responsible adult in addition to the teacher is present.

The Board shall develop and implement within their attendance policy procedures which shall outline and define the delivery of home/hospital services.

Since home/hospital services are temporary in nature, the home/hospital teachers are responsible for facilitating instruction only for approved content standards and objectives for core courses (i.e., English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies). The home/hospital services are guided by the student's classroom teacher(s), consequently, the home/hospital teacher must be in regular contact with the classroom teacher(s) to:

- A. secure and understand units/lessons, instructional plans and instructional resources (including approved online and virtual options), and
- B. establish procedures for the collection and return of student work to the classroom teacher(s) for feedback assessment.

The weekly instruction schedule will take into consideration the student's ability to attend/participate as specified by the licensed physician requesting home/hospital instruction.

Home/Hospital instruction provided for an exceptional student who is unable to attend school temporarily because of an injury, illness, or health condition, requires a change in the student's placement to Out-Of-School Environment (OSE) as defined by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2419. The change of placement to Out-of-School Environment must be addressed by the student's IEP team and implemented in accordance with the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2419.

Home/Hospital services may also be provided temporarily at the direction of the Superintendent for students who have not met the immunization requirements of WV Code 16-3-4.

Teachers providing homebound instruction shall hold a West Virginia teaching license appropriate for the level of instruction for which the assignment is made.

Instruction will not be provided when:

- A. the instructor's presence in the place of a student's confinement presents a hazard to his/her health;
- B. a parent or other adult in authority is not at home with the student during the hours of instruction;
- C. the condition of the student is such as to preclude his/her receiving any benefit from such instruction.

Adult Education

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines describing the availability of adult education programs to citizens of the County.

Alternative School Programs

The Board of Education recognizes that the regular school program may not be appropriate for all students and that certain students may need special programs to help them overcome attendance, academic, and/or behavioral problems.

An alternative education program is a temporary authorized departure from the regular school program designed to provide educational and social development for students whose disruptive behavior places them at risk of not succeeding in the traditional school structures and in adult life without positive interventions. In addition to serving students with disruptive behavior, the County Schools may place at-risk students in an alternative education program who are not succeeding in the traditional school setting. The State Superintendent's approval of the County alternative education policies and procedures is required for authorization to operate an alternative education program under these regulations.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for the education of all students in the County Schools and to meet the educational needs of disruptive students and other identified students through the development education programs.

The alternative education programs for disruptive students and other at-risk students ~~will~~ may encompass the following:

- A. in-school suspension
- B. a separate part-time or full-time alternative education classroom
- C. school within a school
- D. after-school detention

The Board may request a waiver of State Board of Education policies and regulations in the development and operation of alternative education programs directly from the State Superintendent.

Goals of the Program

- A. prepare students for the transition back into regular classroom; or
- B. completion of regular high school graduation requirements and awarding of a regular high school diploma; or
- C. the completion of a high school equivalency diploma.

Eligibility

Students may be placed in alternative education programs for:

- A. violations of the Productive and Safe Schools Act (WV Code 18A-5-1a) in accordance with the provisions of the Act;
- B. repeated violations of the County's discipline policy following documented multiple behavioral interventions by the Student Assistance Team at the referring school;
- C. continuation of educational services during periods of suspension or expulsion;
- D. parent request to be placed in Mountaineer Challenge Academy;
- E. lack of academic success.

Students who have been expelled must be placed in an alternative education program unless found to be a dangerous student under the procedures set forth in WV Code 18A-5-1a.

Students who have been suspended or expelled from a public or private school in another West Virginia county or in another state, but are now found within this County, may not be denied enrollment unless determined to be a "dangerous student" under the procedures set forth in WV Code 18A-5-1a.

Process for Placement

Placement decisions, excluding short-term in-school suspension, shall be made by the Student Assistance Team with the opportunity for the participation of the student's parent/guardians.

The Student Assistance Team shall develop a student's written plan which includes academic courses and behavioral components, criteria for re-entry to the regular school program and provisions for periodic review of the student's progress at least on an annual basis. The team for all students with disabilities shall be the IEP team and the written plan shall be the IEP.

The plan for students whose parents have requested placement in the Mountaineer Challenge Academy (MCA) shall be that as determined by MCA for successful completion of that program.

Curriculum

The Board shall have an identified written curriculum for alternative education programs based upon State Board of Education approved instructional goals and objectives. The curriculum shall also include a component for teaching and learning responsible behavior. In addition, staff certified in the core subject areas shall participate in the development of the academic curriculum and the assessment measures to determine mastery of instructional goals and objectives.

Instruction

The County shall deliver instruction in accordance with the following standards:

- A. instructional activities shall be consistent with the written curriculum and appropriate for the students' developmental levels
- B. instructional materials shall be age appropriate, functionally appropriate, and of high interest level for students
- C. the program shall provide for individualized instruction and accommodate the entry and exit of students
- D. curricular and instructional practices shall reflect high expectations for students
- E. the instructional program shall be delivered in a climate conducive to learning and
- F. sufficient instructional materials, supplies, and equipment shall be available to deliver the instructional program

Student Assessment

Students enrolled in alternative education programs shall participate in the State Assessment Program, in accordance with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2340. The test scores for these students shall be counted in the results of the home school of referral.

Support Services

Students in alternative education programs shall receive school counseling services and/or other support services such as school social work or psychological services as indicate in the student's written plan.

Special Education Services

The Board shall comply with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations in the education of exceptional students placed in alternative education programs.

Involvement of Parents and Community Agencies

Parents, families, community, and business members through a variety of means will be encouraged, to become involved in the student's education. Law enforcement and probation officers will be involved when deemed appropriate for the student's success.

Plan for Awarding Credits

The Board shall grant units of credit for work satisfactorily completed in an alternative education program. Units of credit based upon mastery of performance criteria may be granted as an alternative to the standard units of credit.

Behavioral Management Plan as an Alternative to County's Discipline Policy

A student's behavioral management plan may be an alternative to the Board's discipline plan.

Personnel

It is the responsibility of the County Board to select the most qualified applicant(s) to implement the alternative education program. Classroom teachers shall be selected on the basis of the teachers' demonstration of competence in meeting the following standards:

- A. any West Virginia professional teaching certificate
- B. ability to effect positive behavior in disruptive students
- C. effective leadership and/or mentoring skills in working with youth
- D. successful experience in providing education to troubled or disruptive youth
- E. specialized training or experience in non-tradition programs
- F. specialized training in behavior management skills

A teacher assigned to deliver the academic subjects within an alternative education program must possess a West Virginia professional teaching certificate in any area.

Teachers shall be assigned so that a ratio of no more than ten students per teacher are present unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent.

Criteria for Completion/Reentry into Regular Education

Students may complete an alternative education program in one (1) of the following manners:

- A. fulfillment of the criteria for re-entry into the regular school program
- B. completion of regular high school graduation requirements and awarding of a regular high school diploma from the school of referral
- C. completion of identified performance criteria leading to high school diploma or
- D. completion of a high school equivalency diploma in accordance with ~~State~~ West Virginia Board of Education policy 2444.4
- E. successful completion of the Mountaineer ChalleNGe Academy per MCA guidelines and / or after meeting with an MCA transition specialist

Performance Measures and Process for Program Evaluation

The Board shall conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the program(s).

The evaluation of the effectiveness of alternative education programs shall focus upon the impact of the program on student performance and results using indicators such as: academic gains; reduction in dropout rates; reduction in incidences requiring disciplinary action; improvement in attendance rates; and return to the regular school program; rates of successful completion of vocational training programs; rates of successful completion of high school graduation or attainment of a high school equivalency diploma; and rates of successful job placement and job retention.