
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.

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 the Board shall make a determination of the pupil's risk for school failure and a decision regarding the pupil's placement in an alternative education program. For general education students the determination shall be based on the following, including but not limited to:

- A. The pupil's academic, health and behavioral records, including the pupil's IPP, if one has been developed and the results of available testing, assessment or evaluation of the student;
- B. Consultation with and notice to the pupil's parent/guardian; and
- C. Information provided by the school-based multidisciplinary team responsible to provide intervention and referral services (see board policy 6164.1 Intervention and Referral Services),

~~Decisions regarding the placement of a pupil with a disability in an alternative education program, shall be based on the recommendation of the child study team and consistent with the pupil's individualized education program (IEP). When the needs of special individuals or groups cannot be met through adaptation or independent study, the Superintendent may investigate and propose to the Board for approval alternative programs and facilities. Alternative education programs shall be approved by the Commissioner of Education.~~

Alternative Education Programs

Alternative education programs shall be approved by the Commissioner of Education. Each alternative education program shall fulfill the program criteria that are specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-9.2 including but not limited to:

- A. A maximum student-teacher ratio of 12:1 for high school programs;
- B. A maximum student-teacher ratio of 10:1 for middle school programs;
- C. An Individualized Program Plan (IPP) shall be developed for each general education student

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enrolled in the program; and

- D. For students with disabilities the alternate education program shall be consistent with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Individualized Program Plan (IPP)

The IPP shall be developed in consultation with the pupil's parent/guardian and the receiving school district, or an alternative education program within a State agency, public college operated program or department-approved school approved by the Commissioner of Education. as appropriate. The IPP shall:

- A. Be developed by a multidisciplinary team of professionals with knowledge of the pupil's educational, behavioral, emotional, social and health needs;
- B. Identify the appropriate instructional and support services for addressing the pupil's identified needs;
- C. Be developed in accordance with the format prescribed by the Commissioner of Education and implemented within 30 calendar days of the pupil's placement in the alternative education program but need not, be developed prior to the pupil's placement.

The multidisciplinary team that reviews the IPP shall include district staff and staff from the alternative education program who have knowledge of the pupil's educational, behavioral, emotional, social and health needs.

The multidisciplinary team shall review and, as appropriate, revise the IPP prior to the completion of the pupil's anticipated enrollment in the alternative education program or prior to the end of the school year, whichever occurs first. Additionally, the multidisciplinary team may review and revise the IPP, as needed, at any time during the pupil's enrollment in the alternative education program.

The pupil's parent shall be advised of revisions to the IPP.

Home Schooling

The Board acknowledges the right of parents/guardians to educate their children at home. The Board ~~is shall permitted, but not required, by law to allow~~ a resident child educated elsewhere than at school to participate ~~in the regular school curriculum or~~ in extracurricular or sports activities. Such participation shall only be permitted if the parent/guardian, and the home schooled child comply with the Guidelines, Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of NJSIAA as applicable, and the policies and regulations of the Board of Education.

Required Services to Home Schooled Students

When a student of this district is home schooled, the district shall:

- A. Provide payment for tuition when a student is enrolled in a shared-time vocational school program. Once a resident student is enrolled in a shared-time vocational school program the student becomes a public school student;

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B. Review any written request for a special education evaluation and if warranted conduct an evaluation as described in board policy 6171.4 Special Education and in accordance with the federal special education law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P.L. 108-446 §612). If the child is eligible for special education and related services, the district shall make a free, appropriate public education available only if the child enrolls in the district. If the child does not enroll in the district, but the district chooses to provide services, the district will develop a plan for the services to be provided.

~~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 Superintendent 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 Superintendent shall recommend to the Board placement in a program of another district, or home instruction.~~

~~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).~~

Removal for Weapons Offenses or Assault

Any pupil who is convicted or adjudicated delinquent for possessing a firearm or a crime while armed with a firearm or found knowingly in possession of a firearm on any school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function shall be immediately removed from the school's regular educational program pending a hearing before the Board of Education to remove the pupil from the regular education program for a period of not less than one calendar year subject to a modification on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall determine at the end of the year whether the pupil is to return to the district's regular education program, in accordance with procedures established by the Commissioner of Education.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 2C:39-1F, a firearm is defined as:

... any handgun, rifle, shotgun, machine gun, automatic or semi-automatic rifle, or any gun, device or instrument in the nature of a weapon from which may be fired or ejected any solid projectable ball, slug, pellet, missile or bullet, or any gas, vapor or other noxious thing, by means of a cartridge or shell or by the action of an explosive or the igniting of a flammable or explosive substance. It shall also include, without limitation, any firearm which is in the nature of an air gun, spring gun or pistol or other weapon of a similar nature in which the propelling force is a spring, elastic band, carbon dioxide, compressed or other gas or vapor, air or compressed air, or is ignited by compressed air, and ejecting a bullet or missile smaller than

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three-eighths of an inch in diameter, with sufficient force to injure a person.

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, pending a hearing before the Board. The Superintendent shall determine whether the pupil is prepared to return to the regular education program or whether the pupil remains in the alternative education program or other educational placement. The Superintendent's decision must be made in accordance with school district policy and the New Jersey Administrative Code. If the pupil is educationally disabled, the pupil's placement is determined by the child study team and the pupil's parent or legal guardian in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6:28 et seq., Special Education.

If a pupil is removed from the regular education program and a placement in an approved alternative education program is not available, or if the Superintendent determines that it is not in the best interest of the pupil and the school to modify the conditions for the removal and placement of the pupil, the school district may consider and provide home instruction, distance learning, or another program completion option, or may approve home schooling.

A pupil with an educational disability who brings a firearm to school, may be removed immediately from the school setting for up to 10 school days. Thereafter, such pupil may be placed in an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days. The interim alternative educational placement shall be decided by the Child Study Team members assigned to such pupil and other individuals with responsibility for developing such pupil's Individualized Education Program pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:28-3.6. The Child Study Team shall conduct a reevaluation of the pupil to determine if the pupil's behavior (that is, the pupil's having brought a firearm and/or weapon to school) was primarily caused by the pupil's educational disability and, if so, whether the pupil's current educational placement is appropriate. If such pupil's misconduct is determined to be primarily caused by the pupil's educational disability, the Board of Education may not discipline the pupil. However, the Child Study Team shall make an appropriate recommendation in respect of the pupil's educational placement following the expiration of the 45 day period during which the pupil has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting as stated above. If it is determined that the pupil's behavior is not related to his or her educational disability, the Board of Education may discipline the pupil. Such discipline may include suspension or expulsion. However, at no time shall the Board of Education cease educational services to that pupil.

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6:29-10.3(a) the Board of Education will adopt procedures and a memorandum of agreement with appropriate law enforcement authorities consistent with the Attorney General's Executive Directive 1988-1. The Superintendent will work with the local law enforcement officials to review and revise the implementation of any agreements.

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 should be made to determine the underlying reason and the resources of the

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district should be used to assist the pupil in reaching his/her career goals. No pupil under the age of 18 will be permitted to withdraw without the written consent of a parent/guardian.

A student who has withdrawn from school may apply for readmission at any time prior to his or her twentieth birthday, provided application for readmission is made at the beginning of a school term.

The Superintendent 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;
- D. Inform the pupil of the high school equivalency program;
- E. Point out to the pupil the opportunities available in the armed forces.

Disaffected Pupils

~~A disaffected pupil may be a pupil unable to function properly within a traditional school program; a pupil of average or above average intelligence and ability who achieves below his or her potential; a pupil unable to establish occupational or future goals; a pupil with a pattern of behavior problems, including problems with attendance and tardiness; a pupil who lacks motivation, direction, and decision making ability; a pupil who possesses a poor self-image; a pupil suffering a stressful family setting; a pupil hostile toward adults and authority figures; a pupil in difficulty with community and law enforcement agencies; or a pupil lacking interest in school and avoiding involvement in school activities.~~

~~Teaching staff members shall be alert to pupils whose disaffection precludes their active participation in the learning process. Any such pupil shall be reported to the building principal, who shall provide counseling services designed to explore the cause of the pupil's disaffection, assess the pupil's educational needs, and, if appropriate, plan an instructional program to meet those needs.~~

~~A disaffected pupil who may be educationally disabled shall be referred to the Child Study Team for evaluation.~~

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Possible

<u>Cross References:</u>	5113	Absences and excuses
	5114	Suspension and expulsion
	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

Key Words

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

Date Adopted: 08/23/2005

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Removed sections on disruptive or disaffected pupils to avoid the needless labeling of students. Replaced these sections with a general section focused on diagnosis and services to address the specific educational opportunities identified in these sections. Clarified district's positions and requirements for home schooled students to participate in extracurricular and athletic activities. Added section regarding development of an Individualized Program Plan.