

# Houston County Board of Education

<b>Monitoring: Review: Annually, in April</b>	Descriptor Term:  <b>Alternative Education</b>	Descriptor Code: <b>6.319</b>	Issued Date: <b>08/14/23</b>
		Rescinds: <b>JCCE</b>	Issued: <b>05/14/18; 08/10/20; 04/26/21</b>

*General*<sup>1</sup>

The Board shall operate an alternative school and/or program for students in grades three through twelve (3-12) who have been suspended or expelled from the regular school program.

An alternative school is a short-term intervention program designed to provide educational services outside the regular school program for students who have been suspended or expelled. The alternative school is located in a separate facility from the regular school program.

An alternative program is a short-term intervention program designed to provide educational services outside the regular school program for students who have been suspended or expelled. Alternative programs may be located within the regular school or be a self-contained program within a school. Alternative programs shall include, but are not limited to, in-school suspension.

The alternative school and/or program shall be operated in accordance with state laws and the rules of the State Board of Education, and instruction shall proceed as nearly as practicable in accordance with the instructional program at the student's regular school. The Director of Schools shall develop procedures that provide appropriate educational opportunities for all students assigned to the alternative school or program. These educational opportunities shall adhere to Tennessee's academic standards.<sup>2</sup>

**ASSIGNMENT**

Students who have been suspended for more than ten (10) days or expelled shall be assigned to the alternative school or program if there is staff and space available.<sup>3</sup> Availability of staff and space shall be determined at the time the disciplinary decision is rendered. The Director of Schools/designee shall make this determination by evaluating factors including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Level of supervision available;
2. Safety considerations; and
3. Type of infraction.

The Director of Schools/designee is not required to assign a student to the alternative school or program if the students committed one of the following:

1. A zero tolerance offense;<sup>4</sup> or

2. An offense of violence or threatened violence, or an offense that threatened the safety of other students at the school if the location of the alternative school or program is on the same grounds as the school from which the student was disciplined or assigning the student to that location would endanger the safety of the students or staff.<sup>5</sup>

Prior to the assignment of the student to the alternative school or program, the Director of Schools/designee shall provide written notice to the student's parent/guardian stating the reason for the student's placement.<sup>5,6</sup>

Placement in an alternative education setting shall be reserved for students who significantly disrupt the educational process. If a student has an active Individualized Education Plan, a 504 plan, or is suspected of having a disability, all state and federal laws and rules and regulations related to special education shall be followed. The Director of Schools/designee shall develop procedures regarding placement of students in the program, taking into consideration the impact of exclusionary discipline practices.<sup>6,7</sup>

The Director of Schools/designee shall monitor and regularly evaluate the academic progress of each student enrolled in the alternative school.

**REMOVAL<sup>8</sup>**

A student may be removed from the alternative school or program if:

1. He/she violates the rules of the alternative school or program; or
2. He/she is not benefitting from the assignment and all interventions have been exhausted unsuccessfully.

**ADDITIONAL OFFENSES<sup>9</sup>**

Any new disciplinary offense committed during a student's original suspension or expulsion period shall be treated as a new and separate offense. These offenses shall not constitute an extension of the original suspension or expulsion.

**TRANSITION PLAN<sup>10</sup>**

The Director of Schools/designee shall develop procedures regarding the implementation of transition plans for the integration of students assigned to the alternative school.

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Legal References

1. TCA 49-6-3402; TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09
2. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(a)
3. TCA 49-6-3402(c)(1)(A)
4. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(6)(a); TCA 49-6-3402(c)(1)(B)
5. TCA 49-6-3402(c)(1)(C); Public Acts of 2023, Chapter No. 279
6. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(i)
7. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(h)
8. TCA 49-6-3402(c)(2)(B)
9. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(g)(2)
10. TRR/MS 0520-01-02-.09(9)(m)

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Cross References

Special Education 4.202  
Virtual Education Program 4.212  
Suspension 6.316  
Student Disciplinary Hearing Authority 6.317  
Special Education Students 6.500