

TRINITY COUNTY PLAN FOR EXPELLED YOUTH

7/1/2021

Overview

Legal Requirement: California Education Code (EC) Section 48926 requires county superintendents, in conjunction with superintendents of the school districts within the county, to develop a plan for providing educational services to all expelled pupils in that county. The plan was to be adopted by the governing board of each school district within the county and by the county board of education and submitted to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) in 1997. EC Section 48926 also requires that each county superintendent of schools, in conjunction with district superintendents in the county, submit a triennial update to that plan to the SSPI.

EC Section 48926 provides specifically that:

The plan shall enumerate existing educational alternatives for expelled pupils, identify gaps in educational services to expelled pupils, and strategies for filling those service gaps. The plan shall also identify alternative placements for pupils who are expelled and placed in district community day school programs, but who fail to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plan or who pose a danger to other district pupils, as determined by the governing board.

The Countywide Plan requirements and recommendations are described below:

1. The Countywide Plan must list and describe the educational alternatives currently available for expelled students. It is recommended that the plan also describe strategies for improvement during the next three years, including:
 - Any behavioral intervention practices, at the site and district levels, and options used to:
 - Minimize the number of suspensions leading to expulsions
 - Minimize the number of expulsions being ordered
 - Support students returning from expulsions
 - Specific explanation of how those practices relate to any disproportionate representation of minority students in such interventions. For assistance in this area, you may review recent guidance issued by the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice located at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/quid/school-discipline/index.html>.
2. The Countywide Plan must address gaps in educational services and strategies for filling them, If a 2018 Countywide Plan identified gaps in educational services to expelled pupils, it is recommended the 2021 plan include the following information

regarding the implementation of strategies outlined for filling those service gaps:

- Were the strategies successful or not? Please explain why and how they were or were not successful.
- Were any additional strategies implemented? If so, explain why and how they were or were not successful.
- For strategies that were not successful, describe any additional measure(s) or approach(es) taken, and the outcome(s).

3. Identify alternative placements for pupils who are expelled and placed in district community day school programs, but who fail to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plan or pose a danger to other district pupils, as determined by the governing board.
4. The countywide plans require a regional perspective. Discuss the articulation and coordination between school districts and the county office of education in providing educational placements for expelled pupils.

Trinity County

Trinity County is one of the larger counties in California with one of the smallest populations. The county's nine school districts are small and serve a total of approximately 1,500 students (average daily attendance) in transition kindergarten, kindergarten and grades 1-12. With over five thousand square miles in the county, many districts are remotely situated in very small communities. Mountain roads and passes are frequently difficult to negotiate in winter.

Alternatives for Expelled Youth: Small school districts are experiencing many of the student behaviors that were once attributed only to students who attended schools in large urban school districts. All school districts within Trinity County are small and limited with respect to providing educational alternatives to expelled youth. Small 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 districts or county specific classes or programs for such students is difficult.

In Trinity County, early intervention strategies or pro-active strategies are the major focus of district programs and the subsequent student success. The school districts in Trinity County provide early intervention strategies which include, but are not limited to, one-on-one counseling, student study teams, academic and emotional assessments, in-

school behavior interventions, on campus and off-campus suspensions, special education services, after school activities, conflict management, violence reduction strategies and student contracts and compact days. Several schools have adopted the school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework. Many schools have also adopted the best practices from the “Love and Logic” system in order to improve both academic and behavioral outcomes for all students. Additionally, Trinity County Office of Education has brought training to many of our districts in the area of trauma informed practices. In 2020, Trinity County Office of Education in collaboration with Trinity County Behavioral Health wrote and received a 4 year- student mental health services grant through the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC). The grant brought in services through what we call Pathways to Success, to all 9 school districts in Trinity County, services to California Youth Heritage Build Academy (CHYBA) and to Modoc County school districts through Modoc County Office of Education. Each school is assigned a Wellness Liaison who coordinates services and interventions for students through collaborative relationships with school staff and school partner agencies. Additionally the grant allowed for the hiring of a Pathways to Success Program Manager who is responsible for managing the Liaisons, providing training in trauma informed practices, positive behavior supports, Love and Logic, and other preventative intervention strategies to assist students, parents, and staff. Strategies include helping schools build calming rooms, coordinating tele-health from Trinity County Behavioral health and assisting schools with Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports.

1. Existing Educational Alternatives: Because of the very low rate of expulsion for students in small schools of Trinity County, there are few existing alternatives for expelled youth. These are listed below. The Education Code restricts the allowable classroom alternatives for youth expelled for the most serious offenses to a court school, a county community school, or a district community day school. Trinity County Office of Education has a county community school (RISE Academy). The serious offenses are related to guns, knives, sales of drugs, and sexual assault, robbery, and battery (ED 48915) (a) & (c). All California Education codes will be adhered to regarding students with IEPs, special education services will follow the student.

Alternatives for Students Expelled for Serious Offenses:

Community Day Schools operated by districts: 0

County Operated Programs: 1

Trinity County Community School (RISE Academy) (K-12)

Alternatives for Students Expelled for Less Serious Offenses: Due to less serious nature of the offense, the Education Code allows more options for providing alternatives for students expelled for such offenses listed in EC 48915 (e).

1. **Independent Study:** *EC 51747 (c) (7) A student expelled for a less serious

offense may be offered independent study, provided that an appropriate alternative classroom program is offered as a choice, and the on-site portion of the independent study does not occur on the site from which the student was expelled (EC 48916.1 (c)). The alternative of classroom instruction includes another district site or the county community school for grades K-8 (with waiver). Students with IEP's will have continued services.

Note: While this is an allowable option, our county recognizes that this is not the best option and through a collaborative approach involving the K-8 school district expelling the student, TCOE/RISE ACADEMY, TAU and MVUSD, the process for potential placement at RISE Academy will be discussed.

2. Suspended Expulsion: with placement on the same school campus.
3. Suspended Expulsion: with placement on district school campus with the district.
4. Suspended Expulsion: with placement on district independent study, if all parties agree and other appropriate education alternatives are available.
5. Enrollment: at another district as described in EC 48915.1.

2. Gaps in Educational Program for Expelled Pupils and Strategies for Filling

Them: Through a countywide collaborative process, the following gaps have been identified in respect to providing educational services to expelled pupils. Following each gap is the suggested strategy for addressing the gap:

1. Smaller school districts within Trinity County generally expel very few students during the course of a school year. For instance, from 2018-20, we had less than 10 students expelled from schools in the entire county. Due to this fact, it is not financially or geographically possible to have a special class or program for such students located in each district. There are six districts in Trinity County that each has an enrollment of less than 100 students. In addition, students who are expelled by individual small school districts within Trinity County, vary as to age, grade level, and expulsion offenses. The wide-range of age, grade level, and seriousness of offense makes it difficult to provide appropriate programs.

County/District Strategy for Addressing this Gap:

- a) RISE Academy (community school) will be an option. Pre-agreed upon clearly defined Memorandum of Understanding's (MOUs) will be created for each K-8 school district

with a detailed process that will be followed that includes a collaborative meeting with the referring district, TCOE/RISE Academy, TAU, and MVUSD.

b) Inter-district agreements with clearly defined parameters will be implemented.

c) County operated independent study, if all parties agree (voluntary), and other appropriate options as available, may be offered.

3. Identify alternative placements of pupils who are expelled and placed in community day schools, but who fail to meet terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plans or who pose a danger to other district pupils:

EC Section 48916.1(a) provides that, 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 during the expulsion period. The governing board is required to recommend a plan of rehabilitation. If the expelled students fail to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plan, commit another expulsion offense, or pose a danger to other students, the school district of residence continues to maintain responsibility for developing a rehabilitation plan for the student ensuring that an educational program is provided either within or outside the school district (EC 48926).

County/District Strategy for Addressing this Gap:

a) A new rehabilitation plan may be developed, building on the strengths of the original plan, but using a different educational placement than what was called for in the original plan.

b) Prior to permanent removal of a student from the district, independent study is utilized which reduces the amount of classroom contact hours to as little as five hours per week with fifteen hours of independent work at home. If the student fails the independent study placement, and if reassigning the student back to the district is no longer feasible due to potential disruption or danger caused by the student, the student is then removed from the district school program and referred to the county community school program.

c) District Independent Study, if all parties agree, and other appropriate options are available, may be offered.

d) Inter-district agreements with clearly defined parameters may be an option.

- e) Working closely with other city/county agencies is strongly encouraged to assist with successful completion of the rehabilitation plan. These agencies include local law enforcement, probation, and agencies that provide counseling and family support.

Countywide Plan Review Process

The Countywide Plan for Expelled Youth is reviewed triennially by a group of Superintendents, Principals, the County Superintendent of Schools, the Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, the Educational Services Director, and our Pathways to Success Program Manager.

Trinity County Office of Education's Role

The Trinity County Office of Education provides technical assistance in the development of the plan as well as technical assistance and advisory support to district superintendents who have questions regarding expulsion and placement of students.

Under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), county offices of education are required to adopt a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for county operated schools and programs which includes goals, actions, and expected measurable outcomes in 10 state priority areas, for all pupils and subgroups of pupils identified in EC Section 52052. Included among the priorities, a county office LCAP must address how it will coordinate the instruction of expelled students under EC Section 48926. This Countywide Plan will contribute to the information presented in the LCAP and provide a regional perspective on meeting the needs of expelled pupils.

Date Approved by the Board

County Superintendent's Signature