

Obion County Schools Alternative School Plan and Procedures

Alternative school placement allows a student who commits an offense that merits suspension or expulsion to continue to receive educational services in a more structured setting. A student remanded to alternative school is still under the state's compulsory attendance statutes as per board policy. Failure to attend alternative school could result in the student being cited to court for truancy and/or the revocation of his/her driver's license.

Students assigned to alternative school are considered to be on probation. If a student will not function acceptably and abide by the rules of the alternative school, he/she will be assigned detention or Saturday school. If the misbehavior persists, as a last resort, a student may be suspended out-of-school for the remainder of his/her placement period.

As with suspensions and expulsions, students in alternative school will not be allowed to attend any "home" school functions during their placement, including the last day.

The function of the alternative school is two-fold:

1. To provide a more structured environment and to socially isolate those students who have violated school rules to deter future violations.
2. To modify behavior(s) by identification and correction of the actions or behaviors that resulted in the alternative school placement through self-reflection, communication with alternative school staff, and counseling services, as needed.

The "home" school administrator or the SDHA officer will notify the parent of the reason(s) for the placement, the length of the placement, and outline the enrollment process. Prior to entering alternative school, the student and his/her parent(s) will be required to attend an initial enrollment meeting at the placement site. At this meeting, a contract will be executed detailing the length of placement and the guidelines for alternative school.

The alternative school is in operation on the same days as all other schools in the Obion County School System. The hours are from 7:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. Students who drive or are brought by their parents must arrive no later than 7:30 a.m. and are to be picked up at 2:00 p.m.

Students must arrive on time or be penalized for their tardiness. Students will face escalating sanctions for each tardy they accrue. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to detention, Saturday school, or loss of driving privileges.

TRANSPORTATION

Students with a valid driver's license may drive themselves to school unless there was a loss of driving privileges due to a prior offense. They may not transport other students to the alternative school. Drivers must leave their vehicle immediately upon arriving on campus and report directly to the classroom. Once school is dismissed they must leave (no loitering) and cannot return to the campus until the next school day.

Students who are not drivers may be brought to school by a parent or a designated adult (approved by the alternative school administrator). Parents are asked to escort their child to the classroom each morning and pick him/her up from the classroom each afternoon. This will give the school staff an opportunity to share with the parent the student's progress on a daily basis.

All other students assigned to alternative school will be provided transportation from their home school in the morning and back to the home school in the afternoon. This option is not available to students who have been removed from their bus for disciplinary reasons.

LENGTH OF PLACEMENT

Placement in alternative school should be used only for serious offenses or for chronic misbehavior when all other disciplinary measures have been exhausted. Placements may be for 5, 10, 20, 30, or 45 days and should increase incrementally per occurrence. A placement for more than 10 days requires a hearing before the SDHA.

Students who have exemplary behavior and complete their work on time while in alternative school may have up to 20% of their placement excused and be released early back to the home school under a probationary status for a specified time. This determination will be made by the alternative school supervisor and the home school administrator.

When space is available, the alternative school may be used to allow students who have fallen behind in school (due to extended excused absences or other unavoidable circumstances) the opportunity to catch up. This temporary placement will be contracted with the student and parent and used as a means of allowing the student to regain his/her academic "footing" and be readmitted to the regular educational placement with a better chance of success. This option will be given only to those students who exhibit the desire and determination to benefit from it. Once placed in alternative school, the student must abide by all of the school's policies and procedures, or the placement will be terminated.

LUNCHESES/BREAKS

Students will be required to bring their own lunch and will be given 20-25 minutes to eat. They will be provided an additional three (3) restroom breaks per day. They will be escorted to and from the restrooms and will not be allowed to interact with each other.

ASSIGNMENTS

Teachers from the home school will be required to send student assignments to the alternative school. The assignments should be the same as the in-class assignments and homework being required of non-alternative school students. If lecture or notes have been missed, the instructor should as much as possible make that material available to the student. The regular classroom teachers are also encouraged to provide additional work/projects for their students in alternative school. This work could be used for extra credit, or to make-up for class discussion/participation points that the student will not have an opportunity to accumulate. Students should be given credit for the work they complete at the alternative school.

Work done at the alternative school will be checked on a daily basis. If the work is not completed during the day, it will be assigned as homework. Failure to complete the assignment as homework will result in a detention or Saturday school assignment. Home school teachers will receive progress reports and completed assignments on a weekly basis.

Students can and will be given additional assignments by the alternative school staff if they have nothing to work on.

Each student placed in alternative school will be required to write an essay detailing the situation that led to his/her placement and what changes in behaviors could have prevented the student from getting in trouble.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Counseling dealing with tobacco use, substance abuse, depression, family problems, anger management, and lack of motivation in school will be provided to those students who need such assistance. The staff will also inform the parents of any outside agencies which may be able to provide additional services.

Peer tutoring may be attended by alternative school students if it is offered by the home school and approved by the local administrator.

Students who receive placements of ten days or more will be monitored by the alternative school staff upon their return to their regular setting. This will include the acquisition of grade and discipline reports as well as visits from CSH counselors.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The home school will:

1. Provide detailed assignments and work that will as much as feasible follow the curriculum being provided to students in the regular classroom;
2. Furnish textbooks and materials needed to complete the assignments;
3. Give credit for the work completed correctly; and
4. Provide, upon request, grade reports and discipline records to the alternative school during the transition period.

The alternative school will:

1. Keep a daily log of students served;
2. Keep a disciplinary record of student offenses during placement;
3. Send work and reports of student progress back on a weekly basis;
4. Provide counseling services when needed;
5. Maintain a structured, yet respectful climate where students have the opportunity to make academic progress and learn to make better choices concerning their behavior; and
6. Check on student progress upon their return to the regular placement.

In order for the alternative school program to be successful, it must have the support and cooperation of the entire school community. The program must be viewed as an integral part of the school curriculum that provides a necessary service. The goal of the alternative school program is to return students to their regular classrooms better equipped to handle the academic rigors and behavioral expectations present in all of our schools.

Adopted April 2009