

DEL NORTE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION



**PLAN FOR THE
EDUCATION OF EXPELLED YOUTH**

Pursuant to California Education Code 48926

2018-2021

Introduction

Del Norte County is single district county. The County Office of Education serves one public K-12 school district. The COE and District have one charter school, each, within their scope of service. Del Norte County is home to approximately 4,500 students (2018 count) who attend public schools. These young people have special talents, interests and needs as diverse as the county in which they live.

Educational programs within Del Norte County provide numerous opportunities for students who are in need of traditional and/or alternative education programs. The District operates ten comprehensive education schools and one continuation high school and oversees the operation of one K-9 independent study charter school. The COE operates one community school and one school located at a juvenile detention facility and the COE Board of Education is the governing body for a K-12 independent study charter school.

A student who is simply in need of an educational alternative may access any of these programs, other than juvenile hall, through a designated referral process.

Legal Mandate

Education Code §48916.1

Each county superintendent of schools in counties that operate community schools pursuant to §1980, in conjunction with superintendents of school districts within the county, shall develop a plan for providing education services to all expelled pupils in that county.

Education Code §48916.1

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 who is subject to the expulsion order for the period of the expulsion, but only to the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose in the annual Budget Act or other legislation or both.

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.

Overview

The District and charter schools within Del Norte County are limited in respect to providing educational alternatives to expelled youth. All schools have experienced many of the student behaviors that were once attributed only to students who attended schools in large urban school districts. Our District and charter schools, 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 is naturally quite positive; however, it does create a situation where the development of either district or county specific classes or programs for such students is difficult, both, financially and geographically.

Early intervention strategies or pro-active strategies are the major focus of the District programs. Del Norte County schools provide early intervention strategies which include, but are not limited to, one-on-one counseling, student study teams, academic and emotional assessments, parent support meetings, in-school suspension, off-campus suspension, special education services, after-school activities, conflict management, student behavioral discipline contracts, PBIS, restorative practices, and FBA and other intensive services provided by a certificated Behavior Intervention Specialist.

Existing Educational Alternatives to Expulsions

The District and charter schools located within Del Norte County offer the following options as alternatives to expulsion, when possible:

- Behavior intervention practices at the site and district levels, and options used to:
 - Minimize the number of suspensions leading to expulsions
 - Tiered Discipline Ladder
 - Counseling-counselor on campus
 - MFT or similarly credentialed Counselor
 - Check in/Checkout process for students needing Tier 2 interventions
 - Director of Foster and Homeless Youth Services
 - SST Processes
 - Pre SARB referrals
 - Site Contract Process
 - District Contract Process
 - Identify and utilize alternatives to suspension when possible
 - Minimize the number of expulsions being ordered
 - Use of school support staff to make sure due diligence is practiced and supports in place to be proactive vs. reactive.
 - School Counselors, School Psychologists, Admin Check ins, Site Behavior Contracts

Expulsion Plans and Options

- Educational Alternatives currently available to expelled students.
 - Suspended expulsion with placement on the same school campus under the directive of a rehabilitation plan;
 - Suspended expulsion with placement on district or county contracted independent/home study, if the parent agrees; or
 - Expulsion with referral to the Del Norte County Office of Education Court/Community School.

- Create specific, measurable, attainable, results driven, and time bound reintegration plans to support students in returning to general education from expulsion
 - Supports in place before return.
 - Continuous monitoring of effect on student returning as well as others.
 - Use of support staff
 - Use of SST process

- Analyze and determine how those practices relate to any disproportionate representation in such interventions of minority students or students with disabilities.
 - There has not been any disproportionality realized within Del Norte County in the area of expulsion. The District and charter schools monitor their data to identify any potential trends.

For students who are currently wards of the Court or who are on formal probation, the County Office of Education collaborates with the Del Norte County Probation Department, the Del Norte County Health and Social Services Department, and the Juvenile Court on the educational placement of expelled students, and students who are wards of the court. These students are frequently referred to our Court or Community School programs. In rare cases students may be placed in an out-of-county setting by the local Social Services Department. Administration from the County Office and the District meet regularly with Probation to coordinate the placement and transition of students in and between educational sites. Also both County Office and District staff meet weekly with the Del Norte Department of Social Services and Probation Department to coordinate services for students who are wards.

For students who are not wards of the court, the County Office of Education offers those students and parents a variety of options so that the students may continue to receive standards based educational services. Primarily, parents will be offered an appropriate grade level placement for their child in either the County Office operated K-6 or the 7-12 Community Day Schools. We strongly encourage families to choose a full day program for their students. Other options offered to parents and students include the County Office operated long term independent study program, the County Community School or the County Office authorized charter school, Castle Rock Charter School. These options are offered to parents who would like an alternative to a community day school or to students who have not been successful in our community day school.

The County Office will continue to provide educational services in our alternative programs to students who fail to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plan or who pose a danger to other students.

Gaps in Educational Services

There two major gaps that exist in respect to providing educational services to expelled pupils:

- 1) Students who are expelled within Del Norte County vary as to age, grade level and expulsion offenses. The age and grade span alone, under current California Education Code, would require separate community day school sites for the limited number of expelled students in grades K-5 and 7-12. Schools within Del Norte County have not expelled a student in grades K-5. Del Norte Community School provides the solution for grades 6-12. If a solution in grades K-5 is needed it will be provided on an individual basis.
- 2) Del Norte is the largest geographical district in California so there are significant distances that require either extensive busing, which is financially difficult for the district, or parent provided transportation, which is often impossible for the parents.

Strategies for Addressing Identified Gaps in Services

The strategies for addressing the identified gaps in educational service for expelled youth are:

- 1) Provide one of three options to a K-5 student who is expelled: involuntary transfer to another comprehensive school site with a rehabilitation plan, suspend the expulsion at the current site and require a rehabilitation plan, or arrange for independent study/home study.
- 2) Refer expelled students to the Del Norte County Court and Community School for grades 6-12. Community school will be an option for those students who have transportation and contracted independent/home study may be an option for those students who cannot arrange transportation.

Placement/Rehabilitation Plans

The school district of residence continues to maintain responsibility for developing a rehabilitation plan for the student, referring the student to an appropriate educational setting and ensuring that an educational program is provided to the student.

Expelled students who are referred to the Del Norte County Office of Education's Community School will have an Individual Learning Plan developed with staff. Part of this plan will include a review of what is needed to return to the school district of residence. Student study teams, alternative placements, and alternative strategies will be developed with the court and community school staff for those students who have difficulty meeting the terms and conditions of their district directed rehabilitation plan.

Del Norte Community School is the school of referral for expelled youth. Del Norte Community Schools serves as an alternative school for students in grades six through twelve who reside in Del Norte County. The focus of the Community School is to remediate identifiable weaknesses with the students known strengths while building self-image and personal worth.

The Community School staff believes in the worth of each student and strives to meet each individual's needs. Emphasis is also placed on community services, career and technical education, and numerous activities are organized which involve students directly with community projects, such as disaster preparedness.