

CHAPTER 6

6.8 Marshall County Alternative Education Program

6.8.1 Mission Statement

The mission of the Marshall County Alternative Education Program is two-fold:

1. Assisting appropriate youngsters develop the skills necessary to transition back to a more traditional school setting. Academic Achievement as well as behavioral development are key program components designed to support this effort.
2. Providing a safe, supportive environment specifically designed to encourage, motivate, and reward individual achievement and positive group development.

The Marshall County Alternative Education Program is committed to plan, deliver, evaluate and consistently provide instructional programs and related services essential to positive and intellectual and social development of its students.

6.8.2 Philosophy

The Marshall County Alternative Education Program is based on the premise that all children are capable of developing academic, behavioral and social skills. Special emphasis is placed on creating environments and establishing goals that support, encourage and motivate youngsters to reach their potential. Equal concern is expressed for the individual interests and goals of the student with a realistic appreciation of the special needs of each youngster.

The Alternative Education Program will provide education for at-risk youth in grades 7-12 who are potential dropouts because of educational deficits and maladaptive behavior. The Alternative Education Program should be considered an opportunity for eligible students to continue quality educational experiences and eventually be transitioned back to their home school.

The Alternative Education Program will not be a repository for students who inconveniently disrupt classroom procedures nor a place to warehouse juvenile delinquents. It must be demonstrated that all alternatives in the traditional school setting have been exhausted before referral to the Alternative Education Program can be requested. Placement in the Alternative Education Program will motivate at-risk youth to remain in an educational setting through the development of positive self-concepts, improved educational and social skills, and pre-employment/work maturity skills.

6.8.3 Target Population

Marshall County Alternative Education Program will serve students in grades 7-12 whose disruptive behavior places them at risk of not succeeding in traditional school environments and in adult life without positive intervention. These students will present one or more of the following characteristics: Academic failure; disruptive behavior; truancy; aggressive behavior towards teachers, parents and/or peers.

6.8.4 Goals

1. Provide an evening instructional course of study for students in grades 7-12 that meet the target population
2. Create a learning environment that will meet the individual needs of each student.
3. Endeavor to guide student behavior toward socially appropriate norms.
4. Improve students academic performance.
5. Improve students attendance rate.
6. Reduce incidents of disciplinary action.
7. Reduce student drop-out rate.
8. Prepare students for the transition back into regular classroom.
9. Prepare student to achieve high school graduation.

6.8.5 Eligibility Criteria (may include but not be limited the following):

1. Violations of the Productive and Safe Schools Act (W.Va. Code §18A-5-1A) in accordance with the provisions of the Act;
2. Repeated violations of the school's discipline policy following documented multiple behavioral interventions by the Student Assistance Team at the referring school; and
3. Continuation of educational services during periods of expulsion.
4. Attended high school for four years but need only a few credits to graduate.
5. Drop-outs.

6. Potential drop-outs.

6.8.6 Placement

Each school will have an Alternative Education Placement Team which will include but not be limited to the principal or designee, a counselor and at least two teachers. This team may be a Student Assistance Team. The IEP Team is the Alternative Education Program Team for special education students. This team will make recommendations to the Alternative Education Program Placement Committee.

The Alternative Education Program Placement Committee will be comprised of the Assistant Superintendent, Director of Special Education, the Director of Pupil Personnel, the lead teacher of the alternative school, and an administrator from the home school. This committee conducts an entrance conference with the applicant and the applicant's parent or guardian. During the conference, the committee will determine: (1) the applicant's desire to continue the educational program, (2) the applicant's willingness to meet the expectations of the program, and (3) the parent/guardian's willingness to support the goals of the program and provide at-home assistance.

At the conclusion of the placement conference, the committee will make a decision regarding placement and communicate the decision to the school and applicant in writing. Students who are not recommended for placement may reapply twenty (20) days prior to the beginning of the new term/ semester.

6.8.7 Staffing

Initial staffing includes:

1. Counselor/Psychologist, intern, 1 lead teacher and 2/3 classroom teachers on an as need basis

Classroom Teachers shall be selected with the following qualifications:

1. Appropriate licensure
2. Ability to affect positive behavior in disruptive students
3. Effective leadership and/or mentoring skills in working with youth
4. Successful experience in providing education to troubled or disruptive youth
5. Specialized training or experience in non-traditional programs

6. Specialized training in behavior management skills.

6.8.8 Parent Involvement

Parents are requested to attend a conference and sign a contract prior to entrance.

6.8.9 Instruction

The Alternative Education Program Team will develop a written plan for each student which will include academic courses, behavioral components and counseling services. The plan will also address the criteria for reentry to the regular school program.

It is critical that referring parties understand that the Alternative Education Program's curriculum, design, format and materials may differ from the more traditional school environments. Our program is designed to meet the student's individual needs as identified by the referring parties.

Strategies and techniques are adjusted to accommodate the individual needs of the student to ensure success. The length of the school day and the awarding credits is determined by state statute.

The program shall meet 4 days a week, 3 hours per day. Class size will be limited to 15 students.

6.8.10 Exit Criteria

1. An SAT will review each student's progress at the end of each grading period.
2. Student may return to home school at the end of the first semester or beginning of the next school year, unless the SAT determines otherwise.

6.8.11 Program Description

The Marshall County Alternative Education Program consists of a diversified number of program components designed to address the development of the whole child. While this program's focus is centered upon the enhancement of learning skills offered in a more traditional setting, the strategies, techniques and venues employed by the school are adjusted to meet the needs of its students. The academic component strives to meet the needs of the identified students.

6.8.12 Evaluations

3. Improve Student Academic Performance
EVALUATION: Comparison of report cards and standardized test results.

4. Improve Students Attendance Rate
EVALUATION: Compare student records before entering the program to records at program exit.
5. Reduce Number of Disciplinary Actions
EVALUATION: Comparison of number of incident reports before entering the program to exiting program.
6. Reduce Student Drop-Out Rate
EVALUATION: Compare previous year records to present year.
7. Prepare Students for Transition Back to Regular Classroom
EVALUATION: Reentry reports.