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Parent/Student Alternative Programs Handbook



Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion Guidelines

Lafourche Parish School Board

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Introduction

The Board has approved alternative general education programs called the PASS program and the VAL PASS program for suspended/expelled/ excluded students as provided for in LA R.S. 17:416.2. Students suspended/expelled/excluded for more than 10 days from school or suspended until a formal hearing, shall remain under the supervision of the governing authority of the school system through an appropriate alternative placement.

The PASS program is located in the northern part of the parish in the Thibodaux area on the East Thibodaux Middle School campus. In the PASS program, students receive instructions via computers at the site as well as at home.

The VAL (Virtual Academy of Lafourche) PASS program is an approved alternative education program for suspended/expelled/excluded students in the central and southern parts of the parish. In the VAL PASS program, students receive instructions via computers at the VAL PASS sites as well as at home.

Students who receive special education services or 504 services will continue to receive those services consistent with his/her I.E.P or I.A.P plan while attending either the PASS program or the VAL PASS program.

The PASS program and the VAL PASS program are designed to offer variations of traditional instructional programs and strategies for the purpose of increasing the likelihood that pupils who are unmotivated or unsuccessful in traditional programs or who are disruptive in the traditional school environment remain in school and obtain a high school diploma.

Overview

The Lafourche Parish School District cooperates with the local law enforcement officers and the judicial system in coordinating efforts to make responsible citizens of suspended/expelled/excluded students. The school system is responsible for the instruction of these students at alternative sites. Law enforcement officers will work in conjunction with the alternative programs administration, acting as a liaison between the parent(s) and the site, and as a liaison between the student and the judicial system. The judicial system is responsible for the civic integrity of the student once he/she leaves the alternative sites prematurely. In this manner, the three strongest advocates of order in society cooperate to redirect these students.

Philosophy

The Lafourche Parish School System believes that in order for all public school students to reach their academic, social, and civic potential, there must be a systematic approach to any successful plan for the education of suspended, expelled, and excluded students. We believe that the solution lies in alternative sites employing alternative methods. The objectives and curriculum at these alternative sites are based upon the eventual overall goal of returning these students to the academic and social mainstream of education. ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS is a general education program that emphasizes the use of PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support) and validated education strategies to achieve meaningful and durable behavior and lifestyle outcomes.

Goals

The sequential goals for providing alternative approaches for suspended, expelled, and excluded students are as follows:

- to reduce the number of suspended, expelled, and excluded students;
- to enroll these students at alternative sites;
- to develop academic and social skills for these students in order that they may re-enter the normal school setting;
- to develop in these students those social and civic skills necessary to become responsible citizens of the community;
- to protect the rights of all students to learn in safe, disciplined schools;
- to provide general education services and
- to provide positive behavior supports

Conditions Covering Alternative Programs Assignment:

1. Any student suspended/expelled/excluded for more ten (10) days from school pursuant to the provisions of R.S. 17:416.2
2. Exit from alternative programs is contingent upon successful completion of program requirements.
3. Special education and 504 students awaiting expulsion hearings shall be placed in alternative programs. Regular education students (middle and high school) awaiting an expulsion hearing will attend the alternative site the day following the expulsion recommendation as a "transitional day". The transitional day will allow alternative site staff to orient the student to computer based academic programming (Edgenuity). The following day the student will begin working from home. All elementary students expelled will attend the alternative site
4. The placement status of expelled/excluded students will be determined by the superintendent or his/her designee.
5. Any student expelled from school may be readmitted on a probationary basis to school at any time during the specified period of expulsion on such terms and conditions as may be stipulated by the Lafourche Parish School Board and agreed to **in writing** by the **student** and by the **student's parent** or other person responsible for the student's school attendance.
6. Any student (elementary or secondary) assigned to alternative programs who commits an act resulting in his/her arrest during school hours, may receive additional disciplinary sanctions as prescribed in the Student Code of Conduct.
7. The alternative programs administrator has administrative control for determining a student's "successful" day.
8. Suspended/expelled/excluded students in the Thibodaux area will be assigned to the North PASS site. Suspended/expelled/excluded students in the Central and South Lafourche areas will be assigned to Virtual Academy of Lafourche (VAL) PASS sites.

Responsibilities on Bus Assignments:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the referring school administrator to provide appropriate bus information including but not limited to times and designated bus stops for AM and PM to students that will be referred to alternative programs prior to the student attending.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the students to arrive prior to the designated time at the designated bus stop. In some cases, the parent/guardian may choose to bring the student assigned to alternative programs to the closest designated bus stop in the morning and if deemed necessary make arrangements to have the student picked up at the closest designated bus stop to the student's home. **No additional bus stops will be made to accommodate students.**

3. Alternative programs students must provide documentation to the AM and PM bus operator to identify that they are assigned to alternative programs. These students are to be seated towards the front of the bus as directed by the bus operator. Failure to comply may result in a bus referral and or bus suspension by the site administrator.
4. Students that have been suspended from school transportation prior to their assignment to alternative programs shall not be afforded transportation services to or from the alternative sites.
5. Students utilizing school transportation will be transported from home to school and from school to home.
6. Behavior concerns experienced by any bus operator shall be handled through a School Bus Behavior Referral. These referrals can be given to the SRO or bus operator to be delivered to the alternative programs administrator. The administrator shall use discretion in addressing bus referrals. If deemed necessary, bus suspension shall be administered by the site administrator. If transportation services are suspended, the transportation manager shall be notified (via email) and transportation responsibilities shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

NOTE: Special education transportation concerns must be communicated with appropriate staff including but not limited to transportation manager.

Duties of Alternative Programs Administrator:

1. Serve under the immediate direction of the Supervisors of Child Welfare and Attendance.
2. Maintain contact with all school sites and provide feedback on students.
3. Maintain an effective working relationship with feeder schools.
4. Coordinate training of alternative programs personnel.
5. Meet with teachers, principals, and parents to discuss objectives of the alternative programs.
6. Maintain confidentiality of all student records in compliance with federal and state laws.
7. Participate in planned professional growth.
8. Manage/coordinate paperwork.
9. Assist/substitute for alternative programs teachers.
10. Maintain administrative control of the *discretionary return to school of compliant students* after consulting with the Office of Child Welfare and Attendance and the school site administrator.
11. Communicate regularly with parents of regular education expelled students working on academic programming from home.

Duties of an Alternative Programs Teacher:

1. Serve under the immediate direction of the alternative programs administrator and the Supervisors of Child Welfare and Attendance
2. Coordinate the transfer of paperwork (textbooks, lesson plans, referrals, etc.) between the sending school and the alternative programs site.
3. Maintain positive contact with parents and the alternative programs site by phone calls, notes, etc.
4. Plan and deliver effectively for instruction
5. Maintain an environment conducive to learning

Alternative Programs Officer (SRO)

The Alternative Programs Officer is a fully commissioned law enforcement officer having the power to arrest. He/She will be assigned to the alternative programs sites on regular school days and, by authority of his/her position and commission.

Missions, Goals, and Objectives. The mission of the SHERRIF'S OFFICE and the SCHOOL BOARD is to extend community policing into the Lafourche Parish School System through the expansion of the LPSO School Resource Officer (SRO) Program. It is understood and agreed that the SCHOOL BOARD and SHERRIF'S OFFICE share the following goals and objectives with regard to the School Resource Office (SRO) Program:

- To foster educational programs and activities that will increase student's knowledge of and respect for the law and the function of law enforcement agencies.
- In partnership with the SCHOOL BOARD, define strategies to utilize problem solving and community policing techniques to prevent school violence and implement educational programs.
- To develop or expand crime prevention efforts for students and to educate likely school-age victims in crime prevention and safety.
- To develop or expand community justice initiatives for students and train students in conflict resolution, restorative justice and crime awareness.
- To assist in the identification of physical changes in the environment that may reduce crime in or around the school and to assist in developing school policy that addresses crime and recommend procedural changes.
- To encourage SRO's to attend extra-curricular activities held at schools, when possible, such as PTA meetings, athletic events, dances, socials, and concerts.
- To act swiftly and cooperatively when responding to major disruptions and flagrant criminal offenses at school, such as: disorderly conduct by trespassers, the possession and use of weapons on campus, the illegal sale and/or distribution of controlled dangerous substances, and riots.

- To report serious crimes that occur on campus and to cooperate with the law enforcement officials in their investigation of crimes that occur at school and cooperate with law enforcement officials in their investigations of criminal offenses which occur off campus.
- To encourage SRO's to provide traffic control and crossing guards at schools when deemed necessary for the safety and protection of students and the general public when the regular traffic control officer or crossing guard is absent.

Duties of School Resource Officers (SRO)

1. To protect the lives and property for the citizens and public school students of Lafourche Parish.
2. To enforce Federal, State, and Local criminal laws and ordinances, and to assist school officials with the enforcement of Lafourche Parish School Board Policies and Administrative Regulations regarding student conduct and report any violation of SCHOOL BOARD policy to the school principal or his designee.
3. To investigate criminal activity committed on or adjacent to school property and obtain school information for criminal investigative purposes within established Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office guidelines.
4. To counsel public school students in special situations, such as students suspected of engaging in criminal misconduct, when requested by the principal or the principal's designee or by the parents of the student. SRO may also review a specific student's disciplinary record with the authorization of the principal.
5. To answer questions that student may have about Louisiana Criminal or juvenile laws.
6. To assist other law enforcement officers with outside investigations concerning students attending the school to which the SRO is assigned.
7. To provide security for special school events or functions, such as PTA meetings, at the request of the principal or other appropriate school administrator and provide traffic control during the arrival and departure of students when a school crossing guard is absent.

LIMITATIONS:

No Lafourche Parish School Board official or administrator, or other employee shall have the authority to request that a criminal violation of any type be handled administratively by the SRO. Criminal violations will be handled by the Lafourche Parish Sherriff's Office.

Transporting Students

It is agreed that SROs shall not transport students in their vehicles except:

1. When the students are victims of a crime, under arrest, or some other emergency circumstances exist and when students are suspended and sent home from school pursuant to school disciplinary actions if the student's parent or guardian has refused or is unable to pick up the child within a reasonable time period; and the student is disruptive/disorderly and his/her continued presence on campus is a threat to the safety and welfare of other students and personnel.
2. If circumstances require that the SRO transport the student, the SRO may request, and the SCHOOL BOARD shall supply, a school official or employee of the same gender of the student to be transported accompany the officer in the vehicle.
3. If the student to be transported off campus is not under arrest, a victim of a crime, or violent or disruptive, the school administration shall provide transportation for the student and the SRO may accompany a school official in transporting a student.
4. Students shall not be transported to any location unless it is determined that the student's parent, guardian or custodian is at the destination to which the student is being transported. SROs shall not transport students in their personal vehicles.
5. SROs shall notify the school principal before removing a student from campus.

Discipline

A suspended/expelled/excluded student who is assigned to alternative programs is expected to abide by the following rules and regulations:

- The student will follow directions.
- When speaking to a teacher/alternative programs officer, a student shall address that individual in a respectful manner.
- The student will raise his/her hand to be recognized.
- No student will be allowed to eat, drink or chew anything without permission from site officials.
- The student will comply with all rules and regulations as stipulated in the Lafourche Parish School Board Student Code of Conduct.

NOTE: Failure to follow these rules could result in disciplinary sanctions. A return to a student's regular school site will be contingent upon that student completing "successful days" with the alternative program (i.e. good behavior, daily attendance, and successful parent conferences).

Dress Code

All students assigned to the alternative programs sites shall comply with the Lafourche Parish School Board Dress Code. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary sanctions.

Attendance

All students are expected to bring a written excuse whenever he/she is absent. **State and Parish policies concerning attendance will apply to students when necessary.**

Early Dismissal

In case of an early dismissal (weather, utility outage, etc.), students will be allowed to call home for a ride.

Lunch

Lunch will be served daily for all K-5 students and special education / 504 students in grades 6-12. Regular education students attending the alternative site for their transition day will also be served lunch. Lunch will be served at all three sites. Any student who is assigned to PASS or VAL PASS who may be on a special diet (medical reasons) must bring a doctor's note explaining the reasons. The sending school administrator shall contact the Director of Child Nutrition as well as the site liaisons so that proper lunch arrangements can be made.

Breaks

Students who are assigned to alternative programs will be allowed to take a break in the morning and afternoon. The students will be escorted to and from the restroom by an assigned staff member and/or the school resource officer.

Bus Pick-Up and Drop-Off

- No students are allowed to drive to alternative sites.
- Bus routes will be assigned to the students by the administration of the sending school.
- Parents may choose to provide transportation or give written permission for their child to walk to and from the alternative programs sites for grades 6-12.

Conduct at Bus Stops and Conduct on Bus-To and From PASS/VAL PASS

Students who are assigned to alternative programs will be reprimanded for any misbehavior (profanity, fighting, willful disobedience, disrespect for authority, etc.) at their bus stop, while traveling on the bus, and while waiting for school to start. Bus privileges may be denied.

Campus Restrictions

Any student who is assigned to alternative programs is not allowed on any Lafourche Parish School Board campus unless accompanied by his/her parent/guardian and with written permission from the school administrator. Campus visitation without official school permission will result in disciplinary action.

Medication Policy

Any student who is assigned to alternative programs and is taking prescribed medication must have a doctor's note stating that the student is taking the prescribed medication, the name of the medication, the dosage, and the time it should be given. The student's parent or parent designee must deliver the student's medication to the alternative program site. The medication will be dispensed to the student by the designated person at the alternative programs site. Once the student no longer attends the site, it is the responsibility of the parent or parent designee to make arrangements, if necessary, to collect their son/daughter's medication. Documentation and logging procedures will be assigned by the school nurse of the sending school.

Sick Policy

Any student who does not feel well (sick, cramps, fever, etc.) will be allowed to call home for assistance. However, they will have to make up any days they miss. Parents are required to provide transportation if a child is too ill to remain at the alternative programs site.

Physical Limitations

Any student assigned to alternative programs who has a physical limitation (back problems, fractured arm, etc.) must bring a note signed by a medical doctor explaining his/her physical limitations. If this is not possible due to time constraints, etc., a written explanation of the student's physical condition/limitation should be forwarded to the alternative site staff by the sending school's administration.

Special Services

Any student who is assigned to alternative programs and is receiving special services through the Lafourche Parish School System (counseling, etc.) may arrange for the services to be continued while at the alternative site.

Special Education Students

Any special education student assigned to alternative programs will receive the assistance based on their IEP/BIP. The sending school must send documents (IEP, BIP, medical reports, visual or hearing aids, etc). In extenuating situations (deaf, blind, seizures, etc.), the administrator of the sending school must contact the administrator of alternative programs to set up a conference, whereby all appropriate personnel and parents can meet to develop a plan to provide services.

Parent Conferences

The alternative programs site leader will be available for conferences at each site.

Assignments

Each school sending a suspended student to PASS or VAL PASS pending an expulsion hearing must provide student assignments. **All students are responsible for bringing their books and supplies.** Students attending V.A.L. Central and South ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS sites will receive instruction through Edgenuity and Acellus. Special education students will receive curriculum aligned assignments sent from their base school classroom teachers.

Credit for assignments will be given only if work is complete and satisfactory as judged by the student's regular classroom teacher.