

SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Springfield, New Jersey 07081

POLICY: ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Board endeavors to provide an educational program adjusted to the needs of the individual child within the financial means of the district. Grouping enables a more efficient use of staff in meeting these needs. Program adaptations provide another means of using staff efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of many children.

When the needs of special individuals or groups cannot be met through adaptation or independent study, the Chief School Administrator shall investigate and propose to the Board for approval alternative programs and facilities. Alternative education programs shall be approved by the Commissioner of Education.

Each alternative education program shall fulfill the program criteria that are specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-9.2 including but not limited to:

1. A maximum student-teacher ratio of 12:1 for high school programs,
2. A maximum student-teacher ratio of 10:1 for middle school programs,
3. An Individualized Program Plan (IPP) shall be developed for each general education student enrolled in the program,
4. For students with disabilities the alternate education program shall be consistent with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Home Schooling

The Board acknowledges the right of parents/guardians to educate their children at home. At the Board's request, parents/guardians who choose this option shall submit adequate evidence that they are providing a curriculum that is equivalent to that provided by this district.

Disruptive/Disaffected Children

The Board of Education recognizes that the active engagement of each pupil is a primary requisite for sound teaching and learning to take place. When a child is unable to benefit from the educational program because he/she is either disruptive or disaffected, then the educational goals of the district for that child will not be realized and the efforts of other pupils may be impeded.

In an effort to optimize the educational experience for each child, the Chief School Administrator shall develop procedures to identify and work with disruptive/disaffected pupils.

When it is determined by the Child Study Team that a disruptive/disaffected pupil is not classifiable, the Board shall consider some other program as an alternative to regular classroom attendance. When the district does not have a suitable alternative program available, the Chief School Administrator shall recommend to the Board placement in a program of another district, or home instruction.

In accordance with state law and Board policy, disruptive pupils whose continuing attendance interrupts the educational program and/or threatens harm to themselves and others may be suspended and considered for expulsion (see policy 5114).

Removal for Weapons Offenses or Assault

Any pupil who is convicted or found to be delinquent for the following offenses shall be immediately removed by the principal from the district's regular education program for a period of not less than one calendar year and placed in an alternative education school or program pending a hearing before the Board of Education to remove the pupil:

- A. Possessing a firearm on any school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function; or
- B. Committing a crime while possessing a firearm.

The Chief School Administrator shall determine at the end of the year whether the pupil is to return to the district's regular education program, in accordance with procedures established by the Commissioner of Education.

Any pupil who assaults a pupil, teacher, administrator, Board member, or other district employee with a weapon other than a firearm on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function must be immediately removed from the school's regular education program and placed in an alternative school or program, pending a hearing before the Board. The Chief School Administrator shall determine when the child shall return to the regular education program.

Potential Dropouts

While statute requires attendance of each pupil only until 16 years of age, it is in the best interests of both pupils and the community that they complete the educational program that will equip them with skills and increase their chances for a successful and fulfilling life beyond the schools.

The Board directs that whenever a pupil wishes to withdraw, or has been identified as

a potential withdrawal, effort should be made to determine the underlying reason and the resources of the district should be used to assist the pupil in reaching his/her career goals. No pupil under the age of 18 will be permitted to withdraw without the written consent of a parent/guardian.

The Chief School Administrator shall develop procedures for withdrawal from school that:

- A. Make counseling services available to any pupil who wishes to withdraw;
- B. Make every effort to satisfy the pupil's future educational needs;
- C. Help the pupil define his/her own educational life goals and help plan the realization of those goals;
- D. Inform the pupil of the high school equivalency program;
- E. Point out to the pupil the opportunities available in the armed forces.

Legal References:

- N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 General mandatory powers and duties
- N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq. Discipline of pupils
- N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1, -25 Attendance at school free of charge ...
- N.J.S.A. 18A:54-20 Powers of board (county vocational schools)
- N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1 Graduation requirements
- N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.2 High school diplomas
- N.J.A.C. 6A:10A-3.1 et seq School district-led standards-based instruction
- N.J.A.C. 6A:10A-4.1 et seq Role of Abbott district board of education
- N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.1 et seq. Special Education
- N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.5 Removal of students from general education for firearms offense
- N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.6 Removal of students from general education for assaults with weapons
- N.J.A.C. 6A:16-9.1 et seq. Alternative Education Programs
- N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1 et seq. Home or Out-of-School Instruction for General Education Students
- N.J.A.C. 6A:30-1.4 Evaluation process for the annual review
- N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1 et seq. Student Behavior

State v. Vaughn, 44 N.J. 142, 1965

State v. Massa, 95 N.J. Super. 382, 1967

20 USCA Section 8921 Gun Free Schools Act

Manual for the Evaluation of Local School Districts

Cross References:

- 5113 Absences and excuses
- 5114 Suspension and expulsion
- 5119 Transfers
- 5131 Conduct/discipline
- 5131.7 Weapons and dangerous instruments
- 5134 Married/pregnant pupils
- 6142.2 English as a second language; bilingual programs
- 6142.12 Career education
- 6164.2 Guidance services
- 6164.4 Child study team
- 6171.4 Special education
- 6173 Home instruction

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