

TRINITY COUNTY PLAN FOR EXPELLED YOUTH

JOINT EDUCATION SERVICES PLAN FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS WITHIN TRINITY COUNTY JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2027

Updated and Adopted by All Trinity County School Districts
June, 2024

I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS PERTAINING TO A COUNTYWIDE PLAN

California Education Code Requirements

California *Education Code (EC)* Section 48926 requires county superintendents, in conjunction with superintendents of school districts within the county, to develop a plan for providing educational services to all expelled pupils in that county. The initial plan was to be adopted by the governing board of each school district within the county and by the county board of education and submitted to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1997. *EC* Section 48926 also requires that each county superintendent of schools, in conjunction with district superintendents in the county, submit a triennial update to that plan to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

EC Section 48926 provides 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.

Countywide Plan Requirements and Recommendations

The recommended content of the Countywide Plan must address additional, more detailed questions that were raised and supported by the State School Attendance Review Board and Student Programs and Services Steering Committee of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association. These questions concern behavioral intervention approaches used to minimize the number of suspensions and expulsions, including a focus on how such

practices may impact the disproportionate number of minority students being suspended or expelled.

1. The Countywide Plan must list and describe the educational alternatives currently available for expelled students. It is recommended that the plan also describe strategies for improvement during the next three years, including:
 - Any behavioral intervention practices, at the site and district levels, and options used to:
 - Minimize the number of suspensions leading to expulsions
 - Minimize the number of expulsions being ordered
 - Support students returning from expulsions
 - Specific explanation of how those practices relate to any disproportionate representation of minority students in such interventions. For assistance in this area, you may review guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education and the Department of Justice on the U.S. Department of Education School Climate and Discipline Resources web page at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/index.html>.
2. The Countywide Plan must address gaps in educational services and strategies for filling them. If a 2021 Countywide Plan identified gaps in educational services to expelled pupils, it is recommended the 2024 plan include the following information regarding the implementation of strategies outlined for filling those service gaps:
 - Were the strategies successful or not? Please explain why and how they were or were not successful.
 - Were any additional strategies implemented? If so, explain why and how they were or were not successful.
 - For strategies that were not successful, describe any additional measure(s) or approach(es) taken, and the outcome(s).
3. 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 pose a danger to other district pupils, as determined by the governing board.

Trinity County

Trinity County is one of the larger counties in California, with one of the smallest populations. The county's nine school districts are small and serve a total of approximately 1,500 students (average daily attendance) in transition kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1-12. With over

five thousand square miles in the county, many districts are remotely situated in very small communities. Mountain roads and passes are frequently difficult to negotiate in winter.

Alternatives for Expelled Youth: Small school districts are experiencing many of the student behaviors that were once attributed only to students who attended schools in large urban school districts. All school districts within Trinity County are small and limited to providing educational alternatives to expelled youth. Small school districts, however, are not experiencing large numbers of students who are exhibiting behaviors that result in expulsion. The fact that large numbers of students are not being expelled from small school districts 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 are difficult.

In Trinity County, early intervention strategies or proactive strategies are the major focus of district programs and the subsequent student success. The school districts in Trinity County provides early intervention strategies which include, but are not limited to, one-on-one counseling, student study teams, academic and emotional assessments, in-school behavior interventions, on-campus and off-campus suspensions, special education services, after-school activities, conflict management, violence reduction strategies and student contracts, and compact days. Several schools have adopted the school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework. Many schools have also adopted the best practices from the “Love and Logic” system and “Capturing Kids’ Hearts” to improve both academic and behavioral outcomes for all students. Additionally, the Trinity County Office of Education has brought training to many of our districts in the area of trauma-informed practices, Social Emotional Learning, & Multi-tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS).

In 2020, the Trinity County Office of Education, in collaboration with Trinity County Behavioral Health, wrote and received a 4 year-student mental health services grant through the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC). The grant brought in services through what we call Pathways to Success, to all 9 school districts in Trinity County, services to California Youth Heritage Build Academy (CHYBA), and Modoc County school districts through Modoc County Office of Education. Each school is assigned a Wellness Liaison and/or clinician who coordinates services and interventions for students through collaborative relationships with school staff and school partner agencies. Additionally, the grant allowed for the hiring of a Director of Special Programs, who is responsible for managing the community school partnership planning and implementation grants along with our Wellness Support Services Team that consists of liaisons and clinicians who, provide services in trauma-informed practices, positive behavior supports like Love and Logic, and other preventative intervention strategies to assist students, parents, and staff along with clinical mental health school based supports.

Strategies include helping schools build calming rooms, coordinating telehealth from Trinity County Behavioral Health, and assisting schools with Tier 1 through Tier 3 supports.

With the passage of the Community Schools initiatives, and as funding ends for the Pathways to Success program, TCOE will shift and train current wellness liaisons into Wellness Coaches. These Wellness Coaches will continue to work at school sites and will continue to perform many of the same support services along with additional services in their new coaching roles.

1. Existing Educational Alternatives: Because of the very low rate of expulsion for students in small schools of Trinity County, there are few existing alternatives for expelled youth. These are listed below. The Education Code restricts the allowable classroom alternatives for youth expelled for the most serious offenses to a court school, a county community school, or a district community day school. Trinity County Office of Education has a county community school (RISE Academy). The serious offenses are related to guns, knives, sales of drugs, and sexual assault, robbery, and battery (ED 48915) (a) & (c). All California Education codes will be adhered to regarding students with IEPs, and special education services will follow the student.

Alternatives for Students Expelled for Serious Offenses:

Community Day Schools operated by districts: 1

Trinity River Elementary (TAUSD) (K-6)

County Operated Programs: 1

Trinity County Community School (RISE Academy) (7-12)

Alternatives for Students Expelled for Less Serious Offenses: Due to less serious nature of the offense, the Education Code allows more options for providing alternatives for students expelled for such offenses listed in EC 48915 (e).

1. **Independent Study:** *EC 51747 (c) (7) A student expelled for a less serious offense may be offered independent study, provided that an appropriate alternative classroom program is offered as a choice, and the on-site portion of the independent study does not occur on the site from which the student was expelled (EC 48916.1 (c)). The alternative of classroom instruction includes another district site for grades K-8 (with waiver). Students with IEP's will have continued services.

Note: While this is an allowable option, our county recognizes that this is not the best option, and through a collaborative approach involving the K-8 school district expelling the student, the process for potential placement at a community day school or county operated program will be discussed.

2. **Suspended Expulsion:** with placement on the same school campus.

3. Suspended Expulsion: with placement on district school campus with the district.
4. Suspended Expulsion: with placement on district independent study, if all parties agree and other appropriate education alternatives are available.
5. Enrollment: at another district as described in EC 48915.1.

2. Gaps in Educational Programs for Expelled Pupils and Strategies for Filling Them:

Through a countywide collaborative process, the following gaps have been identified for providing educational services to expelled pupils. Following each gap is the suggested strategy for addressing the gap:

Smaller school districts within Trinity County generally expel very few students during a school year. For instance, from 2020-2023, less than 15 students were expelled from schools in the entire county. Due to this fact, it is not financially or geographically possible to have a special class or program for such students located in each district. There are six districts in Trinity County with an enrollment of less than 100 students. In addition, students who are expelled by individual small school districts within Trinity County, vary as to age, grade level, and expulsion offenses. The wide range of age, grade level, and seriousness of offense makes it difficult to provide appropriate programs.

County/District Strategy for Addressing this Gap:

- a) Trinity River Elementary Community Day School (TAUSD community day school, grades K-6) will be an option. Pre-agreed upon clearly defined Memorandum of Understanding's (MOUs) will be created for each K-8 school district with a detailed process that will be followed that includes a collaborative meeting with the referring district.
- b) RISE Academy (county community school, grades 7-12) will be an option. Pre-agreed upon clearly defined Memorandum of Understanding's (MOUs) will be created for each K-8 school district and 9-12 high school with a detailed process that will be followed that includes a collaborative meeting with the referring district.
 - i) District student referrals will be reviewed and provided feedback through the County RISE Advisory Committee.
 - ii) County-operated independent study, if all parties agree (voluntary), and other appropriate options as available, may be offered.
- c) Inter-district agreements with clearly defined parameters will be implemented.

3. Identify alternative placements for pupils who are expelled and placed in community day schools, but who fail to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plans or who pose a danger to other district pupils:

EC Section 48916.1(a) provides that, 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 during the expulsion period. The governing board is required to recommend a plan of rehabilitation. If the expelled students fail to meet the terms and conditions of their rehabilitation plan, commit another expulsion offense, or pose a danger to other students, the school district of residence continues to maintain responsibility for developing a rehabilitation plan for the student, ensuring that an educational program is provided either within or outside the school district (EC 48926).

County/District Strategy for Addressing this Gap:

- a) A new rehabilitation plan may be developed, building on the strengths of the original plan, but using a different educational placement than what was called for in the original plan.
- b) Before the permanent removal of a student from the district, independent study is utilized which reduces the amount of classroom contact hours to as little as five hours per week with fifteen hours of independent work at home. If the student fails the independent study placement, and if reassigning the student back to the district is no longer feasible due to potential disruption or danger caused by the student, the student is then removed from the district school program and referred to the county community school program.
- c) District Independent Study, if all parties agree, and other appropriate options are available, may be offered.
- d) Inter-district agreements with clearly defined parameters may be an option.
- e) Working closely with other city/county agencies is strongly encouraged to assist with the successful completion of the rehabilitation plan. These agencies include local law enforcement, probation, and agencies that provide counseling and family support.

Countywide Plan Review Process

The Countywide Plan for Expelled Youth is reviewed triennially by a group of Superintendents, Principals, the County Superintendent of Schools, the Assistant Superintendent of Ed Services,

Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, and our Director of Special Programs.

Trinity County Office of Education's Role

The Trinity County Office of Education provides technical assistance in the development of the plan as well as technical assistance and advisory support to the district superintendents who have questions regarding expulsion and placement of students.

Under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), county offices of education are required to adopt a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for county-operated schools and programs which includes goals, actions, and expected measurable outcomes in 10 state priority areas, for all pupils and subgroups of pupils identified in EC Section 52052. Included among the priorities, a county office LCAP must address how it will coordinate the instruction of expelled students under EC Section 48926. This Countywide Plan will contribute to the information presented in the LCAP and provide a regional perspective on meeting the needs of expelled pupils.

Date Approved by the Board

Trinity County Superintendent's Signature