



## **Chapter 17: Other Public Education Programs**

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### **Introduction**

San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS), specific local education agency (LEA) programs, and other alternative programs provide an array of education opportunities for students not eligible to attend schools in their local school districts, those students ordered to attend by their probation officer, or students referred by their LEA and/or physician as pregnant minors. A description of these public-school options is contained within this chapter. Special education students who attend any of these instructional programs receive services in accordance with their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

### **Section A – Alternative Education**

The Student Services Division of San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools works collaboratively with LEAs, community colleges, families, and agencies to provide student-centered educational programs throughout the SELPA. Program content and delivery are based upon state-of-the-art knowledge and practices tailored to the unique needs of LEAs and regions. Working together in a collegial and professional manner, highly competent staff support students' academic, vocational, social, and emotional growth. Students' talents and abilities are strengthened through instruction that focuses on life, employment, and critical thinking skills. Various grants have been received to provide child care, homeless education, counseling, and drug-free curriculum that supplement and support Student Services Alternative Education programs.

The following is adapted from the San Bernardino County web page.

## **Program Components and Educational Objectives**

Student Services Alternative Education Program Components are:

- Delivery of a framework driven, competency based, hands-on core curriculum;
- 180 days of instruction consisting of a 240-300 minute instructional day;
- Recommended extended year opportunities;
- Low student to teacher ratios;
- Individualized Learning Plan for each student;
- Relevant, hands-on experiential instruction designed to meet the individual needs of each student;
- Group and/or individual counseling for each student;
- Ongoing assessment of each student's placement and progress.

Student Services educational/program objectives: 1) provide a transitional educational program which allows students to continue to earn credits toward high school graduation regardless of circumstances; 2) provide opportunities for eligible students to take the GED or the CHSPE; 3) provide students with the opportunity to receive a high school diploma; 4) assist students in developing social skills which will enable students to function successfully in society; 5) assist students in developing work skills and habits which will enable them to function successfully in the work place; and 6) provide opportunities for pregnant minors to learn the skills necessary to fulfill the role of an effective parent.

## **Section B – Charter Schools**

*E.C. 56145. Individuals with exceptional needs attending charter schools pursuant to Part 26.8 (commencing with Section 47600) shall be served in the same manner as individuals with exceptional needs are served in other public schools.*

*E.C. 56146. It is the intent of the Legislature that local plans for special education local plan areas, adopted pursuant to Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 56195) and Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 56205), shall provide for federal funds available under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 et seq.) to individuals with exceptional needs enrolled in charter schools.*

A charter school is a public school and may provide instruction in any of grades K-12. A charter school is usually created or organized by a group of teachers, parents, and community leaders or a community-based organization and is usually sponsored by an existing local public-school board or county board of education. Specific goals and operating procedures for the charter school are detailed in an agreement, or "charter," between the sponsoring board and charter organizers.

A charter school is generally exempt from most laws governing LEAs, except where specifically noted in the law. California public charter schools are required to participate in the statewide assessment test, called the STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting) program. The law also requires that a public charter school be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and prohibits the conversion of a private school to a charter school. Public charter schools may not charge tuition and may not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability.

## Section C – Community Schools

*E.C. 1980. A county board of education may establish and maintain one or more community schools.*

*E.C. 1981. The county board of education may enroll in a community school pupils who are any of the following:*

- (a) Expelled from a school district for any reason other than those specified in subdivision (a), (b) or (c) of Section 48915.*
- (b) Referred to county community schools by a school district as a result of the recommendation by a school attendance review board or pupils whose school districts of attendance have, at the request of the pupil's parent or guardian, approved the pupil's enrollment in a county community school.
  - (1) Probation-referred pursuant to Sections 300, 601, 602, and 654 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.*
  - (2) On probation or parole and not in attendance in any school.*
  - (3) Expelled for any of the reasons specified in subdivision (a) or (c) of Section 48915.**
- (c) Homeless children.*

*AB 922 authorizes school districts to establish community day schools (sections 48660-48664).*

### Definition

In 1995 the Legislature enacted two significant bills that responded to the zero-tolerance mandate from the general public: AB922 and SB966. Among their many provisions, AB922 (Chapter 974) established Community Day Schools and SB966 (Chapter 9720) effective July 1, 1996, required a governing board of the LEA to provide an educational placement to all students who were expelled pursuant to subdivisions (b) and (e) of Education Code section 48915.

This placement must be in a program of study that can appropriately accommodate students with discipline problems, is not provided at a comprehensive school, and is not housed at the school that the student was attending at the time of expulsion. Community Day Schools have the following characteristics:

- They are operated by LEAs.
- They must offer a 360-minute instructional day.
- They serve grade spans K-6 and 7-12.
- They can be co-located with a regular school, an opportunity school, or a continuation campus only under special circumstances.
- They receive tiered incentive funding.
- They cannot offer independent study.

Although expelled students may be served in a county-operated Community School, many local administrators view district Community Day Schools as an appropriate placement for some, but not necessarily all, expelled students and as an option for providing a structured, well-supervised instructional environment for some students who have not been expelled.’

### **Program Description**

The Community Day School Program will provide a comprehensive educational program for at-risk students designed to meet their individual academic and behavioral needs with the intent for them to return to school, graduate, obtain a GED, and/or employment. Alternative strategies include reduced class size, strong emphasis on personal development through a social skills curriculum, career education, and collaboration with other public agencies to provide counseling and support services.

The program components are listed as follows:

- 360 minutes instructional day
- 180 days instructional year plus 30 days extended year
- SBC Board of Education approved curriculum aligned with state frameworks, or local district approved curriculum
- Group and individual counseling
- Elective curricular offerings
- Extracurricular activities - field trips
- Specialized assessment
- Individual learning plan for each student

### **Community Day School – SBCSS**

#### **Definition**

County Community Schools are operated by county offices of education to serve students who are expelled from their regular schools, or who are referred by the juvenile court, by a deputy probation

officer, or by a School Attendance Review Board (SARB) or other agency. Education Code sections 1980-1986 authorizes the educational programs.

### **When to Access**

Community schools, which are established at the request of LEAs, serve students who have been expelled from the schools of the local school district for major offenses or are referred by the County Probation Department's Juvenile Division.

The purpose of the community school program is to provide students with an alternative learning environment, supported by a 15 to 1 student/teacher ratio, where they can successfully continue their education. This environment is carefully planned and executed by the Alternative Education staff with the support of the LEA staff, the Probation Department, and a team of Marriage, Family, and Child Counselors (MFCCs). Community school programs engage students in academic, social skills, and mental health development. Core subjects include science, language arts, social science, mathematics, health, physical education, and visual and performing arts.

Instruction focuses on student interest, active hands-on participation, and individualized instruction. Most students work toward earning credits that will facilitate high school graduation; however, older students who are severely credit deficient, work toward successful GED or CHSPE completion and development of employment skills.

## **Section D – Court Schools**

### **Definition**

County boards of education administer and operate the Juvenile Court Schools authorized by Education Code sections 48645-48645.7. The Student Services Alternative Education Department provides educational programs for students who are wards of the court. Programs offered on the grounds of Juvenile Hall include the regular court school, the Regional Youth Education Facility, the Kuiper Youth Center, Detention Furlough Program, and the (16-22 days) Detention Program.

Students engage in an interactive curriculum enriched with Regional Occupational Program (ROP) courses and computerized instruction. Program enrollment may range from a time period of three days to two years. Those students who are unable to attend class may be served through an independent study program.

The San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools program also includes three sites of the Arizona Boys Ranch: the Civic Conservation Corps, the Ranger Corp, and the Arizona Boys Ranch main facility. These programs are juvenile placement facilities.

The County Probation Department works in partnership with Alternative Education staff to ensure that each student has a well-balanced instructional program that teaches and reinforces academic skills, social skills, and employability.

### **When to Access**

Juvenile Court Schools provide an alternative educational program for students who are under the protection or authority of the juvenile court system and are incarcerated in juvenile hall, ranches, and camps.

### **How to Access**

Students are placed in Juvenile Court Schools when they are referred by the juvenile court.

## **Section E – Continuation Schools**

*E.C. 48430. It is the intent of the Legislature that continuation education schools and classes shall be established and maintained to provide all of the following:*

- (1) An opportunity for pupils to complete the required academic courses of instruction to graduate from high school.*
- (2) A program of instruction which emphasizes occupational orientation or a work-study schedule and offers intensive guidance services to meet the special needs of pupils.*
- (3) A program designed to meet the educational needs of each pupil, including, but not limited to, independent study, regional occupation programs, work study, career counseling, and job placement services, as a supplement to classroom instruction.*

### **Definition**

Continuation Education, an educational option for students since 1919, is a high school diploma program designed to meet the needs of students 16 -18 years of age who have not graduated from high school, are not exempt from compulsory school attendance, and deemed at risk of not completing their schooling. Students enrolled in continuation education programs are often credit deficient. Others need a flexible educational environment because they are employed or are having adjustment problems.

For apportionment purposes, a day of attendance in continuation education is 180 minutes. However, many continuation high schools design programs with maximum access to required courses that exceed the minimum daily requirement. In addition to the required academic courses for graduation, the program of instruction must emphasize occupational or career orientation or a work-study schedule. Supplemental programs and services can include, but not be limited to, independent study, ROP programs, career counseling, job placement, and apprenticeships.

### **When to Access**

Continuation Education serves 16 - 18 year old students who are subject to State compulsory education laws. Many students are referred involuntarily. Others elect to go to continuation schools

because of the available flexible schedules and individualized services. Continuation high schools serve as a major dropout recovery option and a transitional program for students desiring to return to their regular programs.

## **Section F – Independent Alternative Education**

### **Definition**

The goal of the independent study program is to develop in students the highest degree of performance, self-confidence, self-esteem, and motivation while he/she earns credits toward a high school diploma, makes progress toward the next grade level, prepares for the GED or CHSPE, or prepares for employment. In the past, Independent Alternative Education (IAE) has provided independent study instruction for students not assigned to a classroom site. A teacher was assigned to meet with a student one hour per week at the student's home, the local library, or another mutually agreeable setting. IAE is moving away from that model. It is felt students are better served by requiring them to come to a Resource Center at least one day per week. At the Resource Centers there are computers, calculators, TV/VCRs, cassette recorders, reference books, materials, and much more. The nature of the student assignments will require them to research, experiment, investigate, and report what they have learned.

### **When to Access**

Students will have to demonstrate that they can read and comprehend at the 4th grade level or higher to qualify for IAE. Students will also need to show that they can work independently and are motivated to make progress. Board policy states that students must complete at least 75% of the work assigned each week to remain on IAE. IAE primarily serves junior and senior high school students. Under IAE a Master Agreement is developed with input from the student, the supervising teacher and the parent/guardian. This is very similar to an Individualized Learning Plan. This agreement provides for the student's involvement in an alternative learning experience through a course of study aligned to the California State Frameworks and the San Bernardino County Alternative Education Performance Standards. IAE may provide service to students beyond the academic area. Many students and their families may need referrals to and information about community services, counseling and job programs. Alternative Education teachers also provide guidance to students concerning reinstatement procedures to LEAs as well as GED and CHSPE preparation.