

# **Kern County**

## **Plan for Providing Educational Services to Expelled Students**

Approved by the  
Kern County Board of Education  
May 9, 2006

**Office of Larry E. Reider  
Kern County Superintendent of Schools  
Advocates for Children**

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# Overview

California Education Code Section 48926 states;

“Each county superintendent of schools in counties that operate community schools pursuant to section 1980, in conjunction with superintendents of school districts within the county, shall develop a plan for providing education services to all expelled pupils in that county.”

The 35 elementary school districts, 4 high school districts, and 8 unified school districts of Kern County provide services to 165,817 students at 250 school sites spread over an area of 8,170 square miles. Kern County recognized the need for a continuum of educational services for all students, including expelled students, long before the 1995 legislation mandated education placements for expelled students. This Kern County Plan for Educational Services for Expelled Students provides the description of the part of that continuum of services that relates directly to expelled students.

California Education Code Section 48916.1 states;

“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 who is subject to the expulsion order for the period of the expulsion...”

Every Kern County school district governing board will refer each expelled student to an appropriate educational placement for the period of expulsion. The educational placement will be determined on an individual basis by the school district’s governing board based on 1) the seriousness of offense, 2) the available educational alternatives, and 3) other related factors. County-level alternatives for expelled students will remain available to all expelled students. District-level alternatives for expelled students, if district-level alternatives exist, will vary from one district to the next depending on the characteristics of that district. The list of educational alternatives that exist for students enrolled in each of the 47 Kern County districts is identified in the district’s sub-plan, included as part of the total countywide plan.

California Education Code Section 48926 states;

“The plan shall be adopted by the governing board of each school district within the county and by the county board of education.”

A district sub-plan has been developed and board approved for every district in Kern County. Those district sub-plans are included in this countywide plan to provide the complete “Plan for Providing Educational Services to all Expelled Students in Kern County.” Each district sub-plan includes:

- 1) a list of existing educational alternatives for expelled students,

- 2) gaps in educational services to expelled students,
- 3) strategies for filling those gaps and
- 4) alternative placements for students who fail community day school placements (if offered).

California Education Code Section 48926 also states;

“Each county superintendent of schools, in conjunction with the superintendents of the school districts ... shall submit a triennial update to the plan to the Superintendent of Public Instruction ...”

The requirement of a triennial update for the countywide plan for expelled students offers each county an opportunity to review the current status of its educational offerings for this very targeted student population, as well as the at-risk students in the county in general. In Kern County, discussions on this subject between district and county superintendent of schools staff happen on an ongoing basis for the entire three-year period between triennial updates of this plan. The topics of these discussions include district/county offerings, progress in addressing the needs of these students, and ongoing or emerging gaps in services. The topics of these discussions were integrated into the structure of the countywide plan for expelled students in early 2006. On February 22, 2006, this proposed triennial update language was presented to Kern County district superintendents by county superintendent of schools staff in the Administrative Advisory meeting in the morning and the Small Districts Advisory meeting in the afternoon. Following the presentation and a subsequent discussion, the language contained in this 2006 triennial update represents the coordinated effort of the county superintendent, in conjunction with the superintendents of the school districts in Kern County. Finally, this document was taken to the Kern County Board of Education on May 9, 2006 for approval.

The approval of the Kern County Board of Education and submission of the plan to the Superintendent of Public Instruction prior to June 30, 2006 shall satisfy requirements associated with the “county plans for provision of educational services to expelled students.” In addition, this plan shall be distributed to every district superintendent in Kern County and updated prior to June 30, 2009, as required by law.

**Plan for Providing Education Services to Expelled Students Board Approval Record**

	<b>Board Action</b>	<b>Triennial Update</b>
Arvin Union School District	September 17, 1996	March 8, 2006
Bakersfield City School District	October 22, 1996	March 10, 2006
Beardsley School District	December 10, 1996	March 9, 2006
Belridge Elementary School District	September 17, 1996	March 1, 2006
Blake School District	February 12, 1997	March 8, 2006
Buttonwillow Union School District	December 10, 1996	March 14, 2006
Caliente Union School District	September 5, 1996	March 15, 2006
Delano Joint Union High School District	October 23, 1996	March 9, 2006
Delano Union School District	September 3, 1996	April 4, 2006
DiGiorgio School District	September 5, 1996	March 10, 2006
Edison School District	October 8, 1996	March 10, 2006
El Tejon Unified School District	October 1, 1996	May 3, 2006
Elk Hills School District	October 12, 2006	March 10, 2006
Fairfax School District	October 10, 1996	March 9, 2006
Fruitvale School District	September 10, 1996	March 9, 2006
General Shafter School District	September 19, 1996	March 17, 2006
Greenfield Union School District	October 9, 1996	March 13, 2006
Kern High School District	December 9, 1996	March 13, 2006
Kernville Union School District	October 8, 1996	March 13, 2006
Lakeside Union Elementary School District	December 10, 1996	April 25, 2006
Lamont School District	December 17, 1996	April 25, 2006
Linns Valley/Poso Flat Union School District	September 17, 1996	April 24, 2006
Lost Hills Union School District	October 21, 1996	March 13, 2006
Maple School District	November 14, 1996	March 8, 2006
Maricopa Unified School District	October 10, 1996	April 25, 2006
McFarland Unified School District	September 16, 1996	March 15, 2006
McKittrick School District	December 10, 1996	March 20, 2006
Midway School District	September 10, 1996	March 8, 2006
Mojave Unified School District	January 14, 1997	March 14, 2006
Muroc Joint Unified School District	April 9, 1997	March 13, 2006
Norris School District	October 16, 1996	April 20, 2006
Panama-Buena Union School District	September 10, 1996	March 9, 2006
Pond Union School District	March 14, 2006	March 14, 2006
Richland School District	September 16, 1996	March 10, 2006
Rio Bravo-Greeley Union School District	December 9, 1996	March 14, 2006
Rosedale Union School District	February 11, 1997	March 9, 2006
Semitropic School District	February 12, 1997	March 8, 2006
Sierra Sands Unified School District	January 16, 1997	April 26, 2006
South Fork Union School District	December 1, 1996	March 10, 2006
Southern Kern Unified	February 9, 1997	March 27, 2006
Standard School District	June 18, 1996	March 8, 2006
Taft City School District	September 25, 1996	March 15, 2006
Taft Union High School District	September 16, 1996	March 9, 2006
Tehachapi Unified School District	September 10, 1996	April 27, 2006
Vineland School District	October 21, 1996	March 8, 2006
Wasco Union High School District	March 13, 1997	March 8, 2006
Wasco Union School District	September 10, 1996	March 8, 2006
Kern County Board of Education	May 9, 2006	May 9, 2006

**Board Approval Record – Educational Placement Alternatives**

<b>School District</b>	<b>District Placements</b>	<b>County Placements</b>
Arvin Union School District		X
Bakersfield City School District	X	X
Beardsley School District		X
Belridge Elementary School District		X
Blake School District		X
Buttonwillow Union School District		X
Caliente Union School District		X
Delano Joint Union High School District		X
Delano Union School District		X
DiGiorgio School District		X
Edison School District		X
El Tejon Unified School District		X
Elk Hills School District	X	X
Fairfax School District		X
Fruitvale School District		X
General Shafter School District		X
Greenfield Union School District		X
Kern High School District		X
Kernville Union School District		X
Lakeside Union Elementary School District		X
Lamont School District		X
Linns Valley/Poso Flat Union School District		X
Lost Hills Union School District		X
Maple School District		X
Maricopa Unified School District		X
McFarland Unified School District		X
McKittrick School District		X
Midway School District	X	X
Mojave Unified School District	X	X
Muroc Joint Unified School District		X
Norris School District		X
Panama-Buena Union School District		X
Pond Union School District		X
Richland-Lerdo Union School District		X
Rio Bravo-Greeley Union School District		X
Rosedale Union School District		X
Semitropic School District		X
Sierra Sands Unified School District		X
South Fork Union School District		X
Southern Kern Unified		X
Standard School District		X
Taft City School District	X	X
Taft Union High School District		X
Tehachapi Unified School District		X
Vineland School District		X
Wasco Union High School District		X
Wasco Union School District		X
Kern County Board of Education		X

## County-level Alternatives

Forty-two of Kern County's 47 school districts elected to use county-level court and community schools as the educational placement for all students expelled by their district board of education. The school boards for the 42 school districts listed below adopted the "Plan for Providing Educational Services to All Expelled Students in Kern County" that is provided in the following seven pages of this document:

Arvin Union School District  
Beardsley School District  
Belridge Elementary School District  
Blake School District  
Buttonwillow Union School District  
Caliente Union School District  
Delano Joint Union High School District  
Delano Union School District  
DiGiorgio School District  
Edison School District  
El Tejon Unified School District  
Fairfax School District  
Fruitvale School District  
General Shafter School District  
Greenfield Union School District  
Kern High School District  
Kernville Union School District  
Lakeside Union Elementary School District  
Lamont School District  
Linns Valley-Poso Flat Union School District  
Lost Hills Union School District

Maple School District  
Maricopa Unified School District  
McFarland Unified School District  
McKittrick School District  
Muroc Joint Unified School District  
Norris School District  
Panama-Buena Union School District  
Pond Union School District  
Richland School District  
Rio Bravo-Greeley Union School District  
Rosedale Union School District  
Semitropic School District  
Sierra Sands Unified School District  
South Fork Union School District  
Southern Kern Unified School District  
Standard School District  
Taft Union High School District  
Tehachapi Unified School District  
Vineland School District  
Wasco Union High School District  
Wasco Union School District

## **PLAN FOR PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO ALL EXPELLED STUDENTS IN KERN COUNTY**

California Education Code Section 48926 states “each county superintendent of schools in counties that operate community schools pursuant to Section 1980, in conjunction with superintendents of school districts within the county shall develop a plan for providing education services to all expelled pupils in that county.” This section of California Education Code also states 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 35 elementary school districts, 4 high school districts and 8 unified school districts of Kern County provide services to 165,817 students at 250 school sites spread over an area of 8,170 square miles. Kern County recognized the need for a continuum of educational services for all students, including expelled students, long before the 1995 legislation mandated educational placements for expelled students. This Kern County Plan for Educational Services for Expelled Students provides the description of the part of that continuum of services that relates directly to expelled students. A series of legislative bills in 1995, and since 1995, have created new challenges that have resulted in adjustments and refinements to this Kern County continuum of educational services over the past ten years. This 2006 triennial update of the Kern Countywide Plan for Expelled Students will highlight these changes to the educational landscape for this student population.

California Education Code Section 48916.1 states “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 who is subject to the expulsion order for the period of the expulsion...”. Every Kern County school district governing board will refer each expelled student to an appropriate educational placement for the period of expulsion. The educational placement will be determined on an individual basis by the school district’s governing board based on 1) seriousness of offense, 2) available educational alternatives and 3) other related factors. County level alternatives for expelled students will remain available to all expelled students. Any expelled student who requires, and is entitled to, transportation to the county-level educational placement shall have that transportation provided by the district of residence. District level alternatives for expelled students, if district level alternatives exist, will vary from one district to

the next depending on the characteristics of that district. The list of educational alternatives that exist for each of the 47 Kern County districts is identified in that district's sub-plan, included as part of the total countywide plan.

A district sub-plan has been developed and board approved for every school district in Kern County. Those district sub-plans are included in this countywide plan to provide the complete "Plan for Providing Educational Services to all Expelled Students in Kern County". Any substantive changes to district sub-plans during the period between triennial updates receive approvals by the school district governing board at the time the change is made. Each district sub-plan includes 1) a list of existing educational alternatives for expelled students, 2) gaps in educational services to expelled students, 3) strategies for filling those gaps and 4) alternative placements for students who fail community day school placements (if offered).

## **EXISTING EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS**

### **“District Name” School District**

All educational alternatives provided by California’s school districts are not available to all expelled students and most are not available to any expelled students. Seriousness of offense, location of offense and grade level of the student all have the potential to restrict the district level educational alternatives available to the student during the period of expulsion. Students expelled for any of the offenses listed in subdivisions (a) or (c) of Section 48915 of the California Education Code shall not be permitted to enroll in any district operated program during the period of the expulsion unless it is a community day school (California Education Code Section 48915.2). All expelled students shall be referred to an educational placement that is 1) not provided at a comprehensive middle, junior or senior high school or any elementary school and 2) not housed at the schoolsite attended by the student at the time of the offense (California Education Code Section 48915). If the expelled student is in grades K-6, the educational placement for the student shall not be merged or combined with educational programs offered to students in grades 7-12 (California Education Code Section 48916.1). In addition to the above listed requirements, such factors as district size, district level alternatives, county level alternatives and district philosophy can impact the determination by a district board of education of what educational alternatives are appropriate for the students who are expelled.

It is the determination of the “District Name” School District Board of Education that county operated court, community or charter schools will be the appropriate placement for all expelled students from “District Name” School District.

### **Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office**

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office offers educational alternatives to expelled students through its court and community schools. Court schools require the formal placement of students into the program by the juvenile court or its probation/parole department representatives. These programs can be either residential or non-residential and expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement. Community schools enrollment may require referral from the school district of residence and these schools provide

services to students in accordance with California Education Code Sections 1981a and 1981c. Expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement of a student in community schools, but may be used for California Education Code Section 1981 classification purposes. Community Learning Center, a charter school that was established under the umbrella of court and community schools by the Kern County Board of Education in 1994, was also an educational alternative available to all students who were expelled from districts in Kern County. The Community Learning Center program discontinued operation as a charter school and has reverted back to operation as part of the Kern County Community School program, and does continue to offer educational services to expelled students. These two county level educational alternatives (Court Schools and Community Schools) will be available to all Kern County students who have been expelled from district programs when the district board of education determines they are the most appropriate placement.

Educational alternatives offered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office include the following:

- Court Schools
  - Central School \*
  - Avenues to Change\*
  - Juvenile Hall\*
  - Pathways\*
  - Star Academy (Transitioning High-Risk Youth)\*
  - Erwin Owen High School \*
  - Jamison Children's Center \*
  - Ridgecrest Learning Center (Day School Services)\*
  - Redwood High School \*
  - Sandstone Academy (Day School Services) \*
- Community Schools
  - Auburn Community School
  - Community Learning Center-34<sup>th</sup> Street
  - East Kern Community School
  - Kelly F. Blanton Education Center
    - Bakersfield Elementary Community School
    - Community Learning Center-Tech
    - Pride Academy (High-Risk First Time Offender)\*
  - Lake Isabella Community School
  - North Kern Community School
  - Ridgecrest Learning Center (Community School Services)
  - Sillect Community School
  - West Kern Community School

*\*Placement by Non-Education Agency Required*

# **GAPS IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO EXPELLED STUDENTS AND STRATEGIES FOR FILLING THOSE GAPS**

1. The average district enrollment in Kern County is approximately one third the state average. This smaller district size, together with the rural characteristics of the county, make it difficult to offer the range of alternatives often found in the larger urban districts. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a county community school program that is committed to providing educational services to all school districts in the county and that employs a variety of instructional strategies, including those that are capable of overcoming obstacles associated with providing educational services to rural, often isolated, settings. An additional gap that has been identified in recent years is the need to try to keep as much structure in these county-level alternatives as possible. The response to the identification of this gap, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has implemented several layers of strategies. The first is the expansion of classroom options in the Community School program. The number of Community School classrooms has expanded to 45 in 2004-05, up to 51 in 2005-06, up to 60 in 2006-07 and additional classrooms in the North Kern County area planned for 2007-08. In addition to the increase in numbers of classrooms, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has added the very structured (six to eight hours per day) High Risk First Time Offender and Transitional High-Risk Youth programs (Pride and Star Academies) to its non-residential programs. While this gap has been a focus of a great deal of energy, getting the more structured programming into the less-populated, rural areas of the county continues to be a gap. The more serious gap is associated with the current statute that establishes a cap on county-operated community day schools and restricts the ability to provide this more structured programs to expelled students who have exhausted district-level alternatives.
2. Students who commit an expulsion offense during an expulsion period may have limited alternatives that remain available for secondary placement. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a commitment to providing educational services to students, regardless of repeated offenses. These services may be in locations where the distance factor becomes a serious obstacle, but an educational alternative will exist if the necessary commitment exists with student and parent. One strategy that has been employed at the county-level programs is to provide intense training to educational staff that

improves their skills at diffusing potentially volatile situations with students, and subsequently decreasing the likelihood of a problem escalating to an expellable level. Another strategy employed at the county-level programs is the increase in the level of staff providing campus supervision, with one outcome being to decrease the likelihood of a problem being able to escalate to an expellable level. While the existing strategies have produced satisfactory results, the gap continues to exist.

3. Students who are in grades K-6 who are expelled do not have the same educational options available as do their grades 7-12 counterparts. Students in grades K-6 are also expelled at a much lower rate than students in grades 7-12. These two factors, together with the requirement that educational services for students in grades K-6 can not be merged or combined with services to students in grades 7-12 make it very difficult to identify an educational placement for the expelled student who is in grades K-6. The strategy for addressing this problem was to develop a cooperative plan for maintaining a multi-district educational alternative capable of serving this smaller, more isolated student population. Following meetings with a team of district superintendents, an initial plan was to have the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office attempt to address this problem through a Bakersfield Community Day School serving elementary students. After two years of operation, it was determined that the existing “cap on eligible enrollment” for county-operated community day schools resulted in a funding level that was inadequate to operate a credible program through the county office of education. Following a second meeting with a team of district superintendents, it was determined that 1) the county operation of the program made the most sense, and 2) the districts would be willing to supplement the costs in order to have the placement for K-6 students available at all times. That structure was implemented and has successfully operated for the past three years. Unfortunately, the strategy for addressing this problem identifies a gap of under-funding for K-6 services in a county community school.
4. The changes over the past nine years relative to the establishment and elimination of community day schools in Kern County represents efforts by all Local Educational Agencies to have a continuum of educational services available to its expelled students that is practical, functional and in the best interest of its students. The history of attempts at operation of community day schools reflects an awareness of this alternative. Kern County has had eight districts attempt to operate community day schools since 1995 and has four districts actively operating community day schools at this time. As the above listed gaps are addressed, establishment of community day schools at the district and county levels continues to be a strategy that is explored.

## **ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO FAIL COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL PLACEMENTS**

The Court School and Community School programs operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office maintains a standing policy of accepting all students who have been expelled from their district of residence and who have exhausted the alternatives offered by the district. If an initial placement is made to a district operated community day school and the student commits an expulsion offense or fails the program, the “District Name” School District Board of Education shall review the plan of rehabilitation that was established at the time of expulsion and make the adjustments necessary. If there is no educational alternative in the “District Name” School District, the student may be referred to the county community school program.

## **EXISTING EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS**

### **Bakersfield City School District**

All educational alternatives provided by California's school districts are not available to all expelled students and most are not available to any expelled students. Seriousness of offense, location of offense and grade level of the student all have the potential to restrict the district level educational alternatives available to the student during the period of expulsion. Students expelled for any of the offenses listed in subdivisions (a) or (c) of Section 48915 of the California Education Code shall not be permitted to enroll in any district operated program during the period of the expulsion unless it is a community day school (California Education Code Section 48915.2). All expelled students shall be referred to an educational placement that is 1) not provided at a comprehensive middle, junior or senior high school or any elementary school and 2) not housed at the school site attended by the student at the time of the offense (California Education Code Section 48915). If the expelled student is in grades K-6, the educational placement for the student shall not be merged or combined with educational programs offered to students in grades 7-12 (California Education Code Section 48916.1). In addition to the above listed requirements, such factors as district size, district level alternatives, county level alternatives and district philosophy can impact the determination by a district board of education of what educational alternatives are appropriate for the students who are expelled.

It is the determination of the Bakersfield City School District Board of Education that the following district level educational alternatives, if deemed appropriate, be available as placements for students expelled from Bakersfield City School District:

Rafer Johnson Community Day School

## **Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office**

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office offers educational alternatives to expelled students through its court and community schools. Court schools require the formal placement of students into the program by the juvenile court or its probation/parole department representatives. These programs can be either residential or non-residential and expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement. Community schools enrollment may require referral from the school district of residence and these schools provide services to students in accordance with California Education Code Sections 1981a and 1981c. Expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement of a student in community schools, but may be used for California Education Code Section 1981 classification purposes. Community Learning Center, a charter school that was established under the umbrella of court and community schools by the Kern County Board of Education in 1994, was also an educational alternative available to all students who were expelled from districts in Kern County. The Community Learning Center program discontinued operation as a charter school and has reverted back to operation as part of the Kern County Community School program, and does continue to offer educational services to expelled students. These two county level educational alternatives (Court Schools and Community Schools) will be available to all Kern County students who have been expelled from district programs when the district board of education determines they are the most appropriate placement.

Educational alternatives offered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office include the following:

- Court Schools
  - Central School \*
  - Avenues to Change\*
  - Juvenile Hall\*
  - Pathways\*
  - Star Academy (Transitioning High-Risk Youth)\*
- Erwin Owen High School \*
- Jamison Children's Center \*
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Day School Services)\*
- Redwood High School \*
- Sandstone Academy (Day School Services) \*
- Community Schools
  - Auburn Community School
  - Community Learning Center-34<sup>th</sup> Street
  - East Kern Community School
  - Kelly F. Blanton Education Center
  - Bakersfield Elementary Community School

- Community Learning Center-Tech
- Pride Academy (High-Risk First Time Offender)\*
- Lake Isabella Community School
- North Kern Community School
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Community School Services)
- Sillect Community School
- West Kern Community School

*\*Placement by Non-Education Agency Required*

## **GAPS IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO EXPELLED STUDENTS AND STRATEGIES FOR FILLING THOSE GAPS**

1. The average district enrollment in Kern County is approximately one third the state average. This smaller district size, together with the rural characteristics of the county, make it difficult to offer the range of alternatives often found in the larger urban districts. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a county community school program that is committed to providing educational services to all school districts in the county and that employs a variety of instructional strategies, including those that are capable of overcoming obstacles associated with providing educational services to rural, often isolated, settings. An additional gap that has been identified in recent years is the need to try to keep as much structure in these county-level alternatives as possible. The response to the identification of this gap, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has implemented several layers of strategies. The first is the expansion of classroom options in the Community School program. The number of Community School classrooms has expanded to 45 in 2004-05, up to 51 in 2005-06, up to 60 in 2006-07 and additional classrooms in the North Kern County area planned for 2007-08. In addition to the increase in numbers of classrooms, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has added the very structured (six to eight hours per day) High Risk First Time Offender and Transitional High-Risk Youth programs (Pride and Star Academies) to its non-residential programs. While this gap has been a focus of a great deal of energy, getting the more structured programming into the less-populated, rural areas of the county continues to be a gap. The more serious gap is associated with the current statute that establishes a cap on county-operated community day schools and restricts the ability to provide this more structured programs to expelled students who have exhausted district-level alternatives.
2. Students who commit an expulsion offense during an expulsion period may have limited alternatives that remain available for secondary placement. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a commitment to providing educational services to students, regardless of repeated offenses. These services may be in locations where the distance factor becomes a serious obstacle, but an educational alternative will exist if the necessary commitment exists with student and parent. One strategy that has been employed at the county-level programs is to provide intense training to educational staff that

improves their skills at diffusing potentially volatile situations with students, and subsequently decreasing the likelihood of a problem escalating to an expellable level. Another strategy employed at the county-level programs is the increase in the level of staff providing campus supervision, with one outcome being to decrease the likelihood of a problem being able to escalate to an expellable level. While the existing strategies have produced satisfactory results, the gap continues to exist.

3. Students who are in grades K-6 who are expelled do not have the same educational options available as do their grades 7-12 counterparts. Students in grades K-6 are also expelled at a much lower rate than students in grades 7-12. These two factors, together with the requirement that educational services for students in grades K-6 can not be merged or combined with services to students in grades 7-12 make it very difficult to identify an educational placement for the expelled student who is in grades K-6. The strategy for addressing this problem was to develop a cooperative plan for maintaining a multi-district educational alternative capable of serving this smaller, more isolated student population. Following meetings with a team of district superintendents, an initial plan was to have the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office attempt to address this problem through a Bakersfield Community Day School serving elementary students. After two years of operation, it was determined that the existing “cap on eligible enrollment” for county-operated community day schools resulted in a funding level that was inadequate to operate a credible program through the county office of education. Following a second meeting with a team of district superintendents, it was determined that 1) the county operation of the program made the most sense, and 2) the districts would be willing to supplement the costs in order to have the placement for K-6 students available at all times. That structure was implemented and has successfully operated for the past three years. Unfortunately, the strategy for addressing this problem identifies a gap of under-funding for K-6 services in a county community school.
4. The changes over the past nine years relative to the establishment and elimination of community day schools in Kern County represents efforts by all Local Educational Agencies to have a continuum of educational services available to its expelled students that is practical, functional and in the best interest of its students. The history of attempts at operation of community day schools reflects an awareness of this alternative. Kern County has had eight districts attempt to operate community day schools since 1995 and has four districts actively operating community day schools at this time. As the above listed gaps are addressed, establishment of community day schools at the district and county levels continues to be a strategy that is explored.

## **ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO FAIL COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL PLACEMENTS**

The Court School and Community School programs operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office maintains a standing policy of accepting all students who have been expelled from their district of residence and who have exhausted the alternatives offered by the district. If an initial placement is made to a district operated community day school and the student commits an expulsion offense or fails the program, the Bakersfield City School District Board of Education shall review the plan of rehabilitation that was established at the time of expulsion and make the adjustments necessary. If there is no educational alternative in the Bakersfield City School District, the student may be referred to the county community school program.

## **EXISTING EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS**

### **Elk Hills School District**

All educational alternatives provided by California's school districts are not available to all expelled students and most are not available to any expelled students. Seriousness of offense, location of offense and grade level of the student all have the potential to restrict the district level educational alternatives available to the student during the period of expulsion. Students expelled for any of the offenses listed in subdivisions (a) or (c) of Section 48915 of the California Education Code shall not be permitted to enroll in any district operated program during the period of the expulsion unless it is a community day school (California Education Code Section 48915.2). All expelled students shall be referred to an educational placement that is 1) not provided at a comprehensive middle, junior or senior high school or any elementary school and 2) not housed at the school site attended by the student at the time of the offense (California Education Code Section 48915). If the expelled student is in grades K-6, the educational placement for the student shall not be merged or combined with educational programs offered to students in grades 7-12 (California Education Code Section 48916.1). In addition to the above listed requirements, such factors as district size, district level alternatives, county level alternatives and district philosophy can impact the determination by a district board of education of what educational alternatives are appropriate for the students who are expelled.

It is the determination of the Elk Hills School District Board of Education that the following district level educational alternatives, if deemed appropriate, be available as placements for students expelled from Elk Hills School District:

Elk Hills Community Day School

## **Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office**

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office offers educational alternatives to expelled students through its court and community schools. Court schools require the formal placement of students into the program by the juvenile court or its probation/parole department representatives. These programs can be either residential or non-residential and expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement. Community schools enrollment may require referral from the school district of residence and these schools provide services to students in accordance with California Education Code Sections 1981a and 1981c. Expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement of a student in community schools, but may be used for California Education Code Section 1981 classification purposes. Community Learning Center, a charter school that was established under the umbrella of court and community schools by the Kern County Board of Education in 1994, was also an educational alternative available to all students who were expelled from districts in Kern County. The Community Learning Center program discontinued operation as a charter school and has reverted back to operation as part of the Kern County Community School program, and does continue to offer educational services to expelled students. These two county level educational alternatives (Court Schools and Community Schools) will be available to all Kern County students who have been expelled from district programs when the district board of education determines they are the most appropriate placement.

Educational alternatives offered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office include the following:

- Court Schools
  - Central School \*
  - Avenues to Change\*
  - Juvenile Hall\*
  - Pathways\*
  - Star Academy (Transitioning High-Risk Youth)\*
- Erwin Owen High School \*
- Jamison Children's Center \*
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Day School Services)\*
- Redwood High School \*
- Sandstone Academy (Day School Services) \*
- Community Schools
  - Auburn Community School
  - Community Learning Center-34<sup>th</sup> Street
  - East Kern Community School
  - Kelly F. Blanton Education Center
  - Bakersfield Elementary Community School

- Community Learning Center-Tech
- Pride Academy (High-Risk First Time Offender)\*
- Lake Isabella Community School
- North Kern Community School
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Community School Services)
- Sillect Community School
- West Kern Community School

*\*Placement by Non-Education Agency Required*

## **GAPS IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO EXPELLED STUDENTS AND STRATEGIES FOR FILLING THOSE GAPS**

1. The average district enrollment in Kern County is approximately one third the state average. This smaller district size, together with the rural characteristics of the county, make it difficult to offer the range of alternatives often found in the larger urban districts. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a county community school program that is committed to providing educational services to all school districts in the county and that employs a variety of instructional strategies, including those that are capable of overcoming obstacles associated with providing educational services to rural, often isolated, settings. An additional gap that has been identified in recent years is the need to try to keep as much structure in these county-level alternatives as possible. The response to the identification of this gap, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has implemented several layers of strategies. The first is the expansion of classroom options in the Community School program. The number of Community School classrooms has expanded to 45 in 2004-05, up to 51 in 2005-06, up to 60 in 2006-07 and additional classrooms in the North Kern County area planned for 2007-08. In addition to the increase in numbers of classrooms, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has added the very structured (six to eight hours per day) High Risk First Time Offender and Transitional High-Risk Youth programs (Pride and Star Academies) to its non-residential programs. While this gap has been a focus of a great deal of energy, getting the more structured programming into the less-populated, rural areas of the county continues to be a gap. The more serious gap is associated with the current statute that establishes a cap on county-operated community day schools and restricts the ability to provide this more structured programs to expelled students who have exhausted district-level alternatives.
2. Students who commit an expulsion offense during an expulsion period may have limited alternatives that remain available for secondary placement. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a commitment to providing educational services to students, regardless of repeated offenses. These services may be in locations where the distance factor becomes a serious obstacle, but an educational alternative will exist if the necessary commitment exists with student and parent. One strategy that has been employed at the county-level programs is to provide intense training to educational staff that

improves their skills at diffusing potentially volatile situations with students, and subsequently decreasing the likelihood of a problem escalating to an expellable level. Another strategy employed at the county-level programs is the increase in the level of staff providing campus supervision, with one outcome being to decrease the likelihood of a problem being able to escalate to an expellable level. While the existing strategies have produced satisfactory results, the gap continues to exist.

3. Students who are in grades K-6 who are expelled do not have the same educational options available as do their grades 7-12 counterparts. Students in grades K-6 are also expelled at a much lower rate than students in grades 7-12. These two factors, together with the requirement that educational services for students in grades K-6 can not be merged or combined with services to students in grades 7-12 make it very difficult to identify an educational placement for the expelled student who is in grades K-6. The strategy for addressing this problem was to develop a cooperative plan for maintaining a multi-district educational alternative capable of serving this smaller, more isolated student population. Following meetings with a team of district superintendents, an initial plan was to have the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office attempt to address this problem through a Bakersfield Community Day School serving elementary students. After two years of operation, it was determined that the existing “cap on eligible enrollment” for county-operated community day schools resulted in a funding level that was inadequate to operate a credible program through the county office of education. Following a second meeting with a team of district superintendents, it was determined that 1) the county operation of the program made the most sense, and 2) the districts would be willing to supplement the costs in order to have the placement for K-6 students available at all times. That structure was implemented and has successfully operated for the past three years. Unfortunately, the strategy for addressing this problem identifies a gap of under-funding for K-6 services in a county community school.
4. The changes over the past nine years relative to the establishment and elimination of community day schools in Kern County represents efforts by all Local Educational Agencies to have a continuum of educational services available to its expelled students that is practical, functional and in the best interest of its students. The history of attempts at operation of community day schools reflects an awareness of this alternative. Kern County has had eight districts attempt to operate community day schools since 1995 and has four districts actively operating community day schools at this time. As the above listed gaps are addressed, establishment of community day schools at the district and county levels continues to be a strategy that is explored.

## **ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO FAIL COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL PLACEMENTS**

The Court School and Community School programs operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office maintains a standing policy of accepting all students who have been expelled from their district of residence and who have exhausted the alternatives offered by the district. If an initial placement is made to a district operated community day school and the student commits an expulsion offense or fails the program, the Elk Hills School District Board of Education shall review the plan of rehabilitation that was established at the time of expulsion and make the adjustments necessary. If there is no educational alternative in the Elk Hills School District, the student may be referred to the county community school program.

## **EXISTING EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS**

### **Midway School District**

All educational alternatives provided by California's school districts are not available to all expelled students and most are not available to any expelled students. Seriousness of offense, location of offense and grade level of the student all have the potential to restrict the district level educational alternatives available to the student during the period of expulsion. Students expelled for any of the offenses listed in subdivisions (a) or (c) of Section 48915 of the California Education Code shall not be permitted to enroll in any district operated program during the period of the expulsion unless it is a community day school (California Education Code Section 48915.2). All expelled students shall be referred to an educational placement that is 1) not provided at a comprehensive middle, junior or senior high school or any elementary school and 2) not housed at the school site attended by the student at the time of the offense (California Education Code Section 48915). If the expelled student is in grades K-6, the educational placement for the student shall not be merged or combined with educational programs offered to students in grades 7-12 (California Education Code Section 48916.1). In addition to the above listed requirements, such factors as district size, district level alternatives, county level alternatives and district philosophy can impact the determination by a district board of education of what educational alternatives are appropriate for the students who are expelled.

It is the determination of the Midway School District Board of Education that the following district level educational alternatives, if deemed appropriate, be available as placements for students expelled from Midway School District:

Midway Community Day School

## **Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office**

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office offers educational alternatives to expelled students through its court and community schools. Court schools require the formal placement of students into the program by the juvenile court or its probation/parole department representatives. These programs can be either residential or non-residential and expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement. Community schools enrollment may require referral from the school district of residence and these schools provide services to students in accordance with California Education Code Sections 1981a and 1981c. Expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement of a student in community schools, but may be used for California Education Code Section 1981 classification purposes. Community Learning Center, a charter school that was established under the umbrella of court and community schools by the Kern County Board of Education in 1994, was also an educational alternative available to all students who were expelled from districts in Kern County. The Community Learning Center program discontinued operation as a charter school and has reverted back to operation as part of the Kern County Community School program, and does continue to offer educational services to expelled students. These two county level educational alternatives (Court Schools and Community Schools) will be available to all Kern County students who have been expelled from district programs when the district board of education determines they are the most appropriate placement.

Educational alternatives offered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office include the following:

- Court Schools
  - Central School \*
  - Avenues to Change\*
  - Juvenile Hall\*
  - Pathways\*
  - Star Academy (Transitioning High-Risk Youth)\*
- Erwin Owen High School \*
- Jamison Children's Center \*
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Day School Services)\*
- Redwood High School \*
- Sandstone Academy (Day School Services) \*
- Community Schools
  - Auburn Community School
  - Community Learning Center-34<sup>th</sup> Street
  - East Kern Community School
  - Kelly F. Blanton Education Center
  - Bakersfield Elementary Community School

- Community Learning Center-Tech
- Pride Academy (High-Risk First Time Offender)\*
- Lake Isabella Community School
- North Kern Community School
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Community School Services)
- Sillect Community School
- West Kern Community School

*\*Placement by Non-Education Agency Required*

## **GAPS IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO EXPELLED STUDENTS AND STRATEGIES FOR FILLING THOSE GAPS**

1. The average district enrollment in Kern County is approximately one third the state average. This smaller district size, together with the rural characteristics of the county, make it difficult to offer the range of alternatives often found in the larger urban districts. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a county community school program that is committed to providing educational services to all school districts in the county and that employs a variety of instructional strategies, including those that are capable of overcoming obstacles associated with providing educational services to rural, often isolated, settings. An additional gap that has been identified in recent years is the need to try to keep as much structure in these county-level alternatives as possible. The response to the identification of this gap, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has implemented several layers of strategies. The first is the expansion of classroom options in the Community School program. The number of Community School classrooms has expanded to 45 in 2004-05, up to 51 in 2005-06, up to 60 in 2006-07 and additional classrooms in the North Kern County area planned for 2007-08. In addition to the increase in numbers of classrooms, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has added the very structured (six to eight hours per day) High Risk First Time Offender and Transitional High-Risk Youth programs (Pride and Star Academies) to its non-residential programs. While this gap has been a focus of a great deal of energy, getting the more structured programming into the less-populated, rural areas of the county continues to be a gap. The more serious gap is associated with the current statute that establishes a cap on county-operated community day schools and restricts the ability to provide this more structured programs to expelled students who have exhausted district-level alternatives.
2. Students who commit an expulsion offense during an expulsion period may have limited alternatives that remain available for secondary placement. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a commitment to providing educational services to students, regardless of repeated offenses. These services may be in locations where the distance factor becomes a serious obstacle, but an educational alternative will exist if the necessary commitment exists with student and parent. One strategy that has been employed at the county-level programs is to provide intense training to educational staff that

improves their skills at diffusing potentially volatile situations with students, and subsequently decreasing the likelihood of a problem escalating to an expellable level. Another strategy employed at the county-level programs is the increase in the level of staff providing campus supervision, with one outcome being to decrease the likelihood of a problem being able to escalate to an expellable level. While the existing strategies have produced satisfactory results, the gap continues to exist.

3. Students who are in grades K-6 who are expelled do not have the same educational options available as do their grades 7-12 counterparts. Students in grades K-6 are also expelled at a much lower rate than students in grades 7-12. These two factors, together with the requirement that educational services for students in grades K-6 can not be merged or combined with services to students in grades 7-12 make it very difficult to identify an educational placement for the expelled student who is in grades K-6. The strategy for addressing this problem was to develop a cooperative plan for maintaining a multi-district educational alternative capable of serving this smaller, more isolated student population. Following meetings with a team of district superintendents, an initial plan was to have the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office attempt to address this problem through a Bakersfield Community Day School serving elementary students. After two years of operation, it was determined that the existing “cap on eligible enrollment” for county-operated community day schools resulted in a funding level that was inadequate to operate a credible program through the county office of education. Following a second meeting with a team of district superintendents, it was determined that 1) the county operation of the program made the most sense, and 2) the districts would be willing to supplement the costs in order to have the placement for K-6 students available at all times. That structure was implemented and has successfully operated for the past three years. Unfortunately, the strategy for addressing this problem identifies a gap of under-funding for K-6 services in a county community school.
4. The changes over the past nine years relative to the establishment and elimination of community day schools in Kern County represents efforts by all Local Educational Agencies to have a continuum of educational services available to its expelled students that is practical, functional and in the best interest of its students. The history of attempts at operation of community day schools reflects an awareness of this alternative. Kern County has had eight districts attempt to operate community day schools since 1995 and has four districts actively operating community day schools at this time. As the above listed gaps are addressed, establishment of community day schools at the district and county levels continues to be a strategy that is explored.

## **ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO FAIL COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL PLACEMENTS**

The Court School and Community School programs operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office maintains a standing policy of accepting all students who have been expelled from their district of residence and who have exhausted the alternatives offered by the district. If an initial placement is made to a district operated community day school and the student commits an expulsion offense or fails the program, the Midway School District Board of Education shall review the plan of rehabilitation that was established at the time of expulsion and make the adjustments necessary. If there is no educational alternative in the Midway School District, the student may be referred to the county community school program.

## **EXISTING EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS**

### **Mojave Unified School District**

All educational alternatives provided by California's school districts are not available to all expelled students and most are not available to any expelled students. Seriousness of offense, location of offense and grade level of the student all have the potential to restrict the district level educational alternatives available to the student during the period of expulsion. Students expelled for any of the offenses listed in subdivisions (a) or (c) of Section 48915 of the California Education Code shall not be permitted to enroll in any district operated program during the period of the expulsion unless it is a community day school (California Education Code Section 48915.2). All expelled students shall be referred to an educational placement that is 1) not provided at a comprehensive middle, junior or senior high school or any elementary school and 2) not housed at the school site attended by the student at the time of the offense (California Education Code Section 48915). If the expelled student is in grades K-6, the educational placement for the student shall not be merged or combined with educational programs offered to students in grades 7-12 (California Education Code Section 48916.1). In addition to the above listed requirements, such factors as district size, district level alternatives, county level alternatives and district philosophy can impact the determination by a district board of education of what educational alternatives are appropriate for the students who are expelled.

It is the determination of the Mojave Unified School District Board of Education that the following district level educational alternatives, if deemed appropriate, be available as placements for students expelled from Mojave Unified School District:

Red Rock Community Day School

## **Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office**

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office offers educational alternatives to expelled students through its court and community schools. Court schools require the formal placement of students into the program by the juvenile court or its probation/parole department representatives. These programs can be either residential or non-residential and expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement. Community schools enrollment may require referral from the school district of residence and these schools provide services to students in accordance with California Education Code Sections 1981a and 1981c. Expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement of a student in community schools, but may be used for California Education Code Section 1981 classification purposes. Community Learning Center, a charter school that was established under the umbrella of court and community schools by the Kern County Board of Education in 1994, was also an educational alternative available to all students who were expelled from districts in Kern County. The Community Learning Center program discontinued operation as a charter school and has reverted back to operation as part of the Kern County Community School program, and does continue to offer educational services to expelled students. These two county level educational alternatives (Court Schools and Community Schools) will be available to all Kern County students who have been expelled from district programs when the district board of education determines they are the most appropriate placement.

Educational alternatives offered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office include the following:

- Court Schools
  - Central School \*
  - Avenues to Change\*
  - Juvenile Hall\*
  - Pathways\*
  - Star Academy (Transitioning High-Risk Youth)\*
- Erwin Owen High School \*
- Jamison Children's Center \*
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Day School Services)\*
- Redwood High School \*
- Sandstone Academy (Day School Services) \*
- Community Schools
  - Auburn Community School
  - Community Learning Center-34<sup>th</sup> Street
  - East Kern Community School
  - Kelly F. Blanton Education Center
  - Bakersfield Elementary Community School

- Community Learning Center-Tech
- Pride Academy (High-Risk First Time Offender)\*
- Lake Isabella Community School
- North Kern Community School
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Community School Services)
- Sillect Community School
- West Kern Community School

*\*Placement by Non-Education Agency Required*

## **GAPS IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO EXPELLED STUDENTS AND STRATEGIES FOR FILLING THOSE GAPS**

1. The average district enrollment in Kern County is approximately one third the state average. This smaller district size, together with the rural characteristics of the county, make it difficult to offer the range of alternatives often found in the larger urban districts. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a county community school program that is committed to providing educational services to all school districts in the county and that employs a variety of instructional strategies, including those that are capable of overcoming obstacles associated with providing educational services to rural, often isolated, settings. An additional gap that has been identified in recent years is the need to try to keep as much structure in these county-level alternatives as possible. The response to the identification of this gap, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has implemented several layers of strategies. The first is the expansion of classroom options in the Community School program. The number of Community School classrooms has expanded to 45 in 2004-05, up to 51 in 2005-06, up to 60 in 2006-07 and additional classrooms in the North Kern County area planned for 2007-08. In addition to the increase in numbers of classrooms, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has added the very structured (six to eight hours per day) High Risk First Time Offender and Transitional High-Risk Youth programs (Pride and Star Academies) to its non-residential programs. While this gap has been a focus of a great deal of energy, getting the more structured programming into the less-populated, rural areas of the county continues to be a gap. The more serious gap is associated with the current statute that establishes a cap on county-operated community day schools and restricts the ability to provide this more structured programs to expelled students who have exhausted district-level alternatives.
2. Students who commit an expulsion offense during an expulsion period may have limited alternatives that remain available for secondary placement. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a commitment to providing educational services to students, regardless of repeated offenses. These services may be in locations where the distance factor becomes a serious obstacle, but an educational alternative will exist if the necessary commitment exists with student and parent. One strategy that has been employed at the county-level programs is to provide intense training to educational staff that

improves their skills at diffusing potentially volatile situations with students, and subsequently decreasing the likelihood of a problem escalating to an expellable level. Another strategy employed at the county-level programs is the increase in the level of staff providing campus supervision, with one outcome being to decrease the likelihood of a problem being able to escalate to an expellable level. While the existing strategies have produced satisfactory results, the gap continues to exist.

3. Students who are in grades K-6 who are expelled do not have the same educational options available as do their grades 7-12 counterparts. Students in grades K-6 are also expelled at a much lower rate than students in grades 7-12. These two factors, together with the requirement that educational services for students in grades K-6 can not be merged or combined with services to students in grades 7-12 make it very difficult to identify an educational placement for the expelled student who is in grades K-6. The strategy for addressing this problem was to develop a cooperative plan for maintaining a multi-district educational alternative capable of serving this smaller, more isolated student population. Following meetings with a team of district superintendents, an initial plan was to have the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office attempt to address this problem through a Bakersfield Community Day School serving elementary students. After two years of operation, it was determined that the existing “cap on eligible enrollment” for county-operated community day schools resulted in a funding level that was inadequate to operate a credible program through the county office of education. Following a second meeting with a team of district superintendents, it was determined that 1) the county operation of the program made the most sense, and 2) the districts would be willing to supplement the costs in order to have the placement for K-6 students available at all times. That structure was implemented and has successfully operated for the past three years. Unfortunately, the strategy for addressing this problem identifies a gap of under-funding for K-6 services in a county community school.
4. The changes over the past nine years relative to the establishment and elimination of community day schools in Kern County represents efforts by all Local Educational Agencies to have a continuum of educational services available to its expelled students that is practical, functional and in the best interest of its students. The history of attempts at operation of community day schools reflects an awareness of this alternative. Kern County has had eight districts attempt to operate community day schools since 1995 and has four districts actively operating community day schools at this time. As the above listed gaps are addressed, establishment of community day schools at the district and county levels continues to be a strategy that is explored.

## **ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO FAIL COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL PLACEMENTS**

The Court School and Community School programs operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office maintains a standing policy of accepting all students who have been expelled from their district of residence and who have exhausted the alternatives offered by the district. If an initial placement is made to a district operated community day school and the student commits an expulsion offense or fails the program, the Mojave Unified School District Board of Education shall review the plan of rehabilitation that was established at the time of expulsion and make the adjustments necessary. If there is no educational alternative in the Mojave Unified School District, the student may be referred to the county community school program.

## **EXISTING EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS**

### **Taft City School District**

All educational alternatives provided by California's school districts are not available to all expelled students and most are not available to any expelled students. Seriousness of offense, location of offense and grade level of the student all have the potential to restrict the district level educational alternatives available to the student during the period of expulsion. Students expelled for any of the offenses listed in Subdivisions (a) or (c) of Section 48915 of the California Education Code shall not be permitted to enroll in any district operated program during the period of the expulsion unless it is a community day school (California Education Code Section 48915.2). All expelled students shall be referred to an educational placement that is 1) not provided at a comprehensive middle, junior or senior high school or any elementary school and 2) not housed at the school site attended by the student at the time of the offense (California Education Code Section 48915). If the expelled student is in grades K-6, the educational placement for the student shall not be merged or combined with educational programs offered to students in grades 7-12 (California Education Code Section 48916.1). In addition to the above listed requirements, such factors as district size, district level alternatives, county level alternatives and district philosophy can impact the determination by a district board of education of what educational alternatives are appropriate for the students who are expelled.

It is the determination of the Taft City School District Board of Education that the following district level educational alternatives, if deemed appropriate, be available as placements for students expelled from Taft City School District:

Taft Community Day School

## **Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office**

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office offers educational alternatives to expelled students through its court and community schools. Court schools require the formal placement of students into the program by the juvenile court or its probation/parole department representatives. These programs can be either residential or non-residential and expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement. Community schools enrollment may require referral from the school district of residence and these schools provide services to students in accordance with California Education Code Sections 1981a and 1981c. Expulsion status of a student has no negative impact on eligibility or placement of a student in community schools, but may be used for California Education Code Section 1981 classification purposes. Community Learning Center, a charter school that was established under the umbrella of court and community schools by the Kern County Board of Education in 1994, was also an educational alternative available to all students who were expelled from districts in Kern County. The Community Learning Center program discontinued operation as a charter school and has reverted back to operation as part of the Kern County Community School program, and does continue to offer educational services to expelled students. These two county level educational alternatives (Court Schools and Community Schools) will be available to all Kern County students who have been expelled from district programs when the district board of education determines they are the most appropriate placement.

Educational alternatives offered by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office include the following:

- Court Schools
  - Central School \*
  - Avenues to Change\*
  - Juvenile Hall\*
  - Pathways\*
  - Star Academy (Transitioning High-Risk Youth)\*
- Erwin Owen High School \*
- Jamison Children's Center \*
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Day School Services)\*
- Redwood High School \*
- Sandstone Academy (Day School Services) \*
- Community Schools
  - Auburn Community School
  - Community Learning Center-34<sup>th</sup> Street
  - East Kern Community School
  - Kelly F. Blanton Education Center
  - Bakersfield Elementary Community School

- Community Learning Center-Tech
- Pride Academy (High-Risk First Time Offender)\*
- Lake Isabella Community School
- North Kern Community School
- Ridgecrest Learning Center (Community School Services)
- Sillect Community School
- West Kern Community School

*\*Placement by Non-Education Agency Required*

## **GAPS IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO EXPELLED STUDENTS AND STRATEGIES FOR FILLING THOSE GAPS**

1. The average district enrollment in Kern County is approximately one third the state average. This smaller district size, together with the rural characteristics of the county, make it difficult to offer the range of alternatives often found in the larger urban districts. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a county community school program that is committed to providing educational services to all school districts in the county and that employs a variety of instructional strategies, including those that are capable of overcoming obstacles associated with providing educational services to rural, often isolated, settings. An additional gap that has been identified in recent years is the need to try to keep as much structure in these county-level alternatives as possible. The response to the identification of this gap, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has implemented several layers of strategies. The first is the expansion of classroom options in the Community School program. The number of Community School classrooms has expanded to 45 in 2004-05, up to 51 in 2005-06, up to 60 in 2006-07 and additional classrooms in the North Kern County area planned for 2007-08. In addition to the increase in numbers of classrooms, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office has added the very structured (six to eight hours per day) High Risk First Time Offender and Transitional High-Risk Youth programs (Pride and Star Academies) to its non-residential programs. While this gap has been a focus of a great deal of energy, getting the more structured programming into the less-populated, rural areas of the county continues to be a gap. The more serious gap is associated with the current statute that establishes a cap on county-operated community day schools and restricts the ability to provide this more structured programs to expelled students who have exhausted district-level alternatives.
2. Students who commit an expulsion offense during an expulsion period may have limited alternatives that remain available for secondary placement. The strategy for addressing this problem is to maintain a commitment to providing educational services to students, regardless of repeated offenses. These services may be in locations where the distance factor becomes a serious obstacle, but an educational alternative will exist if the necessary commitment exists with student and parent. One strategy that has been employed at the county-level programs is to provide intense training to educational staff that

improves their skills at diffusing potentially volatile situations with students, and subsequently decreasing the likelihood of a problem escalating to an expellable level. Another strategy employed at the county-level programs is the increase in the level of staff providing campus supervision, with one outcome being to decrease the likelihood of a problem being able to escalate to an expellable level. While the existing strategies have produced satisfactory results, the gap continues to exist.

3. Students who are in grades K-6 who are expelled do not have the same educational options available as do their grades 7-12 counterparts. Students in grades K-6 are also expelled at a much lower rate than students in grades 7-12. These two factors, together with the requirement that educational services for students in grades K-6 can not be merged or combined with services to students in grades 7-12 make it very difficult to identify an educational placement for the expelled student who is in grades K-6. The strategy for addressing this problem was to develop a cooperative plan for maintaining a multi-district educational alternative capable of serving this smaller, more isolated student population. Following meetings with a team of district superintendents, an initial plan was to have the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office attempt to address this problem through a Bakersfield Community Day School serving elementary students. After two years of operation, it was determined that the existing “cap on eligible enrollment” for county-operated community day schools resulted in a funding level that was inadequate to operate a credible program through the county office of education. Following a second meeting with a team of district superintendents, it was determined that 1) the county operation of the program made the most sense, and 2) the districts would be willing to supplement the costs in order to have the placement for K-6 students available at all times. That structure was implemented and has successfully operated for the past three years. Unfortunately, the strategy for addressing this problem identifies a gap of under-funding for K-6 services in a county community school.
4. The changes over the past nine years relative to the establishment and elimination of community day schools in Kern County represents efforts by all Local Educational Agencies to have a continuum of educational services available to its expelled students that is practical, functional and in the best interest of its students. The history of attempts at operation of community day schools reflects an awareness of this alternative. Kern County has had eight districts attempt to operate community day schools since 1995 and has four districts actively operating community day schools at this time. As the above listed gaps are addressed, establishment of community day schools at the district and county levels continues to be a strategy that is explored.

## **ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WHO FAIL COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL PLACEMENTS**

The Court School and Community School programs operated by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office maintains a standing policy of accepting all students who have been expelled from their district of residence and who have exhausted the alternatives offered by the district. If an initial placement is made to a district operated community day school and the student commits an expulsion offense or fails the program, the Taft City School District Board of Education shall review the plan of rehabilitation that was established at the time of expulsion and make the adjustments necessary. If there is no educational alternative in the Taft City School District, the student may be referred to the county community school program.