



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 21.20

Subject:	Non-Traditional Educational Settings
Authority:	TCA 37-5-105, 37-5-106
Standards:	DCS Practice Standards: 6-400, 6-401, 6-404
Application:	To All DCS Employees, Contract Provider Agencies, Children/Youth in DCS Custody excluding those placed in a Youth Development Center

Policy Statement:

The Department of Children's Services will make every effort to acquire appropriate educational services and resources for children/youth when treatment needs indicate an alternative to public school attendance is required.

Purpose:

To identify and outline placement procedures for educational settings other than public school.

Procedures:

<p>A. Provider agency and DCS in-house schools</p>	<p>1. Determination of school setting</p> <p>The child/youth's treatment plan must document treatment needs that would interfere with public school attendance. The following are examples of some reasons for a non traditional school setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Current identified alcohol and drug treatment issues that require a self-contained treatment program; b) Identified sexual offending treatment issues that require a self-contained program; c) Zero tolerance issues that prohibit enrollment, despite involvement and efforts of the educational specialist and/or the DCS attorney; d) Placement in wilderness programs in which the treatment regime is so integrally related to the educational program that attendance at public school would disrupt treatment; e) Crisis requiring intensive supervision due to community or child-safety treatment needs, or crisis such that the child is at imminent risk of disruption of placement; f) Public school placement would cause youth to lose academic credits. Such determination will be made through a Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) and will include a best interest of the child analysis.
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	<p>2. Procedures for in-house school attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Use form CS-0772, Educational Placement Evaluation to document compliance. b) If the child/youth requires an in-house educational program, the child/youth may be in that educational setting up to thirty (30) total days. c) Prior to the end of the thirty-day (30) limit, the agency where the child is attending school must contact the child's Family Service Worker (FSW) to request the scheduling of a CFTM. The CFTM should include the FSW, agency representative(s); the resource parents, any individual with educational rights, the educational specialist, and, as necessary and appropriate, a DCS attorney, health unit staff, and other professionals. In-house school staff must invite a representative from the local education agency. A target date for entry into public school will be established. The FSW will have the responsibility for reviewing the child's progress in order to enroll the child in public school at the earliest possible date. d) During the CFTM, a consensus should be reached regarding the educational services that would best meet the needs of the child/youth and his/her treatment plan. If the consensus indicates that the child/youth should continue to receive services at an in-house school or other alternative to public school, the treatment team will establish the specific treatment issues that require the child/youth to be in the in-house school and provide a review and target date for completion of the treatment and projected date for transition to public school. The reasons for such placement and the goals of such educational services must be included in the documentation along with an expected duration or time frame. e) If no consensus regarding the most appropriate educational setting is reached during the CFTM, the FSW and the education specialist will within three (3) days of the meeting, present the case directly to the regional administrator for a decision.
<p>B. Emergency Shelters/Primary Treatment Centers (PTC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a child/youth is placed in an emergency shelter or a PTC, attempts will be made to keep him/her in their former school if it is in the child/youth's best interest. The CFTM will determine the child's best interest regarding school placement location. 2. If a child/youth is placed in an emergency shelter and is not able to attend public school, this time period (thirty (30) days for a shelter) must be used as an educational assessment period by the agency. The agency's staff in conjunction with the school liaison will develop an education plan to allow the child/youth to complete remedial or ongoing schoolwork during the remainder of his/her stay. 3. At the end of the placement in the emergency shelter, agency staff and DCS education staff will provide to the Family Service Worker (FSW) any recommendations for future evaluations and educational programs.

<p>C. Additional exceptions to public school placement</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The following circumstances may be cause for approval of an exception to public school attendance so that the youth can be enrolled in alternative education programs: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Youth who are appropriate for G.E.D. preparation, or who are eligible to take the G.E.D exam; b) Youth eligible for and desiring enrollment in vocational or journeyman training; and c) Youth who have graduated from high school or achieved a G.E.D. 2. In the rare instance that a child/youth has been excluded from public school and cannot be readmitted in another public school setting (such as in some zero-tolerance instances), a CFTM will be convened to consider alternative educational options. 3. Non-Public Schools - With the exception of state custody students placed in provider agencies that have in-house schools, students in state custody may attend a non-public school only if the decision is made by the CFT and the team receives the approval of the DCS Director of Education. FSWs shall notify the regional Education Specialist when placement in a non-public school (other than a recognized provider’s in-house school) is being considered by a Child and Family Team. 4. Home Schooling - Generally, home schooling of children/youth in state custody is appropriate only under certain situations and may occur only with CFT approval along with the approval of the DCS Director of Education. FSWs shall notify the regional Educational Specialist when home schooling is being considered by a Child and Family Team.
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<p>Forms:</p>	<p><u>CS-0772, Educational Placement Evaluation</u></p>
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<p>Collateral documents:</p>	<p><i>DCS Education Work Plan</i></p>
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