



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 21.20

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| 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 shall 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: | |
| A. Provider agency and DCS in-house schools | <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 as recommended by the child/youth's Child and Family Team (CFT). This must be documented on form CS-0772, Educational Placement and Evaluation. 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) The CFT determines that intensive supervision is required due to child or community safety needs or that the student is at imminent risk of disrupting his or her placement. e) Public school placement would cause youth to lose academic credits or postpone his/her graduation. Such determination will be made through the Child and Family Team process 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 the decision making process for the initial and all subsequent educational placement meetings.- 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 continuing services in the alternative setting, the team will document treatment reasons for this decision. In addition, the team will provide a review and target date for completion of the treatment and a projected date for transition to public school. 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 Primary Treatment Center (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 the Family Service Worker (FSW) with any recommendations for future evaluations and educational programs. |

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| <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 DCS custody students placed in provider agencies that have in-house schools, students in DCS custody may attend a non-pubic school only if the decision is made by the CFT and the team receives the approval of the DCS Director of Education. FSWs will 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 and 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> |
| <p>Collateral documents:</p> | <p><i>DCS Education Work Plan</i></p> |