

GEORGE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL
2026 / 2027 HANDBOOK



APPROVED

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G C SCHOOL BOARD

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This handbook is to be used in conjunction with the district handbooks.

George County Secondary Handbook

George County Elementary Handbook

The intent of this handbook is to provide for alternative means in addressing the academic, disciplinary, and social/emotional needs of students placed in the George County Alternative School Program.

Alternative Education Program

Alternative Education exists to meet the behavioral needs of students that cannot be addressed in a traditional classroom setting. The assignment of students to alternative classrooms, centers, or campuses that are designed to remediate academic performance, improve behavior, or provide an enhanced learning experience is an effort to correct student behavior and return him/her to the regular classroom. Alternative Education programs do not include career or technical centers or departments.

Locations

The Elementary Alternative School is located on the campus of L. T. Taylor Intermediate School. The Elementary Alternative School operates Monday through Friday. The hours of operation are 7:30 am to 2:40 pm and provide for 330 minutes of educational services.

The Secondary Alternative School is located on the campus of George County Middle School and operates Monday through Friday. The hours of operation will be from 7:40 am to 2:50 pm and provides for 330 minutes of educational services.

Mission

The mission of the George County School District, along with our community partners, is to prepare and empower our students with the knowledge and skills that are essential in being college and/or career ready.

Goals

The goals of the GCSD Alternative School Program are:

- To provide an educational environment in which students can regain self-control, self-discipline, self-respect, and respect for authority while continuing to learn academic subject material.
- To increase student achievement.
- To provide instruction and models for socially desirable behavior, positive attitudes, and establish work ethics.
- To improve poor attendance patterns.

Placement Criteria

Based on Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated 37-13-92, school districts shall establish, maintain and operate, in connection with the regular programs of the school district, an alternative school program or behavior modification. GCSD Policy JCD- Alternative School GCSD Policy JCAA- Due Process

Alternative School Placement Appeal — Goss vs. Lopez

All students who are recommended to alternative school are entitled to due process. Students may appeal the alternative school placement decision to a Discipline Review Board. The next level for appeal will be with the school board. Goss vs. Lopez affords a student the right to an informal notice of charges, explanation of the evidence, and an opportunity to present his/her version of the story.

Elementary Students

As outlined in the Elementary Student Handbook of the George County School District, students are assigned to the GCSD Elementary Alternative School by recommendation from the principal of the student's home campus and/or the Discipline Review Board. The principal will schedule an appointment with the alternative school administrator for the student and parent on the start date for the alternative school placement.

Students remanded to the program must remain in the alternative setting as required by the school board policy. However, the school board has wide discretion and may require a semester or more depending on the severity of the behavior.

Length of Stay

Grade Level	1st Placement	Repeat Placement
Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd	Up to 20 days	20 days
3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th	Up to 45 days	45 days

Students who reach the alternative school step on the discipline ladder will be referred to a Discipline Review Board for possible expulsion.

Secondary Students

Students who are currently enrolled in grades 7–12 in the George County School District.

Students grades 7–12 who are referred to such alternative school based upon a documented need for placement in the alternative program by the parent, legal guardian or custodian of such a child due to disciplinary problems.

Students grade 7–12 who are referred to such alternative school by the dispositive order of a chancellor or youth court judge, with the consent of the superintendent of the child's school district.

Students grade 7–12 whose presence in the classroom, in the determination of the superintendent or principal, is a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the students and teacher of such class as a whole.

Students Entering From Out-of-Home Placement

The school district is not required to place a child returning from out-of-home placement in the mental health, juvenile justice or foster care system in alternative school. Placement of a child in the alternative school shall be done consistently, and for the students identified under the Individuals

with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), shall adhere to the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. If a school district chooses to place a child in alternative school, the district will make an individual assessment and evaluation of that child in the following time periods:

1. Five (5) days for a child transitioning from a group home, mental health care system and/or the custody of the Department of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services;
2. Ten (10) days for child transitioning from a dispositional placement order by a youth court pursuant to Section 43-21-605; and
3. An individualized assessment for youth transitioning from out-of-home placement to the alternative school shall include:
 - a. A strength needs assessment.
 - b. A determination of the child's academic strengths and deficiencies.
 - c. A proposed plan for transitioning the child to a regular education placement at the earliest possible date.
4. An individual enrolling from homeschool with no prior school setting history will be placed in alternative school for a transition period determined by the school principal.

Attendance

All George County Alternative School students are expected to attend for the number of days assigned. Days missed due to excessive absences must be made up before being dismissed from Alternative School.

Academic Program

Faculty/Staff/Support Services

Alternative faculty and staff meet the required certifications, clearances, and credentials outlined by George County School District and the Mississippi Department of Education requirements.

School counselors and certified special education staff will continue to service students through their alternative placements.

Continuing Education for Students

Students receive work from his/her home campus to complete while in the alternative school along with additional work provided to assist the student in mastering the state standards for the appropriate grade level. Students may also receive instruction and work through Google Classroom.

Awarding Credits

Academic credit for courses taken by students in the George County School District shall be awarded upon successful completion of courses. Credit for high school courses will be awarded in half-units, full units, or multiple units as approved by the Commission on School Accreditation, State Department of Education.

Progress Monitoring

Elementary and Middle School students utilize I-Ready, IXL, or ELS for progress monitoring and the High School Students utilize ELS for progress monitoring. End of quarter tests are also given for grades first through eleventh to measure student growth of MSCCR Standards. All alternative school students will take their grade level/subject area state test.

Individual Instructional Plans (IIP) and Individual Education Plans (IEP)

All students without an IEP will have an Individual Instructional Plan (IIP).

All students with Individual Educational Plans (IEP) will be serviced according to their individual plans. All services provided for the student under his/her IEP will continue in Alternative School. Copies of IIPs and IEPs are maintained at Alternative School.

Grading System

The Alternative School will follow George County School District's grading policy. Student work/Grades will be sent weekly to the student's teachers.

Extracurricular Activities

Alternative School students are prohibited from participating in any school or district extracurricular activities or be present at any extracurricular activity on or off any school campus in the district.

Counseling Services

School Counselors will provide counseling services for Alternative School Students weekly. Counselors or behavior specialists will provide or oversee Character Education lessons.

School Counselors will be in contact with parents to provide their contact information and to provide support to the parents of Alternative Students.

Student Conduct and Discipline

Alternative School students are expected to follow all rules and procedures set forth in the George County Elementary School Handbook and George County High School Student Handbook (i.e. dress code, attendance, cell phone policy, etc.). Please refer to the student handbook posted on the district website for specifics.

In addition, the following consequences will be in place for students who commit infractions while in Alternative School:

Severe Offenses:

Open Defiance, Profanity or Vulgarity, Fighting, Running from Authority, Inappropriate Internet Usage, Other misbehaviors designed by the administration that severely disrupts school.

First Offense	5 Days OSS
Second Offense	Recommendation to Discipline Review Board

*Extreme Offenses:

- Running from authority, attempting to or leaving campus
- Possession of or use of tobacco, electronic cigarettes, or vaping devices
- Possession of or use of alcohol, counterfeit substances, or drug related products
- Possession or use of dangerous objects
- Possession or use of fireworks or explosive device
- Possession or use of a weapon; not limited to guns, knives, objects utilized as a weapon and bodily fluids
- Possession/Distribution of pornographic materials or contraceptives
- Indecent exposure/behaviors

****Student suspended and Recommendation to Discipline Review Board for expulsion for: the school term; the semester; or one calendar school year.***

Transportation and Bus Conduct

Transportation will be determined on a "case by case" basis.

- All elementary and secondary students assigned to alternative school will be picked up and dropped off at the designated area of their home school in the George County School District and transported to L.T. Taylor Intermediate School for elementary students and George County Middle School for secondary students.
- Upon arrival at the home school, all students who are assigned to alternative school will assemble in a location designated by the school principal. Students shall not congregate.
- No alternative school student will be unattended while on home school campus. During the morning arrival and afternoon dismissal, a designated supervisor for all alternative students shall walk students to the designated bus for transportation to the alternative school.
- Students with driver's license will not be allowed to drive a vehicle to the alternative school. He/She will have to be dropped off at the alternative school by a parent/guardian or ride the bus from his/her home school to the alternative school.

Meals/Snacks

- Breakfast and lunch are available for all alternative students at the regular student cost. All students in the GCSD are provided a free breakfast only.
- Students may bring one (1) snack per day to have when the alternative school administrator gives permission to leave.

Parental Supports

Teachers, Counselors, and Administrators will maintain contact with parents of students enrolled in the alternative school program as needed through School Status which includes phone calls and text messages. Conferences will be scheduled as needed by teachers, counselors, or administrators and can also be requested by the parent.

Parents may contact teachers, counselors, or administrators through phone calls or text messages.

Parents are provided contact information for their student's school counselor and may contact the counselor for services regarding the student's behaviors or other concerns.

Parents are encouraged to help staff members with any information or suggestions that will benefit the student.

Daily Procedures

- Students will report to the Alternative School teacher immediately upon arriving on campus each morning. The teacher will escort students to the cafeteria to pick up breakfast and then directly to the Alternative School classroom.

- Students are not allowed to leave the Alternative School classroom for any reason unless escorted by the teacher.
- Students are to be productively working on coursework throughout the entire school day unless instructed otherwise by the teacher.
- Lunch will be delivered to the classroom daily.
- Teachers will complete a daily log for each student tracking participation and behavior.
- Students will be escorted to afternoon transportation by the teacher.
- Students will not be allowed to bring backpacks or book bags to any alternative school facility.

Exit Procedures

The student will return to his/her regular education placement by recommendation of the administrator of the alternative school. In order to be recommended back to the home campus, the student must complete the time stipulated and the following:

1. Academic Achievement — Satisfactorily complete the academic contracts for assigned classes. Students must show an increase in academic skills.
2. Attendance — Students shall be in accordance with the district policy.
3. School Behavior — Must meet requirements of the classroom teacher and school administrator.
4. Receive a counselor's recommendation.

On an individual basis, if it is determined in the exit meeting that a student would more likely succeed in the alternative school program and not in the traditional education program, the committee or IEP team may leave the student in the alternative program with bi-monthly reviews of the best placement for that student.