

Vernon Public Schools

Alternative Education Programs

Vernon Public Schools offers alternative education settings for students with social, emotional, behavioral and academic needs that cannot be met in a traditional setting. Students enrolled in alternative education settings benefit from the same academic standards set for all students in Vernon. Alternative education settings are responsive to student needs by providing unique programming, nontraditional hours, or hybrid experiences for students. These programs focus on students' individual strengths, talents, social/emotional/behavioral needs and provide academic rigor and culturally relevant instruction.

Our alternative programs are available for students in grades kindergarten through grade 12. There are clear and objective criteria for admission, consistent with stated program guidelines that are provided to students and their parents/guardians at the time of admittance into the alternative setting. The alternative educational programs in Vernon are described below.

Elementary (K-5): Renaissance Program at Center Road School

The Renaissance Program is housed at Center Road School and provides a small, structured, restrictive environment for district elementary students who require a higher level of support than a typical public school setting can provide. This special education program services children from all Vernon public elementary schools in grades K-5 who exhibit significant social/emotional/behavioral challenges. The focus of the program is on improving students' sense of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity in school through a philosophy that "children do well if they can". There are specific skills that children need in order to be successful in the general education setting. It is our belief that when students lack any of these skills they are unable to participate in school in a safe, respectful way. Renaissance staff focus on teaching skills through collaborative and proactive problem solving. The staff consists of two certified special education teachers, a clinical social worker (LCSW), and several para-educators (approx 2:1 student/para ratio). Students are placed into two classrooms based on age and needs. The goal of the Renaissance Program is to equip students with essential skills so that they can transition back to their home schools, when appropriate. Students typically begin fully self-contained in the Renaissance Program. Once they are meeting their goals in this setting, they slowly transition to high interest classes/activities in the general education setting at Center Road School, with support.

Middle School (6-8): The Learning Center (TLC)

The TLC Program is a special education program for students who require a more intense, highly structured setting with a low student to staff ratio, in order to make effective progress within the middle school setting. The program provides identified students with intensive educational, behavioral, and emotional support that stresses the Growth Mindset in all areas, including academic and behavioral health. The TLC Program provides:

*Academic instruction including:

- Core classes (language arts, math, science, social studies)
- Academic support in all areas
- Remediation of basic reading, writing and math skills
- Development of compensatory learning techniques
- General education class support, as matriculation is appropriate
- Technology will be utilized as part of instructional delivery, exploration of global matters, student-driven inquiry based learning, and as a tool to create connections between community, school and families

*Social/Behavioral support including:

- Point system for progress monitoring and encouraging appropriate school behavior
- Individualized behavior intervention plans (written with families and staff team)
- Group and individualized counseling
- Frequent home-school communication
- Matriculation into general classrooms, based on consistent target behavior

High School (9-12): Total Alternative Learning Center (TALC)

TALC is a small, structured, self-contained environment that services students from grade 9-12 housed in Rockville High School(RHS). This is a restrictive setting for special education students who exhibit significant social/emotional/behavioral challenges which have severely impacted their academic performance. The TALC program provides a high level of structure and support to receive educational benefits. The program also services students returning to district from an outplacement setting as a transition to learn social and academic rules of the Vernon Public Schools.

The staff consist of three certified special education teachers, a full time social worker and three para-educators. The academic program provides a traditional high school curriculum with small group and individualized instruction. The educational day is divided into six 40 minute learning periods. Opportunity for computer based learning as well as vocational placements are available. Group and individual counseling are provided for all students. In addition, crisis intervention, home visits, collaboration with community support services staff and intensive communication with families and guardians are an integral part of the program.

The goal of TALC program is to teach students essential academic, behavioral and emotional skills so that they can transition to RHS, when appropriate. Students typically begin fully self-contained in the program. Once they are meeting their goals in this setting, they slowly transition to high interest classes in the general education setting at RHS.

Vernon Regional Alternative Educational Program
33 West Main Street Rockville, CT

Vernon Public Schools provides an alternative educational opportunity to all students under the age of 16, and to students who are between the ages of 16 and 18 who have been expelled for the first time and who comply with any conditions set by the board of education in compliance with Public Act 16-147, § 12.

Students in the Vernon Regional Alternative Education Center will receive instruction based on a curriculum aligned to the CT Core State Standards⁵ (CCSS). They will have instruction in core academic classes, and Edgenuity educational software will be available to supplement their learning. Students will be able to participate in a program that is individualized and closely monitored in order for them to continue to earn credits.