

PROJECT OASIS STUDENT SUSPENSION PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Parental Questions

Q: What is the Project Oasis Student Suspension Program?

A: The Project Oasis Student Suspension Program is an open, free of charge, community-based initiative that provides customized, structured academic learning and mentoring for all students who have been suspended from Montclair High School.

Q: Is the Project Oasis Student Suspension Program a national program or based in Montclair?

A: The innovative Program is based only in Montclair and specifically designed for our community. It was created through the collective will of the Board of Education, Superintendent's office, Montclair High School and community leaders who wanted to provide our potentially at-risk children with needed support.

Q: How and why was it created?

A: The program was conceived by the Montclair Neighborhood Development Corporation (MNDC) and under leadership of community activist and MNDC Executive Director Al Pelham, who has dedicated his life to creating needed, not-for-profit community and mentoring programs. In collaboration, between Mr. Pelham, Montclair High School Principal James Earle, MNDC case manager Elaine Spears and the Montclair School District, the Program was created to proactively and strategically address the national epidemic of suspension of African American and other minority students.

Q: Is the program open only to African American and minority students?

A: Montclair is a diverse community and we celebrate all of our great traditions and values. In order to best serve our students, we want to ensure every child who is suspended from a Montclair school has a safe place to go during the day and a constructive environment to ensure greater development and learning.

Q: Who is leading the program?

A: Based on a grant provided by the Montclair Board of Education, and under the supervision of the Montclair School District and Montclair High School, MNDC leads the day-to-day operation of the program.

Q: Is the Project Oasis Student Suspension Program available to every student in the District?

A: The current grant affords the program to be available only to Montclair High School students. It is our hope to expand the program in coming months.

Q: Does the Project Oasis Student Suspension Program cost anything?

A: No. It is a special service offered by the Montclair School District.

Q: Now that my child is suspended, how do I enroll him in the Project Oasis Student Suspension Program?

A: Along with this FAQ, your packet should provide additional background materials and a letter from Principal Earle. You will be contacted by the Program to see if you are interested in enrolling your child. If for any reason you would like to proactively contact the Program, please reach XXX at 973-744-9094.

Q: What is a day at the Project Oasis Student Suspension Program like?

A: The day will be determined based on the needs of the student. In general, it will be a combination of school assignments, counseling, personal development and life skills.

Q: Are the counselors involved in this Program specially trained?

A: The program offers board certified teachers who are registered in the Montclair School district. All counselors and mentors are licensed and certified.

Q: Are the people involved in the program aware of my child's current situation?

A: Yes. Once MHS receives the signed parent consent form, all pertinent information regarding the students will be shared.

Q: Is there confidentiality regarding my child's involvement?

A: Yes. All the clients' data will be absolutely confidential.

Q: Will my child be alone or will other children be involved in the Program at the same time?

A: This depends on the current suspension situation at the High School, but the only participants involved in the Program will be other suspended students.

Q: What kinds of mechanisms are in place to address the safety of my child?

A: We have created a safe and structured educational and mentoring environment for each student involved in the Program. The day will be customized to the needs of each student and supervised by trained professionals.

Q: Where is the Project Oasis Student Suspension Program located?

A: There are three service locations: MNDC HQ on 228 Bloomfield Ave; the 11 Pine St Community Center; or Glenfield Park House at XXX. Once the student is enrolled in the program, a location will be provided.

Q: Is transportation provided?

A: At this stage, we cannot provide transportation for your child.

Q: Should my child bring lunch?

A: A bag lunch will be provided, but students may bring their own lunch.

Q: Will homework be assigned during the course of the Program?

A: Yes.

Q: How long will enrollment in the Program last?

A: If you enroll your child in the Program, it will be our expectation that they will arrive on time each weekday until the suspension has been completed.

Q: When should my child arrive and depart?

A: The program starts at 9:00 am and ends at 3:00 pm.

Q: What if my child does not show up to the Program during the assigned suspension?

A: Your child's attendance and performance will be reported back to MHS.

Q: When my child's suspension has concluded can I expect any specific follow-up?

A: Once the child is off suspension, the consent form signed by the parent becomes null and void. If the parent chooses to involve his/her child in other MNDC programs or seeks additional counseling that relationship will now be between MNDC and the parent.

Q: How can I contact my child during the day?

A: You may contact your child anytime by calling 973-744-9094.