

Alternative Education Guide

Cicero District 99



McKinley School
2020-2021

Overview: McKinley Educational Center is a quality alternative education program. We provide options for students who, for a variety of reasons, are not benefiting from the traditional school setting. McKinley School will provide an educational environment that helps students become successful in an alternative setting. Flexibility, intensive behavioral supports, social and emotional supports, individualized instruction and remediation, and flexibility are some of the ways McKinley's education program will help students meet graduation requirements.

Mission/Vision: We Educate the WHOLE CHILD!

Student Hours: 7:50 am to 2:10 pm

Level System: A level system is a behavioral management approach that is used in programs for students that exhibit challenging behavior. . They are designed to be an organizational framework for managing student behavior where students access greater independences and more privileges as they demonstrate increased behavioral control.. Students learn appropriate behavior through clearly defined behavioral expectations and rewards, privileges, and consequences linked to those expectations. There are specific criteria for advancement to the next level where the student(s) enjoy more desirable contingencies. It is intended that students who proceed through the levels are more able to self-manage, capable of handling more responsibility and therefore enjoy greater independence. There are four main goals of point and level systems: 1) increasing appropriate behavior; 2) promoting academic achievement; 3) fostering a student's improvement through self-management; and 4) developing personal responsibility for social emotional and academic performance.

Social Emotional Supports (SEL): Is the process through which students and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Personalized planning allows students and staff the opportunity to identify specific personal/social/emotional and other life skills needing support and further development.

McKinley's education program embeds SEL strategies in the classroom and across content learning. Cooperative learning, team building and other group activities are practiced to exercise the development of personal/social/emotional behaviors important to the success of the community. We utilize the Second Step Curriculum to help support this process. McKinley has



an established plan to address student crises as they arise. Accommodations for cultural differences are made to allow for personal success within the learning environment.

Restorative Practices: The aim of restorative practices is to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships. This statement identifies both proactive (building relationships and developing community) and reactive (repairing harm and restoring relationships) approaches.

Student Self-Area: The goal of the student self area is to allow students time to reflect and process any behaviors and/or concerns they are having. This is a safe space where staff can work with students to problem solve and build skills to support students when they are getting escalated.

Climate and Culture: McKinley provides the environment for learning that is safe and supportive – socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically. The culture of the program is enhanced by mutually positive, respectful, and supportive relationships as well as by the active, attentive and visible presence of caring adults. It is a high quality option for students that is supported and respected by the district administration and community.

A positive school climate fosters student engagement and principles of positive youth development. Principles include: positive, clear communication of high expectations for learning and behavior; student voice is welcome and expected for all aspects of the program; encouragement of student responsibility for meeting self-identified goals for learning, behavior and personal growth; guidance and actions demonstrate a shared understanding that all youth are valued, contributing members of the learning community rather than problems to be managed; restorative rather than punitive approaches to discipline; and family engagement is encouraged and welcome.

Academics: McKinley school will provide a rich engaging learning experience for diverse learners. Academic and social-emotional curriculums and instruction are flexible to meet the needs of each student. Student interests, needs, strengths and weaknesses drive instruction.

Our curriculum is rigorous, relevant, and reflective. Educators are actively engaged in each student's learning by incorporating technology, project-based learning, STEAM based projects, differentiated instruction, and various methods to meet the needs of each individual student.

Components of McKinley Educational Center:

- Community Service Learning
- Intense academic monitoring
- Small group learning (low student/teacher ratios)

- Level System
- Parent/family involvement
- Life skills training
- Conflict resolution training
- Restorative Practices
- Social Emotional Supports
- Partnerships with community based organizations (i.e., Riveredge)
- Work based learning opportunities
- Flexible scheduling for academic instruction