

2010

Alternative Education Guidebook



Mississippi Department of Education

**Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement,
Alternative Education/GED and Counseling**

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PURPOSE

The purpose of Alternative Education is to accommodate behavioral and academic needs of children and adolescents which cannot be adequately addressed in a traditional school environment. In addition, Alternative Education provides direct social, emotional, and behavior management instruction to students.

MISSION

The mission of the Alternative Education Program is to promote academic success, modify behavior, and facilitate employability and functional skills attainment, as well as to support career and character education development in an environment that differs from the traditional school setting and offers a more conducive setting for learning. Through ongoing direct instruction, guidance, and monitoring, students will be provided support with the goal of returning the student to a comprehensive school environment with the necessary abilities to function therein.

DEFINITION

The alternative school program is defined through written board-approved policies and procedures that define and provide appropriate educational opportunities for the categories of students to be served. Further, the program must meet the requirements of Section 37-13-92 of the Mississippi Code, which delineates the components of alternative education. An alternative education program involves temporary authorized departure from the traditional school setting. It is designed to provide educational and social development for students whose behavior places them at risk of not succeeding in the traditional school structure and/or in adult life without positive interventions.

PROCEDURES

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 program for, but not limited to, the following categories of compulsory-school-aged students:

- ✓ Any compulsory-school-age child who has been suspended for more than ten (10) days or expelled from school, except for any student expelled for possession of a weapon or other felonious conduct;
- ✓ Any compulsory-school-age child referred to such alternative school based upon a documented need for placement in the alternative school program by the parent, legal guardian or custodian of such child due to disciplinary problems.
- ✓ Any compulsory-school-age child referred to such alternative school program by the dispositive order of a chancellor or youth court judge, with the consent of the superintendent of the child's school district.
- ✓ Any compulsory-school-age child whose presence in the classroom, in the determination of the school 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.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Alternative education programs may

- be provided jointly with one or more other school systems
- be located on or off a traditional school campus

Alternative education programs must

- provide the same instructional materials, resources, and textbooks as those supplied in the traditional setting,
- focus on language arts, math, science, social studies, and personal behavioral management,
- ensure that the maximum class size does not exceed 15:1,
- provide each special education student with the services and modifications as indicated in his/her Individual Education Plan (IEP),
- provide for students educational and behavioral needs,
- provide instruction that will enable students to return to a regular or career education program as quickly as possible,
- provide academic and behavioral interventions as well as counseling to enable students to make academic progress and learn socially appropriate behavior while attending the program, and
- separate disruptive students from non-disruptive students who are assigned to the program.

In addition, local alternative education programs should

- separate older students from younger students, and
- individualize, as much as possible, academic and behavioral exit requirements for each student assigned to the program.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS

- Punishment as a customary measure to change behavior
- Avoidance of academic activity due to failure
- Past history with juvenile justice system
- Inadequate skills in reading and math
- Unsuitable family support systems
- Insufficient reinforcement for appropriate behavior
- Significant history of failure
- Strong desire to be viewed as a significant and important person among peer group

FLEXIBILITY IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Program flexibility does not extend to modifying the provisions of Mississippi Code Annotated 1972 section 37-13-92 and Board Policy 901.

SCHOOL BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

Local school boards shall adopt policies and procedures for the operation of alternative education programs. Policies and procedures shall include, but are not limited to, *Goss vs. Lopez* Due Process Procedures (advise student of infraction, allow student an opportunity to give his/her version of the story); manifestation hearing for students receiving special education services; the goals of the program; the eligibility criteria and process for the placement of students in the program (including the composition of the Transition Team which may be an existing school team such as the Teacher Support Team); the continuing education of students; the involvement of parents and community agencies; length and time of the school day; plan for awarding of credits; district discipline policy, the staffing plan (motivated and culturally diverse staff), personnel qualifications and class size limits (15:1); criteria for completion of the alternative education program or reentry into regular education; and the performance measures and process for program evaluation. Rules and regulations which address the unique needs of alternative program students have been developed and disseminated to parents and students.

DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Define the alternative education program and procedures in Board Policy
- Ensure accreditation standards are being met
- Ensure that the Discipline Policy has been followed prior to removal of a student.
- Provide a facility that is clean, safe and functional, and commensurate with facilities provided other students in the district
- Provide adequate, certified staff that is motivated and culturally diverse
- Provide an alternative school program or behavior modification program that meets the requirements of MS Code, §37-13-92
- Provide for the continued education of students
- Provide for the safety of regular staff and students
- Provide transportation
- Provide written policies that meet *Goss vs. Lopez* due process procedures

REGULAR EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Determine suitability of student to be placed in the alternative education program
- Develop a process of educational review by teachers and other appropriate professional personnel to assist in the development of the Individualized Instruction Plan (IIP)
- Develop and implement consistent due process procedures
- Ensure student participation in the Mississippi Assessment System
- Ensure the written and distributed discipline policy has been followed
- Maintain cumulative (not original) records on alternative education students
- Notify parents or guardians regarding removal of student
- Provide data to show “failure to respond” to Tier II and III interventions
- Provide Tier II and III efforts using research and evidenced based practices and positive behavioral interventions

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist in the development of an IIP that provides for courses required for graduation for each student with emphasis in academics, applied behavioral analysis (behavior modification), functional skills, and career education
- Complete annual program review and evaluation as directed by MDE
- Determine duration of placement
- Ensure student participation in the Mississippi Assessment System
- Ensure the safety of staff and students by referring any student involved in criminal or violent behavior on campus to the appropriate authorities
- Ensure that the maximum teacher/student ratio is 1:15
- Ensure that there are high expectations for student achievement
- Meet MDE accreditation standards
- Meet requirements of MS Code, §37-13-92 and SBP (901)
- Provide academic instruction that is tailored to meet the specific needs and learning style of students
- Provide adequate, caring, certified staff who are motivated and culturally diverse
- Provide community involvement and support
- Provide continuous staff development that supports teachers in developing and enhancing classroom management skills
- Provide counseling for parents and students
- Provide evaluation of student's progress at regular intervals and maintain records
- Provide for the continuing education of students
- Provide written rules addressing the unique needs of alternative education students to both parents and students (clearly stated mission and discipline code)

ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist in the development of policies, procedures and programs
- Assist staff in the development of IIP
- Communicate with other administrators, personnel, and outside organizations to coordinate activities and programs
- Identify resource needs
- Interpret, apply, and assure compliance with State law and policy, district law and policy and accreditation standards
- Maintain current knowledge of new trends and innovations
- Manage and oversee the day-to-day operations
- Plan, organize, control, and direct the provisions of services
- Provide staff development
- Recommend appropriate service and staff
- Research, analyze, and evaluate current and new service delivery models, procedures and techniques
- Resolve issues and conflict
- Supervise the performance of assigned personnel

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assist in the development of an IIP for each student
- Choose to participate in the program
- Ensure that expectations are reviewed daily
- Identify additional intervention strategies
- Identify strengths and areas of need
- Know that you are not just a teacher, but counselor, advisor and mentor
- Make clear to the students the behaviors that are expected of them in different environments
- Provide classroom interaction
- Provide frequent and detailed feedback for exhibiting appropriate behavior
- Provide instruction in all core subjects by appropriately certified instructors
- Review all records from the referring school
- Review and evaluate student progress or lack of progress
- Provide flexibility in designing strategies and methods that will work with students. For example: individual learning, cooperative learning, competency based learning, team teaching, peer tutoring and/or teaching multiple intelligences
- Understand strategies for creating an organized and productive learning environment and for managing student behavior

PLACEMENT CRITERIA

The principal shall require verification from the appropriate home school guidance counselor that a student referred is suitable for placement. Before a student is removed and placed in the program, the Superintendent must determine that the disciplinary policy of the local district is being followed. The removal of a student requires a committee of teachers and other appropriate professional personnel to develop the IIP or IEP, for students receiving special education service, to ensure the continued education for the removed student. The IIP should include the duration of placement. The IIP and IEP must be completed prior to placement.

Student placement into an alternative education program is based on a required referral process. This referral process will need to be included in the district's handbook. The Disciplinary Committee may be comprised of a minimum of three members, (i.e., principal, teacher, counselor) and a special education teacher, when applicable. The parents or guardian of the student should be present during the Committee's hearing. A student's placement or assignment may be extended due to academic, behavior, or attendance deficiencies. Students assigned to the alternative program are expected to pass their academic courses and attend school on a daily basis, unless otherwise excused. Students assigned to the alternative education program must exhibit appropriate behavior and adhere to the alternative school's rules and regulations. In the case of a recommendation for alternative education placement, the superintendent or his designee must conduct a review of the recommendation. The review shall take into account the following factors:

- the student is suspended for more than ten days or expelled
- the nature and seriousness of the violation
- the degree of danger to the school community

- the student's disciplinary history, including the seriousness and number of previous infractions
- the appropriateness of an alternative education placement or program
- the student's age and grade level
- the results of any mental health, substance abuse, or special education assessments
- the student's attendance and academic records
- a customized intervention program with support services to meet the needs of individual students assigned to the program
- a comprehensive transition plan for each student returning to the traditional school setting that outlines support services that are to be provided upon the student's return to the home school

TRANSITION TO ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Detailed information from the home school should be provided and include the following:

- academic reports
- attendance reports
- copies of requested cumulative records
- counseling reports
- counselor referral
- detailed report surrounding the disciplinary infraction
- Due Process information
- emergency information
- IIP or IEP if student is receiving special education services
- intervention/s used (RtI, TST, including behavior logs)
- manifestation determination results and minutes
- MSIS information
- other behavioral/disciplinary reports
- parental input
- referral form (include duration of placement)
- superintendent approval for placement
- test data

TRANSITION FROM ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION TO TRADITIONAL SETTING

A student's exit should be contingent upon regular attendance, achieving and exhibiting appropriate behavior, and academic progress during his/her assignment in the alternative program. An evaluation by the alternative education staff of the student's behavior, attendance, and academic progress should be performed prior to returning a student to their home school. If the student's behavior, academic progress, or attendance has been unsatisfactory, the student should remain in the alternative education setting until more favorable progress can be achieved. It is recommended that the student make a gradual transition back to the traditional setting. A Transition Team made up of staff from the traditional setting and the alternative program should meet to discuss strategies that produced positive and acceptable behavior from the student. For a week or two, the student should be allowed to attend their home school for half a day to see if the student is ready to make a complete transition and to make sure the staff at the home school are

adapting to the necessary strategies that produce favorable results from the student. After the student has attended their home school for about a month, the Transition Team should meet to discuss any needed change in strategy. The lines of communication should be left open for questions, concerns, and/or recommendations.

CURRICULUM

Cumulative records on each student placed in an alternative program remain at and are maintained by the school of origin. The curriculum and instructional methodology address the needs of the student through an IIP or IEP for students with disabilities. These programs emphasize academic performance, behavior modification, functional skills, and career education. Academic performance is defined as the achievement level of each assigned student. This performance can be documented by scores on classroom examinations, standardized examinations, or the level of competency on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Students should be assessed by one of the methods stated above and their scores recorded as part of their IIP or IEP. The academic portion of the IIP or IEP should be developed based upon the student's ability and baseline data obtained from the selected assessment. Behavior modification is a structured process that must be implemented to help modify student behavior. There are various ways of achieving these results, i.e., group therapy and individual counseling. Functional skills are defined as the current abilities that students must possess when they are assigned to the alternative program. These may include such skills as reading level, grade level, etc. Additionally, career orientation should be viewed as an integral part of assisting students with preparation and planning careers during and after high school, post-secondary, vocational skills, or military.

The curriculum shall also include a component for teaching socially acceptable behavior. In addition, the district shall provide certified staff in the core subject areas (math, science, English, social studies). Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, students entering 9th grade will be required to obtain a ½ credit in health and physical education (PE) as a part of graduation requirements. Alternative education must provide a teacher to teach physical education as well as a teacher certified in Health if the courses are graduation requirements. School districts that require students to obtain those credits early in their high school career will not have to provide these classes at alternative education. If a student is referred to alternative education in 9th, 10th, or 11th grade, alternative education will not be required to provide Health or physical education as the student will still have time to take the course before graduating. Additional academic offerings may be provided at the expense and discretion of the district; however, no other courses are required by state guidelines for alternative education programs.

INSTRUCTION

School districts shall deliver instruction in accordance with the following standards:

- Curriculum and instructional practices shall reflect high expectations for students.
- Curriculum shall address cultural and learning style differences.
- Instructional activities shall be consistent with the written curriculum and appropriate for the students' developmental levels.
- Instructional materials shall be age appropriate, functionally appropriate, and of high interest level for students.

- Sufficient instructional materials, supplies, and equipment shall be available to deliver the instructional program.
- The instructional program shall be delivered in a climate conducive to learning.
- The instructional program shall include educational and workforce development opportunities.

CUMULATIVE FOLDERS

Alternative education personnel may copy materials from the original cumulative folder to maintain at the AE site.

- Any copied material must be maintained in a secure location.
- A copy of any state test results that apply to the student.
- Cumulative folder copies may be updated at the alternative education site, but any added information must be placed in the cumulative folder at the home school of origin.
- The cumulative folder must reside in the home school of origin.
- When no longer in use, any information obtained from the cumulative folder **MUST** be shredded (**FERPA violations**).

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION STUDENT FOLDER

- Academic and Behavioral Progress Reports
- Alternative Education Handbook Notification Form
- Alternative Education Transition Committee Checklist
- Behavior Modification Tracking Forms
- Counseling Schedule
- Counselor Referral Form
- Criminal or Unlawful Activity Reports
- Individual Instruction Plan or Individual Education Plan and revisions, if applicable
- Parent Notice of Student Placement in Alternative Education
- Superintendent Referral and Recommendation Form
- Transition Team Exit Evaluation

STATE ASSESSMENT

Students enrolled in alternative programs/schools, including those provided through contractual agreements among multi-districts, will participate in the Mississippi Assessment System at sites determined by school officials and in accordance with established guidelines regarding student grade levels and eligibility. Test results for these students will be assigned to the school of origin for accountability purposes.

SUPPORT SERVICES

A student in alternative education programs shall receive school counseling services and/or other support services such as school social work or psychological services as indicated in the IIP or IEP. Many students assigned to an alternative school program have unique needs that cannot be totally addressed by resources in the local district. In order to meet the needs of students and

parents, it is recommended that local districts collaborate with other entities in their community such as but not limited to the following:

- Attendance Officers
- Business, Civic and/or Community Organizations
- Department of Human Services
- Faith Based Organizations
- Health Department
- Law Enforcement Programs
- Local Colleges
- Medical Community
- Mental Health-The Mississippi Department Health will work with alternative education programs that need assistant with students who qualify for Medicaid benefits.
- Mentors/Tutors
- Partners in Education
- PTA, PTO, PTSA DHS
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Youth Court

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development needs to promote growth and development as well as educational services for children with academic and behavior deficiencies. This process should be initiated via a series of in-service training conducted for all personnel who have direct or indirect contact with alternative education students. More specifically, strategies for reaching these goals should come from a group or a person who has experience working with students who exhibit disruptive and offensive behavior. The skills provided should be combined with effective instructional strategies and student discipline techniques to help promote student achievement and modify student behavior. After participants have mastered these strategies, they should be encouraged to implement these techniques with the alternative education students.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Local school boards shall comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations in the education of exceptional students placed in alternative education programs.

The IEP team shall develop a student's written plan which includes academic courses, behavioral components, criteria for re-entry to the school of origin or to another appropriate setting, and provisions for periodic review of the student's progress. A student identified as having special needs must have a certified teacher in the area of special education working with him/her at the alternative education site. School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five school days and without regard for whether the behavior is determined to have manifested in association with the child's disability, if the child

- carries a weapon to, or possesses a weapon on school campus or at school functions on any school campus in the school district under the jurisdiction of the state education agency or a local education agency; knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at all

school functions under the jurisdiction of a state education agency or a local education agency; or

- has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state education agency and/or local education agency.

The decision to remove a student with a disability from the student's current educational placement due to disciplinary infractions must be made by the student's IEP team. Students with disabilities who violate the Code of Student Conduct or who engage in inappropriate behavior, disruptive or prohibited activities and/or actions injurious to themselves or others, which would typically result in corrective action or discipline of students without disabilities, shall be disciplined in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and, if applicable, their IEP and Board policy. A manifestation hearing must be held at the student's school of origin to determine if the infraction justifies AE placement. A student with a disability may be placed in an alternative educational setting; however, removal of a student with a disability from his/her current placement to an interim alternative educational setting may be implemented by school personnel for up to forty five (45) school days for certain infractions committed by students with disabilities. The IEP team shall determine the interim educational setting. The district shall comply with provisions and procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) federal and state regulations when disciplining students with disabilities for violations of district policy or school rules and regulations. A student with a disability may be suspended for ten (10) consecutive days for the same reasons and duration as a student without a disability. Such suspension shall not constitute a change in the student's educational placement. Also, use of interim alternative educational settings permitted by law does not constitute a change in educational placement for these purposes.

PERSONNEL

It is the responsibility of the district to select the most qualified applicant(s) to implement the alternative education program. Personnel shall be qualified for their assigned positions and comply with state directed Alternative Education elements (15:1). Alternative education teachers who are teaching core academic content courses must meet the requirements for highly qualified teachers under *No Child Left Behind* requirements. Adequate instructional staff must be assigned to the alternative program to ensure the continuing education of students and classroom supervision at all times. Further, students assigned for a grading period or longer and receiving Carnegie unit credits will receive instruction from appropriately certified teachers. When the alternative school program is housed in a free standing facility separate from the traditional school program, a certified administrator must be assigned to supervise the program.

Six Core Expectations for Teaching in Alternative Education Settings

Core Expectation	Purpose	Key Components
Planning and Preparation for Learning	Effective teachers plan and prepare their lessons in a thoughtful and purposeful manner in order to maximize student learning.	Knowledge of Subject Area, Knowledge of Cognitive Development, Alignment, Lessons, Assessments, Anticipation, Engagement, Differentiation, Materials, and Environment
Classroom Management	Effective teachers use classroom management techniques that create classroom environments that maximize learning.	Expectations, Relationships, Respect, Efficiency, Social-Emotional, Routines, Student Ownership, Repertoire, Prevention, and Differentiation
Delivery of Instruction	Effective teachers deliver instruction that result in every student learning.	Persistence, Effort-Based, Goals, Connections, Clarity, Repertoire, Engagement, Questioning, Differentiation, Flexibility, Summary and Application
Monitoring, Assessment, and Follow-Up	Effective teachers continuously monitor and assess student learning using fair, valid, and reliable assessment strategies.	Goal Setting, Criteria, Diagnostic, Formative, Analysis, Summative, Communication, Student Self-Assessment, Additional Support, and Recognition
Primary Support Network and Community	Effective teachers show a genuine interest and belief in each student’s ability to reach standards and make many efforts to include each student throughout the learning process.	Identification, Respect, Responsiveness, Involvement, Resources, and Homework/Hall Work
Professional Attitude and Growth	Effective teachers contribute to their site’s mission through their personal standards of professionalism and continue to refine their teaching. Effective instructional practice demonstrates continuing growth.	Attendance, Reliability, Professionalism, Judgment, Teamwork, Contributions, Communication, Openness, Collaboration, and Self-Improvement

CARNEGIE UNITS

Certified teaching staff and other staff assigned to the alternative program have adequate credentials to achieve the stated mission of the program. Further, students assigned for a grading period or longer and receiving Carnegie unit credits will receive instruction from appropriately certified teachers. The district shall grant units of credit for work satisfactorily completed in an alternative education program.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Evaluation of the student's progress in alternative education should include academics, behavior, and attendance. Evaluations should be conducted at traditional intervals according to district policy, and the appropriate records will be maintained and subject to the MDE review. The IIP should be updated on a traditional basis to provide for the continuing education of the student and to meet the behavioral/social needs of the student.

ANNUAL PROGRAM EVALUATION

Each school district shall conduct an annual self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the program(s). The evaluation program will focus on the impact of the program as it relates to student performance. Results should be based on indicators such as gains in academic achievement; reduction in dropout rates; reduction in incidences requiring disciplinary action; improvement in attendance rates; rates of successful program completion and return to the traditional school program; rates of successful completion of vocational training programs; rates of successful completion of high school; and rates of successful job placement. The MDE will review compliance with this policy and the effectiveness of alternative education programs through the MS Public School Accountability Standards.

SAFETY

When the alternative school program is housed in an existing traditional school, the safety of staff and students will be insured by appropriate supervision and isolation of students in the alternative program as deemed necessary by the administrators of the traditional setting and the alternative program. When an alternative program is coordinated by two or more school districts, pursuant to a contract approved by the MDE, the contract will indicate which school district will house and operate the alternative education program. Students removed to an alternative education program should be provided direct supervision of all activities on a closed campus or in an area on a traditional campus that is separate from the traditional setting.

The alternative school facilities must be clean, safe, and functional. Also, they must be commensurate with facilities provided to students in traditional schools by the local school district.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IMPORTANT DESCRIPTIONS

- **Behavior Modification Program**-refers mainly to a program utilizing techniques to increase adaptive behavior through reinforcement and decrease maladaptive behavior through punishment (with emphasis on the former). While behavior modification programs encompass applied behavior analysis and typically use interventions based on behavioral principles, these programs usually do not include functional assessments prior to intervention. Effective behavior modification programs will encompass school-wide behavior management approaches, which address the functional analysis of behavior, the development and implementation of positive behavior support plans to address problem behavior. People should be taught early that there are consequences for their actions both positive and negative.
- **Broader Authority**-is afforded each local school district in establishing alternative education programs that meet the specific needs of the school district. School board and school officials also have broad authority to suspend or expel students for misconduct. Students expelled for acts such as the possession or consumption of alcohol which do not rise to the level of weapons possession or other felonious conduct must be considered for alternative school placement. At the discretion of the school board, the student may be removed from the school system altogether, if the acts of a student, are such as to pose a threat to the safety of himself or others or disrupt the educational process at the alternative school.
- **Educational and Workforce Development**-is a substitute for career and technical education. The term signals a growing awareness that educators should consider a different perspective on working and learning. Workforce education includes the development of clusters that contain basic literacy and job-specific knowledge and skills. Workforce education also encourages self-reflection on one's career and educational goals that are important for career success (job shadowing or job mentoring).
- **Goss vs. Lopez Due Process Process**-affords the student the right to an informal notice of charges, explanation of the evidence and an opportunity to present his/her version of the story.
- **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**-is a legally binding document that describes the educational program that has been designed to meet the unique needs of each child with a disability. It is the written document that sets forth the free appropriate public education that is to be or has been offered to a child with a disability to receive special education and related services under Part B of IDEA. Each child who receives special education and related services must have an IEP. The IEP creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when age appropriate) to work together to improve educational results for children with disabilities. The IEP is the cornerstone of a quality education for each child with a disability.

- **Individualized Instruction Plan (IIP)**-is a required document, due at the time of placement that describes the educational and behavioral analysis programs designed to meet the unique needs of each student placed in AE. It is a written document that will meet appropriate accreditation requirements while providing for the continued education of each student. Functional skills and career education should also be included in the IIP. The IIP creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related service personnel and students to work together to ensure student success in the classroom.
- **Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES)**-is the setting or program other than the student's current placement that enables the student to continue to receive educational services according to his or her **Individualized Education Program**. The Individualized Education Program or **IEP** is a plan developed by the IEP Committee that addresses the special education and related service needs of each child with a disability. Placement in an interim alternative education setting is usually the result of a severe violation of a school's conduct code such as the possession of drugs, alcohol or weapons on school property. Services should include modifications designed to help students address problem behaviors.
- **Measurable Goals and Objectives**-are desired outcomes that measure progress. Goals are broad statements of projected results, whereas, objectives are the short-term steps to achieve the goal. In order for a goal or objective to be measurable, you must be able to monitor progress through observation or measurement.
- **Transition Team**-is the team responsible for developing an Individualized Instructional Plan (IIP) for a student that is transitioning into an alternative education program. This team should be composed of the following individuals (a) at least one regular education teacher of the student, (b) counselor (c) alternative education designee and others as needed to write an effective IIP, and (d) the child's parents. The IIP will focus on maximizing academic potential and behavior modification. The Transition Team should meet with the student on a frequent and regular basis throughout placement and for a period of time after the student returns to the traditional school environment for behavioral monitoring. The student upon return to the regular school should be allowed to meet with the Transition Team or a member of the team for added support as needed.
- **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**-is the application of positive behavioral interventions and systems to achieve socially important behavior change. It is used as an application of behaviorally-based systems and approaches to enhance different environments such as the school, the family, and the community. It is a wide range of universal and individualized strategies developed for use with all students to achieve important social and learning outcomes while concurrently preventing problem behaviors.

APPENDIX B

SECTION 37-13-92. Alternative school program for compulsory-school-age students; transportation of students; expenses.

(1) Beginning with the school year 1993-1994, the school boards of all school districts shall establish, maintain and operate, in connection with the regular programs of the school district, an alternative school program or behavior modification program as defined by the State Department of Education for, but not limited to, the following categories of compulsory-school-age students:

(a) Any compulsory-school-age child who has been suspended for more than ten (10) days or expelled from school, except for any student expelled for possession of a weapon or other felonious conduct;

(b) Any compulsory-school-age child referred to such alternative school based upon a documented need for placement in the alternative school program by the parent, legal guardian or custodian of such child due to disciplinary problems;

(c) Any compulsory-school-age child referred to such alternative school program by the dispositive order of a chancellor or youth court judge, with the consent of the superintendent of the child's school district; and

(d) Any compulsory-school-age child whose presence in the classroom, in the determination of the school 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.

(2) The principal or program administrator of any such alternative school program shall require verification from the appropriate guidance counselor of any such child referred to the alternative school program regarding the suitability of such child for attendance at the alternative school program. Before a student may be removed to an alternative school education program, the superintendent of the student's school district must determine that the written and distributed disciplinary policy of the local district is being followed. The policy shall include standards for:

(a) The removal of a student to an alternative education program that will include a process of educational review to develop the student's individual instruction plan and the evaluation at regular intervals of the student's educational progress; the process shall include classroom teachers and/or other appropriate professional personnel, as defined in the district policy, to ensure a continuing educational program for the removed student;

(b) The duration of alternative placement; and

(c) The notification of parents or guardians, and their appropriate inclusion in the removal and evaluation process, as defined in the district policy. Nothing in this paragraph should be defined

in a manner to circumvent the principal's or the superintendent's authority to remove a student to alternative education.

(3) The local school board or the superintendent shall provide for the continuing education of a student who has been removed to an alternative school program.

(4) A school district, in its discretion, may provide a program of general educational development (GED) preparatory instruction in the alternative school program. However, any GED preparation program offered in an alternative school program must be administered in compliance with the rules and regulations established for such programs under Sections 37-35-1 through 37-35-11 and by the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges. The school district may administer the General Educational Development (GED) Testing Program under the policies and guidelines of the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education in the alternative school program or may authorize the test to be administered through the community/junior college district in which the alternative school is situated.

(5) Any such alternative school program operated under the authority of this section shall meet all appropriate accreditation requirements of the State Department of Education.

(6) The alternative school program may be held within such school district or may be operated by two (2) or more adjacent school districts, pursuant to a contract approved by the State Board of Education. When two (2) or more school districts contract to operate an alternative school program, the school board of a district designated to be the lead district shall serve as the governing board of the alternative school program. Transportation for students attending the alternative school program shall be the responsibility of the local school district. The expense of establishing, maintaining and operating such alternative school program may be paid from funds contributed or otherwise made available to the school district for such purpose or from local district maintenance funds.

(7) The State Board of Education shall promulgate minimum guidelines for alternative school programs. The guidelines shall require, at a minimum, the formulation of an individual instruction plan for each student referred to the alternative school program and, upon a determination that it is in a student's best interest for that student to receive general educational development (GED) preparatory instruction, that the local school board assign the student to a GED preparatory program established under subsection (4) of this section. The minimum guidelines for alternative school programs shall also require the following components:

(a) Clear guidelines and procedures for placement of students into alternative education programs which at a minimum shall prescribe due process procedures for disciplinary and general educational development (GED) placement;

(b) Clear and consistent goals for students and parents;

(c) Curricula addressing cultural and learning style differences;

(d) Direct supervision of all activities on a closed campus;

(e) Attendance requirements that allow for educational and workforce development opportunities:

(f) Selection of program from options provided by the local school district, Division of Youth Services or the youth court, including transfer to a community-based alternative school;

(g) Continual monitoring and evaluation and formalized passage from one step or program to another;

(h) A motivated and culturally diverse staff;

(i) Counseling for parents and students;

(j) Administrative and community support for the program; and

(k) Clear procedures for annual alternative school program review and evaluation.

(8) On request of a school district, the State Department of Education shall provide the district informational material on developing an alternative school program that takes into consideration size, wealth and existing facilities in determining a program best suited to a district.

(9) Any compulsory-school-age child who becomes involved in any criminal or violent behavior shall be removed from such alternative school program and, if probable cause exists, a case shall be referred to the youth court.

(10) The State Board of Education shall promulgate guidelines for alternative school programs which provide broad authority to school boards of local school districts to establish alternative education programs to meet the specific need of the school district.

(11) Each school district having an alternative school program shall submit a report annually to the State Department of Education describing the results of its annual alternative school program review and evaluation undertaken pursuant to subsection (7) (k). The report shall include a detailed account of any actions taken by the school district during the previous year to comply with substantive guidelines promulgated by the State Board of Education under subsection (7) (a) through (j).

APPENDIX C

State Board Policy 901 *Adopted October 20, 1995 (Revised June 21, 1996)*

1. The alternative school program is defined through written board-approved policies and procedures that define and provide appropriate educational opportunities for the categories of students to be served. Further, the program must meet the requirements of Mississippi Code Section 37-13-92.
2. The district has and follows written procedures which meet *Goss vs Lopez* due process requirements for removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons.
3. The curriculum and instructional methodology address the needs of students through an Individual Instructional Plan which emphasizes academic performance behavior modification, functional skills, and career education.
4. The student/teacher ratio in each classroom is no greater than 15:1 with a process for approving exceptions by the State Department of Education.
5. Adequate instructional staff is assigned to ensure the continuing education of students and classroom supervision at all times.
6. Certified teaching staff and other staff assigned to the alternative program have adequate credentials to achieve the stated mission of the program. Further, students assigned for a grading period or longer and receiving Carnegie unit credits will receive instruction from appropriately certified teachers.
7. When the alternative school program is housed in a free standing facility separate from the regular school program, there is a certified administrator assigned to supervise the program.
8. When the alternative school program is housed in an existing school, the safety of regular staff and students will be insured by appropriate supervision and isolation as necessary. When an alternative program is operated by two or more school districts, pursuant to a contract approved by the State Department of Education, the contract will indicate which school district will house and which district will operate the alternative education program.
10. Rules and regulations which address the unique needs of alternative program students have been developed and disseminated to parents and students.
11. The alternative school facilities are clean, safe and functional, and commensurate with facilities provided to other students by the local school district.
12. The school district is in compliance with applicable laws and State Department of Education guidelines for reporting information relating to the alternative program.

13. Cumulative records on each student placed in an alternative program remain at and are maintained by the sending school.
14. Personnel assigned to an alternative program will report any criminal activity or other unlawful activity committed on school property to the appropriate authority.
15. Students enrolled in alternative programs/schools, including those provided through contractual agreements among multidistricts will participate in the Mississippi Assessment System at sites determined by school officials and in accordance with established guidelines regarding student grade levels and eligibility. Test results for these students will be reported in the home school district.
16. Evaluation of the student's progress will be conducted at regular intervals according to district policy and the appropriate records will be maintained and subject to the State Department of Education review.
17. The Individual Instruction Plan will provide full-day attendance with a rigorous workload and minimal non-instructional time.
18. Districts may select programs from options provided by the local school district, the Mississippi Department of Human Services (Division of Youth Services) or the youth court, and/or transfer to a community-based alternative school.
19. Alternative programs will provide:
 - a. a motivated and culturally diverse staff
 - b. counseling for parents and students
 - c. administrative and community support for the program.
20. The district will complete an annual program review and evaluation as directed by the State Department of Education.

APPENDIX D

State Board Policy 4300 *Adopted January 21, 2005 (Revised May 18, 2007)*

The Mississippi Department of Education shall require an instructional model designed to meet the needs of every student. The model shall consist of three tiers of instruction.

Tier 1: Quality classroom instruction based on MS Curriculum Frameworks

Tier 2: Focused supplemental instruction

Tier 3: Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students

Teachers should use progress monitoring information to (a) determine if students are making adequate progress, (b) identify students as soon as they begin to fall behind, and (c) modify instruction early enough to ensure each and every student gains essential skills. Monitoring of student progress is an ongoing process that may be measured through informal classroom assessment, benchmark assessment instruments, and large-scale assessments.

If strategies at Tiers 1 & 2 are unsuccessful, students must be referred to the Teacher Support Team. The TST is the problem-solving unit responsible for interventions developed at Tier 3. Each school must have a Teacher Support Team (TST) implanted in accordance with the process developed by the Mississippi Department of Education. The chairperson of the TST shall be the school principal as the school's instructional leader or the principal's designee. The designee may not be an individual whose primary responsibility is special education.

Interventions will be:

- Designed to address the deficit areas
- Research-based
- Implemented as designed by the TST
- Supported by data regarding the effectiveness of interventions

After a referral is made, the TST must develop and begin implementation of an intervention(s) within two weeks. No later than eight weeks after implementation of the intervention(s), the TST must conduct a documented review of the interventions to determine success of the intervention. No later than 16 weeks after implementation of the intervention(s) is determined to be unsuccessful, then the student will be referred for a comprehensive assessment.

In addition to failure to make adequate progress following Tiers 1&2, students will be referred to the TST for interventions as specified in guidelines developed by MDE if any of the following events occur:

- Grades 1-3: A student has failed one (1) grade
- Grades 4-12: A student has failed two (2) grades
- A student failed either of the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than twenty (20) days in the current school year; OR
- A student scores at the Minimal Level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 Mississippi Curriculum Test

Referrals to the Teacher Support Team must be made within the first twenty (20) school days of a school year if the student meets any of the criteria A-D stated above.

Tier 1

Quality classroom instruction based on MS Curriculum Frameworks

- Universal screening of academic and behavior
- Scientifically based research instruction
 - Effective instruction
 - Differentiated instruction
 - Effective classroom management

Tier 2

Focused supplemental instruction

- Describes the academic and behavioral strategies, methodologies, and practices designed for students who are not making progress
- Scientifically based research or evidence-based interventions

Tier 3

Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students

- TST prescribes the intervention
- Interventions at this level are targeted to specific deficiency areas

Response to Intervention (RtI)

RtI is a single, well integrated, multi-tiered service delivery system that connects general, remedial, and special education through scientifically based research instructional practices. This is a comprehensive and coordinated framework for monitoring students' acquisition of skills and for responding to the lack of progress with appropriate levels of intervention.

RtI is.....

- An interrelated process that is applied to every student
- A process by which instructional practices are evaluated and adjusted based on data
- A process to match the student's needs with strategies
- Not an indication of a need for special education services

APPENDIX E



Mississippi Department of Education

DESCRIPTOR TERM: Behavior Modification	CODE: 4002
ADOPTION DATE: January 25, 2005	REVISION:

STATE BOARD POLICY

Section 37-13-92, Mississippi Code of 1972, requires the State Board of Education to establish the definition and components of a behavior modification program.

Definition:

Policies, procedures and research-based strategies that teach students the skills needed to make positive decisions concerning behavior and learning.

Components:

The program will contain procedures and research-based strategies that:

- Include a (proactive) prevention component for all students;
- Include interventions designed to deal with common disciplinary problems;
- Provide an intensive intervention program for low-incidence behavior problems;
- Provide professional development for all team members and parents;
- Provide a safe and disciplined environment where teaching and learning can take place; and
- Permit implementation of the School Safety Plan.

APPENDIX F

Individualized Instructional Plan

Individualized Instructional Plan

I. Student Information

Student's Name	Date of Birth	Age	Gender	Race	Grade	Date of Placement
Projected Completion Date	School of Origin	Reason for Placement			IEP <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Disability
Parent/Guardian's Name	Address		Home Phone		Cell Phone	

II. Pre-Entry Transition Meeting Date: _____ Committee Members: _____

<i>PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (Please include strengths and weaknesses)</i> <i>To be completed by Transition Team</i>	
<i>English/Language Arts</i>	
<i>Math</i>	
<i>Science</i>	
<i>Social Studies</i>	

Measureable Academic Goal (English)

Measureable Short Term Objective:	Method of Assessment	Reporting Intervals	Report of Progress				
			<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Measureable Short Term Objective:		<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks					

Measureable Academic Goal (Math)

Measureable Short Term Objective:	Method of Assessment	Reporting Intervals	Report of Progress				
			<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
		<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks					

Measureable Academic Goal (Science)

Measureable Short Term Objective:	Method of Assessment	Reporting Intervals	Report of Progress				
		<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	PEM
Measureable Short Term Objective:		<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks					

Measureable Academic Goal (Social Studies)

Measureable Short Term Objective:	Method of Assessment	Reporting Intervals	Report of Progress				
		<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	PEM
Measureable Short Term Objective:		<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks					

Areas	Reporting Intervals	Measureable Goal/s:	<i>Report of Progress</i>	
<i>Behavioral Interventions</i> <i>(include target behavior/s)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks	1. 2. Measureable Objective/s:	Reviewer:	
			1.	Reviewer:
			2.	Reviewer:
	Method of Assessment	2.	Reviewer:	
		3.		
<i>Career Education</i> <i>(career aspirations or type of academic or vocational program the student will pursue post secondary)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Weeks <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Weeks	<i>Measureable Career Education Plan of Action</i>	<i>Report of Progress</i>
	Reviewer:			
	Reviewer:			
	Reviewer:			
	Reviewer:			

III. Transition Exit Plan

Date: _____

Academic Needs _____

Social/Counseling Needs _____

IIP Committee Signatures

AE Administration:	Principal:	Counselor:
Teacher:	Student:	Parent:
Teacher:	Other:	Other:

Post-Exit Meeting (one month post exit)

Subject	Academic Outcome	Social/Behavioral Outcome	Teacher

IIP Committee Signatures

AE Administration:	Principal:	Counselor:
Teacher:	Student:	Parent:
Teacher:	Other:	Other:

Parent Notification of Disciplinary Action (Sample letter)

Student's Name: _____

Referral Source: _____ Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to notify you that your child's behavior has resulted in a disciplinary referral. Due to your child's inability to abide by the district discipline policy, the following disciplinary action is required:

_____ In-school suspension for _____ days.

_____ Out-of-school suspension for _____ days.

_____ Alternative Education placement for _____ days.

If your child has been recommended for suspension for ten (10) or more days, your child has a right to a disciplinary hearing. Parents, students, and teachers must work together to maintain a beneficial learning environment for all students; therefore, if you have questions regarding your child's behavior or referral, please feel to contact the school.

Sincerely,

Alternative Education Transition Committee Checklist

Student's Name _____ MSIS# _____ Grade _____

Referring School _____

Date Completed

_____ Documentation of intervention (include interventions and dates of implementation)

_____ Counselor referral with signature

_____ Parental Notification of Placement

_____ Emergency contact information

_____ Documentation of medical problems

_____ Documentation of daily medications

_____ Copy of Cumulative Records

_____ Copy of recent report card

_____ Copy of recent disciplinary records

_____ Benchmarks mastered/benchmarks students need to master

_____ Individual Instructional Plan (IIP)

_____ Individual Educational Plan (IEP) (if applicable)

_____ Textbooks provided

_____ Student's class schedule for _____ (high school only)
current school year

I verify that this packet is complete and that the student's records are ready to be reviewed by the district superintendent.

Transition Committee Chairperson's Signature Title Date

Date referral packet was submitted to the superintendent _____
Date

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PERSONNEL ONLY

Date referral received _____ Received by _____

Date student enrolled in the Alternative Program _____ Signed by _____

Transition Committee meeting date _____

Committee Recommendation _____

Student has a probation officer? YES NO DON'T KNOW	Name: _____	Phone: _____
Student has been in treatment? YES NO DON'T KNOW	Facility: _____	Phone: _____
IN-PATIENT OUT-PATIENT	Dates Attended _____	_____
	Contact Person _____	

<i>Area</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Other</i>
Mood/Behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anxious/worried	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depressed/unhappy	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eating disorder/body image concerns	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hyperactive/inattentive	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shy/withdrawn	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aggressive behaviors	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stealing	
School Concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Homework not turned in/not complete	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low test/assignment grades	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor classroom performance	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sleeping in class/always tired	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sudden change in grades	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Frequently tardy or absent	
Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	New student	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bullying	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty making friends	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor social skills	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Problems with friends	
Home Concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>	Boy/girlfriend issues	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fighting with family members	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Illness/death in the family	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents/divorced/separated	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suspended abuse	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suspected substance abuse	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent request	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	

Are additional pages attached to this referral form? YES NO If so, how many pages? _____

Counselor's Recommendation

- Refer to alternative
- Retain in regular education
- Attempt another intervention

Counselor's Signature

Date

Parental Notification of Referral

Date _____

To _____

Parent(s) of _____

Your child has been referred for placement in an alternative education program for the following reasons:

The superintendent or his/her designee will be available to meet with you to discuss this matter. You will be notified within the next 5 days of the date, time, and place of the meeting to give you and your child an opportunity to discuss this matter.

Sincerely,

Principal

School

I understand that my child _____ has been referred by officials at his/her school for placement in an alternative education program and that I will be given an opportunity to discuss my child's placement with the superintendent or his/her designee. Please indicate your preference below:

- Would like to discuss with the superintendent or his/her designee
- Would not like to discuss with the superintendent or his/her designee

Signature

Date

Superintendent Referral Recommendation

Student's name _____

Grade Level _____

Date Submitted by the Transition Team/Committee _____

School of Origin _____

Referring Counselor _____ Phone _____

Superintendent Recommendation:

- Refer to Alternative Education Program
- Retain in regular education program
- Attempt another intervention

I have reviewed data on the above mentioned student and have determined the following:

Superintendent's Signature

Date

Note: Referral recommendation adheres to local and state guidelines.

Handbook Notification Receipt

I have received a copy of the School District Handbook. I understand that this handbook is to be given to my parents or legal guardian(s) so that they may be fully informed regarding policies and procedures regarding the school district.

Student Signature

Date

I have read a copy of my child's handbook that includes the district's discipline plan.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I have received a copy of the rules and regulations that address the unique needs of alternative education program students.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Behavior Modification Tracking Form

Student: _____ Date(s): _____

Grade Level: _____ School of Origin _____

	Follows directions first time given	Shows appropriate behavior when corresponding with peers	Shows appropriate behavior when corresponding with authority	Good Worker
MONDAY	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
TUESDAY	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
WEDNESDAY	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
THURSDAY	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
FRIDAY	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no

Comments: _____

Instructor's Signature:

Transition Team Exit Evaluation

Student's Name _____ Date _____

School of Origin _____ Grade _____

Attendance

- Number of excused absences
- Number of unexcused absences
- Total number days present in AE

Academics (Average grades)

- Math
- English
- Science
- Social Studies
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____

Behavior has been successfully modified

- Yes
- No

Recommended intervention strategies for the school of origin (include additional pages as necessary)

Committee signatures

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<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

APPENDIX G

Mississippi Department of Education



Alternative Education Annual Program Review

The self-assessment is used to determine the extent to which alternative education standards are implemented at the alternative education program site. This form is to be completed by district personnel that provide services at the Alternative Education Program site (e.g., administrators, teachers).

Directions: Complete the general information section indicating the school district, district code, title of the person completing the form, the date of the self-assessment instrument.

To complete the Alternative Education Program Self Assessment, use the rating scale rubric on the following page. Rate each indicator on the extent to which the alternative education program's achievement in meeting each standard.

Check the box to the right of each indicator that best represents the rater's assessment of the alternative education program at the time the self-assessment instrument is completed. After rating each indicator for all standards, calculate the total at the end of the assessment Self-Assessment Score Sheet.

To comment or to explain a particular rating, use the section for "comments" at the end of each standard.

Refer to the information below to determine the score for each "indicator," "standard," and the overall "self assessment instrument." The rating scale rubric provides an explanation of the criteria for each score.

- **Indicator Score.** The measure of success for each "indicator" is determined by the individual ratings for the given indicator.
- **Standard Score.** The measure of success for each "standard" is determined by averaging the indicator ratings within the given standard.
- **Total Self-Assessment Score.** The measure of success for the "self-assessment instrument" is determined by averaging the scores for the standards.

A score of "0" or "1" for a given indicator or standard should be viewed as an area for improvement. It is suggested that the local school district review the results of the self-assessment instruments, set goals for improvement, and allocate resources that address the needs identified. A local school district team should review the results of the assessment. This team should be chaired by the district office person directly responsible for the alternative education program and a copy of recommendations should be submitted to this report.

Score Point	Criteria for Scoring Standard Indicators
3	Exemplary —All criteria for the standard indicator are being successfully implemented. Additional comments and/or evidence support that the alternative education program exceeds the criteria for the given standard indicator.
2	Proficient —All criteria for the standard indicator are being successfully implemented.
1	Progressing —Some criteria of the given standard indicator are being successfully implemented, but not completely. At least one of the elements of the standard indicator has not been implemented.
0	Not Meeting Expectations —There is no evidence to support that the alternative education program is meeting the standard indicator.

School District _____ District Code _____ Date _____

Name and title of the individual completing the self assessment _____

I verify that the information provided is accurate _____
Superintendent Date

Mississippi Department of Education



Alternative Education Annual Program Review

Standard 1.0: Program Policy and Mission

The alternative education program operates with a formal set of standards, a clearly stated mission, and a plan for program improvement.

		0	1	2	3
1.1	The school district has established, maintains, and operates a board-approved alternative program. (Procedures and policy manual are approved by local school board.)				
1.2	The <u>school district</u> has a board-approved disciplinary policy that defines the categories of behavior and/disciplinary action to be taken.				
1.3	The disciplinary policy describes due process requirements/procedures for placement into an alternative education program.				
1.4	The mission, goals, disciplinary policy, and expected outcomes of the AE program are documented, published, and provided to staff, students, and parents.				
1.5	The written code of conduct or disciplinary policy is clearly understood and consistently applied to all students (e.g., level system or similar behavior support mechanisms).				
1.6	The disciplinary policy includes a process for the removal of a student from the alternative program whose behavior poses a continuing danger to persons or property disrupting the school or class.				
1.7	Criminal or unlawful activity is reported to the appropriate authority.				
1.8	Student success is central to the mission.				

Standard 2.0: Program Environment

The alternative education program provides a safe, positive, and nurturing environment which is conducive to learning.

		0	1	2	3
2.1	A certified Administrator supervises the alternative program when the program is housed in a free standing facility, separate from the regular school program.				
2.2	The program is housed in a safe, well-maintained, and provides an accessible physical environment that supports optimal student learning.				
2.3	Students placed in alternative education are isolated from the student body, and staff and appropriate supervision are provided to ensure the safety of regular school staff and students.				
2.4	The program has a detailed safety plan that has been distributed and practiced to ensure the security and good health of students and staff.				
2.5	The program demonstrates an understanding and sensitivity to academic, cultural, social, behavioral, and developmental needs of students, parents, and the community.				
2.6	An atmosphere of mutual respect exists among program staff, students, and parents.				
2.7	Staff communicates high expectations for students' academic performance and overall behavior.				
2.8	Transportation is provided to and from the alternative program.				
2.9	Consortium				
	If the alternative education program is part of a consortium operated by two or more school districts, a contract between the lead district and the other participating districts has been approved by the State Board of Education.				
2.10	Transportation is provided for all students by each district of origin.				

Standard 3.0: Transitional Planning

The alternative education program implements a transitional plan for students entering and exiting the program which ensures the likelihood of student success.

		0	1	2	3
3.1	Before a student can be removed and placed in an alternative education program, the superintendent of the student's school district must determine that the written and distributed disciplinary policy of the local district is being followed.				
3.2	The program has a Disciplinary Committee that includes the school counselor to ensure that the alternative placement is most appropriate for the student's specific educational, behavioral, and social needs (individual student, individual placement decision).				
3.3	The program provides a written transitional plan from pre-entry through post-exit for every student in attendance that includes the following: an orientation which consists of rapport building, development of an Individualized Instructional Plan (IIP), short and long term goal setting, and other mechanisms designed to orient the student to the alternative education setting.				
3.4	Transitional plans afford students the opportunity to maintain their current progress toward graduation by providing a full academic day with a rigorous workload in courses required for graduation.				
3.5	The Transition Team consists of educators from the school of origin, educators from the alternative education program, the student, other support staff, and parent(s) who are directly involved in all aspects of the transitional process including drafting, implementing, monitoring, and periodically modifying the transitional plan, as needed.				
3.6	The Transition Team assesses and matches needs to services to ensure that early interventions are developed to minimize the number and length of alternative education placements; social readiness is assessed before returning to the school of origin; continuance of required services is provided to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities; and limited English proficiency and/or significant skill deficiencies are addressed.				
3.7	When appropriate, students in alternative education programs are provided with various opportunities to develop and maintain supportive links to the school of origin.				

Standard 4.0: Support Services

The alternative education program embodies a sound set of support mechanisms that contribute to optimal student development.

		0	1	2	3
4.1	The program provides a comprehensive student assistance program that includes referrals to community agencies as needed.				
4.2	Relationships are established to support the academic, physical, and mental health needs of the students enrolled.				
4.3	The program provides guidance and counseling to promote student performance.				
4.4	The program offers a broad range of weekly individual and/or group counseling sessions.				
4.5	The program utilizes research-based dropout prevention strategies and character building programs (i.e., conflict resolution, mentoring programs, etc.).				
4.6	The program provides the appropriate services to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and/or significant skill deficiencies.				

Standard 5.0: Staffing and Professional Development

The alternative education program is staffed with effective, innovative, and qualified staff. Furthermore, the program has ongoing, relevant professional development to ensure both teacher and student success.

		0	1	2	3
5.1	Teachers for the program are highly qualified.				
5.2	The diversity of the staff mirrors the diversity of the student body.				
5.3	The school district provides a sufficient number of trained teaching assistants, school counselors, and other appropriate support individuals.				
5.4	The student to teacher ratio is (15:1) with a teaching assistant provided if the student to teacher ratio is greater than 15:1 and less than 21:1.				
5.5	Staff members participate in professional development opportunities that facilitate personal and professional growth.				
5.6	Counselors are afforded an opportunity to convene weekly to discuss students' needs and progress (only if multiple counselors are utilized).				

Standard 6.0: Curriculum and Instruction

The alternative education program utilizes Mississippi's state standards, incorporates innovative teaching strategies, delivers research-based instructional techniques, and provides the resources necessary to foster student learning and achievement.

		0	1	2	3
6.1	All students receive instruction in the core curriculum.				
6.2	Students are afforded instructional opportunities that mirror the quality and frequency of the school of origin, as well as opportunities for remedial or accelerated instruction based on individual needs.				
6.3	Differentiated instruction is provided to accommodate students' various learning styles and to recognize multiple intelligences.				
6.4	Assessment results are utilized to determine programming changes.				
6.5	Instructors collaborate with other teachers and the school of origin to enhance teaching strategies and close learning gaps.				
6.6	Group delivery systems are used to support collaboration and teamwork.				
6.7	Instructional strategies are aligned with the goals and expectations of the students' IIP.				
6.8	The teaching day provides 27.5 hours per week.				
6.9	Distance learning is utilized when appropriate.				
6.10	The curriculum is supported by access to up-to-date and well-maintained collection of textbooks, library media, technology, software, and other instructional supplies and materials.				
6.11	The academic year provides a minimum of 180 teaching days.				

Standard 7.0: Individualized Instructional Plans

The alternative education program individualizes the student's curriculum and instruction.

		0	1	2	3
7.1	The Transition Team uses available resources to develop an IIP that includes academic and behavioral present levels of performance, a behavior analysis, and a career plan.				
7.2	The Transition Team is actively involved in monitoring and documenting the student's progress, providing the support necessary for achievement, and making the necessary changes in the IIP for student success and achievement, as warranted.				
7.3	The IIP ensures that the student is making adequate progress toward graduation.				
7.4	Teachers use individual student data in making instructional decisions.				
7.5	The IIP addresses required services to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities.				

Standard 8.0: Life Skills*The alternative education program integrates life skills development into the curriculum and instructional program.*

		0	1	2	3
8.1	The program utilizes available resources to address the specific life skill needs of participants (e.g., career exploration, citizenship, conflict resolution, decision making skills, job shadowing, problem solving skills, social skills, teamwork, time management, work readiness, etc.).				
8.2	Students have opportunities to put relevant life skills into action.				
8.3	Curricula address constructive criticism and appropriate reaction.				
8.4	Students have the opportunity to engage in service learning.				

Standard 9.0: Student Assessment*The alternative education program routinely assesses students' progress and adjusts instruction accordingly.*

		0	1	2	3
9.1	The purpose of assessments is clearly defined and communicated to students, staff, and parents.				
9.2	Teachers use formative and summative assessment tools that are frequent, rigorous, and aligned with curriculum and instruction to track student performance and progress.				
9.3	Teachers use assessments to analyze student work and identify achievement gaps.				
9.4	Assessment, curriculum, and instruction are directly linked to planning for and accommodating a variety of learning styles and multiple intelligences.				
9.5	Results of assessments are used to inform the students and parent(s) of progress, guide the individualized Instructional plan, and modify the instructional delivery, as needed.				
9.6	Students enrolled in the alternative education program participate in the Mississippi Assessment System in accordance with established guidelines.				

Standard 10.0: Monitoring and Program Assessment

The alternative education program systematically conducts program evaluations while using that data for continuous improvement.

		0	1	2	3
10.1	The school district routinely conducts evaluations to determine progress toward the program's mission, standards, and plan for improvement.				
10.2	Program evaluations include a review of student achievement data.				
10.3	Program evaluations include a review of student behavioral progress (e.g., discipline data, recidivism rates, etc.).				
10.4	Program evaluations are used to develop or update the plan for program improvement.				
10.5	The school district makes use of strategic long-range planning to continuously improve alternative education services.				

Compilation of Students

Month	Aug/Sep	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
Number of Students									
Black Females									
White Females									
Black Males									
White Males									
Hispanics									
Other									

Recidivism (students placed in Alternative Education two or more times in a school year)

Month	Aug/Sep	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
Number of Students									
Black Females									
White Females									
Black Males									
White Males									
Hispanics									
Other									

Resources

Anderson, Cami & Murphy, Lucretia, (2009 Webinar). *Supporting Students in Alternative Education Settings*. Retrieved November 2009 from www.schoolsmovingup.net/webinar

DeRuvo, Silvia L. (2009 Webinar). *Response to Intervention: A Small School Approach to Implementation. RtI in Secondary School Setting: Riverbank High School Story – Implementing the Content Literacy Continuum*. Retrieved December 2009 from www.schoolsmovingup.net/events

Lehr, Camilla A., Tan, Chee Soon, & Ysseldyke, Jim. (February 2009). *Alternative Schools: A Synthesis of State-Level Policy and Research*.

San Francisco Unified School District (2007), *Academic Plan for Student Achievement*. Sunset Elementary School.

Available on the Web:

An Illinois State Board of Education Initiative: www.illinoisaspire.org

Effective School-wide Interventions: www.pbis.org

MDE Office of Instructional Programs – Response to Intervention (RtI): www.mde.k12.ms.us/IPS/rti/index.html (See Quick Links)

National Center on Student Progress Monitoring: www.studentprogress.org

National Network of Partnership Schools, John Hopkins University: www.partnershipschools.org

National Research Center on Learning Disabilities: www.nrcl.org

Positive Behavioral Supports: www.pbssurveys.org

School-Wide Information System, *Data Based Decision Making for Behavioral Interventions*: www.swis.org

Standards-Aligned Classroom Initiative: www.sac-success.org

Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, U. S. Department of Education: www.ed.gov

www.the-naea.com

www.educationrevolution.org

www.aypf.org