

Understanding Educational Alternatives

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MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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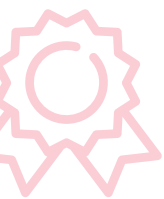
VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens



MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community



1

ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas



2

EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career



3

EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

EVERY School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

4



EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

5



EVERY School and District is Rated “C” or Higher

6



Purpose:

The purpose of alternative education is to accommodate behavior and academic needs of children and adolescents that cannot be adequately addressed in a traditional school environment.

Alternative education provides direct instruction in:

- **Academics**
- **Social**
- **Emotional**
- **Behavior Management**

Mission:

- Promote academic success
- Modify behavior
- Facilitate employability & functional skills attainment
- Support Career development
- Support Character Education development

Mission:

- **Ongoing direct instruction**
- **Guidance**
- **Monitoring**

Definition:

The alternative school program is defined through written local board-approved policies & procedures.

The definition must meet the requirements of MS Code 1972 annotated **§37-13-92**
SBP 7.1

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

Students 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)

A student's parent or legal guardian may request placement when there is a documented need

A chancery or youth court judge may give a dispositive order referring student to program with the consent of the superintendent

Superintendent or principal may refer to the program when the presence of the student is a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest & welfare of the students & teacher of such class as a whole



- May be located on or off a traditional school campus
- Be provided jointly with one or more other school districts
- Must be separate from the traditional students
- Must be commensurate with the traditional classroom setting

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 maximum class size does not exceed 15:1

Provide each special education student with the services and modifications as indicated in his or her individualized education program (IEP)

Provide for student's educational and behavioral needs

Provide instruction that will enable students to return to a regular/career/technical education program quickly as possible

Provide academic & behavioral interventions as well as counseling – learn socially appropriate behavior

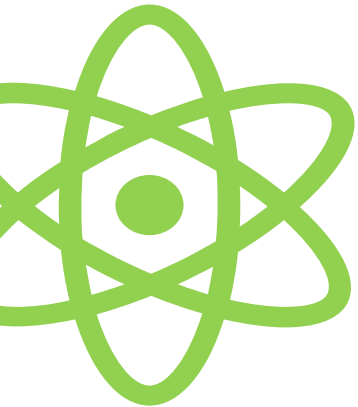
Separate disruptive students from nondisruptive students assigned to the program

Separate older students from younger students

Individualize academic and behavioral exit requirements for each student

Characteristics of Alternative Ed Students





Punishment is a customary measure to change behavior

Unsuccessful Tier III behavior intervention

Excessive absences due to behavior problems

Insufficient reinforcement for appropriate behavior

History with juvenile justice system

Custodial Care of DHS, foster care, or homeless

Mental illness or emotional disability

Prior trauma

Substance abuse

Significant history of academic failure

Avoidance of academic activity due to failure

Inadequate skills in reading & math

Suspected disability

Overage

Provide for student's educational and behavioral needs

Provide instruction that will enable students to return to a regular/career/technical education program quickly as possible

Provide academic & behavioral interventions as well as counseling – learn socially appropriate behavior

Separate disruptive students from nondisruptive students assigned to the program

Responsibilities

School Board, District, Regular Ed, Alt Ed,
Admin, and Teachers

School Board Responsibilities:

- Adopt policies & procedures for the operation for alternative ed programs
- Rules & regulations must address the unique needs of the alternative program students
- All rules & regulations must be disseminated to parents & students
- Assurance are made to parents that alternative education schools are not prisons & that teachers are educated professionals



Goss v Lopez due process procedures

Manifestation hearing for SPED students

Eligibility criteria

Process for placement

Goals of the program

Staffing plan

Discipline policy

Personnel qualifications

Composition of the Transition Team

Continuing education of students

Involvement of parents and community agencies

Class size (15:1)

Length and time of school day

Plan for awarding credits

Criteria for completion or reentry into regular education

Performance Measures & Evaluation Process

Work with school board defining the program

Ensure accreditation standards are being met

Ensure the program meets §37-13-92

Provide written policies that meet Goss vs Lopez due process procedures

Provide a facility – clean/safe/functional

Provide transportation

Provide safety for the staff and students

Provide continued education of students

Ensure all student documentation is forwarded to the alt ed school

Provide adequate, certified staff that is highly motivated & culturally diverse

Provide highly qualified and effective teachers

Provide diversity & trauma-induced behavior professional development





Determination of suitability of student placement

Develop & implement consistent due process procedures

Follow discipline policy

Notify Parent/guardian of removal

Provide documentation that shows “failure to respond” to Tier II & III interventions


Provide class assignments to Alt Program in a timely manner

Ensure student participates in the MS assessments

Provide the individualized Instruction Plan with the arrival of the student

Provide the behavior interventions utilized before placement

Provide the IEP, accommodations, and any other specifics to disability



Communicate with other administrators, personnel, & outside organizations to coordinate activities & program

Manage & oversee day-to-day program operations

Plan, organize, control, & direct the provisions of services

Recommend services & staff

Provide staff development

Supervise the performance of assigned personnel


Assist in the development of policies, procedures, & programs

Resolve issues & conflict

Assist staff in the development of IIP

Identify resource needs

Interpret, apply, & assure compliance with policy, and state law



Provide instruction in all core subjects by appropriately certified teachers

Review all records from the referring school

Review & evaluate student progress

Identify strengths & areas of need

Ensure social skills are addressed daily

Create an organized & productive learning environment for managing student behavior

Provide flexibility in designing strategies & methods that will work with students

Ensure clear behavior expectations are communicated

Ensure academic & behavior expectations are reviewed daily

Identify additional intervention strategies

Provide daily feedback & documentation of interventions & grades

Collaborate with the Regular School Team in completing an IIP for each student

Complete annual program review & evaluation as directed by MDE

Provide an academic plan that tailors instruction to meet specific needs

Refer any student involved in criminal or violent behavior on campus to the appropriate authorities

Provide for the continuation of general education & special education services

Engage in community partners for involvement & support

Meet requirements of SBP Rule 7.1 Guidelines & §37-13-92

Develop & provide for parents & students during the intake process written rules clearly stating mission and discipline codes

Provide evaluation of student's progress at regular intervals, maintain records, & document IIP through monitoring

Provide counseling for parents & students

Employ, support, & retain adequate, caring, certified teachers & support staff who are motivated & culturally diverse

Provide continuous staff development on classroom management skills & best practice areas

Placement Criteria



Alternative Education Programs

Placement Criteria:

- A board approved referral process placed in the district's handbook must be followed
- Verification from the appropriate home school guidance counselor
- Superintendent must determine the disciplinary policy of the local district is being followed
- An IIP and IEP for SPED students must be completed prior to placement
- A disciplinary committee hearing must decide if placement in the alternative school is appropriate

A Principal

A Teacher – a special education teacher when applicable

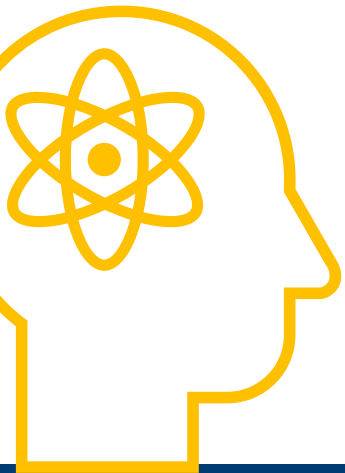
A Counselor

Superintendent or the designee

Disciplinary Committee Hearing:

- The parent/guardian of the student should be present during the Committee's hearing.
- When parent/guardian are not present then they must be notified in writing no more than 3 days after the meeting of the results and recommendation.

A student's placement may be extended due to academic, behavior, or attendance deficiencies. The placement extension is based on a committee review determination.



Suspended for more than 10 days or expelled

The nature and seriousness of the violation

The degree of danger to the school community

Student's disciplinary history

Appropriateness of an alternative placement

Student's age & grade level

Results of any mental health, substance abuse, or special education assessments

Student's attendance & academic records

Customized intervention program with support services to meet the needs of the student

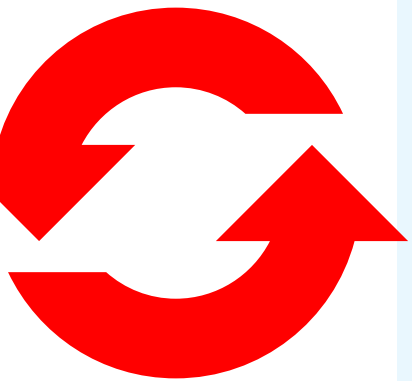
Comprehensive transition plan for each student returning to the traditional setting



- District has a policy that provides guidelines for entry into the program based around discipline
- Students are provided with a certain number of days to complete before consideration for returning to the home school
- Due process is in policy and adhered to for placement in program

Transition

To Alternative Education



Academic Reports
Attendance Reports
Copies of requested
cumulative records
Counseling Reports
Counselor Referral
Detailed report
surrounding the
disciplinary infraction

Due process
information
IIP or IEP
MTSS Reports
Manifestation
determination
MSIS Information
Behavioral/discipline
Reports

Parental input
Referral form –
duration of placement
Superintendent
approval
Test Data
Transition team or
instructional support
team
reports/directions

Transition



From Alternative Education to Traditional Setting



Student's exit should be contingent upon evaluation of:

- Regular attendance
- Achieving/exhibiting appropriate behavior
- Academic progress

A gradual transition back is recommended:

- For a week or two student attends traditional settings for ½ days
- After attending home school for a month then the transition team meets to discuss how successful the student has been before releasing the student

A student in an alternative education program must receive school counseling services and other support services, such as school social work or psychological services, as indicated in the IIP or IEP.



Mentors &
Tutors

PTA or PTO

Partners in
Education

Local
Colleges



Business &
Civic

Community
organization

Faith Based
organization



Mental
Health

Health Dept

Medical
Community

Vocational
Rehabilitation



Law
Enforcement

Youth Court

Youth Court
Counselors

Attendance
Officers

Special Education



A student with a disability may be placed into an alternative educational setting.

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

The IEP team must develop a student's written plan, including academics, 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 full-time, self-contained special education teacher must be available on site when self-contained special education students are placed in the program

A manifestation hearing must be held at the student's school of origin to determine whether the infraction justifies alternative education

Exception to the Manifestation Hearing:

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- 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 a school premises, or at a school functions
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at school function

Child Find:

The alternative education program must identify, locate, and timely refer all students for evaluation who may need special education & related services in the district.

Alternative Education teachers must meet the requirements for highly qualified teachers under the Every Student Succeeds Act regulations

Teachers should be certified in the areas in which they teach

When the alternative education program is housed in a free-standing facility separate from the traditional school program, a certified administrator must be assigned to supervise the program

Other Alternative Education Programs:

- High School Equivalency Program
- Credit Recovery
- Non-Traditional Graduation Pathway

Questions





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A photograph of graduates in blue gowns and caps sitting in rows outdoors. The graduates are seated on folding chairs, and the background shows a brick building and trees. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Title

(No smaller than 54,
ensure text is legible
over picture and do
not type over people's
faces)



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