

# Alternative Education Support Manual

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OFFICE OF COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ENFORCEMENT

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## Purpose

The purpose of alternative education is to accommodate behavioral and academic needs of children and adolescents that 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 an 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 designed to provide appropriate educational opportunities for the categories of students to be served. Further, the program must meet the requirements of Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated §37-13-92,<sup>1</sup> 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 chancery 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, or
- ▶ 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;

<sup>1</sup> Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated §37-13-92 can be accessed here: <https://law.justia.com/codes/mississippi/2013/title-37/chapter-13/mississippi-compulsory-school-attendance-law/section-37-13-92/>.

- ▶ provide each special education student with the services and modifications as indicated in his or her individualized education program (IEP);
- ▶ provide for students' educational and behavioral needs;
- ▶ provide instruction that will enable students to return to a regular or career and technical 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;
- ▶ separate disruptive students from nondisruptive students who are assigned to the program;
- ▶ 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
- ▶ History with the juvenile justice system
- ▶ Inadequate skills in reading and math
- ▶ Insufficient 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
- ▶ Suspected disability
- ▶ Prior trauma
- ▶ Unsuccessful Tier III behavior interventions
- ▶ Excessive absences due to behavior problems
- ▶ Mental illness (short-term or long-term inpatients or outpatients) or emotional disability
- ▶ Lack of challenging or rigorous instruction to meet high-performing ability
- ▶ Substance abuse
- ▶ Overage (behind in grade, English language learner, etc.)
- ▶ Custodial care of Department of Human Services, foster care, or homeless

## Flexibility in Program Development

Program flexibility does not extend to modifying the provisions of Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated §37-13-92 and Chapter 7 Alternate Education Programs Rule 7.1 Guidelines.



## 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 v. Lopez* due process procedures (advise student of infraction, allow student an opportunity to give his or 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; the length and time of the school day; the plan for awarding credits; the 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. The rules and regulations that address the unique needs of alternative program students must be developed and disseminated to parents and students. School boards should assure parents that alternative education schools are not prisons and that teachers are educated professionals.

## District Responsibilities

- ▶ Working with the school board, define the alternative education program, policies, 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, 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 Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated §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.
- ▶ Provide diversity and trauma-induced behavior professional development.
- ▶ Provide highly qualified and effective teachers.
- ▶ Ensure that all student documentation is forwarded to alternative schools before placement.
- ▶ Provide for the safety of staff and students.

## Regular Education Responsibilities

- ▶ Determine suitability of student to be placed into 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 evidence-based practices and positive behavioral interventions.
- ▶ Provide behavior intervention (not just a checklist).
- ▶ Provide behavior interventionist for students with disabilities.
- ▶ Provide continuous opportunities for staff development in classroom management strategies.
- ▶ Provide counseling for parents and students.
- ▶ Provide class assignments and assessments in a timely manner to ensure students’ academic success.

## 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. 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 Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated §37-13-92.
- ▶ Complete annual program review and evaluation as directed by MDE.
- ▶ Provide an academic plan that tailors instruction to meet specific needs and learning styles of students.
- ▶ Provide community involvement support and service learning opportunities.
- ▶ Provide and retain certified staff and support services.
- ▶ 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 Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated §37-13-92 and Chapter 7 Alternate Education Programs Rule 7.1 Guidelines.
- ▶ Provide academic instruction that is tailored to meet the specific needs and learning style of students.
- ▶ Employ, support, and retain adequate, caring, certified teachers and support staff who are motivated and culturally diverse.
- ▶ Engage community partners for involvement and support.
- ▶ Provide continuous staff development on classroom management skills and other best practice areas.
- ▶ Provide counseling for parents and students.
- ▶ Provide evaluation of student's progress at regular intervals, maintain records, and document IIP form monitoring.
- ▶ Provide for the continuation of general education and special education services for students.
- ▶ Develop and provide for parents and students during the intake process written rules that address the unique needs of alternative education students to both parents and students (clearly stated mission and discipline code).

## Administrator Responsibilities

(The responsibilities listed below are for administrators who serve only in an administrative capacity.)

- ▶ 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 knowledge of new trends and innovations.
- ▶ Manage and oversee day-to-day program operations.
- ▶ Plan, organize, control, and direct the provisions of services.
- ▶ Provide staff development.
- ▶ Recommend appropriate services and staff.
- ▶ Research, analyze, and evaluate current and new service delivery models, procedures, and techniques.
- ▶ Resolve issues and conflicts.
- ▶ Supervise the performance of assigned personnel.
- ▶ Provide counseling for parents and students.

## Teacher Responsibilities

(Teachers with the following responsibilities must be certified.)

- ▶ Assist in the development of an IIP for each student.
- ▶ Ensure that academic and behavior expectations are reviewed daily.
- ▶ Identify additional intervention strategies.
- ▶ Identify strengths and areas of need.
- ▶ Ensure that social skills are addressed daily.
- ▶ Provide daily detailed feedback documentation of interventions and grades.
- ▶ Ensure clear behavior expectations are communicated.
- ▶ Provide instruction in all core subjects by appropriately certified teachers.
- ▶ 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 into 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 services) to ensure 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 composed 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. If a parent or guardian cannot be present for the hearing, then they must be notified in writing no more than 3 days after the meeting of the results and recommendation. A student's placement or assignment may be extended due to academic, behavior, or attendance deficiencies. Student placement may be extended based on a committee review determination. An IIP and/or IEP must be completed for each student as a result of alternative education program placement. Students assigned to the alternative program are expected to pass their academic courses, as regular classroom teachers are responsible for providing class assignments and assessment in a timely manner to ensure student academic success. Students must attend school daily with a full academic day of 330 minutes in courses required for graduation and minimal noninstructional time. 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 or her designee) must conduct a review of the recommendation.

The review shall take into account the following factors:

- ▶ Suspended for more than 10 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 must 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
- ▶ Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- ▶ Manifestation determination results and minutes
- ▶ Mississippi Student Information System information
- ▶ Other behavioral and disciplinary reports
- ▶ Parental input
- ▶ Referral form (include duration of placement)
- ▶ Superintendent approval for placement
- ▶ Test data
- ▶ Parent request determination
- ▶ Transition team or instructional support team

## 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 or 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, then 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 education program should meet to discuss strategies that produced positive and acceptable behavior from the student. For a week or two, if feasible, the student should be allowed to attend their home school for half a day to determine whether 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 a month, the transition team should meet to discuss any needed changes in strategy. The lines of communication should be left open for questions, concerns, and recommendations.

## Curriculum

Cumulative records on each student placed into an alternative program remain at and are maintained by the school of origin. The curriculum and instructional methodology addresses 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 a district-approved assessment instrument. 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 on 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 skills such as reading level and grade level. Career orientation should be viewed as an integral part of assisting students with preparation and planning careers during and after high school, postsecondary, 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, and social studies). Beginning with the 2008–09 school year, students entering ninth grade will be required to obtain a ½ credit in health and physical education as a part of graduation requirements. Alternative education must provide a teacher to teach physical education as well as a teacher certified in health education 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, then 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. (See the Resources section for new graduation options.)

## Instruction

School districts shall deliver instruction in accordance with Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards (MCCRS).<sup>2</sup>

- ▶ 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.

<sup>2</sup> <https://mdek12.org/OAE/college-and-career-readiness-standards>

- ▶ 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.<sup>3</sup>

## Cumulative Folders

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

- ▶ Any copied material must be maintained in a secure location.
- ▶ Include in the folder 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 into the cumulative folder at the home school of origin.
- ▶ The cumulative folder must reside in the home school of origin.
- ▶ Information not shredded is subject to a FERPA violation.

## 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
- ▶ IIP or IEP 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 or schools, including those provided through contractual agreements among multiple 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. The test results for these students will be assigned to the school of origin for accountability purposes.

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<sup>3</sup> For information on career and technical education program areas in Mississippi, see <https://mdek12.org/CTE>

## Support Services

A student in an alternative education program shall receive school counseling services and 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 completely addressed by resources in the local district. To meet the needs of students and parents, it is recommended that local districts collaborate with other entities in their community, such as the following:

- ▶ Attendance officers
- ▶ Business, civic, and/or community organizations
- ▶ Department of Human Services (DHS)
- ▶ Faith-based organizations
- ▶ Health department
- ▶ Law enforcement programs
- ▶ Local colleges
- ▶ Medical community
- ▶ Mental health programs<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Mentors and tutors
- ▶ Partners in Education
- ▶ Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA)
- ▶ 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 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.

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<sup>4</sup> The Mississippi Department of Health will work with alternative education programs that need assistance with students who qualify for Medicaid benefits.

## Special Education

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

A full-time, self-contained special education teacher must be available on site when self-contained special education students are placed into alternative schools. 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 or her at the alternative education site. School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 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 whether the infraction justifies alternative education placement.** A student with a disability may be placed into an alternative educational setting; however, removal of a student with a disability from his or her current placement to an interim alternative educational setting may be implemented by school personnel for up to 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 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.





## Child Find

The alternative education program must identify, locate, and timely refer all students for evaluation who may need special education and related services in the district. Each district's current Child Find policy must meet the requirements of 20 U.S.C. §§ 1401(3), 1412(a)(3) of the IDEA and the IDEA's implementing regulations 34 C.F.R. § 300.111; Miss. Admin. Code 7-3:74.19, State Board Policy Chapter 74, Rule 74.19, § 300.111.<sup>5</sup>

## Personnel

It is the district's responsibility 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 (including a 15:1 student-to-teacher ratio). Alternative education teachers who teach core academic content courses must meet the requirements for highly qualified teachers under Every Student Succeeds Act regulations. Adequate instructional staff must be assigned to the alternative program to ensure the continuing education of students and classroom supervision at all times. Teachers should be certified in the areas in which they teach. 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.

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<sup>5</sup> Section 1412(a)(3) of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act can be found here: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/statute-chapter-33/subchapter-II/1412/a/3>.

**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 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 to 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 helps every student to learn.	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 they 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

Note. All teachers (traditional and alternative) should collaborate in professional learning communities that reflect teacher community support.

## Carnegie Units

Certified teaching staff and other staff assigned to the alternative program must be highly qualified. Furthermore, 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

An evaluation of the student's progress in alternative education should include academics, behavior, and attendance. Evaluations should be conducted at designated intervals according to district policy, and the appropriate records will be maintained and subject to review by the MDE. The IIP should be updated on a regular basis, at prescribed intervals, to provide for the continuing education of the student and to meet the behavioral and social needs of the student. An evaluation of student progress should include components of the Early Warning System: attendance, behavior, and course performance.

## Annual Program Evaluation

Each school district shall conduct an annual self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the program(s). The evaluation will focus on the impact of the program as it relates to student performance. The 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, and rates of successful completion of high school. The MDE will review compliance with this policy and the effectiveness of alternative education programs through the Mississippi 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. They must be comparable to facilities provided to students in traditional schools by the local school district.



# APPENDICES





## Appendix A. Important Terms

- ▶ A **behavior modification program** uses techniques to increase adaptive behavior through reinforcement and decrease maladaptive behavior through punishment (with emphasis on the former). Although 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 schoolwide behavior management approaches, which address the functional analysis of behavior, as well as the development and implementation of positive behavior support plans to address problem behavior. Individuals should be taught early that there are consequences for their actions both positive and negative.
- ▶ **Broader authority** is afforded to each local school district in establishing alternative education programs that meet the specific needs of the school district. The school board and school officials 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 if the acts of a student pose a threat to the safety of himself or others, or disrupt the educational process at the alternative school.
- ▶ **Educational and workforce development** is similar to 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 affords the student the right to an informal notice of charges, explanation of the evidence, and an opportunity to present his or her version of the story.
- ▶ An **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. This written document 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 into alternative education. 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 (IEP). The 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 IAES 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 evaluate progress. Goals are broad statements of projected results, whereas objectives are the short-term steps to achieve the goal. For a goal or objective to be measurable, you must be able to monitor progress through observation or measurement.
- ▶ The **transition team** is responsible for developing an Individualized Instructional Program (IIP) for a student who 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) a counselor, (c) an 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 after the student returns to the traditional school environment for behavioral monitoring. Upon return to the regular school, the student 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, family, and 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 preventing problem behaviors.

## Appendix B. MS Code Section 37-13-92

### **Alternative school program for compulsory-school-age students; transportation of students; expenses.<sup>6</sup>**

- (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.

<sup>6</sup> Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law § 37-13-92 can be accessed here: <https://law.justia.com/codes/mississippi/2013/title-37/chapter-13/mississippi-compulsory-school-attendance-law/section-37-13-92/>

- (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. Chapter 7: Alternate Education Programs

### *Rule 7.1 Guidelines<sup>7</sup>*

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 the federal guidelines outlined in 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.
9. Rules and regulations which address the unique needs of alternative program students have been developed and disseminated to parents and students.
10. The alternative school facilities are clean, safe and functional, and commensurate with facilities provided to other students by the local school district.
11. The school district is in compliance with applicable laws and State Department of Education guidelines for reporting information relating to the alternative program.
12. Cumulative records on each student placed in an alternative program remain at and are maintained by the sending school.
13. Personnel assigned to an alternative program will report any criminal activity or other unlawful activity committed on school property to the appropriate authority.

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<sup>7</sup> Source. Miss. Code Ann. § 37-1-3 (Revised 11/2012), which can be found here: <https://mdek12.org/MBE/SBPI>.

14. Students enrolled in alternative programs/schools, including those provided through contractual agreements among multidistrict 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.
15. 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.
16. The Individual Instruction Plan will provide full-day attendance with a rigorous workload and minimal noninstructional time.
17. 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.
18. 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.
19. The district will complete an annual program review and evaluation as directed by the State Department of Education.
20. No school district is required to place a child returning from out-of-home placement, in the mental health, juvenile justice or foster care system in an alternative school program. Placement of a child in the alternative school shall be done consistently, and for students identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), shall adhere to the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. If a school district chooses to place a child in alternative school the district will make an individual assessment and evaluation of that child in the following time periods:
  - a. Five (5) days for a child transitioning from a group home, mental health care system, and/or the custody of the Department of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services custody;
  - b. Ten (10) days for a child transitioning from a dispositional placement order by a youth court pursuant to Section 43-21-605; and
  - c. An individualized assessment for youth transitioning from out-of-home placement to the alternative school shall include:
    - i. A strength needs assessment.
    - ii. A determination of the child's academic strengths and deficiencies.
    - iii. A proposed plan for transitioning the child to a regular education placement at the earliest possible date (37-13-92).

- iv. School districts that enter into a contractual agreement with a private entity to provide services to students placed in an alternative setting must ensure compliance with federal and state laws and State Board Policies governing alternative education.
21. Alternative school placement shall be for, but not limited to, the following categories of compulsory school age students;
- a. whose presence in the classroom is a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the students and teacher;
  - b. 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 acts;
  - c. who are referred by the dispositive order of a chancellor or youth court judge, with the consent of the school district's superintendent; and
  - d. who has been referred by the parent, legal guardian or custodian of such child due to disciplinary problems (37-13-92).
22. The removal of a student to an alternative education program shall include a process of educational review to develop the student's individual instruction plan.
23. Alternative school placement shall be determined individually on a case-by-case basis and applied consistently.
24. School districts are without discretion to establish categories or classes of offenses for which the penalty is total removal from the school setting. Thus, unless a child has been suspended or expelled from school for possession of a weapon or other felonious conduct, the student must be assigned to the alternative school for that school district. The district is cautioned not to have policies that remove students from the traditional school setting to an alternative school setting for minor infractions. If the acts of a student, although not rising to the level of a felony, are such that the student poses a threat to the safety of himself or others or will disrupt the educational process at the alternative school, the school district is not required to admit the student into the alternative school.

## Appendix D. Chapter 38: Healthy and Safe Schools

*Rule 38.2 Behavior Modifications.* 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.<sup>8</sup>

1. Definition:

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

2. Components:

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

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

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<sup>8</sup> The text from this code can be found here: <https://mdek12.org/MBE/SBPI>.

## Appendix E. Chapter 41: Intervention<sup>9</sup>

### *Rule 41.1 Intervention*

Adoption Date: January 21, 2005

Revision: August 18, 2016

1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the behavioral and academic needs of every student are met through an instructional model that is designed to address student learning with quality classroom instruction and opportunities for intervention. The Mississippi Department Education (MDE) shall require every school district to follow the instructional model, which consists of three (3) tiers of instruction:
  - a. Tier 1: Quality classroom instruction based on Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks
  - b. Tier 2: Focused supplemental instruction
  - c. Tier 3: Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students
2. If strategies at Tier 1 and Tier 2 are unsuccessful, students must be referred to the Teacher Support Team (TST). The TST is the problem-solving unit responsible for interventions developed at Tier 3. Each school must have a Teacher Support Team (TST) implemented in accordance with the process developed by the MDE. 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:
  - a. designed to address the deficit areas;
  - b. evidence based;
  - c. implemented as designed by the TST;
  - d. supported by data regarding the effectiveness of interventions.
3. 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 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.

4. 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(s). No later than 16 weeks after implementation of the intervention(s), a second review must be conducted

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<sup>9</sup> Source. Miss. Code Ann. § 37-177-1, et seq., (Act) (Revised 8/2016), which can be found here: <https://mdek12.org/MBE/SBPI>.



to determine whether the intervention(s) is successful. If the intervention(s) is determined to be unsuccessful, then the student will be referred for a comprehensive assessment.

5. In accordance with the Literacy-Based Promotion Act of 2013, each public school student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading at any time, as demonstrated through:
  - a. performance on a reading screener approved or developed by the MDE, or
  - b. locally determined assessments and teacher observations conducted in Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 3, or
  - c. statewide end-of-year assessments or approved alternate yearly assessments in Grade 3, must be given intensive reading instruction and intervention immediately following the identification of the reading deficiency. A student who was promoted from Grade 3 to Grade 4 under a good cause exemption of the Literacy- Based Promotion Act must be given intensive reading instruction and intervention. The intensive intervention must include effective instructional strategies and appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist the student in becoming a successful reader, able to read at or above grade level, and ready for promotion to the next grade.
6. A dyslexia screener must be administered to all students during the spring of their kindergarten year and the fall of their first grade year. The screening must include the following components:
  - a. Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness;
  - b. Sound symbol recognition;
  - c. Alphabet knowledge;
  - d. Decoding skills;
  - e. Encoding skills; and
  - f. Rapid naming (quickly naming objects, pictures, colors, or symbols (letters or digits) aloud.
7. All students in Kindergarten and grades 1 through 3 shall be administered a state- approved screener within the first 30 days of school and repeated at mid-year and at the end of the school year to identify any deficiencies in reading. In addition to failure to make adequate progress following Tier 1 and Tier 2, students will be referred to the TST for interventions as specified in Response to Intervention guidelines developed by MDE if any of the following events occur:
  - a. Grades K-3: A student has failed one (1) grade;
  - b. Grades 4-12: A student has failed two (2) grades;
  - c. 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;

- d. A student scores at the lowest level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 statewide accountability assessment; or
  - e. A student is promoted from Grade 3 to Grade 4 under a good cause exemption of the Literacy-Based Promotion Act.
8. Referrals to the TST must be made within the first twenty (20) school days of a school year if the student meets any of the criteria a-e stated above in Paragraph 7.
9. School districts must complete, at a minimum, documentation as required for all students in Tier 2 or Tier 3. All Tier 3 documentation must accompany the student's cumulative folder upon promotion or transfer to a new school.

## 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"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Disability
Parent/Guardian's Name		Address		Home Phone		Cell Phone

**II. Pre-Entry Transition Meeting**      Date: \_\_\_\_\_      Committee Members: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (Please include strengths and weaknesses)</b> <b>To be completed by the transition team</b>	
English Language Arts	
Math	
Science	
Social Studies	

Measurable Academic Goal (English)

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Measurable 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				

Measurable Academic Goal (Math)

Measurable 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				

Measurable Academic Goal (Science)

Measurable 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				

Measurable Academic Goal (Social Studies)

Measurable 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				



Areas	Reporting Intervals	Method of Assessment	Measurable Goals & Objectives	Report of Progress
<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		Measurable Goal/s:  1.  2.  Measurable Objective/s:  1.  2.  3.	Reviewer:
				Reviewer:
				Reviewer:
				Reviewer:

Areas	Reporting Intervals	Measurable Career Education Plan of Action	Report of Progress
<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		Reviewer:
			Reviewer:
			Reviewer:
			Reviewer:

### III. Transition Exit Plan

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Needs \_\_\_\_\_

Social/Counseling Needs \_\_\_\_\_

IIP Committee Signatures

Alternative Education Administration:	Principal:	Counselor:
Teacher:	Student:	Parent:
Teacher:	Other:	Other:

Post-Exit Meeting (one month post exit)

Subject	Academic Outcome	Social/Behavioral Outcome	Teacher

Subject	Academic Outcome	Social/Behavioral Outcome	Teacher

## IIP Committee Signatures

Alternative Education 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 \_\_\_\_\_ day(s).

\_\_\_\_\_ Out-of-school suspension for \_\_\_\_\_ day(s).

\_\_\_\_\_ Alternative education placement for \_\_\_\_\_ day(s).

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)

\_\_\_\_\_ Individualized Education Program (IEP) (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_ Textbooks provided

\_\_\_\_\_ Documentation of intervention (include interventions and dates of implementation)

\_\_\_\_\_ 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 education program \_\_\_\_\_ Signed by \_\_\_\_\_

Transition committee meeting date \_\_\_\_\_

Committee recommendation \_\_\_\_\_

**Counselor Referral for Alternative Education Program**

Student		Grade		Age	
Referral Source		Date			
Counselor		Phone			
E-mail					

***Counselor's History of Services***

Referred to Counselor by	
First seen by Counselor	
Applied behavioral analysis/interventions attempted or initiated (include additional pages as necessary)	
Date	Specifics

***Counselor's Assessment (in collaboration with referring school/teacher/administrator)***

Performs substantially below the performance level for pupils of the same age ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is at least one year behind in completing coursework or obtaining credits for graduation ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the student pregnant or a parent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Has the student been assessed/diagnosed as chemically dependent? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, who determined this assessment? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the student a victim of physical or sexual abuse? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, who diagnosed this? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the student experienced mental health problems? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, who diagnosed this? \_\_\_\_\_

Has the student experienced homelessness within the last six months? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Does the student speak English as a second language or have limited English proficiency? ☐ Yes ☐ No



Student has been suspended, excluded, or expelled ☐ Yes ☐ No

Dates and explanation \_\_\_\_\_

Student has received other disciplinary action ☐ Yes ☐ No

Dates and explanation \_\_\_\_\_

Student has truancy issues ☐ Yes ☐ No

Dates and explanation \_\_\_\_\_

Truancy petition filed ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know

Student has a social worker or case manager ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student has a probation officer ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know

Facility \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student has been in treatment ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know

Dates attended \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

☐ IN-PATIENT ☐ OUT-PATIENT

Area	Description	Other
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 <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
School Concerns	<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 <input type="checkbox"/> New student <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Area	Description	Other
Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty making friends <input type="checkbox"/> Poor social skills <input type="checkbox"/> Problems with friends <input type="checkbox"/> Boyfriend/girlfriend issues <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Home Concerns	<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

Number of pages \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Refer to alternative education

☐ Retain in regular education

☐ Attempt another intervention

Counselor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Notification of Referral**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) of \_\_\_\_\_

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

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The superintendent (or his or 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,

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Principal

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School

=====

I understand that my child \_\_\_\_\_ has been referred by officials at his or her school for placement into an alternative education program and that I will be given an opportunity to discuss my child's placement with the superintendent (or his or her designee).

Please indicate your preference below:

☐ I would like to discuss with the superintendent (or his or her designee).

☐ I would not like to discuss with the superintendent (or his or her designee).

---

Signature

---

Date

### Superintendent Referral Recommendation

Student's name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade level \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted by the transition team or committee \_\_\_\_\_

School of origin \_\_\_\_\_

Referring counselor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent's recommendation:

☐ Refer to an alternative education program

☐ Retain in a regular education program

☐ Attempt another intervention

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

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Note.* This 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's signature

---

Date

I have read a copy of the School District Handbook that includes the district's discipline plan.

---

Parent's or guardian's signature

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Date

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

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Student's signature

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Date

---

Parent's or guardian's signature

---

Date

## Behavior Modification Tracking Form

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ School of Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

	Follows directions first time given	Shows appropriate behavior corresponding with peers	Shows appropriate behavior when corresponding with authority	Is a 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 of days present in the alternative education program

## 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)

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## Committee signatures

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## Resources

Lehr, C. A., Tan, C. S., & Ysseldyke, J. (2009). Alternative schools: A synthesis of state-level policy and research. *Remedial and Special Education*, 30(1), 19–32.

San Francisco Unified School District. (2007). *Academic plan for student achievement*. Sunset Elementary School. Retrieved from [https://www.sandiegounified.org/sites/default/files\\_link/district/files/monitoring-accountability-reporting/MAR/SPSA/SPSA%202014-16/elem/Sunset%20View%20SPSA%20BOE%20Final%202014-16.pdf](https://www.sandiegounified.org/sites/default/files_link/district/files/monitoring-accountability-reporting/MAR/SPSA/SPSA%202014-16/elem/Sunset%20View%20SPSA%20BOE%20Final%202014-16.pdf)

### Websites

American Youth Policy Forum. [www.aypf.org](http://www.aypf.org)

Approved Graduation Diploma and Endorsement Requirements Effective 2018–2019 for Incoming 9th Graders. <https://www.mdek12.org/ESE/secondary-education/new-diploma-endorsement-options>

Education Revolution—Alternative Education Resource Organization 2018. [www.educationrevolution.org](http://www.educationrevolution.org)

Illinois ASPIRE. <https://www.pepartnership.org/resources/search/early-childhood/illinois-aspire.aspx>

KU Center for Research on Learning. <http://external.kucrl.org/>

Mississippi Code Public Access. <https://advance.lexis.com/container?config=00JAAzNzhjOTYxNC0wZjRkLTQzNzAtYjJiYS1jNjExZWYxZGFhMGYKAfBvZENhdGFsb2cMIW40w5iIH7toHnTBIEP0&crid=42837c0b-7eef-4072-a097-99c4372ddc2d&prid=aa54b5d3-c328-4ce0-8edf-591a28fd63e5>

Mississippi College and Career-Readiness Standards.

- ▶ English: <https://mdek12.org/secondaryeducation/englishlanguage>
- ▶ Mathematics: <https://mdek12.org/secondaryeducation/mathematics>
- ▶ Science: <https://mdek12.org/secondaryeducation/science>
- ▶ Social Studies: <https://mdek12.org/secondaryeducation/socialstudies>

The Mississippi Data Project (MDP). <https://msdatapoint.com/>

Mississippi Department of Education Office of Instructional Programs—Intervention. <https://mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/InterventionServices>

National Alternative Education Association. <http://the-naea.org/>

National Network of Partnership Schools, John Hopkins University. [www.partnershipschoools.org](http://www.partnershipschoools.org)

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) OSEP Technical Assistance Center. <https://www.pbis.org>

Positive Behavioral Supports. <https://www.pbisapps.org/Pages/Default.aspx>



MISSISSIPPI  
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EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright *future* for every child

