

5.26—ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The District shall provide an eligible alternative learning environment (ALE) for each eligible ALE student enrolled in a District school. The ALE shall be part of an intervention program designed to provide guidance, counseling, and academic support to students who are experiencing emotional, social, or academic problems. Placement of a student in an ALE shall not be punitive in nature.

The superintendent or his/her-designee shall appoint an Alternative Education Placement Team which shall have the responsibility of determining student placement in the ALE. A student may be enrolled in an ALE only on the referral of the Alternative Education Placement Team. The team's placement decision is final and may not be appealed. The Board of Education may under certain conditions assign a student to ALE in lieu of expulsion.

The team is to be comprised of the following:

- a school counselor from the referring school;
- the ALE administrator and/or ALE teacher;
- the building principal or assistant principal from the referring school;
- a parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis (if they choose to participate);
 - The District shall document its efforts to contact the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis to schedule a meeting or a phone call for a placement meeting at the convenience of the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis, and maintain such documentation in the student's Student Action Plan (SAP).
- LEA special education/504 representative (if applicable);
- at least one (1) of the student's regular classroom teacher(s); and
- if the District so chooses, the student.

Students who are placed in the ALE shall exhibit at least two (2) of the characteristics from items a through l below:

- a. Disruptive behavior;
- b. Dropping out from school;
- c. Personal or family problems or situations;
- d. Recurring absenteeism;

For the purposes of the ALE, personal or family problems or situations are conditions that negatively affect the student's academic and social progress. These may include, but are not limited to:

- e. Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in literacy and mathematics
- f. Abuse: physical, mental, or sexual;
- g. Frequent relocation of residency;
- h. Homelessness;
- i. Inadequate emotional support;
- j. Mental/physical health problems;
- k. Pregnancy; or
- l. Single parenting.

No later than five (5) school days after a student begins alternative education interventions, the Alternative Education Placement Team shall develop a signed agreement between the ALE; the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis (if they choose to participate); and the student, outlining the responsibility of the ALE; parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis; and the student to provide assurance that the plan for each student is successful.

No later than one (1) week after a student begins alternative education interventions, the Alternative Education Placement Team shall assess the student's current functioning abilities and all relevant social, emotional, academic, career, and behavioral information and develop an SAP outlining the intervention services to be provided to the student that is in compliance with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Rules. The SAP may be revised from time to time by the ALE placement team and a positive behavior or transitional plan shall be developed and added to the SAP prior to a student's return to the regular educational environment.

The district's ALE program shall follow class size, staffing, curriculum, and expenditure requirements identified in the DESE Rules.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-20-2305(b)(2)
 A.C.A. § 6-48-101 et seq.
 DESE Rules Governing Student Special Needs Funding – 3.01, 4.00, and 8.0
 DESE Rules Governing Student Discipline and School Safety

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