



Western Line
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Alternative Program Handbook 2024-2025

"Committed to Excellence in Education"

*“When we accept the unacceptable,
we compromise our values.
Let’s lead with integrity and accountability.”*



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**THIS HANDBOOK IS AN ADDENDUM TO THE
WESTERN LINE SCHOOL DISTRICT HANDBOOK**

This handbook consists of requirements for students placed in the Western Line School District Alternative Program. It shall be posted online, and a hard copy shall be offered to the parents and student at the time of placement in the WLSD Alternative Program. Additional copies are available on request. All State and Federal laws, rules, regulations, requirements, code of conduct, etc., in effect at the student's home school, will remain in effect during the student's enrollment in the Alternative School Program.

**Western Line School District
Alternative Program Vision**

The vision of the Western Line School District is to challenge all students to work to their highest potential and encourage student responsibility as they develop intellectually, socially, emotionally and creatively.

**Western Line School District
Alternative Program Mission Statement**

The Western Line School District leverages three beliefs: rigorous academics, high expectations for student behavior and strong partnership with families and communities to create a learning environment that develops our students as organized, Inquisitive, passionate, respectful lifelong learners.

**Western Line School District
Alternative Program Goals:**

The goals of the Western Line School Alternative Program are as follows:

1. Facilitate in developing skills to be successful in regular school setting.
2. Facilitate in developing skills of self-discipline and taking responsibility for personal actions.
3. Facilitate in maintaining and improving academic skills.
4. Provide a safe, structured and nurturing environment for learning.
5. Assist students in identifying barriers that inhibit their educational and social development through character education.

Western Line School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits. The

following office has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies of the above-mentioned entity.

What is Alternative Education?

“Alternative Education” is a program that exists to meet the needs of students that cannot be addressed in a traditional classroom setting, but through the assignment of students to alternative classrooms, centers, or campuses that are designed to remediate academic performance, improve behavior, or provide an enhanced learning experience.

Who is Eligible for Placement?

Alternative School:

- Students who have been placed by the Western Line School Disciplinary committee.
- Students with repeated (documented) disciplinary infractions
- Students with basic subject failures
- Students with excessive absences.
- Students identified as having specific handicapping conditions, if the IEP committee determines placement is necessary.
- Students returning from a residential or long-term program.

High School Equivalency Program:

- 16 years old
- High School Students: 1 year behind his/her 9th grade cohort
- 8th grader Students: 2 years behind his/her chronological grade
- Meet district requirement

The Alternative Program Handbook is a guide that will be reviewed and revised annually. Western Line Schools reserves the right to make changes or exceptions to statements in this handbook as directed by the Western Line Superintendent or School Board.

The Western Line School District Alternative School has a total of 20 slots. The slots shall be divided eight (8) per high school and two (2) per elementary. In the event one school needs more than their allotted slots, they shall be given any slot not currently used until the other school needs the slot. In that event, the Administration shall meet to determine the course of action.

The Western Line School District High School equivalency program was a total of 20 slots. The slots shall be divided ten (10) per high school. In the event one school needs more than their allotted slots, they shall be given any slot not currently used until the other school needs the slot. In that event, the Administration shall meet to determine the course of action.



WESTERN LINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Committed to Excellence in Education"

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Dear Students:

The staff of the Western Line Alternative Program looks forward to assisting in your transition to and from the Alternative School Setting. We expect you to participate in your class, cooperate with staff and accept responsibility for your actions. You are expected to become familiar with this handbook and obey all rules of the Western Line School District Alternative Program. Exit criteria will involve more than just attending for the prescribed number of days, there is an expectation of involvement and continued education and behavior improvement.

Dear Parents:

In assisting your child with their educational services, we want your support as we are involved in this transition with your child's development. Let us work together to assist and equip your child to be successful in his/her education and social development.

Dear Staff:

It is the proposition that students in the WLSD Alternative Program will continue to move forward instructionally and will gain skills to successfully return to the home school. It is the goal of all Western Line Staff to assist in this process as needed to ensure each student's success.

Lynn Lang
Alternative Program Director
Western Line School District

Alternative Education Program Definition and Description:

The Alternative Education program is defined through written board-approved policies and procedures designed to provide appropriate educational opportunities for the category of students to be served. Further the program must meet the requirements of Mississippi Code 1972 annotated 37-13-92, 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 adult life without positive interventions.

MDE Defined Procedures:

Based on the Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated 37-13-92, the Western Line School Board shall authorize the Superintendent to establish, maintain and operate, in conjunction with the general programs of the district, a separate Alternative School Program. The alternative school program shall be operated as part of and in accordance with the regulations applicable to the general school program and will meet all requirements of federal and state law (MS Code of 1972 Section 37-13-91, 37-13-23, etc.) and the guidelines of the Mississippi State Department of Education. The alternative school or behavior modification program shall be at a minimum based on 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 expressed for possession of a weapon or other felonious conduct.
- Any compulsory-school-aged 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 detriment to the best interest and welfare of the students and teacher of such class as a whole.
- Any student who is returning to the school from a residential facility, foster home, group home or detention center can be placed in the alternative program for 10 days while a committee is convened to determine if the student needs a 45 day placement or can transition into the general school environment at the home school.

Placement in the Alternative Program

Before placement in the alternative school program, the director or principal of the program shall obtain verification of the child's suitability for the program from the appropriate guidance counselor. Before a student can be removed to an alternative school education program, the Superintendent shall determine that the written and distributed disciplinary policy of this district is being followed and that the policy includes 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 teacher and/or other appropriate professional personnel, as defined by district policy, to ensure a continuing program for the removed student;
- b. The duration of the 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.

The Superintendent or his designee shall develop procedures for the continuing education of a student who has been removed to an alternative school program. Students placed in the alternative school program are subject to the policies and rules of conduct and discipline as well as any additional rules of conduct and discipline deemed appropriate by the superintendent and/or principal.

Alternative Education Program Elements:

The Western Line School Alternative Education Program will:

- Be provided jointly with one or more schools within the school district
- Have a certified Administrator as the Director
- Include one certified teacher and at least one para-professional

The Western Line School Alternative Education Program will

- Provide the same instructional materials, resources, textbooks or computers as those supplies in the traditional setting;
- Focus on language arts, math, science, social studies, and personal behavioral management;
- Ensure that the maximum class size will 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 students' educational and behavioral needs
- Separate disruptive students from non-disruptive students who are assigned to the program;
- Separate older students from younger students
- Individualize, as much as possible, academic and behavioral exit requirements for each student assigned to the program.

The Western Line School District shall ensure the following components are included in the alternative school program:

- Clear guidelines and procedures for placement of students into the alternative school program.;

- Clear and consistent goals for students and parents;
- Curricula addressing cultural and learning style differences;
- Direct supervision of all activities on a closed campus;
- Attendance requirements that allow for education and workforce development opportunities;
- Counseling for parents and students;
- Administrative and community support for the program; and
- Clear procedures for annual alternative school program review and evaluation.

It shall be the practice of the alternative school program that any student who becomes involved in any criminal or violent behavior shall be removed from the alternative school program and, if probable cause exists, a case shall be referred to the youth court. The removal of a student from the alternative school program on these grounds shall be reported in accordance with the applicable school board policies.

The school district shall submit a report by July 31 of each calendar year to the state department of education describing the results of its annual alternative school program review and evaluation undertaken pursuant to MS Code of 1972 Section 37-13-92. The report shall include a detailed report of any actions taken by the school district during the previous year to comply with sustentative guidelines promulgated by the State Board of Education under the MS Code of 1972 37-13-92.

Staff Development

The process of in-service training should be 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 should be combined with effective instructional strategies and student discipline techniques to promote student achievement and modify student behavior. Documentation of this training should be kept in the Alternative School Notebook.

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
- Unsuccessful Tier III behavior interventions
- Excessive absences due to behavior problems
- Mental illnesses (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

Special Education Guidelines

Please see the MDE guidelines on discipline and alternative placement as well as IDEA guidelines on discipline for specific procedures to placement of a special education student into the alternative school.

Student Conduct and Grades:

Criteria used in the evaluation process to determine a student's grade must be supported by rational and data. The criteria must be in writing and must include the following:

1. Course content (goals, objectives, materials, etc.) as outlined in the curriculum guides.
2. Methods of evaluation of grades will reflect some combination of the areas listed below:
 - a. Class work
 - b. Homework
 - c. Test scores
 - d. Participation
 - e. Skill application
 - f. Preparation for class
3. The effect of absences on grades.
4. Procedures for making up assigned work and tests.
5. Other criteria as may be approved by the superintendent and school board.

The Western Line School District, in its discretion, may implement a GED program for the alternative program.

Western Line School District Rules and Procedures:

- Come ready to work everyday
- No profane language and gestures
- Raise hand to get out of seat (water fountain, bathroom, etc.)
- Treat other students and property with respect
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Students are to be checked for weapons every morning using the handheld metal detector or pat down from the School Resource Officer.
- Students report to assigned workstation / seat upon arrival.
- Breakfast and lunch are eaten in the alternative setting, or an assigned table in the cafeteria.
- Placement by Students are to follow all rules and regulations when in the cafeteria or other parts of the school building.

Curriculum:

Cumulative records on each student placed in an alternative program remain at and are maintained by the school of origin. The curriculum and instructional methodology address the needs of the student through an IIP or IEP for students with disabilities. These programs emphasize academic performance, behavior modification, functional skills, and career education.

Academic performance is defined as the achievement level of each assigned student. The academic portion of the IIP and IEP should be developed based upon the student's ability and baseline data obtained from the selected assessment.

Instruction:

The Western Line Alternative Program, under the leadership of the Western Line School District, shall use the following standards to deliver instruction:

- The curriculum and instructional practices shall reflect high expectations for all students.
- Discuss with the licensed teacher, school counselor, student, parent, and other involved parties the student's current academic standing, personal interests, and career aspirations.
- Determine academic coursework based upon the above information.
- Curriculum shall address cultural and learning style differences.
- Instructional activities shall be consistent with the written curriculum and appropriate student's development levels.
- Instructional materials shall be age appropriate, functionally appropriate, and of interest level for students.
- The instructional program shall be delivered in a climate conducive to learning.
- The instructional program shall include educational and workforce development opportunities.
- The instruction utilized will be Edgenuity for core courses

The long-term plan includes reference to adequate academic progress and progress on short-term and/or long-term goals. In order to determine adequate progress, the learning plan is reviewed on a semester basis. The plan is reviewed at minimum by the student and his/her school counselor. (If the student is in the Special Education Program, the case manager will also be involved). Adjustments are made as needed.

The Individual Instructional Plan:

The Transition Team will consist of the following:

- Home School Principal or designee
- Home School Teacher
- Alternative Director or designee
- Special Education Teacher (if eligible for services)
- Central Office Representative (when needed)
- Student
- Parent/Guardian

The transition team will develop the Individual Instructional Plan and determine if the student will remain on the current academic plan or if he/she will enroll in the online program for the 4 core classes (English, math, science and social studies). The transition team will also determine any other courses the student will drop or be enrolled in (electives/ comp math, etc.)

The transition team will determine the behavior goals for the IIP and how often the parent/guardian will be provided progress updates.

Support Services:

Students at the Western Line Alternative school receive school counseling and/or other support services such as social work, psychological services, related services, etc., as indicated in the IIP or IEP. We also collaborate with other entities in the community such as:

- Attendance Officers
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Faith Based Organizations
- Local businesses
- Life Help
- Law Enforcement
- Local Colleges
- Mentors and Tutors
- Youth Court
- School based Mental Health
- Partners in Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- School Social Worker, mental health worker, etc.

Student Progress:

Evaluation of the student's progress at the Western Line Alternative Program will include the following, but not limited to:

- Academics
- Behavior
- Attendance
- IEP goals and objectives progress on SPED students.

Placement by District Discipline Committee (DDC)

Students can be placed in the Western Line School District Alternative Program by the District Discipline Committee, according to state and district regulations for a specific incident or a pattern of incidents and as required by law for certain offenses. Students and parents/guardians must attend an intake/transition meeting (even if the student is 18 or older) and sign a contract that states they agree to follow all rules and regulations of the Alternative School established by the Western Line School District.

The DDC will consider recommendation from the home school principal, the MTSS Committee, the parent/guardian or the IEP committee.

Students with an IEP/504 plan:

If a student has a special education eligibility or 504 Plan, the child must have a behavior plan as a component of his/her IEP and progress monitoring data supporting the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness of that IEP component. A manifest determination ruling should be completed before a child is placed at the Alternative School as well. The child can be placed based on parent referral.

Requirements for Admission to the Alternative School Program:

Because participation in an Alternative School Program is an opportunity and not a right, only those students who meet the grades, behavior and attendance requirements are admitted and retained in the program. Requirements for attendance and behavior are stringent.

Parent Agreement:

Parents are required to sign an agreement before the student is fully accepted into the program. The parent agreement helps ensure that the family is committed to and supportive of the Alternative School and that they explicitly agree to support the schools' recommendations regarding both academic and behavioral interventions.

Student Agreement:

All students accepted into a program are required to sign a student agreement prior to starting the program. Students are expected to achieve daily academic progress in designated coursework.

Length of Stay

The length of a placement in the Alternative School is determined by the District Discipline Committee. However, a student must meet multiple exit criteria before returning to regular classes at their home school.

Length of stay can be extended if the student's progress is not satisfactory as measured behaviorally and academically. Exceptions to this process include students entering the district from a juvenile facility or students placed at the Alternative School through the court system.

Students must also meet qualification in order to be released from their alternative school placement:

- Students must have completed all academic assignments to the satisfaction of all Alternative School instructors;
- Students must have attended the required number of days successfully
- Students must be making progress toward behavioral goals
- Students discipline referrals must be at a minimum.

Learning Plan

After a student has been accepted into the Western Line School District Alternative Program, an initial learning plan is developed, unless another individual plan exists (IEP or 504 Plan, etc.). The Individual Instructional Plan (IIP – Learning plan) and subsequent variations of the plan are contracts to which all parties must commit. The following procedures are to be used to create the initial Individual Instructional Plan (IIP).

- Review the high school transcript for completed coursework and credits earned.
- Determine the student's skills through a file review.
- Discuss with licensed teachers, school counselor, student, parent, and other relevant parties the student's current academic standing, personal interest, and career aspirations.
- Determine academic course work based upon the above information.

The IIP includes reference to adequate academic progress and progress on short term and/or long-term goals. In order to determine adequate progress, the IIP is reviewed on a semester basis. The plan is reviewed at minimum by the student and his/her school counselor. If the student has a special education eligibility, then the student's IEP manager will also be involved. Adjustments are made as needed.

The Alternative School Program Positive Behavior Support System

The Alternative School Positive Behavior Support System is a center-wide Behavior Management System for students in the Western Line Alternative School Program. The Behavior Management System is based on sound empirical practices for students who display inappropriate social and behavioral problems that prevent them from meeting with success in the general school setting. The Behavior System is based on a strong teaching model that holds as its central assumption the belief that most of our students who are placed at the Alternative School do not possess the social or behavior skills that would allow them to be successful in typical school settings.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

At the basic level of the system is the Positive Behavior Intervention component. It is comprised of the stated behavioral expectations of our students for the various settings within our building. The feedback system for our students when they are meeting those expectations, and the motivation system to ensure with more certainty that our students would strive to achieve those expectations. The element of the System is based on positive, proactive, and preventive approaches. A comprehensive program for individuals with behavior disorders employs a multitude of components.

Teaching Expectations:

It is important to know and understand the behaviors that are expected in different environments (e.g., classroom, hallway and bathroom). Expectations have been determined for all the different environments at the Alternative School. Those that follow were based on the current management system. These expectations are regularly with the student and the expectations for the Alternative School have been outlined for the hallway/sidewalk, restroom, cafeteria, bus, and classrooms.

Be Safe

Hallway / Sidewalk	Restrooms	Cafeteria / Dining area	Bus / Transportation	Classrooms
Move directly to the designated areas.	Enter quickly and quietly	Walk quietly to your seat.	Arrive at the bus stop / driveway in a timely manner.	Walk quietly to your seat.
Follow all teachers or safety officer directions.	Place all toilet paper in the toilet and paper towels in the trash	Report to the dining area only when directed.	When on the bus, always remain quiet and seated.	Follow all directions from all Alternative Staff Members.
Avoid causing distractions to other students or when passing a classroom.	Wash and dry your hands, and leave the restroom in good shape	Avoid interrupting others around you while eating.	Encourage others to refrain from causing commotion on the bus.	Maintain calm in the classroom.

Be Responsible

Hallway / Sidewalk	Restrooms	Cafeteria / Dining area	Bus / Transportation	Classrooms
Do not linger on the sidewalk at any time.	Properly sign in on the clipboard & inspect before use.	Acquire all meal items, utensils, and beverages before you sit	Follow all ALP procedures on the bus.	Have necessary materials to start class on time.
Do not deviate from the specified route	Report any unclean conditions to ALS Staff	Sit in the designated area	Do not put others at risk of breaking the rules.	Complete all your work on time. Strive to do your best.
		Clean up after yourself and the area around your seat.	Avoid causing distractions to the driver.	Assist in keeping the room clean by keeping your space neat.
Know the rules and policies; ignorance does not exempt you from the consequences				

Be Respectful

Hallway / Sidewalk	Restrooms	Cafeteria / Dining area	Bus / Transportation	Classrooms
Keep your hands and feet to yourself	Keep your hands and feet to yourself	Keep your hands and feet to yourself	Keep your hands and feet to yourself	Keep your hands and feet to yourself
Focus on yourself and surroundings	Focus on yourself and surroundings	Focus on yourself and surroundings	Focus on yourself and your surroundings	Focus on yourself and surroundings
Talk quietly when allowed, using low voice / clean language	Flush after your use / do not flush anything inappropriate.	Remain quiet while waiting on your food	Keep your seat when the bus is in motion.	Sit appropriately at your desk or computer table.
	Talk in a quiet voice.	Sit in your assigned area when in the cafeteria	Remain respectful when the bus is in motion.	Leave class only when you are with ALP staff.
	Report any problems to staff or the ALP Staff	All food stays in the dining area, except meals served in alternative	Refrain from distracting the driver.	Raise your hand to speak, and always speak in a respectful tone.
Be polite to staff members, other students, and visitors and/or guests.				

Exit Requirements

Students earn the privilege of returning to their regular campus only after successfully completing and meeting all of the following requirements. The Student must:

- a. Have served at least the minimum number of days required.
- b. Received a minimum number of behavior referrals.
- c. Have satisfactorily completed all work assigned.
- d. Leave their workstation in order.
- e. Have successfully demonstrated an understanding of the Character Education Program and the positive character traits.

The number of days assigned may be lengthened by the Alternative School Staff and Committee. The home campus will be notified of the date of a student's projected return to that campus at least ten (10) days prior to the return to the home campus.

The items listed below are the criteria used to determine reduction of days at the alternative school.

- a. Attendance
- b. Conduct
- c. Academics

- d. Dress code
- e. Exceeding goals

Process for Transition

When it is time to begin transition back to the home school, a transition team meeting is held. The student may also participate in the transition meeting. The meeting allows the student to understand what will be expected of him/her as well as the receiving school to give all parties concerned an opportunity to interact and establish lines of communication. A review/revision of the IEP and/or change in placement may occur at the meeting (if the student is eligible for SPED services.) Otherwise, a Transition Plan is developed at this meeting to guide the smooth transition of the student back into the home school setting. Details of the plan include transition treatment goals, a check in/check out schedule, establishment of a mentor, the identity of the party responsible for plan implementation, review of program progress, and frequency of progress review meetings. All involved in the development of the plan sign the plan, and the next review meeting is scheduled for a month later.

The Check In/Check Out monitoring technique is used when a student is returned to their home school setting. A transition meeting is held at the student's home school prior to release. As a minimum, a member of the Alternative School Staff, the home school principal (or designee), the home school counselor, and one of the student's teachers attend. Details of the transition are worked out during the meeting.

Definitions of Appropriate Behaviors

Compliance: Student initiates compliance within ten (10) seconds of an adult presented instruction and completes the demand in a timely manner. A timely manner depends on the demand and relies on teacher's discretion for individual demands.

Remain in working Area: Student remain in designated area for an assignment or task for the entire duration of the activity.

Completing Assignments: Students complete assignments or tasks in the time specified by the teacher/director/staff.

Returning Home/School Note: Student returns home/school note for the previous day, thus meeting the conditions for the conditions for the school/home note. Conditions may include having the note signed by the guardian. Etc.

Ignoring Others Teaching, Name Calling, etc.: Student does not respond verbally or by gesture (giving the finger) to another student who is teasing, name-calling, or directing any inappropriate behavior to that student.

Easy Transition to or From Cool Down Time: Student move to Cool Down Time area without any inappropriate behaviors. Student moves from timeout to regular activity without any inappropriate behaviors.

Definitions of Inappropriate Behaviors

Teasing: When one student makes fun of another with the intent of making the other student feel bad or to make others around them laugh at the teased students' expense.

Name Calling: When one student calls another student/teacher/staff member by a name other than his or her accepted name or nickname with the intent to cause the other person to feel bad.

Cursing: When a student says a word commonly used as a swear word. The list of words includes appropriate names of body parts used in an inappropriate manner or in an inappropriate situation. Teacher discretion will be used when determining if a word is a swear word or not.

Leaving Work Area: A student clearly departs from an area assigned for a task without permission from the teacher or staff member. Leaving the classroom meets the definition if the assigned activity is in the classroom.

Sleeping: A student's head is resting on or against an object with eyes closed during instructional time. The student may not be asleep but gives the appearance of sleeping.

Noncompliance: If the student does not initiate compliance with an adult presented instruction within 10 seconds. Noncompliance is also when the student initiates but does not complete the task or instructions within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the person who issued the instruction.

Talking Back: A student is argumentative with a teacher, is sarcastic towards teachers, or makes a "smart" remark after a teacher makes a comment directed at that student or another student.

Not finishing Assigned Work: A student fails to complete an assignment or task after having been given enough time to finish the assignment or task. The teacher will determine if the assignment or task should be finished in a certain amount of time.

Difficult Transition to or From Cool Down Time: A student is noncompliant when told to go to Cool Down Time. If a student refuses to go to Cool Down Time, or if any problem behaviors occur on the way to Cool Down Time, or if the student refuses to comply when released from Cool Down Time or refuses to answer any questions when Cool Down Time is finished (such as "Why were you in Cool Down Time?").

Aggression: A student hits, kicks, scratches, pokes, pinches, throws things, yells, or otherwise intentionally attempts to cause harm or physical irritation to another student, teacher, or staff member. Aggression does not include self-defense, which has its function as protection, and not intent to cause harm. To that end, anyone who bullies other students or who starts or participates in a fight or other emotional or physical harm or threat to another student or member of the school family will be suspended from the Alternate Placement and the days do not count toward the set number of days the student is required to attend the Alternative Program.

Fighting / Disorderly Conduct: A student standing up to fight or standing up yelling at another student is treated as a fight. School Safety is the most important objective of the school and students can be arrested for these offenses while at school or on the bus.

Gang Related Clothing or Activity: Students are required to dress according to the dress code. No gang related clothing will be permitted. In the event, the student crosses the dress code with gang related clothing (safety pin to clothing, rolling up a pant leg or other gang type symbols, writings, drawings, or throwing signs related to a gang, is treated as the first stage of a fight or violence. This includes drawing gang symbols on handbook, school papers, or any school property. No eyebrow jewelry is allowed.

Breaking School Expectations: A student can be disciplined for any behavior related to the discipline code, or behaviors deemed dangerous or causing disruption to the Alternative School Program.

EXAMPLES OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

Mild Misbehavior, such as, but not limited to:

- Talking without permission
- Chewing gum, candy, etc.
- Rocking or swinging arms or legs in chair
- Feet on desk or table
- Sitting on top of the desk or table
- Inappropriate manners
- Sagging clothes
- Interrupting staff while addressing another student or talking to another staff member.

Moderate Misbehavior, such as, but not limited to:

- Making unnecessary noises including; singing, rapping, laughing, talking, etc.
- Cursing
- Spitting in the building or waste baskets
- Not attempting or completing class work
- Not complying with staffs' request
- Writing or passing notes
- Talking after warned to stop
- Bothering other people's possessions
- Not facing forward in seat or table

Serious Behavior, such as, but not limited to:

- Walking out of class without permission
- Calling other's names (students or staff)
- Throwing paper, books, spit balls, etc.
- Graffiti on walls, desk, or other items
- Violation of dress code
- Sleeping on the appearance of sleeping during instruction time.
- Out of seat without permission from staff

- Disrespectful remarks or gestures toward other students, staff or other individuals
- Going on the internet without permission or going to unauthorized sites.
- Violating the computer use regulations
- Repeated minor or moderate offenses
- Use or possession of tobacco on school grounds

Criminal Conduct or Removal, such as, but not limited to:

- Fighting or trying to get someone to fight
- Hitting another person
- Destroying school, staff or another students' property
- Vandalism or theft
- Sexual, verbal, or physical threats toward students, staff or other individuals.
- Trespassing on district property
- Harassment, threats, or intimidation
- Open defiance of a teacher, staff member or Alternative Director
- Use, possessions, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Running or walking away from a search
- Possession of weapons
- Criminal or illegal behavior
- Display, advertise, or recruit for an affiliated gang
- Behavior, gestures, or drawings which symbolize gang membership

Interrogations and Searches

Students assigned to the Alternative School are subject to daily inspection of their person, any possessions, and assigned materials upon arrival to school. This is done in the interest of safeguarding all students, their property, and the school property. Books, equipment, desk or other materials provided by the school, remain school property, even though they are utilized by the students. The school retains the right to check, inspect, or search these materials, facilities, or property, at any time to verify their condition, orderliness, cleanliness, and/or content. Students are fully responsible for security and contents of the assigned desk.

Personal Items Brought to School

Students are not to bring any materials to school except those directed by the teacher (i.e. Homework). **Purses and backpacks are not allowed.** Any items brought to school are removed and confiscated. These include, but are not limited to tobacco products, vape pens, music players, inappropriate published or written materials, tapes, gum, jewelry, etc. Staff may remove any article that is perceived as causing a disruption. Any illegal items found are turned over to the school resource officer. Female students can bring a small bag with necessary items for personal use. The bag will be checked with the Alternative Learning Staff each morning and checked out when the student goes to the restroom. The bag is subject to be searched.

Any unauthorized item brought to school remains in the office until the end of the semester, when the parent/guardian can pick it up. This includes, but is not limited to, accidentally wearing jewelry, wearing a cap or money. **Keys can be surrendered each morning and returned at the end of the day. No cell phones are allowed on campus or on the bus.**

School and Law Enforcement

The Alternative School Program and the Western Line School District share the services of a School Resource Officer. This officer's purpose is to assist in creating a safe, secure, and orderly learning environment and to bridge the gap between police officers and young people by influencing positive attitudes towards law enforcement. In addition, the School Resource Officer offers information to students and parents in regard to law enforcement.

If a student's behavior while he/she is receiving their educational services, at the Alternative School so warrants, the School Resource Officer or possibly other law enforcement officials are called. Examples of such behaviors that would require such a response include, but are not limited to:

- Assault; results in recommended expulsion
- Fighting: a student involved in a fight is suspended for a minimum of three (3) days and up to twenty (20) days are added to the students Alternative School assignment.
- Possession of firearm or weapon; results in recommended expulsion
- Possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia; results in recommended expulsion
- Under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, results in recommended expulsion
- Leaving campus without permission
- Serious disruption to the class or school environment
- Threat to another student or faculty member

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her opportunity to receive a free and public education, to benefit from teacher-led activities to build on each day's learning, to interact with his/her peers in group projects or activities, and to learn strategies that will help prepare the student to be successful in the twenty-first century.

Students remain on the attendance roll of their home campus. Each student's attendance is kept by the alternative school and reported to the home school. During the last week of the student's Alternative School Placement, the Principal, counselor and secretary is notified of the anticipated date of the student's return.

Absences

If a student is absent, the parent must notify the Alternative School by calling (662) 335-2637. The student must submit a note from their parent explaining the reason for the absence upon their return to the Alternative School. A student is required to make up work from all absences before returning to their home campus. Absent days will not count toward the students' number of placement days.

Check-in / Check-out of School Procedures

- Students who arrive by automobile (parent drop-off, as students in the Alternative School are not allowed to drive cars) are not to arrive at the campus before 8:00 am and must be dropped off at the Alternative School Building door.
- Students **MUST NOT** be dropped off or left unattended before or after school hours, and the Alternative School Staff members do not assume responsibility for student safety before check-in or after school dismissal.

- Students riding the bus shall be dropped off at the entrance to the Alternative School and will be picked up in the afternoon in the same location.
- Western Line School Alternative School students are transported to the Alternative School by bus that will only carry the Alternative School Students. They will be allowed to eat breakfast and lunch at school.
- All students must enter the Alternative Placement immediately upon arrival to school.
- Students must wait patiently while security procedures (check for illegal substances or items during entry) are followed:
 - Empty pockets
 - Submit to search by a handheld metal detector
 - Follow staff members' instructions for further requests
 - Recover your appearance and comply with dress code.
- All unauthorized items in one's possession are collected by the Alternative Staff and kept until the end of the semester, when parents can pick up the items (students beware, Alternative School Staff are not responsible for lost, misplaced or stolen items).
- Arrive at school with no more than \$5.00 dollars.
- Western Line Alternative Students will eat breakfast (in the café) in the room once security procedures are complete.
- Classroom instruction begins at 8:30 AM and ends at 2:30 PM.
- Students are to begin instructional work as soon as they return from breakfast, based on their instructional schedule.
- Students are dismissed when the bus arrives or at 2:30 each afternoon.
- Students are expected to leave their work area neat and clean each afternoon.
- Students who arrive late must have their parent check them in at the main office and the Safety Officer or School Resource Officer will walk them to the Alternative School Program.
- Students who check out early, must be picked up by a parent or legal guardian. The safety Officer or School Resource Officer will walk them to the office for dismissal.

Academics

Students who are placed in the Alternative School Program for 45 days or less:

The Alternative School Staff will make every effort to ensure that students complete all work assigned by the home-school teacher in a timely manner. The staff returns all student work to the home-school teachers each Friday and materials for the new week are sent to the Alternative School on Friday for the following week. In certain cases, a student's schedule may have to be modified. Students in certain CTE, Vo-Tech, or Driver's Ed classes may have to drop the class. Students enrolled in a state tested area may also have to drop the class.

Students who are placed in the Alternative School Program for 45 days to one calendar year:

The Alternative School Staff may use online classes to replace the 4 core classes (English, Math, History and Science) to provide instruction. This will allow the students who are placed for more than the 45 days to earn the credit through an online system and keep up with their peers. Electives in the schedule may again be dropped or changed based on the best interest of the child.

Disciplinary progress reports are issued to students at the Alternative School on a regular (every two weeks) basis. Additional progress reports are sent at parent request, or if the staff deems it necessary that the parent be more frequently updated about the child's progress. Academic progress reports are issued by the student's teachers from their home school on a schedule established by the district. If the student is enrolled in the online program, the academic progress reports will follow the same schedule.

All class assignments are logged out to the students and logged back in by students when completed. This is to ensure accountability on all assignments.

All report cards are issued by the home school.

Reading is one of the most essential skill students can take away from an instructional education. In an effort to increase reading skills in all students, all students in the Alternative Reading Program are required to read an AR book every two weeks. Books can be checked out from the Library by the ALP staff and kept in the Alternative School Room for reading.

Transfers and Withdrawals

Students who withdraw from the Alternative School before serving/completing an assignment in the Alternative Program shall complete the assignment (pre-determined number of days) upon re-enrollment in the district, unless the assignment is served in another district.

Students who enroll in the Alternative School before serving/completing an assignment in Disciplinary Alternative School from another school district shall complete the assignment upon enrolling in the Western Line School District.

Students who enroll in the district from a long-term Psychological facility or from foster home, shall be placed in the Alternative School Program for a minimum of ten (10) days (up to 45 days) based on the outcome of the Alternative Hearing Committee.

Cafeteria Services

Breakfast and lunch will be served on site. All students are served breakfast at 8:15 a.m. weekdays. Lunch will be served on campus. It will be worked out between the Alternative Director and Cafeteria staff to determine the time and location of lunch.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students are not allowed to participate in or attend any school related functions on or off any Western Line School District campus while enrolled in the Alternative School Program. Students are not permitted to visit any of the campuses in the district during or after school until they have successfully completed their assignment and have been reinstated in good standing with their home campus. Students disregarding this stipulation may risk the possibility of further disciplinary action, additional days in the Alternative Placement, or action by law enforcement.

Medications

It is the preference of the Western Line School District not to administer a prescription medication to a student. It is understood that, at times, there are situations that justify school personnel dispensing prescription medications. If such a situation exists, the parent follow the school procedures and bring the medication to the school nurse in the original prescription bottle, which must be properly labeled as prescribed by law. A written consent form must be signed by the parent before medication may be dispensed. All approved medication must be kept in the designated location based on the school's procedures. **No student, at any time, may have possession of prescribed or over-the-counter medication on any school property, including the school bus.**

Textbooks

Students assigned to the Alternative School will have textbooks provided from the home school when appropriate. Students are responsible for the condition of the book during the time it is checked out to them. Students must pay for lost, damaged or unreturned books.

Students who are enrolled in the online curriculum will be responsible for the computer they are working on. Materials will be provided for the students to complete the assignments in the Alternative Learning Program. Students who have been issued a device by the district will be responsible for that device during their time in Alternative.

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 Revisions, if applicable
- Parent Notices of student placement in alternative education
- Superintendent referral and recommendation form
- Transition team exit evaluation

High School Equivalency Program Description/Definition:

Completion of the HSEP will help learners develop the skills they will need to succeed across many careers and in higher education. HSEP students unlock career and educational opportunities and become role models both to their peers and the next generation of learners.

A high school equivalency (HSE) diploma is an equivalent to a traditional high school diploma. Earning this credential means that you demonstrate the same skills and knowledge as a traditional high school graduate.

Students enroll in the HSE program to prepare for the GED. This can open the door for students applying for a job or seeking further education. Students are referred by their base school and take a pre-test to determine their academic levels in math, reading and language. Based on their results, they study to advance to the next level and build toward taking the GED.

Once you obtain your GED you can continue your education or go directly into the job market in any area that requires a high school diploma.

Overview

The Western Line School District HSEP is part of the Alternative Education Program and falls under the leadership of the alternative education director. Students participating in the HSEP are not eligible to participate in regular academic courses or other programmatic activities within the school district including athletics, choir, band, or any other extracurricular activities except that a HSEP student may participate in existing job and skill development programs or in programs developed in conjunction with the HSEP and the Vocational Education Director.

Selection Procedures

Students who enroll in the HSEP Option will consist of students who will not graduate with their class because of credit deficiency but are otherwise capable of completing graduation requirements.

Criteria for participation as defined by MDE in Section 37-35-3

The criteria for student participation in the HSEP Option Program will consist of the following:

- a. The student must be at least 16 years of age;
- b. The student must be at least one (1) full grade level behind his or her ninth grade cohort or must have acquired less than four (4) Carnegie units;
- c. The student must have taken every opportunity to continue to participate in course work leading to a regular diploma; and
- d. The student must be certified to be eligible to participate in the HSEP course by the school district superintendent, based on the developed criteria.

Students that have been referred to the Alternative Education Program for disciplinary reasons shall not be eligible for placement in the HSEP option until behavioral modification goals for exiting the Alternative Education Program have been attained.

Placement Process

Entry Dates

New students are admitted into the program no later than September 1 for the fall semester or December 15 for the spring semester. New students are able to start the program at the beginning of the school year provided all necessary documentation has been received by HSEP faculty and approved by the superintendent.

School level

Recommendation for student participation in the HSEP Program will be made by a committee of school staff of the base high school consisting of campus administrators, counselors, classroom teachers, and support staff. Referrals from the school must be submitted to the HSEP by September 1 for the first semester and by December 15 for the second semester.

District level

The recommendation for placement in the HSEP will go to the superintendent to be approved or denied.

Parental Consent

Students shall not be placed in the HSEP prior to obtaining written parental or guardian consent for placement.

Recommended Reading Level

The minimum recommended entry reading level is 6th grade. Current math and reading levels are required before entry into the program from the base school.

Individualized Education and Career Plan

The Individual Education and Career Plan (IECP) will be developed at the time of placement. The IECP committee (the committee should include an academic counselor, academic teacher, principal, and vocational personnel) will emphasize academic/instructional needs of the student, job readiness skills, and work experience options.

Length of stay in the HSEP

WLSD HSEP is a self-paced program with enrollment varying from one semester to several years. GED testing is set when a student has studied efficiently enough to pass. Under normal circumstances, students cannot circumvent the State's Compulsory School Attendance Law or receive a HSE diploma prior to their age equivalent peers. However, students in HSEP Option may be eligible to receive an equivalency diploma prior to their age equivalent peers and/or prior to reaching mandatory compulsory school age, as outlined in Mississippi Code Section 37-13-91. This is not an early graduation option for students who are on track to receive their diploma with their same age peers. Students placed in the HSEP program must meet the criteria for participation.

Attendance

Students must meet the criteria for attendance as set forth by district policies. Written notice will be sent to parents when the student accumulates six unexcused absences, for students admitted to the program by September. When a student accumulates nine unexcused absences, a mandatory meeting will be held with the parents. For students admitted into the program in January, parents will receive written notice after three unexcused absences and a mandatory meeting will be held after five unexcused absences.

How and when students will take the GED

The official test of the WLSH HSEP program is the General Education Diploma (GED). WLSH students who are ready to take the GED will test through a partnership with Mississippi Delta Community College. **Students will take the test in person at the Mississippi Delta Community College Pearson GED testing center.** They must show proficiency on the practice-test (GED Ready) before they will be scheduled to test. The practice test will give feedback on the student's scores as follows: score of 100-133, not likely to pass; score of 134-144, too close to call; score of 145 -200, likely to pass. Students who fall in the "too close to call" range may or may not test. HSEP faculty/staff will make the final decision. Testing will be scheduled on an as needed basis. WLSH HSEP staff will schedule testing upon completion of the requirements of the program and when it is evident they are ready to take the test.

Upon enrollment into the program, students will create an account in GED.com. This is the main website used to prepare for the GED test. This site will also have current scores on both the GED practice test and the GED official test. Score reports list detailed information on what the student needs to study before taking the GED test or practice test again.

The GED scores are as follows:

- Below Passing (score of 100 – 144) — Students who earned a below passing score did not demonstrate the skills graduating high school seniors need to earn their high school diploma.
- GED Passing Score (score of 145 – 164) — Students who earned the GED Passing Score demonstrated the skills that graduating high school seniors need to earn their diploma.
- GED College Ready (score of 165 – 174) — Students who earned the GED College Ready score demonstrated the skills that graduating high school seniors need to earn their diploma at a level indicating college and career readiness.
- GED College Ready + Credit (score of 175 – 200) — The highest score possible on the GED® test. Students who earned the GED College Ready + Credit score not only demonstrated the skills that graduating high school seniors need to earn their diploma at a level indicating college and career readiness, but they may be eligible for up to 10 college credit hours to apply to their program of study (3 credits for math, 3 credits for science, 3 credits for social studies, 1 credit for language arts).

Scores are available within one day of taking the test. The test consists of four sections; Language arts, science, social studies, and math.

Picture ID

Students admitted into the HSE program MUST obtain a state issued ID. The ID is required to

take the test at MDCC.

Accommodations

Students with a disability eligible for the HSEP must meet the requirements to enter the program and be capable of completing work on the levels required for GED instruction. If testing accommodations are necessary, current documentation is required. Candidates who are requesting accommodations based on a diagnosis of a learning or other cognitive disorder are generally expected to provide a report from a current, comprehensive psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluation. Candidates who are requesting accommodations based on a diagnosis of ADHD are generally expected to provide current documentation of their condition, which may include a current, comprehensive medical or psychoeducational evaluation report. Candidates who are requesting accommodations based on a diagnosis of a psychological or psychiatric disorder are generally expected to provide a current, comprehensive psychiatric or psychological evaluation report. Candidates who are requesting accommodations based on a diagnosis of a physical disability or chronic health condition are generally expected to provide a report from a current, comprehensive medical evaluation. **Note that meeting diagnostic criteria for a particular disorder does not necessarily mean that the individual will be found to be disabled for the purpose of needing or being eligible to receive testing accommodations.**

Counseling

HSEP students will receive counseling services for the duration of the enrollment in the program. Prior to placement, documentation of counseling from the base school is required.

Student Conduct and Grades

Students must show proficiency on the pre-test before they will be scheduled to test.

Subjects will consist of but not limited to the following:

- GED Literature
- GED Math
- GED Science
- GED Social Studies
- Personal Finance
- College and Career Readiness

Evaluation of Student's progress

Evaluation of student's progress will be conducted at a minimum at the time of progress reports and report cards. Student progress towards obtaining the GED is available in their individual online accounts.

Instruction

HSEP students should demonstrate the ability to perform on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) at an eighth grade level. Individualized instruction will be outlined in the student's Individual Education and Career Plan (IECP) and based solely on the individual needs of the student.

Content will include instructor-prepared material, standardized GED- instructional material from publishers/websites, instructional materials from secondary publishers and developers. Workforce development instruction and activities should focus knowledge, skills, and abilities required for securing and maintaining employment. HSEP Option instructional time and workforce development shall be determined by the WLSD based on the individualized needs of students.

Driving to Campus

HSEP students are permitted to drive their own vehicles to campus as long as they meet the requirements for driving and purchase a parking decal as set forth by WLSD school board.

Graduation

HSEP Option graduates will receive official school recognition of their achievement. The student who fails to meet the graduation requirements is not permitted to participate in the graduation exercises (Accountability Standard 20.4). A separate graduation ceremony will be held near the same time as the high school graduation ceremony for their peers.

Data Collection

Data will be collected by the Office of Compulsory School Attendance annually and reported to the State Board of Education.

- a. The total number of students enrolled in the HSEP Program;
- b. The age range of students enrolled in the HSEP Program;
- c. The reading level of students entering and exiting the HSEP Program;
- d. The total number of students successfully completing the HSEP Program each school year; and
- e. WLSD will complete an annual report provided by HSEP Testing Services beginning with the end of the 2009-2010 school year. Reports should be completed and submitted after the end of each school year but no later than July 31.

Student Records

All information pertaining to the HSEP will be kept on file in the building/classroom where the program is housed. The cumulative folders will remain at the base school.

Transcripts

Official GED transcripts are not available at Western Line School District. Students must register for an account on the Diploma Sender website <https://diplomasender.com/#/>. Once they register for an account, they will gain access to unofficial transcripts, but will have to pay a fee to obtain their official transcript for jobs or college entry.

Alternative Education Program Student Dress Code:

Shirt:

- White Polo (only white undershirt allowed)

Pants:

- Khaki Pants or shorts
- Pants shall not sag

Belts:

- Belts must be worn

Shoes: Shoes shall be worn at all times

- House-shoes, flip-flops, swim-shoes, crocks, or slides are not allowed.
- Shoes must have a permanent back.
- Shoes with laces must be laced and tied
- Shoes with Velcro must be fastened.
- Sandals shall not be worn on playground or in the gym for P.E.

Jackets:

- Pullover jackets or sweatshirts (with or without hoods) are not allowed.
- Jackets shall be unbuttoned, unzipped or unbuttoned inside the school buildings
- Jackets must not fall below the knee. (Trench coats are not allowed.)

Other regulations:

- All students shall always wear shoes by order of the Health Department
- All pants shall be worn at the waistline with no undergarments or skin showing (No sagging pants)
- No jewelry that is deemed distracting or unsafe.
- All tops shall not show or reveal any mid-section
- No clothing articles or patches are to be worn which advertise alcoholic beverages or other drugs
- Obscene slogans or slogans/signs that promote gang activity are not to be worn on clothing articles or any logo/slogan that may cause a material disruption to the learning environment.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn in the buildings unless otherwise prescribed
- No facial piercings and no jewelry are allowed in the Alternative Placement.
- No caps or hats or headdresses are allowed in the school building.** Students are not allowed to wear caps, hats, bandanas, or skull caps, etc. with bills on school campus. **All caps/hats worn in the school building will be confiscated and kept until the end of the school year.** Toboggans (with no bill) may be worn outside during cold weather.
- In P.E. and on the playground, only tennis shoes shall be worn

Violations of the dress code shall be handled by the Alternative Director. If the student's dress is deemed inappropriate or offensive, he/she shall be required to obtain appropriate clothing before being admitted to class. Violations of the dress code shall be dealt with according to the district discipline policy.