



Western Line 
SCHOOL DISTRICT



Alternative Program Handbook 2026-2027

"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 expelled 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 substantive 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 rationale 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 every day
- 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 by the School Resource Officer.
- Students report to assigned workstation/seat upon arrival.
- Breakfast and lunch are eaten in the alternative setting, or at 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 to students' 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 recommendations 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 school's 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 qualifications 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 coursework 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 behavioral 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 shared with the student, and the expectations for the Alternative School have been outlined for the hallway/sidewalk, restroom, cafeteria, bus, and classrooms.

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 student's 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 skills 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 a 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 must 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 coursework 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 who 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 an HSEP 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 WLSD HSEP program is the General Education Diploma (GED). WLSD 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. WLSD 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 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 students' 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, and instructional materials from secondary publishers and developers. Workforce development instruction and activities should focus on 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 the 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 the playground or in the gym for P.E.

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)
- ☐ Jackets must not fall below the knee. (Trench coats are not allowed.)
- ☐ 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.