

**A. PURPOSES**

The Board is committed to the goal of providing a safe and orderly learning environment in each school. The educational program and the student behavior management plan developed at each school, in addition to numerous other strategies identified in Board policy, are intended to create such an environment and to help each student be a successful and contributing member of the school community.

Alternative learning programs or schools are provided as an option for those instances in which a student's behavior management or academic performance needs cannot be met in a regular educational setting. The purposes of an alternative learning program or school are: (1) to intervene and address problems that prevent a student from achieving success in the regular educational setting; (2) to reduce the risk that a student will drop out of school by providing resources to help the student resolve issues affecting his or her performance at school; (3) to return a student, if and when it is practicable, to the regular educational setting with the skills necessary to succeed in that environment; and, (4) to preserve a safe and orderly learning environment in the regular educational setting.

**B. ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMS/SCHOOLS**

Alternative learning programs and schools should serve the purposes described above. Such alternative education programs are expected to meet all Board policy and state requirements. In addition, alternative education programs and support services should be designed to facilitate students' transition back to the regular educational setting when appropriate.

All school personnel at alternative learning programs or schools should receive training so that students enrolled in such programs or schools receive appropriate educational services.

Each alternative learning program or school is required to develop a behavior management plan, a school improvement plan, and a parental involvement plan in accordance with Board policy. In addition, a conflict resolution plan must be included in the school improvement plan. The Board encourages the principal and other school personnel, in developing these plans, to review successful alternative education programs and make effective use of the resources provided by the superintendent.

The superintendent and Board will review these plans in accordance with Board policy. While providing flexibility at the school level to develop the plans, the superintendent and Board will not approve any plan that is not reasonably likely to meet the purposes of an alternative learning program or school.

Prior to implementing a new alternative learning program or school, the Board will

44 develop a program proposal that is consistent with the State Board of Education standards  
45 for alternative learning programs. The Board then will submit the proposal to the State  
46 Board for its review. After the proposal has been reviewed by the State Board, the Board  
47 will consider any recommendations from the State Board to modify the proposal before  
48 implementing the alternative learning program or school. The Board also will review on  
49 a regular basis whether the school system's alternative learning programs and schools  
50 comply with State Board standards.

51  
52 **C. TRANSFER TO ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMS OR SCHOOLS**

53  
54 Students generally are assigned to a school based on attendance area. However, as  
55 provided by law, the Board may assign any student to a school outside of his or her  
56 attendance area in order for the student to attend a specialized school or for any other  
57 reason the Board, in its sole discretion, deems sufficient.

58  
59 Students may be transferred to an alternative learning program or school on a voluntary  
60 or involuntary basis. The transfer process is provided below.

61  
62 **1. Responsibilities of Personnel at Referring School**

63  
64 In addition to any other procedures required by this policy, prior to referring a  
65 student to an alternative learning program or school, the principal of the referring  
66 school must:

- 67  
68 a. Document the procedures that were used to identify the student as being at  
69 risk of academic failure or as being disruptive or disorderly;  
70  
71 b. Provide the reasons for referring the student to an alternative learning  
72 program or school; and,  
73  
74 c. Provide to the alternative learning program or school all relevant student  
75 records, including anecdotal information.  
76

77 **2. Responsibilities of School Personnel at the Alternative Learning Program or**  
78 **School**

79  
80 In addition to any other procedures required by this policy, once a student is  
81 placed in an alternative learning program or school, the appropriate school  
82 personnel of the program or school must meet to review the student's records and  
83 any other documentation forwarded by the referring school. Based on these  
84 records and any input provided by the parent concerning the student's needs, the  
85 personnel at the alternative program or school shall determine the support services  
86 and intervention strategies that are recommended for the student.

87  
88 If a student who is subject to N. C. Gen. Stat. § 14-208.18 is assigned to an  
89 alternative school, the student must be supervised by school personnel at all times.  
90

### 91 **3. Voluntary Referral**

92  
93 The Board encourages parental involvement in decisions regarding the child's  
94 education and in identifying effective options for addressing concerns regarding  
95 the child's behavior or academic performance.  
96

97 Voluntary transfers are encouraged whenever possible. A voluntary transfer is an  
98 agreement by the parent, the principal, and the disciplinary review committee that  
99 transfer is an appropriate option for the particular student. After agreement has  
100 been reached, the principal of the regular educational setting and the principal of  
101 the alternative learning program or school shall arrange the process and time for  
102 the transfer. The principal of the regular educational setting shall notify the  
103 superintendent of the transfer.  
104

### 105 **4. Involuntary Referral**

106  
107 A student may be required to be transferred from the regular educational setting to  
108 an alternative learning program or school under any of the following  
109 circumstances:  
110

- 111 a. The student presents a clear threat to the safety of other students or  
112 personnel;
- 113  
114 b. The student presents a significant disruption to the educational  
115 environment in the regular educational setting;
- 116  
117 c. The student is at risk of dropping out or not meeting standards for  
118 promotion, and resources in addition to or different from those available in  
119 the regular educational setting are needed to address the issue;
- 120  
121 d. The student has been charged with a felony or a crime that allegedly  
122 endangered the safety of others, and it is reasonably foreseeable that the  
123 educational environment in the regular educational setting will be  
124 significantly disrupted if the student remains; or,  
125
- 126 e. If the Code of Student Conduct provides for a transfer as a consequence of  
127 the student's behavior.  
128

129 Prior to an involuntary transfer, the principal or disciplinary committee of the

130 referring school shall document efforts to assist the student in the regular  
131 educational environment. The principal or disciplinary committee also must  
132 document the student's behavior and academic performance. A voluntary transfer  
133 is preferable to an involuntary transfer. Therefore, a school administrator should  
134 meet with the parents to try to reach a consensus on how to address the student's  
135 difficulties at school.

136  
137 If an agreement is not reached and a basis for involuntary transfer exists, the  
138 principal may recommend to the superintendent that the student be transferred to  
139 an alternative school. The principal must provide in writing: (1) an explanation  
140 of the student's behavior or academic performance that is at issue; (2)  
141 documentation or a summary of the documentation of the efforts to assist the  
142 student in the student's regular educational setting; and, (3) documentation of the  
143 circumstances that support an involuntary transfer.

144  
145 A copy of the recommendation and other documentation must be provided to the  
146 parents by certified mail or in person. The parent may request an informal  
147 meeting with the superintendent to discuss the transfer. The superintendent has  
148 the authority to determine who may be present at the meeting.

149  
150 If the superintendent approves the transfer, the principal of the regular educational  
151 setting and the principal of the alternative school shall make all necessary  
152 arrangements.

153  
154 The parent may appeal the superintendent's decision to the Board. The Board  
155 will hear the appeal in closed session and will follow its procedures as provided in  
156 Policy BDA, "Hearings Before the Board." During the period of the appeal, the  
157 student may be transferred to the alternative learning program or school.

#### 158 159 **5. Assignment During a Long-Term or 365-Day Suspension**

160  
161 A student who receives a long-term or 365-day suspension may be offered  
162 services in the alternative learning program or school for a portion or the full  
163 duration of the suspension (see policy JGDA, "Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day  
164 Suspension, and Expulsion"). Any student who receives a long-term or 365-day  
165 suspension must be offered alternative education services unless the  
166 superintendent provides a significant or important reason for declining to offer  
167 such services. Alternative education services include, but are not limited to, the  
168 alternative programs or schools established in this policy in accordance with N. C.  
169 Gen. Stat. § 115C-105.47A.

#### 170 171 **6. Assignment of Student Sex Offenders**

173 The Board may decide, pursuant to N. C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-390.11(a)(2), to  
174 assign a student who is subject to N. C. Gen. Stat. § 14-208.18 to an alternative  
175 learning program or school.  
176

177 **D. TRANSITION FROM ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMS OR SCHOOLS**  
178

179 In most instances, the goal of the alternative learning program or school is to return the  
180 student to the regular educational setting with the skills necessary to succeed in that  
181 environment as soon as practicable. The personnel of the alternative learning program or  
182 school and those of the regular educational setting shall work together to help create a  
183 successful transition for the student.  
184

185 If the student is not or will not be returned to the regular educational setting, the  
186 alternative learning program or school will assist in the student's transition to other  
187 educational settings, including other programs offered by the school system or a  
188 community college or vocational school.  
189

190 **E. ASSIGNMENT OF PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL TO ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMS**  
191 **OR SCHOOLS**  
192

193 When assigning professional personnel to an alternative learning program or school, the  
194 superintendent shall consider the experience and evaluation ratings of the professional  
195 employee who may be assigned to the program or school. As school system resources  
196 allow, the superintendent shall strive to avoid assigning to an alternative school or  
197 program less experienced professional personnel or professional personnel who have  
198 received an evaluation rating of less than "Accomplished" within the last three years.  
199

200 **F. EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMS OR SCHOOLS**  
201

202 **1. Information to be Reported**  
203

204 Each year, the Board will evaluate each alternative learning program or school  
205 based upon reports provided by the superintendent and any other information the  
206 Board wishes to consider. In addition to data required by the School  
207 Improvement Plan, each alternative learning program or school must report the  
208 following information annually to the Board:  
209

- 210 a. Referral patterns from the regular educational setting, including age, race,  
211 gender and method of transfer (voluntary, as an alternative to suspension  
212 or expulsion, or involuntary);
- 213 b. Dropout rates;  
214  
215

- 216 c. How long students stay at the alternative learning program or school and  
217 where they go (including the regular educational setting, community  
218 college/technical schools or dropping out) when they leave the alternative  
219 program or school;  
220  
221 d. The training and development of professional employees assigned to the  
222 alternative learning program or school;  
223  
224 e. A list of services or programs that the alternative learning program or  
225 school coordinates with other governmental agencies; and  
226  
227 f. Any other information the superintendent requires.  
228

229 To assist the Board in evaluating an alternative learning program or school, the  
230 school system safe school plan must include measures of the effectiveness of the  
231 alternative program or school.  
232

## 233 **2. Items to be Considered**

234  
235 In addition to any other outcomes the Board deems important, the Board will  
236 determine whether:  
237

- 238 a. A diverse group of students is referred to the alternative learning program  
239 or school;  
240  
241 b. The alternative learning program or school complies with State Board  
242 standards;  
243  
244 c. The alternative learning program or school incorporates best practices for  
245 improving student academic performance and reducing disruptive  
246 behavior;  
247  
248 d. School personnel at the alternative learning program or school are well-  
249 trained and provided with appropriate professional development;  
250  
251 e. The alternative learning program or school is organized to provide  
252 coordinated services;  
253  
254 f. Students at the alternative learning program or school receive high quality  
255 and rigorous academic instruction; and,  
256  
257 g. The alternative learning program or school assists students in transitioning  
258 back to the regular educational setting or to other educational settings.

259  
260 Legal References: N. C. Gen. Stat. § 14-208.18; 115C-47(32a), -105.47, -105.47A, -105.48, -  
261 276(r), -288, -367, -369, -390.7, -390.9, -390.10, -390.11

262  
263 Cross References:  
264 Policy BDA, "Hearings Before the Board;"  
265 Policy IGAJ, "Driver's Education and License Eligibility"  
266 Policy JFCL, "Student Sex Offenders;"  
267 Policy JFDA, "School Plan for Management of Student Behavior;"  
268 Policy JFDB, "Parental Involvement in Student Behavior Issues;"  
269 Policy JGDA, "Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day Suspension, and Expulsion"  
270 Policy JP, "Student Discipline Records;"

271  
272  
273  
274 APPROVED BY BOARD  
275 AND EFFECTIVE \_\_\_\_\_  
276

NEW