Alternative Education School and Program Application Guidance Document

Alternative Education sites exist to ensure that all Louisiana school children have access to education services and supports that best meet the needs of the individual student. Exemplary alternative education develops a guiding mission and purpose that drives the overall operation of the site. The mission and purpose include the identification of the target student population, the reasons that student is transitioned to the alternative site, and identified outcomes for students to achieve while at the alternative site. This guidance document is designed to assist with the development of a plan for school systems to utilize the new alternative education site authorization process and align with revisions to BESE Bulletin 131.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION (AE) AUTHORIZATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE	
ACTIVITY	**DATE**

● New AE application released
● All school systems must complete one of the three options:
  ○ NEW AE sites must complete an application
  ○ Existing AE schools can decide to participate in the new authorization process
  ○ All school systems must confirm existing AE sites that choose not to pursue the new authorization process
	January 30, 2019

Informational Webinar on new AE Authorization Process	February 7, 2019: 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. February 12, 2019: 9:00 -10:00 a.m.
All applications and school system confirmations due to LDOE	March 1, 2019
Interviews with LDOE for new AE site applications	March 11-15, 2019
LDOE presents BESE with final AE site list for approval	April 16-17, 2019

Core Component	Core Component Description	Strategies to Support Implementation
Transitional Planning and Support	Transitional planning and support should be implemented to ensure school systems create a consistent and thorough process that encourages students to maximize the time spent receiving alternative education services and that leads to a successful transition out of services or on to post-secondary education or the workforce.	● Creation of transition plan detailing appropriate behavior and academic interventions and goals for progress for each student ● Review and use of Individualized Education Plan (IEP) ● Review of student's full behavior records ● Creation of plan for students once they return to the sending school, including bridge supports, to assist with readjustment

Core Component	Core Component Description	Strategies to Support Implementation
Behavior Intervention (BI) and Site Climate	Both state law and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) policy require alternative education to provide expanded services and evidence based interventions to assist students displaying behavioral misconduct. Students at the AE site should have evidence based interventions and a supportive school/program climate to progress academically and behaviorally.	● Identified evidence based interventions from the LDOE BI Portfolio to support Tier 2 and/or 3 interventions with the Multi-Tier system of support ● Utilization of evidence based approaches through a multi-tier system of support to provide clear behavioral expectations at the AE site and foster a positive climate ● Selection and implementation of a social and emotional learning curriculum from the LDOE vetted portfolio ● Create and use of identified student growth measures, such as evaluation plans, assessments and learning outcomes, to measure student behavioral improvement ● Consider utilization of an annual climate survey to assess and respond to site culture and needs
Academic Intervention and Individual Academic Plan	Academic interventions, aligned to Tier 1 curriculum (standards-aligned), is foundational to providing students at alternative sites high quality instruction and curricular supports. Academic interventions should prioritize inclusive and individualized approaches to meet the needs of all learners, support English language learners, students with disabilities and students that are academically behind so that they exit the alternative site on track academically.	● Review and use of Individual Academic Plan (IAP) and Pupil Progression Plan ● Review of student's full academic records at entry to determine appropriate course schedule and targeted instructional methods ● Use of curriculum at the AE site that is aligned to state standards ● Identified structure and plan, with timeline, for progress monitoring student's academic performance
Graduation and Post-Secondary Pathways	Students at alternative sites should receive equitable access to academic and career readiness opportunities. Students should have access to career and technical education opportunities and graduation pathways available in the school system.	● Continued access to Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), if previously participating ● Continued access to Jump Start pathways available in the school system, if previously participating ● Specific supports for students with IEPs seeking an alternate diploma/graduation pathway (Act 833 of 2014)

Core Component	Core Component Description	Strategies to Support Implementation
Specialized Staff Support and Educator Engagement	Students at alternative sites often need specialized support to achieve successful academic and behavioral outcomes. School systems must employ and retain effective teachers and staff with specialized training to address the comprehensive academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs of the students receiving alternative services.	● Provision of annual professional development for staff to include, but not be limited to, evidence based behavioral interventions, classroom management, trauma informed response, adverse childhood experiences and implementation strategies for behavioral interventions used at the site
Community Partnerships	The students referred to alternative sites often need supports that are beyond the capacity of the site staff. School systems should identify and pursue partnerships with community based organizations that assist the AE site in providing supplemental supports and resources to students and their families.	● Partnerships to address counseling, family engagement, mental health, social-emotional learning, etc., that are beyond the capacity of school or program site staff
Evaluation and Accountability	Alternative education sites must annually review programmatic and academic components to ensure struggling students are receiving effective interventions and have the opportunity for both academic and behavioral remediation.	● Submission of an annual report to LDOE detailing site mission, staffing structure, interventions used, community partners and strategies to support student success ● Implementation of annual climate survey ● Use of implementation fidelity measures to gauge efficacy of selected academic and behavioral interventions as well as professional develop training for staff