

# Alternative Programs in Public Schools

## Background

State regulation Ed 306.21 gives local school districts the authority to operate alternative programs. An alternative program is defined as the regular delivery of the majority of a student's instruction through classroom or other methods that are different from the methods of instruction used by the standard schools of the district

An alternative program may be housed within one of the standard schools of the district or it may be set up as a standalone program. Standalone alternative programs may even be organized as Alternative Schools with their own leadership structure that is separate from any other district school.

## Key Components

- Alternative programs provide different methods of instruction for students.
- Alternative programs may be set up as Alternative Schools.
- Alternative programs are designed to address the individual needs of students or specific student groups.

## Alternative Program Requirements

1. An alternative program must be approved by the local school board in a plan that includes the following elements:
  - a. The goals of the program;
  - b. The curriculum to be provided;
  - c. The procedures for assessing and implementing the alternative program, consistent with RSA 193-C:3, III;
  - d. The program schedule, if different from the standard school district schedule;
  - e. A demonstration of how the alternative program will enable participating students to achieve the same competencies outlined for all district students; and
  - f. Explicit explanation of how extended learning opportunities (ELO's) will be incorporated as a learning option for all students.

## Department of Education Review

Prior to implementing an alternative program, the school administrative unit (SAU) shall submit to the Department the following items:

- Local school board approval
- Alternative Program Plan
- Location of alternative program
- Copies of fire, health, and safety inspections, if applicable

## Students with Disabilities

Alternative programs for students with disabilities shall meet all requirements of State Regulation Ed 1119.

## Participation

Participation in an alternative program is voluntary and shall require the written approval from the parent or guardian.

## Reporting Requirements and School Approval

An alternative program which is supervised by the principal of a standard school shall be considered part of that standard school for reporting purposes and for school approval under State Regulation Ed 306.28.

An alternative program which is supervised by a district level administrator shall be considered a separate school for reporting purposes and for school approval under State Regulation Ed 306.28.

### Staff Certification

Staff assigned to alternative programs shall meet the requirements of State Regulation Ed 306.18.

### Student Services

Students in alternative programs shall be provided equivalent services, including but not limited to:

- Food and Nutrition Services
- Health Services
- Guidance and Counseling Services

### Helpful Resources

*More documents found on the NHED site:*

- [NH Education Regulations](#)
- [Office of Public Schools](#)

### More Questions?

Contact the Office of Public Schools at [SchoolApproval@doe.nh.gov](mailto:SchoolApproval@doe.nh.gov)