NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE
NAEA
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Exemplary Practices 2.0:
Standards of Quality and Program Evaluation 2014

2014 Board of Directors

President	Robert L. Eichorn, M.Ed
Vice-President	Kay Davenport, Ed.S
Treasurer	Thomas Trautman, Ed.D
Secretary	Edward Lowther, Ed.D
Director	Denise Riley, M.S.
Director	Jacquelyn Whitt, Ed.S
Director	Richard Thompson, M.Ed
Director	John Holmes, D.Min.

2018 Board of Directors

President	Pam Bruening, Ed.D
President-Elect	Kathleen Chronister, M.Ed
Treasurer	Pat Conner, M.Ed
Secretary	Ja'net Bishop, Ed.D
Past President	Kay Davenport, Ed.S
Region-1	Justin DeMartin, M.S.
Region-2	Edward Lowther, Ed.D
Region-3	Michael Hylen, Ph.D
Region-4	Jacquelyn Whitt, Ed.S
Region-5	Glen Hoffman
Region-6	Coby Davis, Ed.D
Region-7	Sean Hollas, M.Ed
Region-8	John Holmes, D.Min.
Region-9	Valinda Jones, M.Ed
Advocacy	Frances Gooden, Ed.D
Technology	Richard Thompson, M.Ed

Table of Contents

Introduction to Exemplary Practices 2.0: Standards of Quality and Program Evaluation 2014

Throughout the world, nontraditional and alternative schools serve students who require or thrive in an environment other than a traditional educational setting. This population of learners may face challenges in school, home, and community. As a result, their ability to access services in the traditional setting may be at-risk. Nontraditional and alternative education delivers innovative 21st Century approaches to teaching and learning which provides students with the opportunity to meet graduation requirements, engage in college and career readiness, and participate as productive members of their communities. In an effort to enhance the quality of nontraditional and alternative education in all fifty states, the National Alternative Education Association (NAEA) has identified 15 exemplary practices. Research based, field tested, and incorporating best practices in the field of education, *Exemplary Practices 2.0: Alternative Education Standards of Quality and Program Evaluation* represents unified standards and indicators of quality programming. *Exemplary Practices 2.0* provides educational leaders and practitioners with a standards based approach to program evaluation, identifies essential characteristics, and notes the importance of wrap-around services which include school counseling, social work, and technology; all of which play a role in successful schools and programs.

Each exemplary practice includes an overview of the practice and indicators. The practices relate to the following topic areas:

- 1.0 Vision and Mission
- 2.0 Leadership
- 3.0 Climate and Culture
- 4.0 Staffing and Professional Development
- 5.0 Curriculum and Instruction
- 6.0 Student Assessment
- 7.0 Transitional Planning and Support
- 8.0 Parent/Guardian Involvement
- 9.0 Collaboration

- 10.0 Program Evaluation
- 11.0 School Counseling
- 12.0 School Social Work
- 13.0 Digital and Virtual Learning
- 14.0 Policies and Procedures
- 15.0 Nontraditional Education Plan

The identified practices are appropriate for all nontraditional and alternative education settings including comprehensive campuses, interagency programs, co-facility schools, or stand-alone facilities. *Exemplary Practices 2.0* is designed to ensure quality nontraditional and alternative education programming occurs, is accountable to and for students, parents, and stakeholders, and fulfills the mission of helping students matriculate to the next grade level on their path to graduation.

Exemplary Practices 2.0 is designed to:

- Assure high quality educational services for any student served by nontraditional or alternative schools are delivered with fidelity and accountability
- Develop standards, indicators, and technical language that will serve as operational and performance guidelines
- Promote 21st century learning in the creation of new nontraditional and alternative programs
- Evaluate the effectiveness of new and existing programs based on standards and indicators
- Create a common framework for future nontraditional and alternative education policy development

Exemplary Practices in Alternative Education: Indicators of Quality Programming 2009 has been revisited and revised to reflect the most innovative exemplary practices for alternative programs. *Exemplary Practices 2.0: Alternative Education Standards of Quality and Program Evaluation 2014* provides an updated document with a research based evaluation instrument designed to assist educators in assessing current programs and to aide in the creation of new and effective schools.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 1.0: VISION AND MISSION

- An exemplary nontraditional or alternative education school develops a guiding vision and mission that drives the overall operation of the program.
- All stakeholders (i.e., administrators, community representatives, parents/guardians, staff, and students) share in developing, implementing, directing and maintaining the vision and mission for the school.
- The vision and mission of the school includes the identification of the target student population and promotes the success of all students.
- Additionally, the vision and mission embody high expectations for academic achievement, and the nurturing of positive social interactions between staff and students.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

1.1 The vision clearly articulates goals to the stakeholders.

1.2 The mission is documented, published and visible to students, parents/guardians, staff, and the community stakeholders.

1.3 All stakeholders are involved in developing the vision, mission, goals, and projected outcomes for the school.

1.4 The mission includes the identification of the student population for whom the nontraditional or alternative education school is designed to serve.

1.5 The vision and mission of the school has a unifying theme that evokes high levels of student and stakeholder support.

1.6 The driving vision and mission of the nontraditional or alternative school is consistent with the district's strategic goals while aligning with specific state standard(s).

1.7 Student success is central to the vision and mission of the school, which includes the development of effective and affective skills, social competencies, and career readiness skills.

1.8 The vision and mission of the school promotes a safe and secure environment while developing the emotional and physical wellness of all students.

1.9 The development of school culture and student ownership of their school is facilitated through the use of symbols, ceremonies, celebrations, and the development of traditions.

1.10 Resources are sought and obtained to support the implementation of the vision and mission.

1.11 Barriers to achieving the vision and mission are identified, clarified, and addressed through the schools strategic plan.

1.12 The vision and mission shape the educational plans and activities undertaken by the nontraditional or alternative school.

1.13 The vision and mission are monitored, evaluated, and revised (as needed) on a yearly basis.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 2.0: LEADERSHIP

- An exemplary nontraditional or alternative school employs passionate, innovative, competent, and experienced leadership.
- School leadership purposely engages in opportunities to promote program success and strategically includes community, business, and media in celebrations.
- All stakeholders including administrators, teachers, and staff must be committed to full implementation of the mission and core values of the school.
- On-site leadership utilizes and engages in a collaborative approach that ensures shared decision-making, high expectations and continuous monitoring of program quality.
- The superintendent/designee sustains the independence of the school and allocates sufficient resources (i.e., financial or other necessary resources) to protect the integrity of the program.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

2.1 The Superintendent/designee provides sufficient oversight to ensure quality programming while protecting the autonomy of the nontraditional or alternative school's operation.

2.2 The Superintendent/designee provides adequate financial support and other needed resources for implementation of quality alternative education services (i.e., teaching and non-teaching staff, equipment, technology, supplies, curriculum, etc.).

2.3 School administrators are experienced and competent, enabling them to be engaged in all aspects of the program's operation and management.

2.4 The shared vision of the nontraditional or alternative school is communicated by leadership through the program's mission.

2.5 School leadership engages stakeholders in a collaborative process when making program decisions (i.e., Advisory Board and other opportunities that promote stakeholder participation in the decision-making process).

2.6 School leadership ensures decisions regarding operations align with state legislation and local policies and procedures.

2.7 School leadership recruits, hires and trains highly qualified teachers and support personnel.

2.8 School administrators ensure appropriate student to teacher ratios exist, that ratios reflect the needs of the student population, and that the student to teacher ratio never exceeds 12 to 1.

2.9 Leadership promotes collaboration among the school of origin, community, and home, thereby fostering an effective learning environment for the student.

2.10 Administration ensures that reliable data and student performance measures guide the instructional practices of the program.

2.11 School and district leaders work to offer transportation, food services and appropriate health services to students.

2.12 Consistent and constructive performance evaluations of administrative, teaching, and support personnel are conducted by leadership in a timely manner.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 3.0: CLIMATE AND CULTURE

- A safe, caring, and orderly climate and culture that promotes collegial relationships among students, parents/guardians, and staff is maintained in an exemplary nontraditional or alternative school.
- The school culture and climate are characterized by a positive rather than punitive atmosphere for behavioral management and student discipline.
- School staff establish clear expectations for learning and conduct.
- The staff actively models and rewards appropriate student behavior.
- Proven practices to foster healthy communities are implemented at the school.
- Connections among all stakeholders that are positive and encourage academic, behavioral, and social success are actively promoted at the school.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

3.1 Services are efficiently organized into effective delivery systems whether the entity is a nontraditional or alternative school, program, or classroom.

3.2 The program is housed in a safe, well maintained, aesthetically pleasing, and physically accessible environment that supports optimal student learning.

3.3 Rules and behavioral expectations are clearly written (i.e., code of conduct and comprehensive student discipline action plan), understood and accepted by staff, students, and parents/guardians.

3.4 The program has a designated team of representatives (i.e., administrative, teaching and support personnel, parents/guardians, and, if possible, student representatives) that strategically plan, monitor, and implement prevention and intervention strategies that reflect the culture and climate of the nontraditional or alternative school.

3.5 The school actively promotes student engagement and affords students with the opportunity to have a role in shaping the learning environment to facilitate feelings of connectedness.

3.6 The nontraditional or alternative school communicates high expectations for student and staff performance and celebrates success on a regular basis.

3.7 Student, parent, and staff survey feedback are presented at staff meetings and used to make appropriate programming changes.

3.8 The school demonstrates an understanding and sensitivity to academic, behavioral, cultural, developmental, gender, and societal needs of students, parents/guardians and the community.

3.9 Short and long-term goals address the needs of the students, parents/guardians, and staff.

3.10 School growth plans are measurable and built upon student performance in the effective and affective domains, attendance, matriculation, and graduation.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 4.0: STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- An exemplary nontraditional or alternative school is staffed with effective, innovative, and qualified individuals trained in current research based teaching methods that facilitate active learning, promote creativity, and encourage self-evaluation.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

4.1 Enthusiastic, energetic, and innovative teachers who demonstrate multiple teaching styles are employed at the school.

4.2 The staff understands and practices the concept of facilitative learning.

4.3 The diversity of the staff mirrors the diversity of the student body and the experience of the alternative education faculty mirrors the faculty experience of the school district.

4.4 The teacher to student ratio of the nontraditional or alternative school promotes individualized instruction. The recommended student to teacher ratio is 12 to 1.

4.5 Staff members create written professional development plans that facilitate personal and professional growth, identify the professional development needs of the individual, establish short and long term SMART(Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results Focused, Time Bound) goals, and align professional development training to address the individual's overall plan.

4.6 Staff members create a professional learning community (PLC), that encourages the sharing of successes and growth areas to cultivate an attitude of continuous improvement and lifelong learning.

4.7 The focus of professional development is on student achievement, effective and affective skills development, social skills, and college and career readiness.

4.8 A variety of professional development approaches, including technology, to accomplish the goals of improving instruction and increasing student achievement are used at the school.

4.9 Professional development opportunities include information related to effective collaboration with community agencies and services to support the student in the home and workplace.

4.10 Increasing staff capacity through training to ensure the use of research based strategies that align with the needs of the program population is used strategically at the school.

4.11 Sufficient fiscal and capital resources are allotted to allow all staff to participate in workshops, conferences, and seminars.

4.12 Administration ensures ongoing professional development is geared towards the specific needs of teachers and support personnel as it relates to their role in the nontraditional or alternative school.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 5.0: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- Instructional practices and curriculum are rigorous and inclusive, support the needs of second language and disabled students, and are individualized to meet the needs of all learners.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

5.1 Access to the academic core curriculum is ensured at the nontraditional or alternative schools.

5.2 Teachers are highly qualified in the content area based on individual state standards.

5.3 All faculty are competent in research based teaching techniques and behavior management strategies appropriate for the target student population.

5.4 The school is operated in full compliance with local, state, and federal laws governing students.

5.5 Curricular options reflect, but are not limited to, those offered in the traditional educational setting, which may included blended learning.

5.6 Credit by proficiency, as allowed by the local education agency and/or state, to increase probability of student graduation with his or her age cohort is investigated and applied.

5.7 Teachers identify and provide appropriate instruction designed to close gaps in student learning.

5.8 Differentiated Instructional strategies are culturally responsive and employed to accommodate for students with different backgrounds, differentiated according to individual learning styles (e.g. visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners), and multiple intelligences. Personalized learning plans are evident and intentionally incorporates Social Emotional Learning.

5.9 Students have opportunities to learn and/or participate in non-core content areas to include, but not limited to, the following: fine and practical arts, leadership, health/physical education, music, service learning, and technical/vocational courses.

5.10 Community involvement using service learning as a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction, teaches civic responsibility, and strengthens the student's role in his or her community through self-reflection is promoted at the school.

5.11 Instruction integrates life skills (e.g., career preparation, citizenship, conflict resolution, decision making skills, problem solving, public speaking, self-management, social skills, teamwork, time management, work-based learning, etc.) into the curricula and affords the student with opportunities to put the acquired skills into action.

5.12 Using interest inventories and vocational investigation, opportunities for career exploration (e.g., job shadowing and training, mentorships, work-based learning, career fairs, etc.) related to the student's interests and postsecondary goals are provided at secondary programs.

5.13 Small group lessons in concert with project based learning are used to build social relationships by supporting collaboration and teamwork.

5.14 Researched based dropout prevention strategies for students at-risk of dropping out of school are used at the nontraditional or alternative school.

5.15 Technology is blended into the instructional delivery process across all content areas.

5.16 The curriculum is supported by access to a balance of up-to-date, well-maintained collection of textbooks, library media, technology, software, and other instructional materials that are age and grade appropriate for all learners.

8

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 6.0: STUDENT ASSESSMENT

- An exemplary nontraditional or alternative school includes screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic and outcome-based measurements and procedures to improve short and long term results at the student level.
- Student assessments are used to measure achievement and identify specific learner needs. The school uses reliable measures to monitor student progress and adjust program services.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

6.1 School administrators promote assessment as a means to identify individual and group learner needs.

6.2 School administrators enforce data-driven accountability as required by state and local authorities.

6.3 The purpose of assessments is clearly defined and communicated to students, parents/guardians, and staff which include program accountability for quality instruction and student qualification for matriculation or graduation.

6.4 Data collection procedures are clearly outlined to ensure reliable and valid student assessment results.

6.5 Teachers use reliable formative and summative assessment tools that align with curriculum and instruction to track student performance and progress.

6.6 The program utilizes multiple measures to monitor student achievement, effective and affective performance, and preparation for matriculation or graduation with an emphasis on both informal and formal assessments.

6.7 Quantitative and qualitative data are used to identify student progress as prescribed by the district and state.

6.8 Assessments are directly linked to identifying appropriate curriculum and instructional methods to accommodate a variety of individual learning needs.

6.9 Results of assessments are used to adjust instructional practices, provided to students and parents/guardians in a timely manner, and used to update student academic/graduation plans.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 7.0: TRANSITION PLANNING AND SUPPORT

- Clear transition criteria and procedures are in place to address student enrollment, transfers, and reintegration, if applicable, to a traditional setting at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.
- Transition plans include college and career readiness support for high school students.
- School counselors or transition specialists are specifically trained to address student transitions.
- The transition process ensures the nontraditional or alternative school is the most appropriate placement based on the student's effective and affective needs, academic requirements, and post-baccalaureate goals.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

7.1 A screening committee to ensure the placement is most appropriate for the student's specific effective and affective needs, academic requirements, and post-baccalaureate goals is in place at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.

7.2 A formal transition process for students from entry to exit which includes the following elements: an orientation which consists of rapport building, assessment of the student, IEP review, information and record sharing regarding the student, short and long-term goal setting, development of an individualized student plan, and other mechanisms designed to orient the student to the alternative education setting is in place at exemplary schools.

7.3 Transition planning and the student plan afford students the opportunity to maintain and accelerate their current progress toward matriculation or graduation.

7.4 A Student Support Team (SST) is established that consists of educators from the school of origin, educators from the nontraditional or alternative school, the student, parents/guardians and other trained transitional personnel. The team is directly involved in all aspects of the transition process including assessment, planning, and implementation of the student's transition plan.

7.5 Transition planning includes referral and timely access to community agencies, and support services such as: mental health, public health, family support, housing, physical fitness activities, and other youth services.

7.6 When appropriate, students are provided with opportunities to develop and maintain supportive links to the school of origin.

7.7 Student areas of strength and growth are addressed as part of transition in, throughout, and upon exit of the nontraditional or alternative school.

7.8 Prior to a student's entrance and exit from the school, transition services are coordinated by the SST with all appropriate entities to ensure successful entry into the student's next educational setting or workforce.

7.9 Within the bounds of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), information sharing (availability of pertinent records) takes place between the school of origin, the nontraditional or alternative school, and other social service organizations. Copies of the student cumulative academic file should be sent to the nontraditional or alternative school to ensure adherence to second language, special needs, or medical plans, to establish accurate student schedules, and to ensure the student's areas of academic strength and growth are known and used by the nontraditional or alternative school to develop the individual student plan.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 8.0: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- An exemplary nontraditional or alternative school actively involves parents/guardians beyond parent/guardian-teacher meetings.
- Non-judgmental, solution based approaches that incorporate parents/guardians as respected partners throughout the student's length of stay at the school are emphasized in nontraditional and alternative programs.
- The school works with parents/guardians to provide proper training and support to advance the learning and personal success of each student in the program.

Indicators of Quality Programming

8.1 Family Engagement is welcomed recognized as vital and actively recruited by opportunities for involvement in the nontraditional or alternative program is evident. All families are given equal opportunity for involvement with ever effort being made to reduce barriers such as language, transportation, or geographic location.

8.2 Effective communication and interaction takes place between family and school staff to include consistent notification of student progress (regular progress reports or as needed).

8.3 Family is recognized as equal partners and involved in the decision-making process for the student and the program, including the following: to serve on the Student Support Team (SST), to help develop the individualized student plan, to help guide and direct the mission and purpose of the program via an Advisory Council, and to help evaluate the overall effectiveness of the nontraditional and alternative program.

8.4 Family participates as partners to create solution based strategies to support the effect and affect growth of their student.

8.5 Consultation regarding strategies to support the learning and personal success of students is made readily available to all families.

8.6 Families have access to parent education programs sponsored by the nontraditional or alternative school and other community agencies.

8.7 Procedures are in place to address all family grievances in a timely manner with an emphasis on flexibility, accountability, and consistency.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 9.0: COLLABORATION

- Partnerships with community agencies, businesses and groups based on trust, open communication, clearly defined goals, and shared responsibility at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.
- Collaborative efforts enhance the student's performance in the school, home, and community.
- Collaborative partnerships promote opportunities for life skills, soft skills, service learning and career exploration for all students.
- Community representatives have a role in the planning and resource development of the nontraditional or alternative school.

Indicators of Quality Programming

9.1 Partnerships with community resources are secured and established to help the nontraditional or alternative school solve problems and achieve goals as outlined in the program's vision and mission.

9.2 Partnerships are designed to support and enrich the school by including the community as a resource for funding education, advocacy and volunteerism.

9.3 A comprehensive outreach program utilizing the parent advisory council is established by the nontraditional or alternative school.

9.4 Interagency and community partnerships exist to support the physical and mental health of students enrolled in the program.

9.5 A student assistance program which allows for referrals to community agencies when appropriate is provided at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.

9.6 Community representatives are drawn upon as resources during the planning phase of the individualized student plan that involves student planning for the following: community participation, employment, independent living and postsecondary education. All effort is made to ensure that representatives reflect the unique needs of the community demographics and serve to close any existing opportunity gaps.

9.7 Community partners are utilized when integrating life skills, soft skills, college and career readiness and service learning into the nontraditional or alternative school.

9.8 Community representatives serve on the Advisory Board and assist in planning, resource development, and decision-making for the nontraditional or alternative school.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 10.0: PROGRAM EVALUATION

- Systematic program evaluations for continuous school improvement are conducted at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.
- Data triangulation is employed with three different sources of data:
  - program implementation ratings
  - student achievement data
  - and student/parent surveys
- All sources of data are gathered and used to assess quality, provide a course for improvement, and direct future activities of the school.

Indicators of Quality Programming

10.1 Routine, yearly evaluations to determine progress toward meeting the vision and mission of the program and plans for continuous school improvement are conducted at nontraditional or alternative schools.

10.2 Evaluation measures include a review of program implementation ratings (based on observable and measurable data). Ratings are given based on alignment with state specific standards and the *NAEA Evaluation Rubric*.

10.3 Student outcome data (graduation rates, credits earned, grades, attendance, disciplinary data, and dropout statistics) is gathered as a means to evaluate the success of the nontraditional or alternative school and is disaggregated into sub-groups as appropriate.

10.4 On a yearly basis, student, parent/guardian, staff and community surveys are administered by the nontraditional or alternative school to assess school improvement.

10.5 Staff surveys are administered to assess attitudes and opinions about school culture and climate, the learning environment, staff-administrator/staff-staff relations, perceptions of program effectiveness and success relative to students' academic, behavioral, and social progress.

10.6 Transition services are routinely evaluated to determine the program's effectiveness in preparing the student for the next educational setting or workforce.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 11.0: School Counseling

- An exemplary professional school counseling program that serves nontraditional or alternative students targets academic performance, is grounded in research based practices, and addresses the current and future needs of students.
- Effective and affective strategies to enhance student achievement are integrated in exemplary school programs.
- Professional school counselors collaborate with school stakeholders to support best practices, articulate instruction, and create effective citizens.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

11.1 Improvement of academic self-concept is promoted at the school.

11.2 Students acquire affective skills to become self-directed and independent learners.

11.3 Students develop interests and abilities to achieve school success.

11.4 An environment for academic preparation which promotes a wide range of post-secondary options including trade/technical school, the armed services, and college is created at the program.

11.5 Students work with professional counselors to establish challenging effective and affective academic goals.

11.6 Students understand the relationship between success in school and transition to the world of work.

11.7 Opportunities for students to engage in service learning are created at the program.

11.8 Students investigate the world of work as it relates to their interests, skills, and goals.

11.9 Students develop an awareness of self, others, and the importance of working effectively in teams.

11.10 Helping students establish job readiness skills is a goal of the program.

11.11 Students develop research and critical thinking skills which include the use of technology to explore and prepare for future employment.

11.12 Students acquire interpersonal skills to recognize, respect, and appreciate the differences in others.

11.13 Students develop a clear understanding of consequences of decisions and choices.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 12.0 SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

- A social work program that is proactive, promotes educational equity, and removes barriers to learning is a characteristic of an exemplary nontraditional or alternative school.
- Practices are consistent with local, state, and federal mandates.
- The program promotes the academic mission of the nontraditional or alternative school fostering policies that are responsive, rigorous, and emphasize intervention and prevention services.
- To maintain sustainability, the program is receptive to growth producing feedback from community stakeholders.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

12.1 Social justice is emphasized by the program.

12.2 Social workers demonstrate knowledge of local, state and federal mandates related to informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality.

12.3 Social workers have a graduate degree from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited social work program and licensed by their state board of social work.

12.4 Continuous assessment of students and families with the goal of improving social/emotional outcomes in school and community is conducted by the social work program.

12.5 The program conducts annual needs assessments targeting the interactions of students, families, and school personnel.

12.6 School-based intervention, research and evidence, and informed practices are utilized in social work services.

12.7 Intervention strategies use a multi-tier framework with an emphasis on salient *ecologies* (school, home, or community) to address a student's social/emotional growth.

12.8 Yearly data related to practices are collected and analyzed.

12.9 Accurate and confidential records that demonstrate outcome and ensure service accountability are maintained.

12.10 The program is organized with an emphasis on student and program needs, professional skills of the social worker, and availability of resources.

12.11 Social workers participate in ongoing professional development activities that target nontraditional, alternative, and at-risk populations.

12.12 Social workers develop and demonstrate specialized knowledge of nontraditional and alternative populations and are culturally responsive to stakeholders needs.

12.13 Social workers take a proactive role in the development of positive school climate and culture.

12.14 Social workers provide stakeholders with training and engage the community with an emphasis on developing equal access of service for all students.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 13.0 DIGITAL AND VIRTUAL LEARNING

- An exemplary digital or virtual learning program implemented in a nontraditional or alternative school is accessible via the World Wide Web and in secure facilities.
- Digital or Virtual courses are aligned to state/national standards and meet local education agency course content guidelines.
- Digital and Virtual courses are rigorous, prescriptive, and standard and assessment based.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

13.1 The course content is characterized by rigor, is aligned to state and local standards, and includes an overview, syllabus, and scope of sequence for delivery which may include blended learning.

13.2 The course content incorporates literacy and communication skills, reflects multicultural education, and research based.

13.3 The course design is clear, incorporates multiple ways to engage in learning, and organized in lessons and units that are organized and sequential.

13.4 The course design provides students the opportunity to engage in critical thinking, readability is grade level appropriate, and assignments are aligned to course content.

13.5 Course assessments are aligned with objectives, reliable and valid, and provide for timely and frequent feedback to inform teaching and learning.

13.6 Grading tools and materials provide the student and teacher with immediate feedback, provide flexibility in assessment, and are easy to understand and manage.

13.7 The course construction allows instructors to add content and activities, provides clear navigation parameters for students, and includes rich and varied multimedia.

13.8 The course construction supports multiple schedules and pacing guides, clearly identifies technology requirements, notes prerequisite technology skills, and includes content specific tools.

13.9 Course materials provide appropriate access for all students and student information remains confidential as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

13.10 The course is updated regularly noting changes in state and national standards and is facilitated by a highly qualified teacher.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 14.0 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A current policies and procedures manual that is consistent with the vision and mission of the nontraditional or alternative school, approved by the local board of education, and articulated to all stakeholders in the form of standard operating procedures (SOPs) is maintained.
- The manual is reviewed and updated on a yearly basis.
- The manual is made available in an electronic and hardcopy format.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

14. 1 Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all teaching and support personnel are written and fully explained to nontraditional or alternative school staff.

14.2 Referral, screening, and intake procedures are outlined and promote timely, user-friendly access to program services for students.

14.3 Procedures to collect, share, and store individual student records are developed for participants that ensure student confidentiality.

14.4 Processes are established that coordinate effective placements, assess student needs to match appropriate program services and interventions, and formalize the transition of students from one learning environment to the next.

14.5 Reliable assessments are identified and inform procedures for developing an individualized student plan that addresses student achievement, effective and affective growth, and college and career readiness skills.

14.6 Schools have established a thorough written code of conduct and a comprehensive student discipline action plan that outlines rules and behavioral expectations, appropriate interventions, and consequences for infractions.

14.7 Program policies encourage the active engagement of parents/guardians as equal partners in the planning, implementation, and development of the nontraditional or alternative school.

14.8 Policies for developing collaborative partnerships with public and private agencies are established and formalized by school/division leadership (i.e., memoranda of understanding or MOU's) and outline the roles and responsibilities of partnered social service organizations in accordance with local education agency guidelines.

14.9 A formal Crisis Management Plan is developed and managed by school leadership to include strategies that sustain a safe, well-maintained, caring, and orderly program environment that is in compliance with state and local policies, standards, procedures, and legislation.

14.10 Lists and procedures for conducting emergency drills (fire/tornado drills, shelter in place, lock down) are included in both the school manual and Crisis Management Plan.

14.11 Procedures to collect, store, and share program data ensure that students, parents/guardians, and staff are protected and identities are preserved.

14.12 Procurement procedures, time and leave policies, professional development requirements, and professional responsibilities are outlined in a systematic, clear, and concise manner.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 15.0 PERSONALIZED EDUCATION PLAN

- Individualized curriculum and instruction is implemented using individualized learning plans at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.
- The individual student plan targets student achievement, effective and affective growth, social skill development, and college and career readiness skills.

Indicators of Quality Programming:

15.1 A Student Support Team (SST) is established and involved in forming and monitoring the student's progress on the nontraditional education plan while further providing the reinforcement necessary for achievement.

15.2 Parents/guardians are on the SST and involved in drafting, developing, and implementing the student's plan.

15.3 Plans that are developed are culturally responsive based on the student's differentiated (accelerated or remedial) needs.

15.4 Processes for the nontraditional education plan include reviewing current credit accrual and ensuring the student is making adequate progress toward graduation.

15.5 Three strands are embedded into the nontraditional education plan that engages the student in post-secondary planning for the following: effective citizenship, independent living, and college and career readiness.

15.6 Teachers and school counselors utilize individual student data in making instructional decisions and developing the nontraditional education plan.

15.7 Plans incorporate goals for developing healthy behaviors and effective social skills.

15.8 The nontraditional education plan addresses required services to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities and second language learners.

15.9 Student plans are updated on a bi-yearly basis based on informal and formal assessment data, student feedback, and interest inventory results.

15.10 The students maintain a copy of the plan and reference it during school counseling sessions, teacher conferences, and administrative meetings.

Postscript to Exemplary Practices 2.0: Standards of Quality and Program Evaluation 2014

Students are provided with the opportunity to accelerate their learning, rediscover their capacity as life-long learners, and provide individualized and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of our global student community at exemplary nontraditional and alternative schools. *Exemplary Practices 2.0: Alternative Education Standards of Quality and Program Evaluation 2014 provides* the structure to ensure students and those that serve them are provided with the human, capital, and technical resources to create and maintain exemplary schools. In addition, *Exemplary Practices 2.0* informs school districts, divisions, communities, and their stakeholders on the critical '*look fors'* that should be evident in nontraditional or alternative schools and found in the school community that supports each program.

The result will be a nontraditional or alternative school that communicates high expectations for student and teacher performance, uses student performance data to initiate program development, creates long and short term goals in a transparent manner inclusive of all stakeholders, and celebrates success in an authentic and public manner.

We challenge your educational community to implement these practices not only in your nontraditional or alternative schools, but in your traditional schools. You will see graduation rates increase, dropout rates diminish, and most importantly your schools thrive and meet the needs of your 21st Century community.

2014 Board of Directors

President	Robert L. Eichorn, M.Ed.
Vice-President	Kay Davenport, Ed.S.
Treasurer	Thomas Trautman, Ed.D.
Secretary	Edward Lowther, Ed.D.
Director	Denise Riley, M.S.
Director	Jacquelyn Whitt, Ed.S.
Director	Richard Thompson, M.Ed.
Director	John Holmes, D.Min.

2018 Board of Directors

President	Pam Bruening, Ed.D
President-Elect	Kathleen Chronister, M.Ed
Treasurer	Pat Conner, M.Ed
Secretary	Ja'net Bishop, Ed.D
Past President	Kay Davenport, Ed.S
Region-1	Justin DeMartin, M.S.
Region-2	Ed Lowther, Ed.D
Region-3	Michael Hylen, Ph.D
Region-4	Jacquelyn Whitt, Ed.S
Region-5	Glen Hoffmann
Region-6	Coby Davis, Ed.D
Region-7	Sean Hollas, M.Ed
Region-8	John Holmes, D.Min.
Region-9	Valinda Jones, M.Ed.
Advocacy	Frances Gooden, Ed.D
Technology	Richard Thompson, M.Ed

References

American School Counselor Association. (2010). American School Counselor Association National Model. Alexandria, Virginia, (Author).

An overview of alternative education. The Urban Institute: Washington, DC.

Aron, L. Y. (2003). Towards a typology of alternative education programs: A compilation of elements from the literature. The Urban Institute: Washington, DC.

Barr, R. D., & Parrett, W. H. (2001). Hope fulfilled for at-risk and violent youth: K-12 programs that work (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Chalker, C. S. (1996). Effective alternative education programs: Best practices from planning through evaluating. Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Company

Bureau of Legislative Research. (2006). Alternative learning environment report. Little Rock, AR: Government Printing Office.

Comptroller of the Treasury. (2005). Tennessee's alternative schools. Nashville, TN: Government Printing Office.

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2008). Educational leadership policy standards: 2008. Washington, DC: Author.

DeJesus, E. (2000). Undervalued & overlooked: Educational standards and out-of-school Youth. Montgomery Village, MD: Youth Development & Research Fund.

Eichorn, R. Garza, R., Jones, K. & Sobers, M. (2010). Graduation Credit Cards-Immediate Buy In, Immediate Payoff. The International Journal on School Disaffection 7(2), 50-52.

Fitzpatrick, J. L., Sanders, J. R., & Worthen, B. R. (2004). Program evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidelines (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Gardenhire, C. W. (2007). Alternative school administrators and teachers perception of effective school correlates in the organizational culture and operation of alternative schools . Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Arkansas at Little Rock: Little Rock, Arkansas.

Georgia Department of Education. (2007). Alternative education self-assessment instrument. Atlanta, GA: Government Printing Office.

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). The program evaluation standards (2nd ed.). California: Sage Publications.

Hamilton Fish Institute Reports and Essays Serial. Washington, DC: Hamilton Fish Institute, George Washington University.

International Association for K-12 Online Learning. (2011). National Standards for Quality Online Courses. Vienna, Virginia, (Author).

Kellmayer, J. (1998). Building educational alternative for at-risk youth: A primer. The High School Magazine . 6(2), 26-31.

Lacey, R., & Sobers, M. (2005). The need for motivated and highly qualified teachers in alternative education. International Journal on School Disaffection 3(2), 33-38.

Lange, C. M., & Sletten, S. J. (2002). Alternative education: A brief history and research synthesis. National Association of State Directors of Special Education: Alexandria, VA.

Leorne, P., & Drakeford, W. (1999). From a last chance to a proactive model. San Jose' State University: San Jose', CA.

Loflin, J. H. (2008). Alternative education's spoiled image: When it happened, how it happened, why it happened, and what to do about it (Rev.ed.). Iowa Association of Alternative Education: Indianapolis, IN.

Martin, N., & Halperin, S. (2006). Whatever it takes: How twelve communities are reconnecting out-of-school youth. American Youth Policy Forum: Washington, DC.

McDonald, A. (2002). Best practices for at-risk children. Retrieved October 30, 2007, from http://www.sanmarcos.net/ana/bestpractices.html.

National Alliance for Secondary Education and Transition. (2005). National standards and quality indicators: Transition toolkit for systems improvement. Minneapolis, MN:

National Association of Social Workers. (2012). NASW Standards for School Social Work Services. Washington, DC, (Author).

National Association of State Boards of Education. (1996). Alternative education for students at Risk (State Education Standard). Alexandria, VA: Author.

National Governors Association. (2001). Setting high academic standards in alternative

North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center. (2002). North Carolinas alternative learning programs: An evaluation of juvenile structured day programs for suspended and expelled youth. Raleigh, NC: Government Printing Office.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (n.d.). Alternative education programs: Effective practices research brief.Raleigh, NC: Government Printing Office.

Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center. (2007). Standards for evaluation: 17 criteria for alternative education academies. Retrieved October 16, 2007 from, http://csdcotac.org/New%20rubric%202006.pdf.

Orange, J., & Van Slyke, S. (2006). Transitional services. Conference on Juvenile Justice Education and No Child Left Behind, Orlando, FL.

Oregon Department of Education. (2006). Alternative education program toolkit. Salem, OR: Government Printing Office.

Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2007). Recommended parameters and best standards .
    Retrieved October 30, 2007 from,
    http://www.pde.state.pa.us/alt_disruptive/cwp/view.aspa=3&q=108881.

Raywid, M. A. (1999). History and issues of alternative schools. The Education Digest, 64, 47-51.

Raywid, M.A. (1994). Alternative schools: The state of the art. Educational Leadership, 52(1), 26-31.

Reimer, M. S., & Cash, T. (2007). Alternative schools: Best practices for development and education.
    Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network.

Rutherford, P. (2005). Leading the learning. A field guide for supervision and evaluation. Alexandria, VA:
    Just ASK Publications.

Ruzzi, B., & Kraemer, J. (2006). Academic programs in alternative education: An overview. Washington,
    DC: Government Printing Office.

Schargel, F. P. (2005). Best practices to help at-risk learners. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Schargel, F. P. (2007). From at-risk to academic excellence: What successful leaders do. Larchmont, NY:
    Eye on Education.

Schargel, F. P. (2008). 152 ways to keep students in school: Effective, easy-to-implement tips for
    teachers, Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Swarts, L. (2004). Alternative education accountability: Kentucky's approach. Impact. Retrieved October
    16, 2007 from, http://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/163/prof5.html.

Tennessee State Board of Education. (1996). A model for alternative schools. Nashville, TN: Government
    Printing Office.

Tennessee State Board of Education. (2008). Alternative education program model/standards. Nashville,
    TN: Government Printing Office.

Texas School Safety Center. (2007). Best practices in Texas disciplinary alternative education programs.
    San Marcos, TX: Government Printing Office.

U.S. Department of Education. (2002). Public alternative schools and programs for students at risk of
    education failure: 2000-01. (NCES Publication 2002-2004). Washington, DC: Government
    Printing Office.

U.S. Department of Education. (2007). New directions for program evaluation at the U.S. Department of
    Education . Washington, DC: Retrieved November 8, 2007 from,
    http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2002/04/evaluation.html#continuous.

Virginia Department of Education. (2003). Individual student alternative education plan (ISAP) program
    guidelines . Richmond, VA: Government Printing Office.

White, D.L., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. A. (2005, September). Foundation for alternative education.

Witty, J. V. (2007). A meta-evaluation of proposed support mechanisms aimed at enhancing the quality
    of alternative education in Tennessee. Paper presented to the National Alternative Education
    Association, Orlando, FL.

Acknowledgments

Our most socio-economically challenged, emotionally in need, and intellectually starved students deserve the best schools, teachers, and support services. When provided with a world class education, these students become self-sufficient, confident, and motivated life-long learners. They turn despair to hope, create happiness from sadness, and mold failure into success. The National Alternative Education Association, first and foremost, acknowledges the significant contribution our students played in the revision and development of *Exemplary Practices 2.0: Standards of Quality and Program Evaluation 2014.*

In addition to the educational professionals responsible for *Exemplary Practices in Alternative Education: Indicators of Quality Programming 2009*, the membership of the National Alternative Education Association would also like recognize the following organizations for their contributions to *Exemplary Practices 2.0: Standards of Quality and Program Evaluation 2014*: *The American School Counselor Association, National Association of Social Workers, International Association for K-12 Online Learning, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development*, and Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center. Exemplary practices for nontraditional and alternative education students are derived from the best practices found in world class schools, exemplified by outstanding teachers, and illustrated in the outcomes found across the nation in our nontraditional and alternative schools.

NATIONAL ALTERNATIVE

NAEA

EDUCATION ASSOCIATION