  
**Tennessee Department of Education**

Office of Student Support

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Nashville, TN 37243

**Annual Alternative Education Report**

(2017-18 School Year)

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*Governor’s Advisory Council for Alternative Education January 2019*

*Printable report also available on the department’s website at*

[*https://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/alternative-education.html*](https://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/alternative-education.html)*.*

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# Introduction

T.C.A. § 49-6-3402 requires that at least one alternative school or program be established for districts serving students in grades 7-12 who have been suspended or expelled from the regular school program and also allows districts to create alternative schools or programs for grades 1-6. T.C.A. § 49-6-3404 mandates the establishment of an advisory council that shall advise, assist, and consult on alternative education. The advisory council is required to make an annual report to the governor, the General Assembly, the commissioner of education, and the State Board of Education on the state of alternative education in Tennessee. The report presented here meets the legislative requirement set forth.

To obtain the needed data, the Governor’s Advisory Council for Alternative Education, in conjunction with the department of education, developed the Annual Alternative Education Survey. A copy of the survey is included as [Appendix A](#_Appendix_A:_Annual).When reporting on alternative education, districts used the definition supplied by the Governor’s Advisory Council for Alternative Education, which states, “A non-traditional academic program or school designed to meet the student’s educational, behavioral, and social needs.” Operating under this definition, districts reported on various aspects of their alternative education programming. Information presented in this report summarizes surveys provided by Tennessee districts.

In addition to collecting data on current programming at the local level, districts were asked a series of questions related to their current needs in the field. Those major findings are included in this report. The report also provides a historical background of alternative education in Tennessee, current trends in the field, and stories of success.

Questions regarding this report may be directed to Pat Conner at (615) 253-0018 or via email at [Pat.Conner@tn.gov](mailto:Pat.Conner@tn.gov).

# Survey Results and Findings

The annual alternative education survey requires each district to identify an alternative education coordinator, thereby providing a framework for networking, collaboration, training, and technical assistance. The designee for every district is listed in [Appendix B](#_Appendix_B:_District).The survey asks districts to report by grade bands (i.e., K–5, 6–8, and 9–12) whether they have an alternative school or program, the number of classrooms, the number of students served, and the average length of placement. The information in Table 1 below reflects survey responses from districts. The total number of students served in an alternative setting for 2017-18 was **11,375**,a 10 percent increase from 2016-17.

**Table 1: 2017-18 Alternative Education Survey Summary**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **K–5** | **6–8** | **9–12** |
| Number of alternative schools | 29 | 79 | 91 |
| Number of alternative programs | 35 | 87 | 110 |
| Number of classrooms | 89 | 240 | 380 |
| Number of students served | 578 | 3,589 | 7,208 |
| Average length of placement | 48 days | 55 days | 61 days |

Districts were asked to distinguish between the various types of professionals providing services to students in the alternative school or program. Statewide, there were **881**certified teachers serving students. Of those certified teachers, **141**were certified special education teachers, and **100**were certified English as a second language (ESL) teachers. A total of **240**school counselors are also working with alternative education students. Other groups providing alternative education services include **595**non-certified staff in which **294**were education assistants, **169**were school resource officers (SROs), and **132**were social workers. Please see Chart 1 below.

Districts were asked to rate the primary reason for student participation in the alternative school or program. The number one reason for attendance was for *disruptive behavior/violation of school rules* (**69 percent**). Other reasons include committing a *zero tolerance offense* (**18 percent**) and *need for alternative education strategy* **(13 percent**). Chart 2 below summarizes those findings.

Alternative education programs provide a range of educational, social and personal, transition, and dropout prevention services to meet the needs of all students. Alternative schools and programs may be housed in a designated, separate alternative school building, which may or may not have a school number, or may be self-contained within a traditional school. Alternative services are geared toward students who have been suspended or expelled, as well as students who have dropped out of school and are re-entering the education system. Some alternative schools and programs have a mixture of elements making them a hybrid school serving various alternative programming purposes. Districts are strongly encouraged to establish an alternative education advisory committee to guide program development and implementation. **Seventy-three** districts reported having an active advisory committee.

The alternative education survey gave districts an opportunity to discuss the general needs of their program(s) and/or school(s). Sample comments from districts are found in [Appendix C](#_Appendix_C:_Sample). Comments shed light on the needs of alternative education programs across the state. The needs most commonly reported were increased mental health supports and additional funding for alternative education.

Many districts recommended that the current basic education program (BEP) funding be changed to designate specific funding for alternative education. A history of alternative education in Tennessee is included in [Appendix D](#_Appendix_D:_History).

# Exemplary Practices in Alternative Education Recognition Program

For the 2017-18 school year, the department, in partnership with the Governor’s Advisory Council for Alternative Education and the Tennessee Alternative Education Association, established the ***Exemplary Practices in Alternative Education Recognition Program*** to recognize the efforts of districts that exemplify high-quality alternative education programs utilizing the state board’s exemplary practices for alternative education.

Upon submission of an application, a team comprised of members from the department, the alternative education advisory board, and Tennessee Alternative Education Association (TAEA), reviewed each application. Once the application was reviewed, members from the team conducted a site visit to the school or program. Upon completion of the site visit, the Governor’s Advisory Council met to discuss the district applications and select those schools/programs deemed exemplary. The schools/programs were recognized at the state level in April 2018.

These exemplary schools/programs will be a model for other districts throughout the state to develop high-quality alternative education programs.

# Alternative Education Recognition Program Recipients

## Richard Yoakley Alternative School, Knox County

The Richard Yoakley Alternative School (RYS) — in partnership with students, families, and base schools — works to provide a behavioral, educational foundation that allows students the opportunity to succeed in school and in life. The school serves students in grades 6–12 and seeks to provide a rigorous academic learning environment with a focus on daily social and emotional learning. With 25 certified and 25 classified staff, every student at RYS receives the structure and support necessary to ensure the appropriate academic and behavioral intervention is implemented to promote success.

The RYS staff includes an instructional coach, transition coordinator, restorative interventionist, school psychologist, social worker, and school counselor. The instructional coach leads weekly professional learning communities (PLCs) and provides academic support and coaching. The transition coordinator monitors student progress and tracks student behavior/interventions at their base school when they return. The restorative interventionist conducts weekly restorative circles with students/staff to promote social development and build supportive relationships. The social worker tracks student attendance and conducts home visits to meet the needs of students and families. The school psychologist and school counselor play pivotal roles in addressing the social and emotional needs of students, which allows the school to teach the whole child.

Students receive standards-based instruction on core curriculum as well as career and technical education (CTE) offerings and daily social skills lessons. RYS follows a school-wide behavior management system that provides students opportunities to grow and reflect. Teachers work an extended contract to allow for professional development and have common planning time for collaboration and weekly PLCs. Additionally, RYS is one of nine Knox County Schools to pilot the Teacher Instructional Growth for Effectiveness and Results (TIGER) evaluation model for the 2017-18 school year.

In fall 2017, RYS established the first community parent teacher student association (PTSA) in an alternative program in the state of Tennessee. RYS is also a proud member of the North Knoxville Business and Professionals Association, which has enabled them to create strong partnerships with the community, including the Metro Drug Coalition and the YWCA.

The principal of Richard Yoakley is Seth Smith, who can be reached at [Seth.Smith@knoxschoools.org](mailto:Seth.Smith@knoxschoools.org).

## G.W. Carver College and Career Academy, Shelby County

At G.W. Carver College and Career Academy (GWCCCA), the administrators, faculty, and staff have shifted the mindset of what a traditional alternative school should look like and transformed it with a college and career focus. Scholars are required to take an exclusively designed academic counseling course created by the teachers at GWCCCA. In this course students receive exposure to colleges, the military, community service, and various careers. Students participate in a college fair, visit colleges, and meet with recruiters from such colleges as Christian Brothers University, LeMoyne-Owen College, Tennessee State University, and the University of Memphis. Students who wish to have a special session with a recruiter from The College of Art can explore other career options, too.

Students that aspire to be in the military take the armed services vocational aptitude battery (ASVAB) test and meet with U.S. Army and Navy recruiters to discuss requirements for joining. The academic counseling class also teaches students the importance of networking through community service. Scholars participate in community service at facilities like the St. Jude Garden Project, act as greeters for the Wiley College concert, and assist at the food bank.

In addition to the academic counseling class program, other programs like DECA, work-based learning, Carver Ambassadors, and Project Stand all share the school’s goal of exposing all GWCCCA students to college and career opportunities. In particular, the Carver Ambassadors program has helped students receive employment at local businesses and allowed students to participate in service learning projects at local community gardens and the Civil Rights Museum. Project STAND has aided students in earning National Career Readiness Certifications, obtaining career-readiness skills, and earning Technical Employment Certifications. Through Project Stand, students visit technical education schools such as Lincoln Tech, Rankin Tech, Nissan Tech, and Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT).These programs, along with the academic counseling course, serve as the successful core of GWCCCA’s academic, college, and career focus for *all* students.

The principal of G.W. Carver College & Career Academy is Dr. James Suggs, who can be reached at [suggsj@scsk12.org](mailto:suggsj@scsk12.org).

## Jefferson Academy, Jefferson County

In June 2009, Jefferson County embarked on the task of creating a new alternative school. The first year of operation, the alternative school was given the name A.C.E. and served only students remanded from Jefferson County’s middle school. Beginning in 2010, the school’s name was changed to Jefferson Academy and moved to its current permanent location. The academy serves students in grades 6–12 and, occasionally, elementary school students.

Jefferson Academy provides students temporary placements for behavior management with a focus on academic success. The academy provides a safe and structured learning environment that cultivates self-respect and self-discipline. The goal is for the student to successfully complete the program and return to, and be successful in, their home school.

Jefferson Academy is a smaller program and accommodates up to 60 students at a time. On average, 160 students attend during the course of a year. A recent survey revealed that 29 percent of students had three or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Ninety percent of students are on free or reduced-price lunch, and only 7.7 percent of students live with their biological parents.

Students are placed at Jefferson Academy for transition, behavior, and zero tolerance offenses. The process for student placement at Jefferson Academy is structured, beginning with a pre-intake prior to placement. Once placed, a transition and exit plan are developed to help the student understand expectations and set goals.

A typical day at Jefferson Academy has students rotating to receive instruction in four core subjects aligned with the Tennessee Academic Standards and modified to meet their individual needs. Classrooms are blended learning environments that include direct instruction, computer-based curriculum, and hands-on activities for all learning styles. Data collection is an integral component of the academy. Program data—including academics, behavior, and attendance—is collected for continuous program improvement. Professional growth is a priority for staff with participation in various professional development opportunities to include the TAEA conference.

To foster individual growth and community involvement, students participate in quarterly service-learning projects that range from reading to younger students to packing food boxes for those in need. College and career planning is offered through career exploration, guest speakers, hands-on experiences, college and career week, and job shadowing. In addition, Jefferson Academy offers students behavioral health services from a licensed school-based mental health therapist one day a week.

Jefferson Academy is privileged to be supported by a strong advisory board comprised of representatives from Carson Newman University, parents, community leaders, and students. The academy has been recognized by the Tennessee Behavior Supports Project from the University of Tennessee as a RTI2-B Model Demonstration School.

The principal of Jefferson Academy is Garry Jett, who can be reached at [gjett@jcboe.net](mailto:gjett@jcboe.net).

# Appendix A: Annual Alternative Education Survey

**Annual Alternative Education Survey**

*As Required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-3404*



***Alternative Education as defined by the Advisory Council for Alternative Education:***

*“A nontraditional academic program designed to meet the student’s educational, behavioral and social needs.”*

* + 1. ***§* 49-6-3402** mandates “at least one (1) alternative school shall be established and available for students in grades seven through twelve (7-12) who have been suspended or expelled.” ***T.C.A. §* 49-6-3404** also requires that the Department of Education submit a report annually on the status of alternative education in Tennessee. In order to gain a better perspective, the following survey was developed. The information provided to the department will be reported to the Governor, both education committees of the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education. Please complete the following survey and return it to the address listed below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***School System:*** | ***Date:*** |
| ***District Alternative Education Coordinator:*** | ***Email Address:*** |
| ***Phone Number:*** | ***Fax:*** |
| ***Address:*** | ***City and Zip Code:*** |
| ***Person Completing Report (if different from above):*** | ***Phone Number:*** |

**ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL(S) OR PROGRAM(S) THAT OPERATED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 2016-17**

***(For each alternative school/ program, please identify the principal or program coordinator and provide an email address and phone number for each. Please do not include ISS.)***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Alternative School/Program Name** | **Principal/Program Coordinator** | **Email Address of Principal/ Program Coordinator** | **Phone Number for School/ Program** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**PARTICIPATION (TOTAL FOR ALL SCHOOLS/PROGRAMS IN YOUR DISTRICT)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **K–5** | **6–8** | **9–12** |
| Number of ***alternative school(s)\**** |  |  |  |
| Number of ***alternative education program(s)\*\**** |  |  |  |
| Total number of classroom(s) serving alternative education students |  |  |  |
| Total number of students served during the 2016-17 school year |  |  |  |
| Number of students placed more than once during the 2016-17 school year |  |  |  |
| District’s total capacity (seats) |  |  |  |
| Average length of placement (stay) in an alternative setting (number in days) |  |  |  |
| Number of certificated staff working in an alternative school/program |  |  |  |
| Number of non-certificated staff assigned to an alternative education setting |  |  |  |

\* A facility is dedicated solely to alternative education.

\*\* An alternative education program that is within a school.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| An alternative education advisory committee has been established at the district level. |  |  |
|  |  |
| Attendance at the alternative school is mandatory. |  |  |
|  |  |
| Transportation is provided to the alternative school/program. |  |  |
|  | |

**PRIMARY REASON FOR STUDENT ASSIGNMENT (RANK 1, 2, 3, AND 4)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **K–5** | **6–8** | **9–12** |
| Zero tolerance offense (i.e., firearm, drugs, aggravated assault) |  |  |  |
| Violation of school rules |  |  |  |
| Disruptive behavior |  |  |  |
| Need for alternative education strategy |  |  |  |
| Other (please describe below) | | | |

**ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL/PROGRAM ELEMENTS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **K–5** | **6–8** | **9–12** |
| Afterschool or other extended day programming |  |  |  |
| Individual behavior plans |  |  |  |
| Character education |  |  |  |
| Credit recovery |  |  |  |
| Distance learning |  |  |  |
| Dropout prevention strategies |  |  |  |
| Individual and/or family counseling |  |  |  |
| Individual learner plans |  |  |  |
| Juvenile court partnership |  |  |  |
| Life skills |  |  |  |
| Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) |  |  |  |
| Mental health partnership |  |  |  |
| Service learning |  |  |  |
| Student drug testing |  |  |  |
| Technology based instruction |  |  |  |
| Transitions services (a formal plan)\* |  |  |  |
| Use of level system that encourages appropriate behavior |  |  |  |
| Restorative practices |  |  |  |
| College and career ready act |  |  |  |
| Other (please describe in the space given) | | | |

\* Mandated requirement under Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-3402.

**NUMBER OF SPECIAL FACULTY/STAFF SERVING ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL/PROGRAM**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **K–5** | **6–8** | **9–12** |
| ESL Teachers |  |  |  |
| School Counselors |  |  |  |
| Special Education Teachers |  |  |  |
| Social Workers |  |  |  |
| School Resource Officers |  |  |  |
| Teaching Assistants |  |  |  |
| Transition Counselor |  |  |  |
| Behavior Specialist |  |  |  |
| Other (please describe in space given) | | | |

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:**

1. What models or curricula are you currently implementing in your alternative education classroom(s)?
2. What technical assistance opportunities would help you as an alternative educator?
3. What is the greatest challenge facing your alternative education school(s)/programs(s)?
4. Additional comments/feedback that would be appropriate for the alternative education report to the General Assembly?
5. What offenses are classified as “zero tolerance” in your school?
6. Please list any community partners that collaborate with the alternative school/program.

PLEASE EMAIL REPORT NO LATER THAN ***JUNE 30*** to [Pat.Conner@tn.gov](mailto:Pat.Conner@tn.gov).

# Appendix B: District Alternative Education Coordinators

| **School District** | **Coordinator** | **Email** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Achievement School District | James Bacchus, II | [jbacchusii@pathwaysedu.org](mailto:jbacchusii@pathwaysedu.org) |
| Alcoa City | [Dr. Keri Prigmore](mailto:bgossett@alcoaschools.net) | [kprigmore@alcoaschools.net](mailto:kprigmore@alcoaschools.net) |
| Alvin C. York Institute | Kaye Copley O'Brien | [k.obrien@fentressboe.net](mailto:k.obrien@fentressboe.net) |
| Anderson County | Teresa Taylor | [ttaylor1@acs.ac](mailto:ttaylor1@acs.ac) |
| Anderson County | Dr. Tricia Jones | [tjones@acs.ac](mailto:tjones@acs.ac) |
| Anderson County | Darren Leach | [dleach@acs.ac](mailto:dleach@acs.ac) |
| Arlington Municipal | Felicia Turner | [felicia.turner@acsk-12.org](mailto:felicia.turner@acsk-12.org) |
| Athens City | Mike Simmons | [rsimmons@athensk8.net](mailto:rsimmons@athensk8.net) |
| Bartlett Municipal | Zoe Anne Bozeman | [zbozeman@bartlettschools.org](mailto:zbozeman@bartlettschools.org) |
| Bedford County | Emily Wilson | [wilsone@bedfordk12tn.net](mailto:wilsone@bedfordk12tn.net) |
| Benton County | Dr. Randy Shannon | [randy.shannon@tennk12.net](mailto:randy.shannon@tennk12.net) |
| Bledsoe County | Linda Pickett | [pickettl@bledsoecountyschools.org](mailto:pickettl@bledsoecountyschools.org) |
| Blount County | Justin Ridge | [justin.ridge@blountk12.org](mailto:justin.ridge@blountk12.org) |
| Bradford SSD | Shane Paschall | [paschalls2@bradfordspecial.com](mailto:paschalls2@bradfordspecial.com) |
| Bradley County | Kyle Page | [kpage@bradleyschools.org](mailto:kpage@bradleyschools.org) |
| Bristol City | Roby Witcher | [witcherr@btcs.org](mailto:witcherr@btcs.org) |
| Bristol City | Dave Collins | [collinsd@btcs.org](mailto:collinsd@btcs.org) |
| Bristol City | Seymour Ray | [rays@btcs.org](mailto:rays@btcs.org) |
| Bristol City | Dr. Kyle Evans | [evansk@btcs.org](mailto:evansk@btcs.org) |
| Campbell County | Sandi Wilson | [sandi.wilson@ccpstn.net](mailto:sandi.wilson@ccpstn.net) |
| Campbell County | Donna Singley | [donna.singley@ccpstn.net](mailto:donna.singley@ccpstn.net) |
| Cannon County | Mike Jones | [mike.jones@ccstn.net](mailto:mike.jones@ccstn.net) |
| Carroll County | Stephanie Pearson | [spearson@carrollschools.com](mailto:spearson@carrollschools.com) |
| Carter County | Mike Ensor | [mikeensor@carterk12.net](mailto:mikeensor@carterk12.net) |
| Cheatham County | Jo Jones | [jonesj@cheathamk12.tn.us](mailto:jonesj@cheathamk12.tn.us) |
| Chester County | Bobby Helton | [bhelton2@tennk12.net](mailto:bhelton2@tennk12.net) |
| Claiborne County | Paula Goins | [paula.goins@claibornecsd.org](mailto:paula.goins@claibornecsd.org) |
| Clarksville-Montgomery County | Dr. Kim Siegears | [kim.sigears@cmcss.net](mailto:kim.sigears@cmcss.net) |
| Clay County | Teia Arms | [armst1@k12tn.net](mailto:armst1@k12tn.net) |
| Cleveland City | Barbara B. Ector | [bector@clevelandschools.org](mailto:bector@clevelandschools.org) |
| Cleveland City | Leneda Laing | [llaing@clevelandschools.org](mailto:llaing@clevelandschools.org) |
| Clinton City | Suzanne Oliver | olivers@clintonschools.org |
| Cocke County | Bryan Douglas | [douglasb@cocke.k12.tn.us](mailto:douglasb@cocke.k12.tn.us) |
| Coffee County | Jeff Johnson | [johnsonj@k12coffee.net](mailto:johnsonj@k12coffee.net) |
| Collierville Municipal | Veronica Norfleet | [vnorfleet@colliervilleschools.org](mailto:vnorfleet@colliervilleschools.org) |
| Crockett County | Jerrod Shelton | Jerrod.shelton@crockettschools.net |
| Cumberland County | Stephanie Barnes | [barness5@ccschools.k12tn.net](mailto:barness5@ccschools.k12tn.net) |
| Dayton City | Chris Tallent | [tallentch@daytoncity.net](mailto:tallentch@daytoncity.net) |
| Decatur County | Jeff Melton | [jeff.melton@decaturschools.org](mailto:jeff.melton@decaturschools.org) |
| DeKalb County | Danny Bond | [dannybond@dekalbschools.net](mailto:dannybond@dekalbschools.net) |
| Dickson County | Rhiannon Masson | [rmason@dcbe.org](mailto:rmason@dcbe.org) |
| Dyersburg City | Lyn Taylor | [ltaylor@dyersburgcityschools.org](mailto:ltaylor@dyersburgcityschools.org) |
| Elizabethton City | Brian Jenkins | [brian.jenkins@ecschools.net](mailto:brian.jenkins@ecschools.net) |
| Etowah City | Cheryle Cooper | [cooperc6@k12tn.net](mailto:cooperc6@k12tn.net) |
| Fayette County | Terry Williams | [terry.williams@k12tn.net](mailto:terry.williams@k12tn.net) |
| Fayetteville City | Ron Perrin | [perrinr@fcsboe.org](mailto:perrinr@fcsboe.org) |
| Fentress County | Diana Hannahan | [diana.hannahan@fentressboe.com](mailto:diana.hannahan@fentressboe.com) |
| Franklin County | Jeff Sons | [jeff.sons@fcstn.net](mailto:jeff.sons@fcstn.net) |
| Franklin SSD | Judith Carre | [judithc@wcs.edu](mailto:judithc@wcs.edu) |
| Germantown Municipal | Robert LeGault II | [robert.legault@gmsdk12.org](mailto:robert.legault@gmsdk12.org) |
| Gibson County SSD | Jim Hughes | [hughesj@gcssd.org](mailto:hughesj@gcssd.org) |
| Gibson County SSD | Phil Rogers | [rogersp@gcssd.org](mailto:rogersp@gcssd.org) |
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| Greeneville City | Fred Dobson | [dobsonf@gcschools.net](mailto:dobsonf@gcschools.net) |
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| Hamilton County | Deborah Smith | [smith\_deborah@hcde.org](mailto:smith_deborah@hcde.org) |
| Hamilton County | Riquel Burton | [burton\_riquel@hcde.org](mailto:burton_riquel@hcde.org) |
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| Hardin County | Charles Patton | [chuck.patton@hctnschools.com](mailto:chuck.patton@hctnschools.com) |
| Hawkins County | Sharon Lindsey | [sharon.lindsey@hck12.net](mailto:sharon.lindsey@hck12.net) |
| Haywood County | Drayton Hawkins | [hawkinsd@k12tn.net](mailto:hawkinsd@k12tn.net) |
| Henderson County | David Weatherford | [weatherford@k12tn.net](mailto:weatherford@k12tn.net) |
| Henry County | Michael Poteete | [poteetem@henryk12.net](mailto:poteetem@henryk12.net) |
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# Appendix C: Sample Comments from School Districts from the 2017-18 School Year

School districts were asked to name the greatest challenge facing their alternative education school/program for the Tennessee General Assembly. Below are just a few sample comments from districts. The responses shed light on the challenges these schools/programs face in meeting the needs of students in an alternative setting. The primary need is related to lack of funding and mental health support.

| **District** | **Greatest Challenge** |
| --- | --- |
| Alcoa City | Plato Software in our 9–12 program and funding |
| Anderson County | Online programming and Tier II and III interventions for academics and behavior |
| Arlington Municipal | Finding community service opportunities |
| Athens City | Student family engagement |
| Bartlett Municipal | Funding |
| Blount County | Mental health support |
| Bristol City | Funding |
| Campbell County | Funding |
| Chester County | Apathy from students |
| Claiborne | Differentiating instruction |
| Clarksville-Montgomery | Staff retention and training |
| Cocke County | Space |
| Coffee County | Mental health support |
| Collierville Municipal | Mental health support |
| Cumberland County | Reduction of pupil-to-teacher ratio |
| Decatur County | Teaching areas outside of strength |
| DeKalb County | Space |
| Dickson County | Mental health support |
| Dyersburg City | Technology |
| Fentress County | Family dysfunction |
| Franklin County | Students’ transition to alternative school |
| Germantown Municipal | Mental health support |
| Gibson County | Cell phones |
| Giles County | Funding |
| Greene County | Lack of school counseling |
| Greeneville City | Home support |
| Hamblen County | Overcrowding and not enough staff |
| Hancock County | Transportation and behavior challenges |
| Hardeman County | Funding |
| Hardin County | Lack of family support |
| Hawkins County | Lack of funding |
| Henderson County | Student academic growth |
| Henry County | Lack of student motivation |
| Hickman County | Additional funding for another alternative school |
| Houston County | Inadequate staffing |
| Humphreys County | Lack of School Resource Officer |
| Jackson County | Lack of communication between alternative teachers and regular school |
| Jefferson County | Mental health issues |
| Johnson City | Mental health/trauma issues |
| Johnson County | Staffing |
| Kingsport City | Trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) |
| Knox County | Community and family involvement, poverty, attendance |
| Lake County | Funding |
| Lauderdale County | Staffing |
| Lawrence County | Understanding from regular education teachers |
| Lebanon SSD | Lack of space |
| Lenoir City | Shifting mindsets of educators |
| Lewis County | Motivating students |
| Lexington City | Funding |
| Lincoln County | Family/students taking responsibility |
| Loudon County | Student motivation |
| Macon County | Lack of social workers |
| Manchester City | Student motivation |
| Maryville City | Drug Use |
| Maury County | Mental health support |
| McMinn County | Foreign language and CTE classes |
| McNairy County | Space |
| Milan SSD | Receiving assignments from home school |
| Moore County | Communication with home school |
| Morgan County | Student behavior and attendance |
| Oak Ridge City | Mental health support |
| Obion County | Student apathy |
| Overton County | Funding |
| Paris SSD | Student motivation |
| Pickett County | Scheduling and staffing |
| Putnam County | Mental health issues |
| Richard City | Funding |
| Roane County | No school counselor |
| Robertson County | Drug issues and family home life |
| Rogersville City | Parent involvement |
| Rutherford County | Funding and lack of social services |
| Scott County | Funding |
| Sequatchie County | Parent involvement |
| Sevier County | Poverty and transient families |
| Shelby County | Options and support for chronic alternative school offenders, drug addiction, and mental health support |
| Stewart County | Lack of staffing |
| Sullivan County | Transportation |
| Sumner County | Recruiting and retaining qualified staff |
| Sweetwater | Student motivation |
| Tipton County | Family involvement |
| Trenton SSD | Mental health supports |
| Tullahoma | Lack of space and staff; serving a diverse set of students with equity |
| Union County | Recruiting and retaining math and special education teachers |
| Van Buren County | Differentiating instruction |
| Wayne County | Serving both 6-8 and 9-12 in the same classroom |
| White County | Attendance issues and family involvement |
| Williamson County | Apathy / failing students / communication with home schools / correct information disseminated regarding ALC |
| Wilson County | Setting limits for accepting students in the program |

# Appendix D: History of Alternative Education in Tennessee

According to the comptroller’s report on alternative education titled *Tennessee’s Alternative Schools*, one of the first alternative schools in our state originated in Dickson County in the late 1970s (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 2). Former Juvenile Judge William D. Field, Sr. identified a true need for alternatives to student expulsion or suspension from school (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 2). In 1984, the General Assembly passed a bill authorizing the establishment of alternative schools for those who were continually having disciplinary problems in their traditional school environment (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8). The legislature soon amended that bill in 1986 to *require* an alternative school for students in grades 7–12 in each district (T.C.A. § 49-6-3402).

The Education Improvement Act (EIA) was passed by the Tennessee General Assembly in 1992. This mandated that any school district serving students in grades 7–12 have at least one alternative education program (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005 p. 3). The state legislature later authorized districts to create alternative programs for grades 1–6. The General Assembly also passed legislation that prevented students from graduating from an alternative school (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8).

In 1996, the General Assembly authorized the Tennessee Department of Education to establish a pilot alternative school program, one in each grand division (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8). The state legislature also mandated that the State Board of Education provide a curriculum for alternative schools focused on reforming students. In response, the board released *Alternative School Program Standards* in 2000 (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8-9). In 2004, the Senate passed [Joint Resolution 746](https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/acts/108/resolutions/hjr0746.pdf) that required the Office of Education Accountability of the Comptroller’s Office to conduct a study of alternative schools in Tennessee. That report was released in April 2005.

More recently (2006*),* the General Assembly amended T.C.A. § 49-6-3404 to require the establishment of an advisory council, referred to as the Governor’s Advisory Council for Alternative Education. The advisory council is charged with the following responsibilities:

* + - 1. Consider any issue, problem, or matter related to alternative education presented to it by the governor, the commissioner, or the State Board of Education, and give advice thereon.
      2. Study proposed plans for alternative education programs or curricula to determine if the plans or curricula should be adopted.
      3. Study alternative education programs or curricula implemented in Tennessee school systems to determine the effectiveness of the programs or curricula, and alternative education programs or curricula implemented in other states to determine if the programs or curricula should be adopted in Tennessee schools.
      4. Consider rules of governance of alternative schools, and make recommendations concerning rules of governance.
      5. Make an annual report to the governor, the education committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the commissioner of education and the State Board of Education on the status of alternative education in Tennessee.

In 2007, Public Chapter Number 517 mandated a transition plan for students entering and leaving an alternative education setting and establishes greater accountability measures to include monitoring academic and behavioral progress of students. Public Chapter Number 211 required that the Advisory Council for Alternative Education study issues relating to the establishment of pilot alternative school programs. Finally, T.C.A. § 49-6-3402 required the Tennessee Department of Education to create a pilot project for the 2007-2008 school year in Davidson County.

With the release of the first annual [Alternative Education Report](Annual%20Alternative%20Education%20Report%20(SY08-09)) in January 2008, the council acknowledged the need to examine the following question, “What do we really mean by alternative education?” Due to the complexity of alternative education in our state, the council proposed that the State Board of Education adopt a much broader definition that encompassed all alternative education programs in Tennessee. The council recommended that the board adopt a new, more contemporary definition of alternative education. The council proposed that the following definition of alternative education be adopted: **“*A nontraditional academic program designed to meet the student's educational, behavioral, and social needs.”***

In August of 2008, the Governor’s Advisory Council for Alternative Education in conjunction with the State Board of Education released [*Alternative Education Program Standards*](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/2000/2.302%20Alternative%20Education%20Programs%20Policy%201-26-18.pdf). The model standards address the following broad categories: mission and environment, governance, transitional planning, support services, parent and community engagement, staffing and professional development, individualized learner plans, life skills, curriculum and instruction, student assessment, and monitoring and program assessment. The standards replaced the previously adopted *Alternative School Program Standards* from 2000*.*

In February of 2009, the advisory council released *A Feasibility Study Related to the Establishment of Alternative Programs in Tennessee* with specific recommendations on how to drive quality by enriching funds for alternative education. Additionally, in February of 2009, the council hosted the first annual Student Discipline and Alternative Education Institute. Over 300 educators attended the first institute. In October 2009, the council joined with the National Alternative Education Association (NAEA) on the first ever southeastern regional summit on alternative education. At this conference, the council explored best practice, national trends, and allowed alternative educators an opportunity to collaborate with other practitioners outside of the state. The first summit was held in Rogers, Arkansas.

The council also published an executive brief in February 2010 entitled *Promoting High Quality Alternative Education: An Update from the Advisory Council*. In the brief, the council set forth several legislative recommendations/priorities which include the following: redefine alternative education, establish an *Exemplary Practices in Alternative Education Award*, investigate ways to enrich funding, and create a state-level position to support alternative teachers, students, and parents.