

Alternative Learning Experiences Comparison of Former and Amended Rules

This is intended as a summary; please see the full text of the WAC 392-121-182 for complete details.

Topic Area	Former Rules	Amended Rules as of 8/05/05
Purpose or Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines a course of study conducted in part outside the regular classroom. • Excludes part-time enrollment of home-based and private school students. <p>May include instruction provided by the student's parent or guardian under supervision by the school district.</p>	<p>Provides an alternative method of determining full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment for learning experiences that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized courses of study. • Supervised, monitored, assessed, and evaluated by certificated staff. • Provided in whole or in part outside the regular classroom setting, including those provided digitally via the internet or other electronic means. <p>Allows for part-time enrollment. Does not limit alternative instruction provided with federal or local resources.</p>
Board Policy	<p>Requires a school board policy for alternative learning experiences, which must address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The written student learning plan. • Approval of curriculum and course requirements. • Supervision and evaluation of student. • Schedule for assessing the student revising the written plan. • Documentation requirements. • The role of the parent. 	<p>School board policies must be adopted and annually reviewed which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require written student learning plans. • Require Certificated Instructional Staff to student ratio be approved. • Describe how student performance will be supervised, evaluated, and recorded by certificated instructional staff. • Require direct personal contact weekly with certificated staff. The board policy may allow for alternate electronic means of contact if the board determines alternate means do not compromise educational quality, student health and safety, or the fiscal integrity of the district. • Require student progress be reviewed at least monthly by certificated staff. • Comply with the State Board of Education WAC 180-50 and 180-51 for course equivalencies and graduation requirements. • Designate school official(s) responsible for approving programs or courses, monitoring compliance, and reporting specific information annually to the school board. • Identify reimbursable expenditures.

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Program Standards	Program Standards: Program standards are implied in board policy requirements.	Program Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be accessible to all students. • Requirements for curricula, course content, etc. provided by district and have consistent quality. • Work based learning and contracting must comply with applicable WACs. • Parents to sign document describing program difference between ALE and home-based education. • Must have methods to verify student is doing his or her own work. • Some programs must be accredited.
Staffing Requirements	The district must either: maintain a staffing ratio equivalent to the district's regular basic education program; or demonstrate that 70 percent of money generated by ALE students is directly expended on the alternative program. In addition: "School staff" must evaluate student progress; a "school official" must approve learning plans; one-to-one contact must be with "qualified school staff."	Requires program description for board approval to address roles and responsibilities of certificated and classified staff, including the overall ratio of certificated staff to FTE students. Requires learning plans to be developed and monitored by certificated staff. Requires weekly contact with certificated staff. Requires monthly evaluations of progress by certificated staff. 70% expenditure provision is removed.
Contact Requirements	Requires students to either attend school at least five hours per week, or meet one-on-one (face-to-face) with district qualified staff for at least one hour per week.	Each student enrolled in an ALE course of study shall have direct personal contact with school district certificated staff, or certificated staff of a contractor with the approval of the school district, at least weekly. Direct personal contact shall be for the purposes of instruction, review of the student's assignments or other course work, testing, evaluation of student progress, and/or other learning activities. If approved by the board policy , direct personal contact may include use of telephone, e-mail, interactive computer, interactive video communication, or other digital means of communication.

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Learning Plan	<p>Written Learning Plan: The student must have a written plan of instruction that must be approved by a school officer or another person allowed by school policy. The plan must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duration of the program. • Learning activities to be completed. • Where and when teaching will be conducted by school district staff. • A description of the student's responsibilities including a one hour meeting per week one-on-one with district staff if the student attends school less than 5 hours per week. 	<p>Written Learning Plan must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include beginning and end date. • Set an estimated average number of hours per week student will engage in learning activities. • Specify how weekly contact requirements will be met. • Include learning goals and objectives. Course syllabi may be used to meet this requirement. • Identify essential instructional materials. • Include timelines and methods of evaluation. • Be developed and monitored by district certificated staff. • Include connection with EALRs and graduation requirements.
Assessment of Student Learning/Accountability for Student Performance	<p>The student must be assessed in the first 20 school days and at least every 45 school days thereafter. If the student is not successful, a revised plan may be adopted. If the student is not successful within 90 days the student must be removed from the alternative program by the end of the current school year.</p>	<p>Accountability for student performance: The student must be evaluated at least monthly by certificated staff by personal contact, which may include various electronic means, if board policy allows. An intervention strategy must be implemented for students not making satisfactory progress for two consecutive months. A revised written plan must be developed for students not making progress for three consecutive months. All students must be assessed at least annually using state assessments or other means for students subject to statutory exemptions to state assessments identified in the home-based education and private school laws.</p>

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Enrollment Reporting	Enrollment is based on the existing definition of a full-time equivalent (FTE) student. Actual reported student FTE is based on the total number of hours that the student engages in learning activities. What qualifies as a countable learning activity is specified in detail, and includes home study supervised by the student's parent(s) or guardian. A district may use estimated hours if, in the prior two months, actual hours do not differ by more than five hours per week from the estimate. Students who have not met with appropriate school staff for 20 consecutive school days must be excluded from the enrollment count.	Enrollment Reporting: Enrollment is based on the existing definition of a full-time equivalent (FTE) student. Actual reported student FTE is based on estimated hours of instruction in the written plan as long as the student's progress review is satisfactory. If a student's progress review indicates a lack of satisfactory progress, the next month the actual hours are tracked and in ensuing months, the FTE is based on the actual hours of documented learning activity. Students who have not met with appropriate school staff for 20 consecutive school days must be excluded from the enrollment count. School Districts must report alternative learning enrollment annually to OSPI.
Program Evaluation	No reference to program evaluation.	Districts must engage in periodic self-evaluation in a manner designed to objectively measure their effectiveness and shall follow a continuous improvement model.
Part-Time Enrollment	Does not allow part-time enrollment.	Allows part-time enrollment.
Home-Based Education Students	Home-based education students cannot enroll part-time in an ALE program. If enrolled full-time the student is not considered home-based, even though the parent may be supervising some instruction at home.	Home-based education students may enroll part-time in an ALE program. The school district maintains primary responsibility and accountability for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the ALE course of study.

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Documentation and Annual Reporting	<p>All hours of learning activities must be documented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-8 student's parent or guardian provides written documentation of activities away from school not supervised by district staff. • A 9-12 grade student provides written documentation of activities not supervised by district staff. 	<p>Documentation: The district must maintain for audit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school board policy. • Annual reports to the board of directors and OSPI as required. • Student learning plans and documentation of weekly contact. • Student evaluations and assessments. • Student enrollment data. • Signed parent disclosure documents. <p>Districts must annually report to OSPI ALE types of programs, course offerings, and enrollment, CIS to student ratio, and enrollment of students provided alternative education under contract.</p>