

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION AS A QUALITY CHOICE FOR YOUTH: PREPARING EDUCATORS FOR EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS [9504]

Carol A. Kochhar-Bryant, The George Washington University
Renee Lacey, Prince William County Public Schools, Manassas, Virginia

Abstract

As enrollment rates in alternative education programs rise, states' K-12 systems are implementing higher academic standards for students and standards for teacher qualifications. Until recently, however, alternative education programs largely remained outside the academic standards movement. In response to the dearth of knowledge about the preparation of educators to teach student in alternative education settings, this paper explores (1) the proliferation of alternative education programs; (2) models for alternative education; (3) differences in qualifications of personnel in base schools and alternative education programs, and; (4) needs of teachers of students alternative programs. Examination of alternative education programs in Washington Metropolitan Area school districts revealed great discrepancy between the level of competence in teacher credentialing between public and alternative schools. An innovative program for preparing alternative education program teachers with dual certification in special education and a content area is presented.

Introduction

While the passage through adolescence and into adult roles is difficult for all youth, it is especially challenging for youth who are at risk of failure in traditional high school settings. Youth included under the 'at-risk' umbrella include those who have been chronically academically unsuccessful, suspended from, expelled or dropped out of their community school, abused, neglected, exploited, abducted, runaway and homeless youth, migrant youth, victims of crimes, offenders, and those who abuse drug and alcohol, (GAO, 1996; No Child Left Behind Act of 2001). Many of these youth also have disabilities including learning, emotional and behavioral, language and sensory integration dysfunction (these groups represent 95% of all students with disabilities) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001; Rutherford and Quinn, 1999). States report that anywhere from 19% to 60% of alternative education students have disabilities and a majority has learning and emotional/behavioral disabilities (NCES, 2002).

These student groups combined make up from 20-75% of all students in some school districts. They are among those most at risk of poor school attendance, dropout, involvement in the correctional system, unemployment and failure to transition to adult independence. Many observers contend that traditional schools are failing to engage a significant number of such students and meet their complex needs.

As high school *graduation* rates have declined slightly over the past 10 years for the general population of students, it has not declined, and has even increased, for students with disabilities, and those at risk for failure in the public schools. About one-quarter of all students drop out of the traditional K-12 educational system before receiving their high school diploma and almost 40% of students with special learning needs and disabilities (Kaufman et al. 2000). Over the past decade, Black and Hispanic students are 70 % more likely to be suspended from school, expelled or ticketed by police than White students in the past four years (The Advancement Project, 2005). Within 3-5 years after leaving high school the *arrest rate for students of color with disabilities is 40%* (Oswald, Coutinho, and Best, 2000). Consequently, 40 states now have Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs for behavior management, and minority students are overrepresented in removals to these alternative programs (Education Commission of the States, 1998; Intercultural Development Research Association, 1999).

Research has shown that quality long-term alternative education programs can have positive effects on school performance, attitudes toward school, and self-esteem (White, 2005). Consequently, long-term alternative

schools and programs (more than 5 days) have emerged as one educational option for students with and without disabilities who have a history of failure and are at risk of dropout from traditional public schools.

As a result of these conditions, the rate at which American children have been turning to alternative education has more than doubled (Aron, 2003; GAO, 2003; National Governors Association, 2002). As enrollment rates in alternative education programs are rising, states' K-12 systems are in the midst of implementing higher academic standards. Until recently, however, alternative education programs largely remained outside the academic standards movement.

In view of this expansion of alternative educational options, serious attention is needed to the quality of these programs and the professionals who teach in them. At-risk youth have complex needs and require a more intensive educational and support program. It is the obligation of school systems to ensure that as alternative placements proliferate, appropriate educational services, including special education, are extended to students who need them.

In response to the dearth of knowledge about the preparation of educators to teach student in alternative education settings, this paper explores (1) the proliferation of alternative education for students who are unsuccessful in their base schools; (2) models for alternative education; (3) differences in quality and qualifications of personnel in base schools and alternative education programs and how staffing decisions are made; (4) needs of effective teachers of alternative program students. An examination of alternative education programs in selected school districts was conducted to determine the needs of teachers in alternative schools.

Trends In The Proliferation Of Alternative Education

Alternative education programs are proliferating in an attempt to meet the needs of students who would benefit from non-traditional approaches to learning. In a review of legislation on alternative schools, 48 states indicated that they are now more likely to rely on alternative placements for students with learning and behavioral problems, particularly in response to the pressure of new student achievement accountability requirements (Lehr, 2004). About 54% of local school districts (representing about 42 states) reported that within the last 3 years the demand for enrollment exceeded capacity (GAO, 2003).

The roughly half of all districts with alternative schools and programs reported that each of the following was a sufficient reasons for transferring at-risk students from a regular school: possession, distribution or use of alcohol or drugs (52 percent); physical attacks or fights (52 percent); chronic truancy (51 percent); continual academic failure (50 percent); possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm (50 percent); disruptive verbal behavior (45 percent); and possession or use of a firearm (44 percent).

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs, 2002), studied a national sample of 1,534 public school districts, and a 2003 GAO study identified 10,900 alternative schools and programs. These studies reported the following findings:

- As of Oct 2000, 612,900 students, or 1.3% of all public school students were enrolled in alternative education (does not include private programs, private therapeutic programs, day treatment, or residential).
- 12% of all students in alternative education were special education students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); many students are unidentified.
- The target population included students at risk of educational failure with at least 50% of instructional time is in the alternative setting.
- 39% of districts administered at least one alternative program during 2000-01 year.

- Districts more likely to have alternative schools include those that are urban, large districts, in the Southeast region, have high minority student enrollment, and high poverty
- 59% (6,400) of all public alternative schools and programs were housed in separate facilities (not within regular school; 4% were in juvenile detention centers; 3% in community centers; 1% in charter schools).
- Alternative schools were offered at the secondary level (88-92% of districts); at the middle school level (46-46%); at elementary level (10-21%).
- One third (1/3) of districts had at least one school or program that was filled to capacity; this is more likely to be the case in large or moderately sized districts.
- Staffing: 86% of districts hired teachers specifically to teach in such programs.
- Over ¾ districts had curricula leading toward regular HS diploma (91%); academic counseling (87%); policies requiring smaller class size (85%); remedial instruction (84%); opportunity for self-paced instruction (84%); Crisis/behavioral intervention (79%); crisis/career counseling (79%).

As many school districts are developing systems of services to support students with special learning needs, they are incorporating in their continuum models for alternative schools and educational programs. Schools will be required to collect data on students who are placed into alternative settings and the kinds of services they need and receive.

Models for Alternative Education

Alternative schools have long been defined by what they are not, or how they differ from typical public schools. Generally, alternative education reflects society's recognition that educational settings and models cannot be standardized and must be varied to allow each individual to find a learning environment in which they can successfully participate. These programs vary dramatically, from carefully structured, well-regulated options embedded within a district's school system as a continuum of options, to small, unregulated, private programs of questionable quality. A major problem with research and research synthesis on alternative schools is the lack of conceptual standardization and a standard definition.

Alternative schools fall under the auspices of educational alternatives that also include charter schools, magnet programs, distance learning programs, and private schools. They are designed to meet a variety of needs including academic options, dropout prevention, disciplinary consequences, providing academic/behavioral remediation. They have small enrollments (i.e., 25-75 students), serve primarily high school age students, can be accessed through student choice or by mandatory placement, include both short or long-term placements, and offer both academic and a range of supportive services (Alternative Schools Research Project, 2004).

Designed for students who cannot succeed in the traditional classroom, alternative programs depart from conventional rules and regulations that govern textbooks, class size, grading, curriculum, locus of instruction and teacher qualifications. Some programs use computer learning and distance education. Some are built around outdoor activities and challenges. Others rely on the community as a classroom or blend academic instruction with real world work experience. As a result of growing evidence of the minimal success of 'last chance' detention center programs (often referred to as 'dumping grounds' for discipline problems), alternative educational programs are shifting toward smaller, innovative academic programs for socially and academically at-risk students. These approaches are more individualized, have more respect for the student, parent and teacher, and are more experiential and interest-based (Mintz, 1995; Raywid, 1999).

Models for Alternative Schools

As Raywid (1999) observes, most alternative schools do emphasize central themes and philosophies, citing smallness, personalization, interpersonal relationships, and a primary focus on students as human beings. By looking at patterns in alternative school organization, teaching methods, and philosophies, Raywid defined three models that emerge from the thousands of individual programs currently in place across the country.

Restructured Schools. These schools, progeny of the early free schools, may start as early as the primary grades. They bring progressive educational principles to a wide population of students. Some have endured since the 1960s. Many of the new charter schools opened since the early 1990s have adopted a similar child-centered philosophy. Although not specifically designed for at-risk youth, these programs often incorporate ideas that work to the advantage of students who are struggling in mainstream schools.

Disciplinary Programs. Violent or disruptive students are ‘sentenced’ to these diversion programs. Sometimes nicknamed ‘last chance highs,’ these institutions provide high school or middle school students with a mix of behavior modification and intensive individual attention. In theory, they also benefit mainstream students by removing troublemakers from class.

Problem-Solving schools. Alternatives specifically designed for at-risk students, these programs tend to be nonpunitive, more positive and compassionate for students in need of extra help, remediation, or rehabilitation. They often provide a network of academic, social, and emotional assistance to students who have been unsuccessful in the mainstream.

Raywid (1999) suggests two more metaphors to describe the other models. Disciplinary programs resemble soft jails, while problem-solving schools are more akin to therapy. Barr and Parrett (1995) observed that it is startling to consider the wide variety of concepts, approaches, and programs first developed in alternative schools that now have become widely used in traditional public schools.

Program Structures and Design Associated with Student Success

Researchers and practitioners find that discipline problems that may have led to the removal of students from their home schools tend to be reduced in alternative settings. Others have suggested two factors that are most likely to help delinquent youth improve in alternative settings: (1) a significant increase in the proportion of a student's successful vs. unsuccessful experiences, and (2) a warm, accepting relationship with one or more adults. Furthermore, a change of setting can also help youth believe that they can make a new start. The following section summarizes common features identified by many proponents of alternative education that are considered to be central to student's success (Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair and Lehr, 2005; Barr and Parrett, 2001; Cantelon and LeBoeuf, 1999; Christenson and Thurlow, 2004; Dugger and Dugger, 1998; Jacobs, 1994; Joyner, 1996; Kadel, 1994; Kellmeyer, 1998; Kershaw and Blank, 1993; Knapp and Associates, 1995; Morley, 1991; Needles, Dyanarski and Corson, 1998; Raywid, 1999). They are clustered into five categories.

1. Comprehensive and Continuing Programs. Effective programs are not short-term interventions that return them to their former schools after a few weeks or months, but rather are long-term, allowing students to benefit from comprehensive efforts that address academic, social, family, and health concerns. Successful programs have a systematic approach, that is, staff, administrators, and students share in the planning and implementation of the program. They are academically focused programs but also help students with problems and events both in school and in their daily lives. Staff members consider student counseling to be a part of their job and an integral part of the curriculum.

The instructional emphasis is on individual learning styles to guide instructional planning. Classes are small with teacher-student ratios that range from 1:10 to 1:15. The curriculum integrates technology as well as career-vocational skills. Specific hours of work experience are a part of the curriculum in addition to classroom-based learning. The curriculum is also highly individualized and includes a high degree of hands-on activities. Teachers help students make connections between school and work by collaborating with employers about ways to make the curriculum mesh more effectively with real-world career opportunities.

Pregnant students and those with children take parenting and life skills classes, and day care is made available. Updated versions of home economics and life skills classes teach students how to manage a house, a car, and a job. There is strong interagency collaboration among social services agencies in the community and students have access to case managers who play a vital role in matching youths with needed services. An individualized process of transitioning students from school to work or to post-secondary education is in place for each student.

2. Choice and Commitment. In alternative programs that yield the most positive outcomes for youth, both students and teaching staff choose to participate. Students apply for acceptance into the school, take part in interviews, and complete a battery of tests and questionnaires. Voluntary participation is essential and choice remains a theme throughout their school experience. Parents are also engaged and supportive of their child's participation. Programs are centered on student self-determination and personal responsibility for their education. Students are taught to make personal decisions and rebuild their confidence in their ability to succeed academically and socially. Students keep planners with daily, weekly, and long-term goals, and are held responsible for requesting help and completing assignments. Students set short and long-term personal goals and decide for themselves how fast they will move toward high school completion. However, successful programs establish well-defined standards and rules for students with effective ongoing monitoring. Extensive extrinsic reward systems are in place to promote attendance and academic achievement.

3. Caring and Demanding Teachers. Caring and demanding teachers are perhaps the most powerful variable in effective programs for at-risk youth (Barr and Parrett, 2001). Programs provide a supportive environment in which teachers also act as advisors, mentors, and counselors. Programs strive to create a sense of community among teachers, staff, and students that foster positive relationships as well as student affiliation with the school. Curricula is student-centered and related to students' academic and personal concerns. Faculty advisors have at least weekly conferences with students to monitor their progress and provide encouragement.

Alternative schools have a structured school environment and strict behavioral expectations that are clear to students and staff and discipline is administered in a fair and consistent manner. Absences are taken seriously as an indicator of eroding student commitment or as a sign of student distress. When students don't show up for school, faculty advisors will call. Teachers consistently maintain high expectations for students, routinely employ positive discipline techniques, and establish rapport with students and peers. Staff members believe that it is their responsibility to model for students the kind of behaviors they are trying to elicit from students. Faculty encourage assertiveness and responsibility, and students are praised for taking responsibility.

4. Flexible Structure. Both school and class size are a critical factor in the success of alternative programs. Student work schedules are accommodated through flexible school hours (e.g., offering night classes or staying open until late in the evening). Alternative grading and performance assessment is used to prevent student from failing classes; traditional A-F grading systems are not used or are used along with other assessments. If student performance is not up to standard, they are not 'failed' but are assisted to complete additional work to achieve target goals. Report cards are objective, showing an accounting of credits earned and percentage of tasks completed, and students create portfolios as tangible records of their accomplishments. s. Programs maintain flexible teacher roles and program autonomy. Most successful

alternative education programs have some degree of freedom from standard district operating procedures. Teachers, and often students, participate in management and decision making, both in establishing the school's goals and direction and in its ongoing functioning.

5. Self-Evaluation and Continuous Improvement. Formative, summative, and continuous self-evaluation are noticeably apparent in successful programs. Program staff are accountable to the students, families, schools, communities. Staff development for teachers is ongoing and comprehensive as is staff team building.

Because the costs of losing at-risk students are so high for schools and communities, many states have passed legislation allowing a variety of alternatives. Oregon law goes so far as to require districts to provide educational alternatives for students who either are not meeting, or are exceeding, educational standards. Table 1. summarizes common indicators of success for alternative education programs that have been synthesized from the literature.

Table 1. Indicators of Success for Alternative Education

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in 3 core areas of academic achievement -- reading, mathematics, and English • Increased graduation rates or GED achievement • Increased enrollment in 2 and 4 year college or technical schools • Increased portion of the student population achieving district-wide honor roll status • Greater focus on academics and improved attitudes toward school • Graduation at levels that exceed faculty's expectations • Increase in average daily attendance • Progress toward personal goals • Successful return to home schools • Significant increase in self-esteem • Reduction of delinquent behavior • Earned permission to take lunch breaks outside the building and return to class on time • Earned permission to take textbooks home whereas in the past they could not remove textbooks from class • Earned permission to produce a yearbook and to have a senior prom • Benefits from regular staffing that help both teachers and students solve students' problems that impeded their social and academic development • Improved parental involvement • Greater respect shown by students who are given more responsibility by the school staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student perceptions of high teacher commitment and involvement • Student reports of benefit from school policies that discourage avoidant behaviors • Student reports of benefits from counseling services, peer mediators, support groups for adolescent issues, individual academic assistance, and a sense of belonging • Student reports of benefit from one-to-one interaction with teachers • Smaller number of students in the classrooms • Teacher expectations of the best from students • Acquisition of a marketable skill at graduation • Acquisition of required graduation credits • Improved social behavior • Student recognition that their actions, hard work, improved grades, graduation, and attitude will help them be viewed as successful • Significant increases in extrinsic motivation, persistence, home self-esteem, peer self-esteem, and school self-esteem • Increased productivity and engagement in the community after school. • Students' expressed belief that they have benefited from the program and expressed high levels of satisfaction with the program.
---	--

Examining Differences In Qualifications Of Personnel In Base Schools And Alternative Education Programs

Various factors have been identified as beneficial to at-risk students in alternative education environments, including dedicated and well trained staff, effective curriculum, and a variety of support services provided in collaboration with an array of community agencies (Quinn and Rutherford 1998).

Although alternative programs are designed for a variety of reasons, they are commonly designed for youth with challenging behaviors. While these students may or may not be eligible for special education services, they are in need of special learning strategies, interventions or supports in order to be successful in school (Lacy and Sobers, 2004; Smith, Polloway, Patton, and Dowdy, 2001). Many alternative education programs are staffed with inexperienced teachers who are not prepared to address the complex needs of at-risk youth. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) demands that teachers be ‘highly qualified’ to teach all secondary youth, however, there is evidence of discrepancy in the qualifications between teachers in base schools and those in alternative education. NCES (2003), however, provided no national data on how teachers come to teach in alternative schools and programs.

Qualifications of Teachers in Alternative Education

Lehr (2003) conducted a study of state policies and legislation across the U.S. An analysis of findings related to teacher qualifications revealed that half of states with a formal alternative education law or policy included language about staffing. Most required alternative schools or programs to have certified teachers or to comply with the state’s staffing standards, although half of states did not have this in policy or law. Twenty nine (29) states had legislation related to teacher credentialing, qualifications, student-staff ratios, or provision of specialized services. Only 18 states had legislation related to the provision of special education services, IEPs, entrance criteria, or provision of specialized services. Although alternative schools were viewed as another educational option for students with disabilities, there were questions about the availability of special education (Lehr and Lange, 2003).

The study also indicated that there was no mention of the need for teachers to be certified in particular subject areas or grade levels. Legislative language in several states indicated that teachers in alternative education programs were not required to hold teachers certificates, nor were school counselors. Many states, however, are beginning to examine their policies. For example, in North Carolina a significant number of teachers – mostly core academic areas – are teaching in areas where they do not hold appropriate credentials. Attracting fully licenses teachers in general education is a challenge in most districts, and even more formidable for alternative education programs. The North Carolina Evaluation and Accountability Division has recognized that alternative education programs need teachers with strong content knowledge, who are creative and persistent in finding ways to teach each and every student. Teachers need skills in teaching basic skills, reading, mathematics and writing. (North Carolina State Board of Education (2000).

Assignment of Teachers to Alternative Education Settings

The national NCES study (2003) provided no national data on how teachers come to teach in alternative schools and programs and there is *little formal data on the qualifications of teachers in long-term alternative education setting or how they are assigned to their schools*. According to the survey, 86% of districts surveyed hired teachers specifically to teach in the alternative school or program. The report further indicated that 49% of districts reported that teachers were transferred from traditional education settings by choice. Ten percent of the school divisions involuntarily assigned teachers in the schools and programs. Finally, “large school districts, those with high minority enrollment, and districts with high poverty concentration were more likely than their counterpart districts to report assigning teachers involuntarily” (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003, p. 34). Overall, these teachers choose to work with at-risk students in alternative education settings.

Qualifications of Teachers In Alternative Education Programs In the Washington Metropolitan Area

In a series of interviews conducted in 2004-05, practitioners and administrators of alternative education programs in six public school districts in the Washington Metropolitan region reported that general education

teachers are poorly trained to address the needs of at-risk youth in their classrooms, particularly in the area of behavior management. They suggest that teacher behavior, or the responses of teachers in the classroom during behavioral incidents, are a strong predictor of student's removal from the classroom and placement into alternative settings. They are unfamiliar with the social emotional needs of these students, or do not know the most effective strategies, or wait too long before intervening. Better trained teachers are able to keep students in their classes longer and tend to have a positive impact academically. There is great concern in school districts about the impact these students are having on standardized test scores and the ability of these individual schools to achieve Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). These scores are now well publicized in the states, and this intensifying pressure for accountability is having a profound impact on school programming.

The relatively high dropout rate of students with disabilities, as well as the increasing rate of outplacement of youth with disabilities to alternative educational programs indicates a need for professionals who can implement transition planning and support services at much earlier ages. At-risk youth have complex needs and require a more intensive educational and support program. The nature of their needs also demands close coordination between alternative school and community-based human services. Alternative schools are generally viewed as another option available to students with disabilities. Students may be pushed out of traditional school in a subtle or overt manner, with school officials suggesting alternative schools as an option. The student's IEP may be continued, modified, or may not systematically follow the student from their previous school (Lehr, 2004; 2003). Improved preparation of educators in schools and alternative schools is likely to lead to a reduction in the overuse of in-school discipline, inappropriate referrals to alternative schools, increased success in alternative settings, decreased dropout from school, and improved long-term adult outcomes.

Reflecting national data, the District of Columbia (DC) faces chronic teacher shortages and unfilled positions, especially in special education. This has played a major role in the outplacement of large numbers of students with disabilities into alternative private placements, the majority of whom are identified as students with emotional disturbance. In Virginia, there exists "a most acute" need for special educators, particularly in the EBD endorsement area (Virginia Department of Education, 2000), with over half of Virginia's school divisions anticipating severe shortages over the next five years. In the latest Annual Report to Congress (2001), Virginia employed 1,505 special educators who were not fully certified.

Maryland is a non-categorical state, but endorsement in generic special education (grade 6-adult) is considered a "critical shortage area" (MSDE, 2001). For the 2001-2002 school year, 418 teachers with special education endorsement (6-adult) were needed, however Maryland only had an available pool of 179 candidates. The difference of 239 positions meant that Maryland was only producing 43% of the necessary new hires. The situation is not expected to improve, as the state predicts the need for 472 new secondary special educators with an available candidate pool of only 203 individuals (MSDE, 2001). In a mini-study of the Maryland SDE report card, in which school percentages of classes taught by teachers who are not found to be highly qualified are listed by county, we found a great discrepancy between the level of competence in teacher credentialing between the comprehensive high schools and alternative schools.

Personnel Preparation Needs Of Teachers In Alternative Programs

There are increasing shortages of adequately prepared personnel to work with adolescents with EBD (Maag and Katsiyannis, 1999), particularly for students with co-occurring LD and EBD. USDOE (2001) reports that for the 1999-2000 school year there were 12,013 open teaching positions for students with EBD. In a study of 36 State Improvement Grants (Kochhar, 2003; 1999), almost all states indicated a need for expertise to address interventions for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities and to reduce the rates of referrals for disciplinary actions, suspensions and expulsions. Most states reported severe shortages of teachers of students with emotional and behavioral disabilities (EBD) and reported that behavior management

preservice and inservice training as among the highest priorities. In some cases districts fill EBD teacher positions with long-term substitutes, short term contractees or teachers not licensed in EBD but in other areas of special education who have provisional licenses or variances.

Recent research on teacher effectiveness from Stanford University indicates that there is a direct correlation between increased student success and achievement and being taught by highly qualified teachers (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin and Heilig, 2005; Lacey and Sobers, 2004, p.2). Many alternative education teachers are involuntarily transferred from regular education classrooms with no formal training, a practice that occurs most frequently in high poverty districts and schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). The practice of involuntary transfer to alternative education programs contradicts evidence-based best practices, and in schools where teachers have specialized skills, students can achieve at the same rate as those in their base school (Levine, 2003, p. 6).

Students considered at risk of education failure require special supports to address their myriad needs in order to achieve academically. As a result, teachers must possess particular characteristics to work with this challenging population. Successful programs indicate that specific training and dispositions of the teachers are keys to successful alternative education programs. Teachers need to be content area certified and certified in special education with content in positive behavioral support.

The success of students, especially in alternative programs, may largely depend on the quality of education they receive while attending the program. Students achieve better outcomes when teachers are highly motivated, well-trained, compassionate and caring, set high expectations, and are willing to differentiate instruction (Barr and Parrett, 2001). While there are many teachers who exhibit the majority of the characteristics cited above, few have the expertise obtained from formal instruction and supervised practice afforded through direct instruction of techniques that are found to be essential in meeting the educational needs of youth at risk.

Cultural and linguistic discontinuity has been identified as a significant factor for the educational problems experienced by students from diverse backgrounds (Ford, 1992; Gallegos and McCarty, 2000, p. 266; Ogbu, 1992; Hilland, 1992). Children from culturally diverse backgrounds are overwhelmingly represented in the United States special education system (Oswald, Coutinho, and Best, 2000) and in alternative education, but these students seldom get the services they need. Across the U.S., students speak 400 languages, 76.9% of which are native Spanish speakers learning English. School personnel have difficulty distinguishing between language acquisition-based learning difficulties and actual learning disabilities. Consequently, English language learners are either inappropriately placed into special or alternative education, or have great difficulty obtaining services from both special education and ESL departments.

A Model Program For Preparing Alternative Education Program Teachers With Dual Certification In Special Education And A Content Area

The George Washington University is demonstrating a Masters Degree program designed to prepare highly qualified teachers for Alternative Education settings, with *dual certification in special education (learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral disabilities) and an academic content area*. The goals of the program are to (a) prepare teachers for a variety of alternative education settings; (b) help each achieve *dual certification in secondary special education (emphasis on learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral disabilities) and a content area specialization* (meeting the 'highly qualified teacher' definition under NCLB (Sec. 665. Interim Alternative Educational Settings, Behavioral Supports, and Systemic School Interventions); (c) create effective change agents to promote effective linkages among schools, community agencies, and post-secondary institutions; and (d) demonstrate the impact of graduates on learning environments for youth and on their host schools.

The primary service area for the program is the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area. This program is focused on the preparation of personnel to (1) improve the transition process into alternative placements as well as the return to base schools, (2) facilitate student academic and behavioral success and attainment of the regular diploma; and (3) facilitate transition from secondary to technical, 2 or 4 year colleges and/or employment. This program prepares educators for a spectrum of alternative education settings, including Experimental and Career Focused Schools; In-School Suspension Programs; Community Day Schools; Home-schooled Students; Contracted Learning; Alternative Career and Academic Programs; Second Chance Programs; GED Accelerated programs; Inter-Agency Alternative Schools; Short Term Therapeutic Settings; Juvenile Correctional Education schools; Group Homes and Social Service Institutional schools. The program will address the following professional competencies:

- Demonstrate knowledge of classification of alternative educational programs and settings, their philosophy, organizational and administrative structures, target populations, and legal issues.
- Demonstrate knowledge of and skills in special education planning, designing and delivering differentiated instruction to students with learning, emotional/ behavioral disabilities in the general education curriculum.
- Demonstrate mastery of teaching methods in a content area (Math, science, language arts, social studies, etc.) and prepare for completion of Praxis II and III in the content area.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships among the learner's physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and cultural development and their learning and academic progress.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the developmental assets for adolescent development, and the relationship between adolescent brain development and behavior.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills in the use of positive behavioral approaches supported by evidence-based practices, and of the role of language in adolescent behavior.
- Demonstrate understanding of reading development, assessment and instruction.
- Use valid assessment approaches, both formal and informal, which are age-appropriate and address a variety of developmental needs and curriculum goals.
- Demonstrate understanding of career-vocational development and curriculum options, and legal requirements to assist youth in transition from high school to post-secondary..
- Demonstrate knowledge of interdisciplinary, interagency and parent coordination strategies to promote learning and ensure access to support services in school and community.
- Address needs of English Language Learners with disabilities, including assessment, instruction, and instructional accommodations.

The training program equips scholars with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively assist children in achieving State learning standards. The program meets the definition of 'highly qualified' for special education teachers: (1) eligibility for state special education certification or license; (2) post-bachelor's degree; (3) no waiver of licensing requirements; (4) for veteran special education teachers teaching multiple subjects (two or more core academic subjects), the above plus the option of going through a state High Objective, Uniform, State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSSE); or (5) for new special education teachers be highly qualified in one core area (math, language arts, science, foreign languages, civics, economics, arts, history or geography). The program meets NCATE (National Council on Accreditation of Teacher Education) standards, CEC standards for special educators, and teachers with specializations in LD and EBD, and International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). The project works closely with the State Education Agencies of Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia, as well as other states based on individual review.

Students participate in -year long '*learning- in-service*' *internships* under guidance of qualified cooperating teachers and administrators. The project evaluation creates an innovative approach to (1) determining the

impact of student interns on their host agencies and employers; (2) tracking and follow-up; and (3) evaluation of graduates' positive impact on youth in alternative education.

Grounding Principles Based on Current Research. The curriculum will reflect the 7 essential elements of effective programs synthesized from several studies of alternative education include the following: (1) functional and academic assessments; (2) standards-based and functional curriculum; (3) effective and efficient instructional techniques; (4) programming for effective transition to post-secondary and employment; (5) comprehensive systems of support; (6) appropriate staff, resources, and procedural protections for students with disabilities; and (7) educational climates that are supportive of the student's social/emotional needs (Christenson, and Thurlow, 2004; Gorney and Ysseldyke, 1993; Hasazi, et al, 2001; Kleiner, Porch and Farris, 2002; Lacy and Sobers, 2004; Lehr, 2004; National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices, 2001; NCES, 2004; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2001; Quinn, Osher, Hoffman, and Hanley, 1998; Rutherford and Howell, 1997; Sinclair, Christenson and Thurlow, 2005; Smith, Polloway, Patton, and Dowdy, 2001; Smith and Thomas, 2001; Tobin and Sprague, 2000; White and Kochhar-Bryant, 2004).

Effective Planning and Teaching for Adolescent Learners. The program incorporates several research-based teacher planning and instructional routines for diverse learners (Lenz, Boudah, and Bulgren, 1994) such as the *Unit and Lesson Organizers* developed by the Center for Research on Learning at the University of Kansas (Lenz et al, 1994). We have conducted research on how to effectively incorporate these routines into our teacher education programs (Taymans and Lynch, 1996). We also teach trainees how to use the *Western Oregon Work Sampling* methodology (McConney and Ayres, 1998) to collect unit based pre and post assessment information on student achievement. This unit planning-teaching methodology enables teachers to differentiate instruction and to collect curriculum-based information on student learning. Teachers also learn how to help students develop skills and *learning strategies* necessary for life long learning, including self-monitoring, social skills and self-advocacy to reading, writing and study skills (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, Johnston, 2000; Kissam and Lenz, in press).

Psychoeducational teaching. Teachers' subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills are not the only predictors of success with troubled youth; teachers must also have "relationship skills-- the ability to connect with children and youth," (ATE, 1999, p. 3). Psychoeducational teaching is a philosophy about intervening in the worlds of troubled children. It is not a recipe or one specific strategy but a proven synthesis of diverse theoretical standpoints, procedures, and intervention techniques (Wood, Brendtro, Fecser, and Nichols, 1999, p. 7). The tenets of psychoeducation include beliefs in (a) psychodynamic theory and practice as described by Redl and Wineman, (1951,1952), Morse (1998); Long and Morse (1996) and Wood (1996), (b) relationships that promote corrective emotional and academic development as outlined by Brendtro and Brokenleg (1999), Long and Morse (1996), (c) application of assessment to educational methodology including behavioral analysis (Sugai and Lewis, 1999) and the developmental audit (Brendtro, 2000), (d) the interdependence of cognitive and affective processes, (Gibbs, Potter and Goldstein, 1995), (e) teacher as central in creating helping environments for peers (Morse, 1998), (f) the importance of therapeutic, inclusive environments for peers (Brendtro and Ness, 1983), (g) intervention as an attitude to the teacher (Long and Morse, 1996) and therapeutic power of kindness, and (h) emotions as critical personal events that become understood, accepted and valued (Long and Morse, 1996).

Psychoeducation is derived from the most effective child-centered theories and practices and utilizes components of behaviorism, psychodynamic theory, ecological theory, sociological theory, humanism, and medical models. The translation of these theories to evidence-based practices includes the following strategies, described below.

Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI). *LSCI* employs a strength-based approach to problem solving, focusing on understanding and intervening in the self-defeating patterns that many at-risk adolescents experience. It is a proven practice of crisis intervention (Dawson, 2001; Long, Wood, and Fecser, 2001; Wood and Long, 1991).

Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions. At-risk youth need to develop interpersonal skills. Too few programs have any lasting impact because of the brevity of instruction, lack of a research-based methodology and lack of valid assessment (Maag and Howell, 1992). One research based cognitive-behavioral program is the *EQUIP* Program (Gibbs, Potter, and Goldstein, 1995). Trainees observe this program in action and learn how to effectively guide students through this type of integrated cognitive-behavioral intervention.

Positive Behavioral Support. The responses of teachers in the classroom during behavioral incidents are a predictor of student's removal from the classroom and placement into alternative settings (interviews with administrators in Virginia, Maryland and the D.C., 2005).

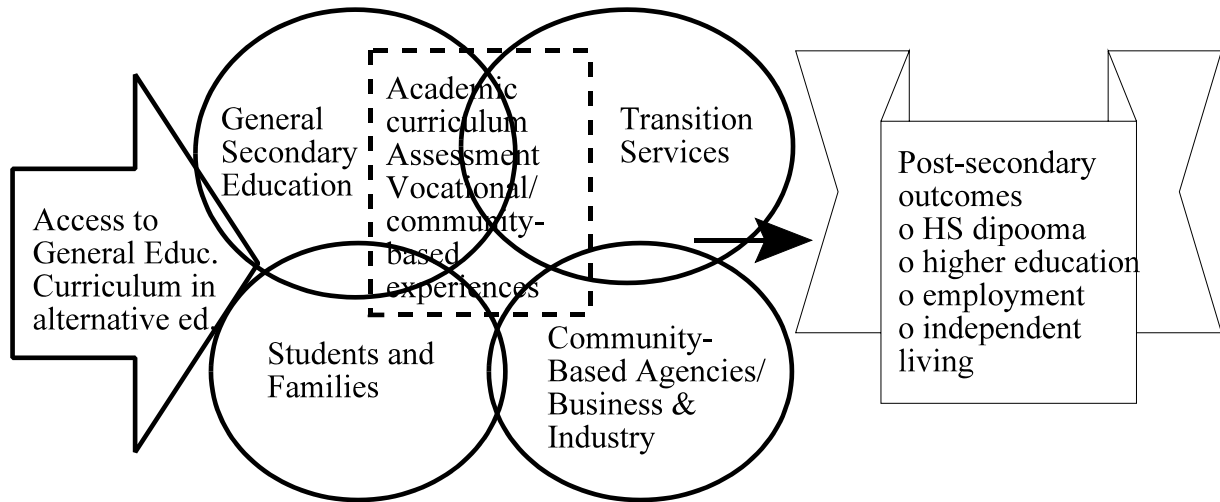
This program prepares teachers to develop positive school climates based research-validated practices. To understand the needs of adolescents with learning and emotional disabilities, teachers must identify significant behavioral patterns through functional behavioral analysis. Using Brendtro's (2000) work on the *developmental audit* and the steps of functional behavioral assessment, teachers identify patterns and positive behavioral support and team with other professionals and parents/guardians. This behaviorally-based approach uses a seven step process to apply research-validated practices to designing supportive environments (Sugai et al, 1999, p. 7). Emphasis is placed upon the teacher's role in developing and sustaining student motivation, self-regulation, and resiliency (Sugai, Good, and Lee, 1996; Lewis, Colvin, and Sugai, 2001; Lewis, Sugai and Colvin, 1998; Ruef, et al, 1998; Taylor-Greene, et al., 1997; Todd, Horner, Sugai, Sprague, 1999; Sugai, Sprague, Horner, Walker, 2004).

Collaborative Process and Engagement of Parents. Participants are introduced to the Comer School Development Program (Borman, et al., 2002; Comer, 1968) also known as the Comer Process. This is a model of collaboration that has demonstrated effectiveness in improving the educational experience of youth by building supportive bonds among children, parents, and school staff. The Comer Process has been implemented in schools throughout the US with an improved attendance, increased parent participation, lower teacher turnover, improved test scores, and a decrease in the number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions. Participants are expected to use the model to focus on their individual classrooms to build a model of parent-school-classroom collaboration.

Aligning Transition Supports With Access to General Education. IDEA 1997 emphasized both transition services and access to the general education curriculum and therefore placed expectations on state and local educational agencies to seek practical solutions for aligning the systems (Kochhar and Bassett, 2003). The Alternative Education program is designed to prepare professionals for teaching roles that assist youth with disabilities to achieve the regular high school diploma, prepare for and make a successful transition from schooling to employment, postsecondary settings, and independent adult life.

Furthermore, educational interventions must be coordinated with supports that 'wrap-around' youth and address social, emotional, environmental, employment, physical and mental health, and independent living domains (Crawford, 2002; Leone and Drakeford, 1999; Leone and Meisel, 1997; Malian and Love, 1998; Martin, Marshall and DePry, 2002; Medrich, Ramer and Merola, 2000). Therefore, the program curriculum incorporates interagency coordination to support alternative education. Trainees observe transition planning and preparation in alternative schools and learn how to effectively involve parents and students in the process of student led IEP's (Mason, McGahee-Kovac, Johnson and Stillerman, 2002).

Figure 1. Access to Regular Diploma and Transition Planning



Preparation for Diversity. Diversity competencies are integrated into the program (Baca, Fradd and Collier, 1990; Zeichner, 1996). In addition, the project will embrace CEC’s Common Core of Knowledge and Skills related to diversity and continue to strengthen their incorporation into course work. In our efforts to improve the coursework of our project so that the graduate trainees will be empowered to work with diverse youth, we have identified the courses where each specific diversity competency is taught (Figs 5-7 in *Appendix J*).

Effective teachers have the ability to create meaningful learning activities that take into consideration the learner’s culture and background (Villegas, 1991). Candidates observe and interact with professionals who model the attributes of kindness, optimism, understanding, adaptability and warmth – competencies that several researchers have suggested are appropriate for affective-oriented teachers of diverse learners (Collins and Tamarkin, 1982; Cureton, 1978; Dillon, 1989; St. John, 1971). Other field-based experiences that enhance understanding and work with culturally and linguistically diverse students include: bridging home and school cultures; peer- and cross-age grouping and cooperative learning groups in instructional planning; and the use of creative rhythms, varied intonations, and verbal interplay (Franklin, 1992).

Table 2. Summary of Evidence-Based Practices in Selection, Support and Assessment

Program Area	Evidence-Based Practices/Tools
Admittance	Haberman Interview Protocol
Clinical Supervision and In-School Support	Providing in-school mentors; Praxis III – Pathwise teacher Assessment
Provide Models of Effective Practice for AED	Psychoeducational Teaching; Life Centered Crisis Intervention; Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions; Positive Behavioral Supports
Collaborate with Parents	Comer Model

Orchestrate Success in Secondary Education and Transition	Unit and Lesson Organizer; Western Oregon Work Sampling; Learning Strategy Instruction; Student-Led IEP's; Interdisciplinary collaboration skills
Preparation for Diversity	Observe-learn from culturally responsive role models Intermix coursework with multicultural competencies

Integrated Training and Practice and Performance Based Teacher Assessment. The program includes field-based training opportunities for students in diverse settings, such as high-poverty communities, in rural areas and in urban areas. We distinguish between the 'employment placement' (teacher already employed in an alternative school but seeking certification) and the 'clinical placement' (new teacher). Interns who are already employed in alternative schools receive full time supervision for a 2-semester internship, through a supervised partnership with a school cooperating teacher-mentor (CT). In the clinical settings, candidates plan for design and delivery of instruction and assessment of student learning with university supervision and attend a weekly seminar. A mid-term and final evaluation includes a three-way feedback session with the CT, university supervisor and the teacher engaged in the internship. For each cooperating district or school, the internship site has a licensed cooperating teacher (who could be the school principal), who participates in a supervision seminar series in which they are introduced to the program philosophy, candidate proficiencies, expectations, field performance assessment tools, action research/learning opportunities. For Cooperating teachers hosting an intern is counted toward renewing their professional development requirements.

Outcome and Impact Evaluation. The outcome evaluation will examine outcomes related to students' development, partnerships, and project performance. Focus is on the extent to which graduates of the training program have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide research-based instruction and services that result in improved outcomes for children with disabilities. Outcomes for the participants include numbers of participants, measures of student competency attainment, student scores on Praxis I and II, successful completion of internships, successful placement, actual roles filled by graduates, retention in placement for at least 2 years, 80% satisfaction with preservice curriculum and scores on technology competence assessment.

The impact evaluation component addresses the impact of the student interns on host systems and on alternative education classrooms and youth outcomes, with participation of internship host organizations and advisors. Follow-up studies include exit surveys and 2-year post-employment follow-up surveys and interviews with host internship sites and employers. A 'community of learning' web-site connects candidates, field-based personnel and graduates, serving as a resource for graduates and their employers in their transition year (with information about best practices in alternative education regionally and nationally). The web-site will also support communication to facilitate follow-up surveys of graduates and employers, and will aid in the gathering of post-graduation impact data.

Closing

A growing body of empirical and anecdotal evidence show that students who have been labeled failures, troublemakers, or dropouts in traditional schools can thrive in smaller, more individualized settings. This may not be news to a teacher who has worked to pull a struggling student back from the brink of failure. But it is a very timely subject for communities across the nation face staggering social and economic costs resulting from the growing numbers of alienated and undereducated youth and young adults. After operating for decades on the fringes of public education, alternative schools are now receiving serious attention. In light of emerging evidence that states are struggling to provide qualified teachers to teach our most challenging students, more research is needed on teacher qualification and the conditions of teaching in alternative education programs.

References

- Advancement Project (2005). Education on lockdown: Schoolhouse to jailhouse track. Children and Family Justice Center of Northwestern University School of Law, 24, March
- Anderson, A.R., Christenson, S.L., Sinclair, M.F., and Lehr, C. A. (2005). Check and Connect: The importance of relationships for promoting engagement with school. *Journal of School Psychology*
- Anderson M.A., Kaufman J., Simon T.R., Barrios L., Paulozzi L., Ryan G., et al. School-associated violent deaths in the United States, 1994-1999. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2001; 286:2695–702.
- Aron, L. (2003). *Towards a typology of alternative education programs: A compilation of elements from the literature.* Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Barr, R.D., Parrett, W.H. (2001). *Hope fulfilled for at-risk and violent youth.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Benz, M. R., Lindstrom, L., and Yovanoff, P. (2000). Improving graduation and employment outcomes of students with disabilities: Predictive factors and student perspectives. *Exceptional Children*, 66, 509-529
- Benz, M., Yovanoff, P., and Doren, B. (1997). School-to-work components that predict postschool success for students with and without disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 63(2), 155-165.
- Blackorby, J., and Wagner, M.(1996). Longitudinal postschool outcomes of youth with disabilities: Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study. *Exceptional Children*, 62(5), 399-413.
- Borman, G., Hewes, G., Overman, L., and Brown, S. (2002). Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis. Center For Research On The Education Of Students Placed At Risk. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.
- Boykin, A.W. (2000). A talent development model of schooling. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 5,3-25.
- Brewster, C., and Fager, J. (2000). Increasing student engagement and motivation: From time-on-task to homework. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Cantelon, S., and LeBoeuf, D. 1997. Keeping Young People in School: Community Programs That Work. Bulletin. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Castleberry, C. and Enger, J. (1998). Alternative school students: Concepts of success. *NASSP Bulletin*, December 1998, Volume 82, Issue 602, p. 105-111.
- Cash, T. (2004). Alternative schooling. In Smink, J. and Schargel, F. P.(Eds), *Helping students graduate: Strategic approach to dropout prevention.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Christenson, S.L., Hurley, C.M., Hirsch, J.A., Kau, M., Evelo, D.L., and Bates, W. (1997, Fall). Check and Connect: The role of monitors in supporting high-risk youth. *Reaching Today's Youth: The Community Circle of Caring Journal*, 18-21.1
- Christenson, S.L., and Peterson, C.J. (1998). Family, school, and community influences on children's learning: A literature review (Report No. 1). Parents are Teachers Project. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Extension Service.
- Christenson, S.L., Sinclair, M.F., Lehr, C.A., and Godber, Y. (2001). Promoting successful school completion: Critical conceptual and methodological guidelines. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 16 (4), 468-484.
- Christenson, S.L., Sinclair, M.F., Lehr, C., and Godber, Y. (2001). Promoting successful school completion: Critical conceptual and methodological guidelines. *Miniseries on school completion. School Psychology Quarterly*.
- Christenson, S.L., Sinclair, M.F., Thurlow, M.L., and Evelo, D. (1999). Promoting student engagement with school using the Check and Connect model. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counseling*, 9 (1), 169-184.
- Christenson, S.L., and Thurlow, M.L. (March, 2004). Keeping kids in school: Efficacy of Check and Connect for dropout prevention of high-risk students. *Communique*, 32(6), 37-40.
- Christenson, S.L., and Thurlow, M.L. (2004). School dropouts: Prevention, considerations, interventions, and challenges. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*,13(1), 36-39.
- Colley, D., and Jamison, D. (1998). Postschool results for youth with disabilities: Key indicators and policy implications. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 21(2), 145-160.
- Comer School Development Program (1998). Changing Schools for Changing Times: *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)*, Vol. 3 (1).
- Cory, R., Taylor, S., Walker, P., and White, J. (Eds.). (2003). Beyond compliance: An information package on the inclusion of people with disabilities in postsecondary education. National Resource Center on Supported Living and Choice, Center on Human Policy. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University.

- Cross, P., and Steadman, M. (1996). *Classroom Research: Implementing the Scholarship of Teaching*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Holtzman, D., Gatlin, S., and Heilig, J. (2005). Does teacher preparation matter? Evidence about teacher certification, Teach For American, and Teacher Effectiveness. School Redesign Network, Stanford University.
- Dugger, J. and Dugger, C. (1998). An Evaluation of a Successful Alternative High School. *The High School Journal*, April-May 1998, Volume 81, Number 4, p. 218-228.
- Duke, D.J., and Griersdorn, J. (1999, November/December). Considerations in the design of alternative schools. *The Clearing House*, 73(2), 89-93.
- Dynarski, M. (1999). *How can we help?* Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
- Easton, L. (2002). Lessons from learners. *Educational Leadership*, 60 (1). September.
- Education Commission of the States, (1998), Discipline: Alternative schools for disruptive students. Denver, Colorado.
- General Accounting Office (2003). Special Education: Clearer Guidance Would Enhance Implementation of Federal Disciplinary Provisions. Washington D.C. GAO-03-550
- Goldhaber, D.D., and Brewer, D.J. (2000, Summer). Does teacher certification matter? High school teacher status and student achievement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 22 (2), p 129-145.
- Gorney, D. J., and Ysseldyke, J. E. (1993). Students with disabilities use of various options to access alternative schools and area learning centers. *Special Services in the Schools*, 7(1), 125-143
- Gottfredson, G., and Gottfredson, D. (1996). A national study of delinquency prevention in schools: Rationale for a study to describe the extensiveness and implementation of programs to prevent problem behavior in schools. Ellicott city, MD: Gottfredson and Associates.
- Guerin, G., and Denti, L. (1999, November/December). Alternative education support for youth at risk. *The Clearing House*, 73(2), 76-78.
- Hasazi, S.B., Proulx, R., Hess, K., Needham, B., MacKinnon, C., Morgan, P., and O'Regan, B. (2001). *Report on alternative education schools/programs in Vermont*. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont.
- Hefner-Packer, R. (1991). Alternative education programs: a prescription for success. *Monographs in Education*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia.
- Individuals With Disabilities Education Act Amendments. 1997. PL105-17.
- Intercultural Development Research Association (1999). Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas – What is Known; What is Needed. San Antonio, TX: Author.
- Izzo, M. V., Cartledge, C., Miller, L. E., Growick, B., and Rutkowski. (2000). Improving employment earnings: Extended transition services that make a difference. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 23(2), 139-156.
- Jans, L., Stoddard, S. and Kraus, L. (2004). Chartbook on Mental Health and Disability in the United States. An InfoUse Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research.
- Joyner, J.G. (1996). A study of factors that contribute to success at New Directions Alternative School. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 5707A, p. 2770. (University Microfilms No. AAG96-38570).
- Katsiyannis, A. and Williams, B. (1998). A National Survey of State Initiatives on Alternative Education. *Remedial and Special Education*, September/October 1998, Volume 19, Number, 76.
- Kellmayer, J. (1998). Building Educational Alternatives for At-Risk Youth: A Primer *The High School Magazine*, Volume 6, Issue 2, October 1998, p. 26-31.
- Kleiner, B., Porch, R., and Farris, E. (2002). Public alternative schools and programs for students at risk of education failure: 2000-01 (NCES 2002-004). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Knapp, M.S., and Turnbull, B.J. (1990). *Better schooling for the children of poverty: Alternatives to conventional wisdom: Vol.1. Summary*. Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation.
- Kochhar-Bryant (August, 1999). Synthesis of state needs and barriers to systemic reform in the 1998 special education state improvement grants. Under contract to the Federal Resource Center, Academy for Educational Development
- Kochhar-Bryant, C. (2004). Building Transition Capacity Through Personnel Development: Analysis of 35 State Improvement Grants, Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, Spring, 2004
- Kochhar-Bryant, C. (2005). Caring alternatives: Interagency collaboration to improve outcomes for students with mental health needs. *Journal of Alternative Education*, Washington D.C.: Hamilton Fish Institute on Schools and Community Violence.

- Kochhar, C. (1998). Literature synthesis on alternative schools and programs for violent, chronically disruptive and delinquent youth. Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence. Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University, Institute for Educational Policy Studies.
- Koetke, C. (1999) One size doesn't fit all. Tech-Nos Quarterly. Bloomington, IN: The Agency for Instructional Technology.
- Kortering, L. J., and Braziel, P. M. (1999). Staying in school: The perspective of ninth-grade students. *Remedial and Special Education*, 20(2), 106-113.
- Lacey, R. and Sobers, M. (2004). Review of alternative education. The George Washington University.
- Lange, C. M., and Sletten, S. J. (2002). Alternative education: A brief history and synthesis. Alexandria, VA: Project Forum at National Association of State Directors of Special Education. Retrieved October 29, 2003, from <http://www.nasdse.org/forum.htm>
- Lehr, P.E., and Meisel, S. (1997). Improving education services for students in detention and confinement facilities. *Children's Legal Rights Journal*, 17(1), 2-12.
- Lehr, C.A. (2004, October). *Information brief: Alternative Schools and students with disabilities: identifying and understanding the issues, Vol 3 (6)*. Minneapolis, MN: National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.
- Lehr, C.A., Moreau, R.A., Lange, C.M., and Lanners, E.J. (2004). Alternative schools: findings from a national survey of the states. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration.
- Lehr, C. A., Johnson, D. R., Bremer, C. D., Cosio, A., and Thompson, M. (2004). Increasing rates of school completion: Moving from policy and research to practice (Essential Tool Series). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition.
- Lehr, C.A., Hansen, A., Sinclair, M.F., and Christenson, S. L. (2003). Moving beyond dropout towards school completion: An integrative review of data-based interventions. *School Psychology Review*, 32(3), 342-364.
- Lehr, C. A., and Lange, C. M. (2003). Alternative schools and the students they serve: Perceptions of state directors of special education. Policy Research Brief. (University of Minnesota: Minneapolis, Institute on Community Integration), 14(1).
- Lehr, C. A. and Lange, C. M. (2003). Alternative schools serving students with and without disabilities: What are the current issues and challenges? *Preventing School Failure*, 47(2), 59-65.
- Lehr, C.A., Lanners, E.J., and Lange, C.M. (2003). Alternative Schools: Policy and legislation across the U.S. (Research Report 1). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration.
- Leone, P., and Drakeford, W. (1999, November/December). Alternative education: From last chance to a proactive model. *The Clearing House*, 73(2), 86-89.
- Leone, P., Meisel, S., and Drakeford, W. (in press). *Special Education Programs for Youth with Disabilities in Juvenile Corrections*. Journal of Correctional Education
- Leone, P.E., and Meisel, S. (1997). Improving education services for students in detention and confinement facilities. *Children's Legal Rights Journal*, 17(1), 2-12.
- Levine, E. (2003). A Position Paper: A Methodological Realignment of the Behavior Treatment Programs for Education and Residential Treatment Centers of The Sheppard Pratt Health System: The Implementation of Positive Behavioral supports Across Programs, The Jefferson School.
- Lewis, T. J, Sugai, G., Colvin, G. (1998). Reducing problem behavior through a school-side system of effective behavioral support: Investigation of a school-wide social skills training program and contextual interventions. *School Psychology Review* 27, 446-459.
- Malian, I. and Love, (1998). Leaving high school: An ongoing transition study. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 30(3), 4-10.
- Martin, J., Marshall, L., and DePry, R. (2001). Participatory decision-making: Innovative practices that increase student self-determination. In Flexer, R., Simmons, T., Luft, P., and Bart, R. (Eds.). *Planning Transitions Across the Life Span*. Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall/Merrill Education
- Medrich, E., Merola, L., Ramer, C. (2000). *A Report to the National School-to-Work Office*, MPR Associates, Inc. 2150 Shattuck Avenue, Suite 800, Berkeley, CA 94704.
- Meisel, S., Henderson, K. Cohen, M., and Leone, P. (2000). *Collaborate to educate: Special education in juvenile correctional facilities*. Retrieved December 30, 2003 from http://www.edjj.org/Publications/pub01_17_00.html.
- Mettetal, G. (2003). Improving teaching through classroom action research, *Essays on Teaching Excellence*. Vol. 14 (7). The Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education, University of Illinois.
- Mintz, J. (Ed) (1995). *The Almanac of Education Choices: Private and Public Learning Alternatives and Homeschooling*. New York: Solomon Press.

- Morley, R. E. 1991 Alternative Education. Dropout prevention research reports, p. 8. Clemson, South Carolina: National Dropout Prevention Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 349 652).
- Morse, A.B., Anderson , A.R., Christenson, S.L., and Lehr , C.A. (February, 2004). Promoting school completion. *Principal Leadership*, 4(6), 9-13.
- National Center for Education Statistics (2001). *Public alternative schools and programs for students at risk of education failure: 2000-01*. Washington, DC. U.S.Department of Education.
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (2001). Setting high educational standards in alternative education. Issue Brief, Employment and Social Services, Washington D.C.
- Needles, K., Dyanarski, M., and Corson, W. (1999). Helping Young People in High Poverty Communities: Lessons from Youth Fair Chance. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
- Neubert, D.A., Moon, M.S., and Grigal, M. (2001, April). Designing alternative options: Postsecondary programs for students with significant disabilities during their final school years. Presentation at the 2001 Council for Exceptional Children Conference. Kansas City, MO (competitively selected).
- Newman, Judith M. (2000, January). Action research: A brief overview [14 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research [On-line Journal]*, 1(1). Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/1-00/1-00newman-e.htm>
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110,115 Stat 1425 (2002).
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (2002). *Alternative learning programs evaluation: 2000-2001*. Raleigh: Author.
- Ogle, D. (1997). Critical Issue: Rethinking learning for students at risk. Naperville, Illinois: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Orfield, G., Losen, D., Wald, J., and Swanson, C. (2004). Losing our future: How minority youth are being left behind by the graduation rate crisis. Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.
- Pratt, J. (1994). *Curriculum planning: A handbook for professionals*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich.
- Quality Counts (January 9, 2003). To close the gap, quality counts. Retrieved September 15, 2004 from <http://www.edweek.org/sreports/qc03/templates/article>
- Quinn, M. M., Rutherford, R. B., Wolford, B. I., Leone, P. E., and Nelson, C. M. (2001). The prevalence of youth with disabilities in juvenile and adult corrections: Analysis of a national survey. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice.
- Quinn, M. M., Osher, D., Hoffman, C. C., and Hanley, T. V., (1999). Safe, drug-free, and effective schools for all students: What works! Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.
- Quinn, M. M., Rutherford, R. B., and Osher, D. M. (1999). Special education in alternative education programs. (ED436054). ERIC Digest. Reston, VA: Eric Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education.
- Quinn, M. M., and Rutherford, R.B. (1998). *Alternative programs for students with social, emotional, and behavioral problems*. Reston, VA: Council for Children with Behavioral Problems.
- Quinn, M. M., and Rutherford, R.B., (1998). *Alternative Programs for Students with Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Problems*. Reston, VA: Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders
- Raywid, M.A. (1999, May). History and issues of alternative schools. *Education Digest*, 64 (9), 47-51.
- Raywid, M.A. (1998). The journey of the alternative schools movement: Where it's been and where it's going. *The High School Magazine*, 6(2), 12-15.
- Raywid, M. A. (1994). Alternative schools: The state of the art. *Educational Leadership*, 26-31.
- Ruef, M.B., Higgins, C., Glaeser, B.J.C., and Patnode, M. (1998). Positive behavioral support: Strategies for teachers. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 34 (1), 21-32.
- Rumberger, R.W. (1995). Dropping out of middle school: A multilevel analysis of students and schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 583-625
- Rutherford, R.B., Jr., and Quinn, M.M. (1999, November/December) Special education in alternative education programs. *The Clearing House*, 73(2), 79-81.
- Ryan, A. (Ed.) (2001). Strengthening the safety net: How schools can help youth with emotional and behavioral needs complete their high school education and prepare for life after school. Burlington, VT: School Research Office under contract from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.
- Sagor, R. (2005). *Action research guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press
- Sinclair, M.F., Christenson, S.L., and Thurlow, M.L. (2005). Promoting school completion of urban secondary youth with emotional or behavioral disabilities. *Exceptional Children*.
- Sinclair, M.F., Christenson, S.L., Lehr , C.A. , and Anderson, A.R. (2003). Facilitating student engagement: Lessons learned from Check and Connect Longitudinal studies . *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 29-42

- Sinclair, M.F., Christenson, S.L., Evelo, D.L., and Hurley, C.M. (1998). Dropout prevention for high risk youth with disabilities: Efficacy of a sustained school engagement procedure. *Exceptional Children*, 65 (1), 7-21.
- Sinclair, M., Hurley, C., Christenson, S., Thurlow, M., and Evelo, D. (2002). Connections that keep kids coming to school. In R. Algozzine and P. Kay (Eds.) *Preventing Problem Behaviors*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Sinclair, M.F., Lam, S.F., Christenson, S.L. and Evelo, D. (1994). Parent-teacher action research in profile. *Equity and Choice*, 10(1), 21-35.
- Sitlington, Patricia L. *Transition education and services for adolescents with disabilities*. 3rd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, c2000.
- Smith, T.E.C., Polloway, E., Patton, J.R., and Dowdy, C.A. (2001). *Teaching students with special needs in inclusive settings (3rd ed)*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Smith, T.E.C., Polloway, E., Patton, J.R., and Dowdy, C.A. (2004). *Teaching students with special needs in inclusive settings (4th ed.)*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Southwest Regional Education Laboratory. Insights...on education policy and practice, Number 6, December 1995, *Alternative Learning Environments*.
- Spergel, I. and Alexander, A. (1993). *National youth gang suppression and intervention program: A school-based model*. [On-line]. Available: <http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/d0012.txt>.
- Sugai, G., and Sprague, J. R. (1999). Effective behavior support: Strengthening school-wide systems through a team-based approach. *Effective School Practices*, 17(4), 23-37.
- Sugai, G., Sprague, J.R., Horner, R.H., and Walker, H.M. (in press). Preventing school violence: The use of office discipline referrals to assess and monitor school wide discipline interventions. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*.
- Taylor-Greene, S., Brown, D., Nelson, L., Longton, J., Gassman, T., Cohen, J., Swartz, J., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., and Hall, S. (1997). School-wide behavioral support: Starting the year off right. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 7, 99-112.
- Todd, A. W., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., and Sprague, J. R. (1999). Effective behavior support: Strengthening school-wide systems through a team-based approach. *Effective School Practices*, 17(4), 23-37.
- Thurlow, M.L., Christenson, S.L., Sinclair, M.F., and Evelo, D.L. (1997, Fall). Wanting the unwanted: Keeping those "out of here" kids in school. *Beyond Behavior*, 8(3), 10-16.
- Tobin, T. and Sprague, J. (2000). Alternative education strategies: Reducing violence in school and community. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 8(3), 177-186.
- Todd, A. W., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Sprague, J.R., Horner, R.H., and Walker, H.M. (in press). Preventing school violence: The use of office discipline referrals to assess and monitor school wide discipline interventions. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2003, October). Deciding to teach them all. *Educational Leadership*, 61 (2), p. 6-11.
- U.S. General Accounting Office (1996). At-Risk and delinquent youth: Multiple federal programs raise efficiency questions. March 1996, Washington, DC.
- U.S. Department of Education. Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000. National Center for Education Statistics. NCES 2000-022
- Vaughn, S., Bos, C., and Schumm, J.S. (2003). *Teaching exceptional, diverse and at-risk students in the general education classroom*. Boston, MA. Allyn and Bacon.
- White, D. and Kochhar-Bryant (2004). *Alternative education*. National Alternative Education Association. Washington D.C.: Hamilton Fish Institute on Schools and Community Violence.

[This page is blank.]