



The Alternative Learning Center (ALC)

A PBIS extension of the classroom

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ALC Mission Statement

The mission of the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) is to provide space where students will reflect upon the behaviors that led to disciplinary consequences, understand alternative behavioral options, and identify improved behavior strategies for the future. Resources and support will be provided at the students' developmental level with the aim of minimizing repeated ALC assignments. This is done in a setting that removes the student from the classroom while minimizing disruption to learning.

Origins of the ALC

The passage of House Bill 318 by the Ohio Legislature significantly changed the landscape of school discipline in Ohio. HB 318 made fundamental changes to the way schools apply consequences for misbehavior:

- Prohibits out-of-school suspensions of K-3 students, unless required by Ohio law.
- Out-of-School Suspensions or Expulsions can occur only for specified severe grounds: guns, knives, making a bomb threat, serious physical injury to a person, serious physical damage to property, to protect the immediate health or safety of the student, classmates, schoolteachers or staff.
- Out-of-School suspensions are limited to 10 days.
- Any in-school suspensions must occur in a "supervised learning environment".
- Whether suspended in or out of school, a student must be given an opportunity to complete any assignments.

A result of HB 318 was the implementation of district-wide Alternative Learning Centers (ALC), formerly known as In-School Suspension. Previously used only in high schools, ALCs are now in place in all Cincinnati Public Schools. ALCs are aligned with the goals of the district's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program and provide the "supervised learning environment" called for in HB 318.

Purpose of the ALC

- ALC can provide a needed "cooling-off" period when a student has had a conflict with a peer or an adult.
- ALC can be used as a replacement for Emergency Removals that are no longer allowed. Students in ALC are not deprived of an educational experience. They can continue to receive academic support while they are excluded from class and school activities.
- ALC provides structure, support, and supervision to students during a time when they would otherwise be outside of the sphere of adult influence and guidance.
- ALC provides a setting where students can work to understand the reason for their misbehavior and identify alternative behaviors for the future.
- Students can receive or be connected with counseling designed to help them change their inappropriate behaviors

- ALC can help to reduce the effects suspensions have on students' attitude toward school and decrease the dropout rate.

Expectations of the ALC

- Full-time, qualified staff person to supervise the ALC and who serves as a supportive resource or mentor for students.
- Clear protocol for student referral to the ALC
- Clear procedure is place to ensure that academic assignments are provided for the ALC facilitator/student and for completed work to be returned to the assigning teacher
- Clear rules and procedures are are posted and expected to be followed
- Access to academic work
- Schedule for time-out and all-day assignments that mixes academic and social-emotional work
- Process for students to reflect on behavior and identify needed improvements
- Provide a rating or grade to reflect the quality of work and time the student spends in ALC; this should be communicated to the student, the assigning teacher, and administration
- Access or connection to individual and group counseling when needed
- Notification to parents of students' ALC assignments
- Data entry for monitoring and decision making

ALC Supervisor Responsibilities

- Review referral to determine why students are assigned to in ALC
- Be encouraging and respectful to students, review the behavior expectations with students, and be consistent with procedures
- Help students with apology letters and organize student ALC folders
- Complete daily behavior sheet for each student
- Ensure that students are working on their assigned work; provide support as needed.
- Inform teachers if a student needs more work
- Have at least one private conversation with each student daily in order to discuss behaviors of concern and reflection activities
- Return the student folder to appropriate teaching staff when the student has finished serving their time in ALC
- Inform administration regarding students who are not complying with instructions

Teacher Responsibilities

- Following all corrective measures preceding an ALC assignment as laid out in the school's PBIS Plan
- Filling out all appropriate referral documents (hard copy, Google Doc, other electronic database)
- Providing the student with a written pass to ALC
- Providing the student with a sufficient amount of academic work to complete in ALC
- Making the appropriate log entry into PowerSchool within 24 hours

- Contacting parent/guardian to inform them of the ALC assignment
- Entering referral data as established in PBIS Plan

Administration Responsibilities

- Creating adequate physical space that is conducive to learning and the other goals of the ALC
- Staffing the ALC with a trained facilitator and providing support for the facilitator
- Processing teacher referrals as quickly as possible, knowing that the CBA allows for the immediate removal from the classroom of students exhibiting violence, force, coercion, threat, harassment, insubordination, or repeated acts of misbehavior—any of which disrupt the educational process
- Follow all procedures described in the school's PBIS Plan in regard to ALC assignments and/or follow-up.
- Notification to parents of students' ALC assignments
- Regular review of ALC data for formative decision making

ALC Responsibilities for Special Education Students

Administration, teachers/teams, Intervention Specialists, ALC facilitators should all work collaboratively to ensure that the following guidelines are followed:

- Maintain a safe environment conducive to learning
- Teach the school's code of discipline to the student
- ALC Instructor should help the student understand the reason why he/she is there and ways to prevent a return visit
- Have IEP reviewed to assess the possible need for adaptive behavior goals/Behavior Intervention Plan or changes needed in those documents, if they already exist
- If a BIP already exists, a copy of it should be given to the ALC Instructor.
- Intervention Specialists should meet with the ALC Instructor to provide information about the student and discuss work that will be sent for completion.
- ALC Instructor should receive work from the students' Intervention Specialist for the student to complete, so the student does not get behind
- The student should be receiving instruction in their Specially Designed Instruction areas