

# Policy, Guidelines, and Procedures for Alternative Education Programs

Alternative Grade 10, 11 and 12

2022

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## Versioning History

This chart provides a summary of revisions made to the final document since publication. The posted document reflects the most recent version.

<b>Date of revisions</b>	<b>Type of revisions made</b>
<i>Policy, Guidelines and Procedures for Alternative Education Programs Alternative Grade 10, 11 and 12 2016</i>	Renewal of approach and programming requirements.
<i>Policy, Guidelines, and Procedures for Alternative Education Programs Alternative Grade 10, 11 and 12 September 2006</i>	Changes to credit requirements for Alternative Education Programs and Alternative Education Adult 12 added.
<i>Policy and Procedures Locally Developed Alternative Education Programs January 1991</i>	Government developed provincial policy, guidelines, and procedures to be used in the approval and registration of alternative education programs.

## Preface

This document, *Policy, Guidelines and Procedures for Alternative Education Programs: Alternative Grade 10, 11 and 12, 2022* is designed to assist school division personnel and schools in the development and implementation of Alternative Education Programs.

Any reference in this document to a board of education or board is deemed to include the conseil scolaire, First Nations schools, independent schools, custody and care schools and post-secondary sites that have been approved by the Ministry of Education to offer Secondary Level courses.

Any reference in this document to Regular Education Programs is deemed to include courses from the four course options: Core Curriculum, Locally Modified Advanced Courses, Locally Modified Basic Courses and Locally Developed Courses of Study.

## Introduction

Education in Saskatchewan promotes the development of responsible and caring people who are equipped to meet the challenges of a complex and rapidly changing world. All students require an approach to education that meets their unique needs and the needs of their communities.

When provincially developed courses do not meet the unique student and community needs, school divisions may provide courses and programs that differ from those that are provincially developed. In this case, school divisions may offer Additional Education Programs. Programs include Alternative Education Programs grades 10, 11, and 12 and Functional Integrated Programs grades 9, 10, 11 and 12. School divisions should have policies and procedures concerning the development and implementation of courses and programs and the enrolment of students in such offerings.

The Minister's authority for approving local development of courses and programs lies within *The Education Act, 1995*.

## Policy

### Policy Statement

Every student has a right to receive instruction appropriate to their age and level of educational achievement. Additional Education Programs, such as Alternative Education Program and Functional Integrated Programs, provide a means for achieving this expectation. School divisions offering Additional Education Programs must develop policies and procedures to ensure student success.

Alternative Education Programs are developed to address the strengths and the needs of students requiring a different option from that provided through the Regular Education.

### Authority

*The Education Act, 1995:*

Subsections 4(1)(f)(g)(h), 86(a)(j), 103(1)(2)(3)(4)(5), 142(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b), 143(1)(a)(b), 168(2)(3), 176(1)(2)(3), 185(1); section 177 and subsection 231(1)(2)(b).

*The Education Regulations, 2015*

Sections 2(1), 30, 31 and 32.

## Intent

Education in Saskatchewan promotes the development of responsible and caring people who are equipped to meet the challenges of a complex and rapidly changing world. All students require an approach to education that meets their unique needs and the needs of their communities.

The intent of this document is to provide guidance to school divisions in developing and implementing policies/procedures for Additional Education Programs: Alternative Education Program. Planning for entrance into this program requires a collaborative team approach, inclusive of student, parent(s)/guardian(s), school and division personnel and when applicable, agency partners, to ensure placement is appropriate and inclusive in nature.

## Student Registration and Reporting

School divisions enroll students in the Student Data System (SDS) with a program type of Alternative Education, Alternative Adult Secondary or Le Programme d'éducation alternative.

Individual course grades for a student enrolled in an approved Alternative Education Program must be reported to the Registrar's Office in the form of percentage grades. All student final marks for the student must be submitted to the Ministry of Education Student Data System. Refer to the Registrar's Handbook for information on submitting data. The student's transcript indicates the completion of an Alternative Grade 10, Alternative Grade 11 or Alternative Grade 12.

## Overview of Education Programs

School divisions make choices to best serve the students in their jurisdiction. Regular Education Programs and Additional Education Programs provide a variety of options for the full range of students attending the province's schools. Within the Regular Education Programs, there are four course options: Core Curriculum, Locally Modified Advanced Courses, Locally Modified Basic Courses and Locally Developed Courses of Study. Within the Additional Education Programs are two options: Alternative Education Programs and Functional Integrated Programs.

The needs of most student can be met through the selection of provincially developed offerings within the Regular Education Program. Implementation of *The Adaptive Dimension* allows teachers to adjust any or all the following variables: learning environment, instruction, assessment and resources. Adjustments to these variables are intended to make learning meaningful and appropriate and support students to achieve curricular outcomes. However, there may be situations where the unique needs of students cannot be met in this way. In this case, school divisions may offer Additional Education Programs.

In partnership with parents, students and professional staff, school divisions determine the specific needs, interests and abilities of students and plan programs and courses of study that address them. Alternative Education Courses (18, 28, 38) exist to meet needs of students that are not able to experience success with provincially developed curricula. Successful completion of a minimum of 24 credits provides a Saskatchewan Grade 12 Transcript of Secondary Level of Achievement-Alternative Education.

*Figure 1: An Overview of Educational Programs* illustrates the range of options available to Saskatchewan school divisions in providing education for secondary students. *Figure 2: Credit Policy*

*for Secondary Education* illustrates the credit requirements for the Regular Education Program, Alternative Education Program and Alternative Education Adult 12 Program.

All students require an approach to education that meets their unique needs. Additional Education Programs, although different from the Regular Education Program, embraces student diversity within the province of Saskatchewan. Registration in and completion of requirements in an Additional Education Program will result in a qualitatively different transcript.

#### **Alternative Education Program**

- Students are enrolled in an Alternative Education Program and successful completion of a minimum of 24 credits provides a Saskatchewan Grade 12 Transcript of Secondary Level Achievement – Alternative Education. To meet the credit requirements for graduation, students must successfully complete 11 credits from the Required Areas of Study and 13 elective courses.
- Career and Work Exploration, Family Studies and Life Skill courses are recommended electives to be considered in an Alternative Education Program. Electives should be based on a holistic understanding of the student and responsive to the individual's strengths and needs. Courses may be tailored to the strengths and needs of the student.
- A student enrolled in an Alternative Education Program may acquire credits from courses within the Regular Education Program but will have at least one Alternative Education course in their profile. Prerequisites that apply in the Regular Education Program remain the same in the Alternative Education Program.

#### **Regular Education Program**

- Students are enrolled in a Regular Education Program and successful completion of a minimum of 24 credits provides a Regular Saskatchewan Grade 12 Transcript of Secondary Level of Achievement.
- A course designated 18, 28 or 38 cannot be used toward credit requirements for Grade 12 Regular Saskatchewan Grade 12 Transcript of Secondary Level Achievement.

#### **Alternative Education Adult 12**

- A student registered and enrolled in an Alternative Education Program Adult 12 will receive a Saskatchewan Grade 12 Transcript of Secondary Level Achievement – Alternative Education. To meet the credit requirements a student must successfully complete five credits at the Grade 12 level and four electives at the 20 or 30 level.

#### **Alternative Education Program and Regular Education Program**

- To meet the credit requirements for graduation of Alternative Education Program or Regular Education Program, students are required to take at least five credits at the Grade 12 level.
- One credit is equivalent to 100 credit hours; a credit hour course should be allocated between 95 and 100 hours of instructional time.

<p>The Adaptive Dimension is designed to assist students to meet the outcomes of all approved curricula, courses, and programs. The Adaptive Dimension for Saskatchewan K-12 Students.</p>	<p><b>Regular Education Programs</b></p>		<p>Designed and approved as individual course options</p>	<p>Core Curriculum 10, 20, 30</p>	<p>100% of core provincial curriculum outcomes.</p>	<p>Students are supported through the following key principles of a needs-based approach: inclusionary philosophies, and beliefs; responsive instruction, interventions and supports; and interprofessional collaboration. <i>Actualizing a Needs-Based Model.</i></p>
			<p>Successful completion of credit requirements provides a</p> <p><b>Regular Saskatchewan Grade 12 Transcript of Secondary Level Achievement</b></p>	<p>Locally Modified Advanced 10A, 20A, 30A</p>	<p>100% of core provincial curriculum outcomes PLUS school division developed advanced outcomes.</p>	
				<p>Locally Modified Basic Course 11, 21, 31</p>	<p>At least 50% of core provincial curriculum outcomes PLUS school division developed outcomes.</p>	
				<p>Locally Developed Courses of Study 10L, 20L, 30L</p>	<p>Contains original outcomes not found in provincially developed curricula and designed to meet local needs that are not met in existing provincial courses.</p>	
	<p><b>Additional Education Programs</b></p>		<p><b>Alternative Education Programs</b></p>	<p>Designed and approved as individual courses.</p> <p>Successful completion of credit requirements provides a</p> <p><b>Saskatchewan Grade 12 Transcript of Secondary Level Achievement – Alternative Education.</b></p>	<p>Alternative Education Courses 18, 28 and 38</p>	
		<p><b>Functional Integrated Programs</b></p>	<p>Designed and approved as a complete program.</p> <p>Transcript indicates the completion of an approved</p> <p><b>Functional Integrated Program.</b></p>	<p>Inclusion and Intervention Plan (Functional Integrated Programs are not described as individual courses)</p>	<p>Areas of focus as referenced in <i>Inclusion and Intervention Guidelines, 2022.</i></p> <p>Important consideration: students registered in this program may participate and engage in outcomes personalized to meet unique needs across various settings in the school.</p>	
<p>Time Allocations and Credit Policy (1.1) section in the <i>Registrar’s Handbook for School Administrators.</i></p>						

Figure 1: An Overview of Education Programs

Areas of Study	Regular Education Program Credits	Alternative Education Program Credits	Alternative Education Adult 12 Credits
English Language Arts	5	5	2
Mathematics	2	2	1
Science	2	1	
Social Studies, History or Native Studies	3	1	
Health Education/Physical Education	1	1	
Arts Education/Practical and Applied Arts	2	1	
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>
Electives	9	13	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>At least five credits must be Grade 12 level</b>		

Figure 2: Credit Policy for Secondary Education in Saskatchewan

## Guidelines

### Rationale for Placement in an Alternative Education Program

Saskatchewan classrooms are diverse learning communities. To provide effective environments for continuous learning, Saskatchewan-based guiding principles of assessment promote individual student success in a fair and culturally inclusive and affirming manner.

Assessment and evaluation are continuous actions that are integral to the teaching and learning process. These actions involve students, parents/caregivers and teachers and are used to communicate consistent, accurate and meaningful information to all stakeholders. The main goal of assessment is to support and enhance student learning while empowering the student to become a responsible lifelong learner.

An Alternative Education Course is designed for students who are not able to attain a passing grade in a Regular Education course despite implementation of *The Adaptive Dimension* to support the student's learning. The decision to register a student in an Alternative Education Program is to be approached with careful consideration.

### Consideration for Placement in an Alternative Education Program

Assessment is a way of understanding a student to make informed decisions about the student. A diagnostic assessment is a detailed evaluation of a student's strengths and needs in several areas, such as cognitive, academic, language, behaviour, emotional and social functioning and supports a comprehensive and holistic approach to planning for a student. The priority in gathering information using several tools from different sources is not only about data collection, but on integration of the findings, interpretation and synthesis of the information. Testing will produce findings; assessment gives meaning to the findings within the context of the student's life.

A **multimethod assessment** involves obtaining information from several sources (the student, parents/guardians, school personnel [e.g., classroom teachers, student support services teachers, administration]; school division professional support personnel [e.g., coordinators, consultants,



psychologists or other division-based staff]; and, may include outside agency personnel) and reviewing student educational records.

This approach uses several assessment techniques and assesses multiple areas. This information supports discussion among the collaborative team regarding the student's current level of functioning across multiple areas (cognitive, language, academic, behavioural, social and interpersonal functioning). Assessment should encompass several tools: informal assessment procedures, norm-referenced measures, observations and interviews.

- Informal assessment procedures must include various assessments which are authentic (student work samples, portfolios), content-based (written and oral assignments, classroom tests) and recommendations aligning with the principles of *The Adaptive Dimension*.
- Norm-referenced measures must be completed by a qualified or certified practitioner; be current, valid and reliable; and inclusive of several assessment techniques with recommended interventions. It is important to note, norm-referenced assessments may indicate impairments for which the effect are at least moderate or prolonged and demonstrate impairments that markedly limit functioning in the conceptual domain (academic, abstract thinking, problem solving) all or substantially all the time.
- Observations of the student in their natural surroundings such as the classroom, community and home should be included.
- Interviewing the student, parents/guardians, teacher and other individuals familiar with the student regarding future are considered.

### Placement and Implications

Alternative Education Programs **are not considered appropriate** for students:

- with mild conceptual limitations or moderate limitations in functioning that do not directly affect academic performance or potential. A student may demonstrate limitations in social, communication, behavioural and independent functioning but able to meet learning outcomes of Regular Education Programs when *The Adaptive Dimension* is applied;
- with specific learning disabilities;
- with external factors impacting educational engagement (e.g., attendance, behaviour, mental health, frequent transitions); and,
- with lack of proficiency in the language of instruction in the school.

The **decision to register a student in an Alternative Education Program** is to be approached with careful consideration. Student(s), parent (s)/guardian(s), school and division personnel, and in some circumstances, outside agency representatives **must understand the rationale and implications of placement.**

**If it has been determined** through comprehensive assessment, current level of performance and collaborative team planning that a student's needs can be best met through placement in an Alternative Education Program, **then all people involved in this decision must understand** the implications of such placement.

Completion of an Alternative Education Grade 12 **may not meet requirements for many post-secondary programs and impact career planning or employment opportunities**. When initially discussing the option of Additional Programs, the collaborative team, should bring into the discussion what the student's plan is after they have completed high school.

### **Program Guidelines and Student Enrollment**

It is expected that school divisions have policies and or procedures regarding:

- programming criteria and placement for registration of a student in an Alternative Education Program;
- planning collaboratively with students, parent(s)/guardian(s) with respect to programming and placement decisions for Alternative Education including explanation as to benefits for student, implications for graduation and transcript record and, post-secondary and future employment limitations;
- ensuring the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) are aware an Alternative Education Program and courses associated with will not meet the credit requirements for a Regular Saskatchewan Grade 12 Transcript of Secondary Level Achievement;
- effective and culturally inclusive and affirming assessment(s) appropriate to the individual student's needs is accessed with respect to appropriate programming and placement; and,
- an evaluation of approved Alternative Education Program.

School divisions are expected to consider, prior to using Alternative Education Courses, as many Regular Education Program courses as possible when planning for a student.

School divisions are expected to be flexible in the design of a student's Alternative Education Program. A student may require adjustment to the pace at which they are able to complete an Alternative Education course. School divisions are expected to be flexible and responsive to facilitate success. A student may require more than one year to complete what is often considered a one-year course. It is the responsibility of local school authorities to determine when course requirements have been completed, as per the Registrar's Handbook.

A signed agreement for students and parent(s)/guardian(s) containing details regarding benefits and implications of enrolling a student in an Alternative Education Program should be developed and reviewed when determining programming and placement.

When enrolling a student in an Alternative Education Program, the school must ensure that the program selection identified for the student on the Student Data System indicates an Alternative Education Program. A student must be in Grade 10, 11 or 12 to be enrolled in the Alternative Education Program.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The process of ensuring every student receives instruction appropriate to their age and level of educational achievement is a shared responsibility among students, parents(s)/guardian(s), the school division and the Ministry of Education.

### School Divisions

School division personnel are responsible for:

- collaborating to identify students who are best served through an Alternative Education Program;
- developing guidelines to meet diverse learning needs;
- increasing understanding among school staff regarding Alternative Education Programs and the development of programs to meet the diverse needs of individual students who are unable to meet the learning outcomes of the Regular Education Program even after *The Adaptive Dimension* has been extensively applied;
- communicating the benefits and implications of being registered in an Alternative Education Program with students, parent(s)/guardian(s) and school personnel;
- consulting with and requesting approval from the Ministry of Education to offer an Alternative Education Program;
- submitting online applications prior to offering an Alternative Education Program;
- requesting access, upon receiving approval, to existing Alternative Education Course(s) or submitting newly developed course(s) for approval;
- developing an Alternative Education Program to meet the student's strengths and needs;
- generating the Locally Developed Report Course Type: Alternative Education Course on the Student Data System to monitor expiration dates of courses; and,
- monitoring, evaluating and updating course(s) and programs as student's needs change.

### Schools

School personnel are responsible for:

- planning and reporting for students who are unable to meet the learning outcomes in the Regular Education Program despite extensive application of *The Adaptive Dimension*, responsive instruction, and interventions;
- communication, collaboration and planning with student, parents/guardian, division personnel and when applicable, agency partners;
- engaging with the student, parent(s)/guardians(s), teachers and others to provide a comprehensive summary of a student's educational experience;
- collaborating with school division personnel in developing the Alternative Education Program according to the guidelines in this document; and,
- provision of supervision of program courses to ensure that the learning outcomes and content, instructional strategies and structure meet the needs of the student.

### Ministry of Education

The responsibility for consultation and approval of program and course submissions from school divisions is shared among several areas within the Ministry of Education. Approval is granted by the Executive Director of the Student Achievement and Supports Branch or designate.

The Ministry of Education is responsible for:

- providing consultative support to school division personnel who are responsible for Alternative Education Programs, including assistance with policy clarification and program approval;
- providing access to the Alternative Education Program Portal and functions within;
- review and approval of requests from school divisions to offer Alternative Education Programs;
- providing confirmation to a school division on the status of an approval;
- collaborating with the Registrar's office when a request for transfer from an Alternative Education Program to a Regular Education Program is submitted;
- responding to inquiries and referring requests to personnel regarding the development of an Alternative Education Program;
- reviewing Alternative Education Course(s) submitted by school divisions, providing feedback and approving or denying course approvals;
- forwarding notification of course approval to the Registrar's Office;
- supporting schools and school divisions with the electronic transfer of student demographic data to enroll a student in a specific school program on the Student Data System;
- registering courses and programs, assigning new course codes when a new course is approved, entering the approval on the Student Data System for that school and/or school division and recording student-specific course registration; and,
- recording student marks for secondary level courses and producing student transcripts.

## Procedures

### Alternative Education Program and Course Approval

Before implementing an Alternative Education Program:

- School divisions must complete the My Program application found online, [www.edonline.sk.ca](http://www.edonline.sk.ca) and attend to the deadline for application, March 31<sup>st</sup>.

When approval is granted:

- school divisions receive automatic access to Alternative Education Courses found on the Alternative Education Program Portal;
- Alternative Education Programs are approved for a five-year period cycle. If an Alternative Education Program is required at the end of the five-year cycle, the school division must resubmit an application for renewal;
- available courses may be found on the Alternative Education Program Portal, through the My Courses tab; and,
- Alternative Education Courses can be used for the duration of the provincial curriculum upon which the Alternative Education Course was developed.

When approval is not granted:

- ministry personnel will provide consultative support to school division personnel who are responsible for Alternative Education Programs, including assistance with policy clarification provide feedback regarding application; and,
- school divisions will complete the My Program application found online, [www.edonline.sk.ca](http://www.edonline.sk.ca) with additional details as required based on feedback provided from initial application.

### **Alternative Education Program Approval Timelines**

Alternative Education Programs are approved for a five-year period cycle. Deadline for submission of Stage 1: Intent to Offer and Initiate and Alternative Education Program is March 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Student Registration**

When enrolling a student in an Alternative Education Program, the school must ensure the program section identified for the student on the Student Data System indicates Alternative Education Program.

Student enrolment, course registration and student mark submissions are forwarded by the school to the Registrar's Office using procedures as per the Registrar's Handbook. Course registration and student mark submission for Alternative Education Programs may be made throughout the school year. Data submissions may occur electronically (XML file transfer or direct entry using the Web application).

### **Transfer Procedures: Alternative Education Program to Regular Program**

In some circumstances, a school/school division proposes a student transfer from an Alternative Education Program to a Regular Program and in such case the school division must complete the online *Transfer Plan: Alternative Education Program to Regular Education Program* at [www.edonline.sk.ca](http://www.edonline.sk.ca).

Alternative Education Program Course work, specifically successful outcome attainment, is recognized when a student transitions to the Regular Education Program. The student should be placed at the appropriate level for successful course completion in the Regular Education Program.

The following principles apply:

- students must meet credit requirements under the Core Curriculum Policy for Secondary Level completion (24 credits);
- required subjects cannot be waived; and,
- a course designed 18, 28 or 38 cannot be used toward the completion of credit requirements for Regular Education Secondary Level.

After consultation with Ministry of Education personnel regarding the proposed transfer plan, the transfer plan is approved/disapproved, notice is provided to the Director of Education or designate and original course submission, with supporting documentation, is retained by ministry and Director of Education.

The Registrar's Office will make the necessary changes on the Student Data System and the student's profile will reflect the approved changes. When a student transfers from the Alternative Education Program to Regular Program and successfully completes Regular Education Program courses, the Alternative Education Course(s) become suppressed on the official student transcript. All courses remain on the student profile.

## Appendix A: Sources of Information

*Renewed Curricula: Understanding Outcomes (2010)*

*The Adaptive Dimension for K-12 Students (2017)*

*Inspiring Success: Building Towards Student Achievement (2018)*

*Treaty Education Outcomes and Indicators (2013)*

*Deepening the Discussion: Gender and Sexual Diversity (2015)*

*Digital Citizenship Education in Saskatchewan Schools (2015)*

*Learning Resources Evaluation Guidelines (2020)*

*Accessing Professional Supports (2017)*

*Inclusive Education (2021)*

*Alternate Format Materials Library*

*Functionally Integrated Programming (2018)*

*Supporting All Learners- Blackboard*

*EAL and Immigration Portal*

*Implementation Supports – Blackboard*