

Alternative Schools and Programs for Public School Students At Risk of Educational Failure: 2007–08

First Look



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First Look

March 2010

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First Look Summary

Introduction

This report provides national estimates on the availability of alternative schools and programs for students at risk of educational failure in public school districts during the 2007–08 school year. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) previously reported results from a similar survey of alternative schools and programs conducted during the 2000–01 school year (Kleiner, Porch, and Farris 2002). The estimates presented in the current report are based on an initial district survey about alternative schools and programs available to students during the 2007–08 school year and a short follow-up survey. The initial survey asked about alternative schools and programs administered by the district and covered many of the same topics included in the 2000–01 survey. The follow-up survey expanded the coverage by asking about students enrolled in the district who attended alternative schools and programs administered by an entity *other* than the district. Both the 2007–08 initial and follow-up surveys instructed district respondents to answer the survey about the 2007–08 school year using the following definition for alternative schools and programs:

Alternative schools and programs are designed to address the needs of students that typically cannot be met in regular schools. The students who attend alternative schools and programs are typically at risk of educational failure (as indicated by poor grades, truancy, disruptive behavior, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with temporary or permanent withdrawal from school).

- **Alternative schools** are usually housed in a separate facility where students are removed from regular schools.
- **Alternative programs** are usually housed within regular schools.

All of the questions in the initial survey concerned district-administered alternative schools and programs. Specifically, the 2007–08 initial survey covered the following:

- Availability and number of alternative schools and programs, including those that operated as charter schools, were located in juvenile detention centers, or used distance education as an instructional mode;
- Availability of alternative schools and programs designed to serve specific types of students at risk of educational failure (e.g., students who had dropped out of regular school, or students who were highly disruptive);
- Grades taught in alternative schools and programs;
- Number of students enrolled in alternative schools and programs and, of those students, number who were receiving special education services;
- Whether any alternative schools and programs were unable to enroll new students because of staffing or space limitations;
- Reasons students enrolled in alternative schools and programs, means by which they were placed, and the district's procedures for handling parental objections to recommended placement in an alternative school or program;
- District's policy on allowing students enrolled in an alternative school or program to return to a regular school and factors important in determining whether a student returned to a regular school;
- Reasons students left alternative schools and programs, and whether the district had a database to track students after they left;

- Whether the district had ongoing professional development or specific requirements for teaching in an alternative school or program;
- Whether a written learning plan stating educational goals was required for students beyond those who were receiving special education services upon entry into alternative schools and programs; and
- Whether the district collaborated with various agencies to provide services to students who attended alternative schools and programs, and whether various services or practices were required to be made routinely available in alternative schools and programs.

In addition to district-administered alternative schools and programs, alternative education for students at risk of educational failure could be provided through alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than the district. To provide a more complete picture of the total number of alternative schools and programs and the total number of students served, a follow-up survey on the use of alternative schools and programs run by entities other than the district was conducted after the initial data collection. Specifically, the follow-up survey asked whether any students enrolled in the district attended an alternative school or program administered by an entity *other* than the district. The survey also requested the number of students enrolled in the district who attended alternative schools or programs administered by an entity other than the district and the type of entity that administered the alternative school or program.

In responding to the initial and the follow-up 2007–08 surveys, district respondents were instructed to include or exclude alternative schools and programs based on certain characteristics. The primary difference in the inclusions and exclusions between the initial and follow-up surveys was that the initial survey only included alternative schools and programs administered by the district, while the follow-up survey only included alternative schools and programs that were not administered by the district. For both the initial and follow-up surveys, if the alternative schools and programs were for at-risk students and were attended by the majority of the students for at least half of their instructional time, they were to be included. However, if the alternative schools or programs exclusively served students receiving special education services or were short-term in-school suspension programs, they were to be excluded. For a complete list of inclusions and exclusions for the initial and follow-up surveys, see the surveys in appendix C.

The NCES in the Institute of Education Sciences conducted these Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) surveys in fall 2008 (initial 2007–08 survey) and spring 2009 (follow-up survey). FRSS is a survey system designed to collect small amounts of issue-oriented data from a nationally representative sample of districts, schools, or teachers with minimal burden on respondents and within a relatively short period of time. The initial survey was mailed to 1,806 public school districts in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The unweighted survey response rate was 95 percent and the weighted response rate was 96 percent. The follow-up survey was mailed to the 1,698 districts that responded to the initial 2007–08 survey; approximately 99 percent of districts that received the follow-up survey completed it. The survey weights were adjusted for questionnaire nonresponse and the data were then weighted to yield national estimates that represent all public school districts in the United States.

Because the purpose of this report is to introduce new NCES data from the 2007–08 initial and follow-up surveys through the presentation of tables containing descriptive information, only selected findings are presented. These findings have been chosen to demonstrate the range of information available from the FRSS study rather than to discuss all of the data collected; they are not meant to emphasize any particular issue. The findings are based on self-reported data from public school districts.

All specific statements of comparisons made in the bullets have been tested for statistical significance at the .05 level using Student's *t*-statistics to ensure that the differences are larger than those that might be expected due to sampling variation. Adjustments for multiple comparisons were not included. Many of the variables examined are related to one another, and complex interactions and relationships have not been explored. Tables of standard error estimates are provided in appendix A. Detailed information about the

survey methodology is provided in appendix B, and the 2007–08 initial and follow-up questionnaires can be found in appendix C.

Selected Findings

This report presents key findings about alternative schools and programs for at-risk students in the 2007–08 school year. These schools and programs may be administered either by the district or by another entity.

Alternative Schools and Programs Administered by the District or by Other Entities

- In the 2007–08 school year, 64 percent of districts reported having at least one alternative school or program for at-risk students that was administered either by the district or by another entity (table 1). Forty percent of districts reported having at least one district-administered alternative school or program, and 35 percent of districts reported using at least one alternative school or program administered by another entity in the 2007–08 school year.
- There were 10,300 district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students in the 2007–08 school year (table 2). Of these schools and programs, 37 percent were housed within a regular school.¹
- Of districts that had students who attended district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, 17 percent used distance education as an instructional delivery mode (table 2).
- Of districts that had students who attended alternative schools and programs for at-risk students administered by entities other than the district, 81 percent reported that some schools and programs were administered by a public entity such as a regional program, consortium, cooperative, or another school district; 26 percent reported that a private entity contracted by the district administered some alternative schools or programs; and 8 percent reported that a 2- or 4-year postsecondary institution in partnership with or contracted by the district administered some alternative schools and programs (table 3).²
- There were 646,500 students enrolled in public school districts attending alternative schools and programs for at-risk students in 2007–08, with 558,300 students attending district-administered alternative schools and programs and 87,200 students attending alternative schools and programs administered by another entity (table 4).

Alternative Schools and Programs Administered by the District

This section presents key findings for the 40 percent of districts with alternative schools and programs for at-risk students administered by the district.

- Most of the districts reported offering alternative schools and programs for students in grades 9 through 12 (88 to 96 percent), with offerings for grades 6 through 8 reported by 41 to 63 percent of districts, and for grades 1 through 5 by 8 to 18 percent of districts (table 5). The grades in which districts reported offering alternative schools and programs varied by district enrollment size. For example, in each of grades 1 through 9, a higher percentage of large districts (ranging from 19 to 94 percent of districts) offered alternative schools and programs than medium districts (from 8 to 88 percent of districts) or small districts (from 5 to 87 percent of districts).³ Similarly, in each of grades 3 through 8, a larger percentage of medium districts (from 12 to 67 percent of districts) offered alternative schools and programs than small districts (from 7 to 54 percent of districts).

¹ Alternative schools and programs can be housed within regular schools or separate facilities. The estimate presented here represents schools and programs housed within regular schools; the remaining alternative schools and programs are housed within separate facilities.

² Percents sum to more than 100 because districts could report more than one administering entity.

³ Large districts have 10,000 or more enrolled students. Medium districts have between 2,500 and 9,999 enrolled students. Small districts have less than 2,500 enrolled students.

- One-third (33 percent) of the districts reported being unable to enroll new students in alternative schools and programs because of staffing or space limitations during the 2007–08 school year (table 6). A higher percentage of districts located in cities (46 percent), suburbs (38 percent), and towns (34 percent) reported being unable to enroll new students in alternative schools and programs because of staffing or space limitations than districts located in rural areas (25 percent). Also, a higher percentage of districts located in cities reported being unable to enroll new students than districts located in towns.
- Districts reported that students could be transferred to an alternative school or program solely for physical attacks or fights (61 percent); the possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or drugs (excluding tobacco) (57 percent); disruptive verbal behavior (57 percent); continual academic failure (57 percent); chronic truancy (53 percent); the possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm (51 percent); and the possession or use of a firearm (42 percent) (table 7).
- Districts reported that the placement of students in alternative schools and programs was based to a moderate or large extent on the recommendations from regular school staff (75 percent); a committee of teachers, administrators, and counselors (71 percent); a district-level administrator (54 percent); a parent request (48 percent); and a student request (41 percent) (table 8).
- Forty-eight percent of the districts reported resolving parental objections to a student’s placement in an alternative school or program through due process, 22 percent reported resolving parental objections by withdrawing the recommendation for placement, and 13 percent reported that the student was placed in an alternative school or program despite parental objections (table 9).
- Sixty-three percent of the districts reported having a policy that allowed all students enrolled in alternative schools or programs to return to regular school, and 36 percent of the districts reported having a policy that allowed some of the students to return to a regular school (table 10). Of those districts that allowed all or some of the students to return to a regular school, among the factors that districts reported as *very important* in determining whether a student was able to return were improved attitude/behavior (78 percent), student motivation to return (77 percent), approval of alternative school or program staff (60 percent), and improved grades (58 percent) (table 11).
- Districts reported the following reasons that explain to a moderate or large extent why students leave alternative schools or programs: graduated with a regular high school diploma (68 percent), returned to a regular school (68 percent), transferred to an adult education or General Educational Development (GED) program (19 percent), graduated with a nonstandard high school diploma or certificate of completion (16 percent), dropped out of school (17 percent), and were transferred to a criminal justice facility (5 percent) (table 12).
- Thirty-five percent of the districts reported having a database to track students after they leave alternative schools and programs (table 13).
- Sixty-three percent of the districts reported requiring a written learning plan upon entry into alternative schools and programs for some or all students beyond those who were receiving special education services (table 14).
- In addition to regular requirements for teaching in alternative schools and programs, 30 percent of districts reported having specific requirements for teaching in alternative schools and programs, and 48 percent reported having professional development requirements (table 14).
- Districts reported having collaborations with various outside agencies to provide services to students in alternative schools and programs. This included 80 percent of the districts reporting collaborations with the criminal justice system, 78 percent with community mental health agencies, 77 percent with child protective services, 69 percent with the police or sheriff’s department, 60 percent with drug and/or alcohol clinics, and 55 percent with crisis intervention centers (table 15).

Administration

Table 1. Percent of districts with alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, by administering entity and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Alternative schools and programs administered either by the district or by another entity	At least one alternative school or program administered solely by the district	At least one alternative school or program administered solely by another entity	Alternative schools and programs administered by both the district and another entity
All public school districts	64	40	35	12
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	54	27	34	7
2,500 to 9,999	86	67	39	20
10,000 or more	96	91	35	31
Community type				
City	94	87	44	37
Suburban	66	43	38	16
Town	77	55	34	12
Rural	56	29	34	8
Region				
Northeast	60	30	43	13
Southeast	90	76	26	11
Central	61	33	40	13
West	60	42	27	9
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent	55	26	39	10
6 to 20 percent	66	42	36	13
21 to 49 percent	70	54	31	15
50 percent or more	73	54	30	11
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent	62	34	42	13
10 to 19 percent	62	38	36	12
20 percent or more	68	49	29	10

NOTE: There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percents do not sum to the total percent of districts with alternative schools and programs administered either by the district or by another entity because districts could report using one or both types of alternative schools and programs.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08" and "Follow-up District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Program Type

Table 2. Total number of district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students and percent of district-administered alternative schools and programs, by type and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Number of alternative schools and programs ¹	Percent of district-administered alternative schools and programs that are a specific type ²			
		Housed within a regular school ³	Located in juvenile detention centers ⁴	Operated as charter schools ⁵	Used distance education as an instructional delivery mode ⁶
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	10,300	37	4	3	17
District enrollment size					
Less than 2,500	3,300	50	2	3	21
2,500 to 9,999	3,600	36	4	2	20
10,000 or more	3,500	25	6	3	12
Community type					
City	2,400	24	6	4	13
Suburban	2,800	39	4	2	13
Town	2,200	35	3	3	22
Rural	2,900	47	3	2	22
Region					
Northeast	1,400	59	2	2	9
Southeast	2,400	35	3	2	18
Central	2,900	40	4	3	27
West	3,700	27	5	4	13
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students					
Less than 6 percent	1,900	58	3	2	22
6 to 20 percent	2,600	39	3	3	22
21 to 49 percent	2,800	32	5	3	17
50 percent or more	3,100	27	4	3	11
Poverty concentration					
Less than 10 percent	2,500	44	2	2	19
10 to 19 percent	4,300	36	5	3	19
20 percent or more	3,600	33	4	2	15

¹Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

²Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year.

³Alternative schools and programs can be housed within regular schools or separate facilities. Percentages presented here represent schools and programs housed within regular schools; the remaining alternative schools and programs are housed within separate facilities.

⁴Juvenile detention centers represent one type of separate facility where alternative schools and programs are located.

⁵Charter schools are a type of administrative structure rather than a location, although charter schools are generally located in a separate facility.

⁶Distance education represents one mode of instructional delivery and can be offered in school, at home, or in another location.

NOTE: There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Education Providers

Table 3. Percent of districts with alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than the district that reported using various entities to provide alternative education to at-risk students, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	A public entity (e.g., regional program, consortium, cooperative, or another school district)	A private entity contracted by the district	2- or 4-year postsecondary institution in partnership with or contracted by the district	Other entities
All public school districts	81	26	8	2
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	82	21	7	2
2,500 to 9,999	80	36	10	1!
10,000 or more	75	37	11	4
Community type				
City	79	35	11	3!
Suburban	83	41	7	1!
Town	81	22	7	‡
Rural	81	20	8	3
Region				
Northeast	70	50	3	3!
Southeast	76	24	6!	9
Central	87	17	13	‡
West	86	14	4	3!
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/ Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent	78	28	9	2!
6 to 20 percent	82	26	9	3!
21 to 49 percent	86	25	9	3!
50 percent or more	86	20	3	1
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent	84	31	8	‡
10 to 19 percent	79	25	10	2
20 percent or more	81	20	5	6

! Interpret data with caution; the coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent.

‡ Reporting standards not met; too few cases for a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 35 percent of districts that reported using alternative schools or programs administered by an entity other than the district during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percents sum to more than 100 because districts could report more than one administering entity.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “Follow-up District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Students Served

Table 4. Total number of students enrolled in public school districts attending alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, number of students enrolled in district-administered alternative schools and programs and the number of those students receiving special education services, and number of students enrolled in public school districts attending alternative schools and programs administered by an entity other than the district, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Total number of students enrolled in public school districts who attend alternative schools and programs administered by the district or another entity	Students enrolled in alternative schools and programs administered solely by the district		Number of students enrolled in a public school district who attend alternative schools and programs administered solely by another entity
		Number of students	Number of students enrolled in alternative schools and programs who receive special education services	
All public school districts	645,500	558,300	90,300	87,200
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	98,200	75,600	12,100	22,700
2,500 to 9,999	181,500	150,500	23,900	31,000
10,000 or more	365,700	332,200	54,300	33,600
Community type				
City	222,600	197,800	32,100	24,800
Suburban	232,500	200,500	32,900	32,000
Town	89,000	77,800	12,400	11,100
Rural	101,400	82,100	12,900	19,300
Region				
Northeast	76,000	56,000	13,000	20,000
Southeast	141,400	125,100	25,200	16,300
Central	150,200	122,300	20,800	27,900
West	277,900	254,900	31,300	23,000
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent	60,000	44,600	7,800	15,400
6 to 20 percent	127,600	106,600	18,500	21,000
21 to 49 percent	175,400	148,500	25,600	26,900
50 percent or more	282,600	258,600	38,400	23,900
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent	140,100	117,200	18,600	22,800
10 to 19 percent	287,400	242,800	40,500	44,600
20 percent or more	217,700	198,100	31,200	19,700

NOTE: There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08" and "Follow-up District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Grades Served

Table 5. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students reporting the grades taught in the alternative schools and programs, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Un-graded
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	1	6	8	10	11	13	18	41	57	63	88	95	94	96	5
District enrollment size															
Less than 2,500	#	4	5	7	7	6	11	28	47	54	87	94	93	95	5
2,500 to 9,999	#	6	8	10	12	15	21	47	62	67	88	96	95	97	4
10,000 or more	3	13	19	22	25	31	33	65	78	81	94	98	97	97	5
Community type															
City	2	12	17	19	23	28	29	56	73	77	94	97	96	97	5
Suburban	1	5	7	10	11	13	16	36	49	56	82	93	93	94	3
Town	#	4	6	7	8	10	14	37	50	56	88	96	96	95	4
Rural	‡	6	7	10	11	11	18	41	62	67	90	95	93	96	6
Region															
Northeast	#	1	1	3	3	6	8	22	42	48	78	96	94	96	3
Southeast	1	9	11	13	15	22	31	71	87	93	99	97	96	97	5
Central	1!	4	5	7	7	6	8	26	40	47	87	94	93	96	5
West	1	8	12	15	17	18	24	43	61	65	87	94	94	94	5
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students															
Less than 6 percent	‡	3	3	6	5	4	9	27	48	56	88	95	93	95	4
6 to 20 percent	#	6	7	7	7	8	10	32	50	53	83	95	94	99	5
21 to 49 percent	1!	7	9	12	15	18	22	51	65	71	89	94	93	94	6
50 percent or more	1	8	14	17	20	27	33	55	69	74	94	96	96	96	4
Poverty concentration															
Less than 10 percent	1!	3	5	5	5	6	7	25	37	42	76	93	95	98	4
10 to 19 percent	1!	7	8	9	10	12	17	36	55	61	91	96	94	95	5
20 percent or more	1	6	10	15	18	20	26	57	74	81	94	95	93	95	4

Rounds to zero.

! Interpret data with caution; the coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent.

‡ Reporting standards not met; too few cases for a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percents sum to more than 100 because districts could report multiple grades.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Enrollment Limitations

Table 6. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that were unable to enroll new students because of staffing or space limitations, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Percent
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	33
District enrollment size	
Less than 2,500	24
2,500 to 9,999	38
10,000 or more	46
Community type	
City	46
Suburban	38
Town	34
Rural	25
Region	
Northeast	30
Southeast	26
Central	35
West	37
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/ Alaska Native students	
Less than 6 percent	25
6 to 20 percent	37
21 to 49 percent	36
50 percent or more	32
Poverty concentration	
Less than 10 percent	35
10 to 19 percent	34
20 percent or more	29

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Reasons for Transfer

Table 7. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, by reported individual reasons that students could be transferred to an alternative school or program and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Possession or use of a firearm	Possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm	Possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or drugs (excluding tobacco)	Arrest or involvement with the criminal justice system	Physical attacks or fights	Disruptive verbal behavior	Chronic truancy	Continual academic failure	Pregnancy/teen parenthood	Mental health needs	Other
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	42	51	57	42	61	57	53	57	31	27	5
District enrollment size											
Less than 2,500	37	42	47	36	57	57	52	58	32	27	3
2,500 to 9,999	45	55	61	46	61	56	55	56	29	25	6
10,000 or more	56	70	75	52	71	62	50	56	35	31	7
Community type											
City	54	66	72	56	73	63	58	56	34	30	5
Suburban	42	49	56	34	56	49	52	59	33	31	4
Town	39	45	50	40	54	51	52	57	31	24	7
Rural	42	52	57	44	64	65	52	56	30	26	3
Region											
Northeast	45	53	50	30	49	45	49	46	16	21	3
Southeast	59	75	76	51	79	72	48	49	19	20	7
Central	27	31	41	32	50	51	57	69	41	35	5
West	44	53	62	52	64	60	55	56	38	26	3
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students											
Less than 6 percent	40	43	49	29	54	57	51	60	32	26	3
6 to 20 percent	37	41	50	37	54	49	52	59	31	31	6
21 to 49 percent	43	61	63	52	69	65	58	56	35	30	4
50 percent or more	51	63	67	53	67	61	51	52	26	19	5
Poverty concentration											
Less than 10 percent	38	40	43	27	41	38	46	57	29	29	4
10 to 19 percent	38	49	59	47	65	63	58	61	37	29	5
20 percent or more	51	61	64	47	69	65	51	52	27	23	4

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percents sum to more than 100 because districts could report multiple reasons students could be transferred to an alternative school or program.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Means for Placement

Table 8. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that reported the placement of a student in alternative schools and programs was based to a moderate or large extent on various means, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Means that influence placement to a moderate or large extent							
	Recommendation of district-level administrator ¹	Recommendation of regular school staff ²	Recommendation of a committee of teachers, administrators, ³ and counselors ³	Student request	Parent request	As a result of Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)	Referral by the criminal justice system	Other
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	54	75	71	41	48	28	23	6
District enrollment size								
Less than 2,500	62	71	70	40	50	32	27	5
2,500 to 9,999	49	79	72	39	46	23	18	5
10,000 or more	43	76	69	47	49	24	26	8
Community type								
City	41	76	70	45	54	25	26	9
Suburban	49	74	75	43	50	24	18	6
Town	60	76	73	49	52	25	25	6
Rural	57	74	67	33	44	32	24	5
Region								
Northeast	50	76	80	39	45	30	20	5
Southeast	49	76	67	17	27	24	19	7
Central	65	77	73	50	61	34	25	6
West	50	71	65	50	52	22	25	5
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students								
Less than 6 percent	67	75	78	41	54	38	26	6
6 to 20 percent	52	78	66	51	53	22	21	5
21 to 49 percent	45	73	66	33	42	25	23	4
50 percent or more	54	73	73	37	43	25	22	7
Poverty concentration								
Less than 10 percent	48	74	77	54	58	26	16	6
10 to 19 percent	58	76	68	40	50	28	28	5
20 percent or more	54	75	69	32	40	28	22	7

¹ Examples of district-level administrators include the Director of Special Education or Director of Alternative Education.

² Examples of regular school staff include teachers, administrators, or counselors.

³ Examples of a committee of teachers, administrators, and counselors include an education management team or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team.

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percentages were derived by summing two categories, moderate extent and large extent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,”

FRSS 96, 2008.

Resolving Parental Objections

Table 9. Percentage distribution of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, by means used to resolve parental objections to student placement in an alternative school or program and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Place the student despite parental objections	Resolve the dispute through due process	Withdraw placement recommendation	Other
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	13	48	22	17
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	12	47	24	17
2,500 to 9,999	14	46	22	18
10,000 or more	14	55	19	12
Community type				
City	14	57	17	13
Suburban	9	46	26	19
Town	11	45	28	16
Rural	17	48	18	17
Region				
Northeast	11	41	22	25
Southeast	26	54	5	15
Central	8	41	33	18
West	10	53	24	13
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent	13	46	22	19
6 to 20 percent	9	38	31	21
21 to 49 percent	14	53	16	16
50 percent or more	17	55	19	9
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent	10	35	34	22
10 to 19 percent	13	51	20	16
20 percent or more	15	54	16	15

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Policy for Returning to Regular School

Table 10. Percentage distribution of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that reported a policy that allows all, some, or no students enrolled to return to a regular school, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Policy allows all students to return to a regular school	Policy allows some students to return to a regular school	Policy allows no students to return to a regular school
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	63	36	1
District enrollment size			
Less than 2,500	60	39	‡
2,500 to 9,999	67	32	1
10,000 or more	66	34	#
Community type			
City	69	30	‡
Suburban	61	38	1!
Town	66	33	‡
Rural	61	38	‡
Region			
Northeast	66	32	‡
Southeast	71	29	‡
Central	53	46	2!
West	67	32	‡
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students			
Less than 6 percent	56	42	‡
6 to 20 percent	61	38	1!
21 to 49 percent	65	34	‡
50 percent or more	73	27	‡
Poverty concentration			
Less than 10 percent	62	35	3!
10 to 19 percent	63	36	‡
20 percent or more	64	36	#

Rounds to zero.

! Interpret data with caution; the coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent.

‡ Reporting standards not met; too few cases for a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Reasons for Returning to Regular School

Table 11. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that allowed some or all students to return to regular schools, by factors reported as very important in determining whether students were able to return to a regular school and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Factors deemed very important in determining whether students were able to return to regular school						
	Improved grades	Improved attitude/behavior	Student motivation to return	Student readiness as measured by a standardized assessment	Availability of space in regular school	Approval of the regular school administrator or counselor	Approval of alternative school/program staff (e.g., teacher, administrator, or counselor)
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	58	78	77	16	4	38	60
District enrollment size							
Less than 2,500	60	77	77	19	4	46	59
2,500 to 9,999	57	81	80	14	4	34	61
10,000 or more	51	74	69	12	4	21	60
Community type							
City	46	73	72	10	4	24	54
Suburban	63	80	78	18	6	38	65
Town	60	76	84	15	2 ¹	38	54
Rural	56	79	74	17	4	42	63
Region							
Northeast	55	84	83	10	4	38	61
Southeast	53	84	71	17	2	38	70
Central	64	80	82	13	5	43	58
West	55	69	75	21	5	33	55
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students							
Less than 6 percent	61	80	83	15	5	44	59
6 to 20 percent	54	75	78	13	3	36	54
21 to 49 percent	55	80	77	17	5	39	66
50 percent or more	61	78	70	20	4	32	62
Poverty concentration							
Less than 10 percent	57	71	81	10	5	37	57
10 to 19 percent	56	77	79	16	4	37	58
20 percent or more	60	84	73	19	3	39	64

¹ Interpret data with caution; the coefficient of variation is greater than 50 percent.

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 99 percent of the 40 percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs during the 2007–08 school year that allow some or all students enrolled in alternative schools and programs to return to a regular school. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Reasons for Leaving

Table 12. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students indicating that students leave alternative schools and programs, by reason cited to a moderate or large extent and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Reasons that explain to a moderate to large extent why students leave alternative schools and programs					
	Returned to regular school	Graduated with a regular high school diploma	Graduated with a nonstandard high school diploma or certificate of completion	Transferred to an adult education or GED ¹ program	Dropped out of school	Were transferred to a criminal justice facility
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	68	68	16	19	17	5
District enrollment size						
Less than 2,500	64	68	17	20	15	5
2,500 to 9,999	71	68	16	17	15	5
10,000 or more	76	69	14	23	28	6
Community type						
City	66	69	13	21	30	8
Suburban	67	74	17	19	12	2
Town	64	72	14	22	20	6
Rural	72	63	18	18	14	5
Region						
Northeast	62	70	13	21	17	6
Southeast	92	46	20	24	15	5
Central	56	80	19	17	19	6
West	67	71	14	18	16	4
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students						
Less than 6 percent	63	73	20	22	17	3
6 to 20 percent	61	75	17	18	15	4
21 to 49 percent	70	63	13	18	19	4
50 percent or more	82	61	16	20	16	10
Poverty concentration						
Less than 10 percent	55	80	14	16	17	5
10 to 19 percent	66	71	20	19	16	3
20 percent or more	80	57	14	22	19	7

¹General Educational Development.

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percentages were derived by summing two categories, moderate extent and large extent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Databases for Tracking

Table 13. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that reported having a database to track students after they leave alternative schools and programs, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Percent
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	35
District enrollment size	
Less than 2,500	32
2,500 to 9,999	36
10,000 or more	40
Community type	
City	41
Suburban	36
Town	33
Rural	33
Region	
Northeast	34
Southeast	38
Central	30
West	37
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/ Alaska Native students	
Less than 6 percent	32
6 to 20 percent	37
21 to 49 percent	35
50 percent or more	35
Poverty concentration	
Less than 10 percent	30
10 to 19 percent	33
20 percent or more	40

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Program Requirements

Table 14. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that reported having various requirements for teaching or educating students in an alternative school or program, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Have specific requirements for teaching in alternative schools and programs in addition to regular teacher requirements	Have professional development requirements for teaching in alternative schools and programs in addition to those required of all teachers	Require a written learning plan upon entry into alternative schools and programs for some or all students beyond those receiving special education services
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	30	48	63
District enrollment size			
Less than 2,500	38	51	64
2,500 to 9,999	24	45	61
10,000 or more	21	43	67
Community type			
City	22	44	61
Suburban	26	47	59
Town	29	51	66
Rural	36	47	65
Region			
Northeast	37	44	63
Southeast	25	45	56
Central	34	52	65
West	25	47	67
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students			
Less than 6 percent	39	44	65
6 to 20 percent	30	49	59
21 to 49 percent	23	51	64
50 percent or more	27	47	66
Poverty concentration			
Less than 10 percent	32	44	61
10 to 19 percent	29	50	66
20 percent or more	30	48	62

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Collaboration

Table 15. Percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that collaborated with various agencies in order to provide services for enrolled students, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Child protective services	Community mental health agency	Community organization ¹	Job placement center	Crisis intervention center	Drug and/or alcohol clinic	Family planning/child care/child placement agency	Health clinic or hospital	Criminal justice system	Parks and recreation department	Police or sheriff's department	Other
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	77	78	46	46	55	60	51	49	80	23	69	6
District enrollment size												
Less than 2,500	75	74	38	41	51	54	49	46	79	16	68	3
2,500 to 9,999	77	80	48	47	55	61	50	51	80	27	69	8
10,000 or more	82	86	66	57	66	76	63	58	87	34	76	11
Community type												
City	79	84	68	58	68	73	65	66	84	38	75	13
Suburban	75	80	46	47	59	64	45	47	75	26	60	7
Town	82	83	53	48	54	60	59	52	88	25	75	7
Rural	73	72	35	40	49	54	46	45	78	17	70	4
Region												
Northeast	72	82	36	50	59	61	42	48	66	22	56	4
Southeast	74	84	41	33	46	52	40	46	82	23	69	8
Central	78	71	46	52	55	62	56	47	81	23	69	5
West	80	78	54	46	59	63	60	54	85	24	77	8
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students												
Less than 6 percent	71	73	32	45	53	59	46	43	75	18	66	3
6 to 20 percent	79	79	46	45	55	60	49	49	79	23	66	6
21 to 49 percent	77	77	45	43	55	57	53	51	84	20	74	6
50 percent or more	80	84	61	50	55	64	59	55	83	32	73	12
Poverty concentration												
Less than 10 percent	77	78	46	46	55	60	51	49	80	23	69	6
10 to 19 percent	75	74	38	41	51	54	49	46	79	16	68	3
20 percent or more	77	80	48	47	55	61	50	51	80	27	69	8

¹Examples include Boys & Girls Clubs, United Way, Lion's Clubs.

NOTE: Percentages are based on the 40 percent of districts that reported at least one district-administered alternative school or program during the 2007–08 school year. There were a small number of cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Poverty estimates for school districts were based on Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau. Percents sum to more than 100 because districts could report collaborations with multiple agencies.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

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Kleiner, B., Porch, R., and Farris, E. (2002). *Public Alternative Schools and Programs for Students At Risk of Educational Failure: 2000–01* (NCES 2002–004). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

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Appendix A
Standard Error Tables

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Administration

Table 1a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, by administering entity and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Alternative schools and programs administered either by the district or by another entity	At least one alternative school or program administered solely by the district	At least one alternative school or program administered solely by another entity	Alternative schools and programs administered by both the district and another entity
All public school districts	1.6	1.1	1.6	0.7
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	2.2	1.5	2.1	0.8
2,500 to 9,999	1.1	1.6	1.6	1.5
10,000 or more	0.9	1.1	2.0	2.0
Community type				
City	1.5	2.4	3.4	3.5
Suburban	2.8	2.3	2.8	1.7
Rural	3.1	3.1	2.9	1.8
Town	2.4	1.8	2.3	1.0
Region				
Northeast	3.2	2.4	3.0	1.8
Southeast	2.6	3.2	3.1	1.8
Central	3.1	2.2	3.1	1.5
West	3.1	2.5	3.0	1.1
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent	3.5	2.2	2.9	1.4
6 to 20 percent	2.9	2.5	2.7	1.2
21 to 49 percent	3.4	3.6	2.9	1.8
50 percent or more	2.7	3.4	2.4	1.3
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent	2.4	2.0	2.5	1.4
10 to 19 percent	2.3	2.0	2.2	1.0
20 percent or more	2.6	2.8	2.4	1.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08” and “Follow-up District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Program Type

Table 2a. Standard errors for the total number of district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students and percent of district-administered alternative schools and programs, by type and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Number of alternative schools and programs	Percent district-administered alternative schools and programs that are a specific type			
		Housed within a regular school	Located in juvenile detention centers	Operated as charter schools	Used distance education as an instructional delivery mode
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	267.9	1.3	0.4	0.4	1.1
District enrollment size					
Less than 2,500	220.1	3.0	1.0	1	2.8
2,500 to 9,999	130.4	1.8	0.6	0.7	1.6
10,000 or more	79.5	1.7	0.6	0.4	0.9
Community type					
City	110.5	2.0	0.8	0.7	1.7
Suburban	125.8	2.3	0.7	0.5	1.1
Town	173.7	2.9	0.8	1.1	3.1
Rural	183.7	2.9	1.1	1	2.5
Region					
Northeast	124.9	3.1	0.8	0.8	2.3
Southeast	137.8	2.6	0.4	0.4	2.0
Central	189.6	2.4	0.7	1	3.0
West	199.9	2.1	0.9	0.8	1.5
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students					
Less than 6 percent	162.6	3.1	0.9	0.9	3.7
6 to 20 percent	211.8	3.0	0.9	0.9	2.5
21 to 49 percent	180.2	2.6	1.1	0.9	1.9
50 percent or more	166.4	2.1	0.6	0.6	1.5
Poverty concentration					
Less than 10 percent	180.5	2.5	0.6	0.9	2.0
10 to 19 percent	203.5	1.8	0.7	0.7	1.9
20 percent or more	202.6	2.5	0.7	0.7	1.8

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Education Providers

Table 3a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than the district that reported using various entities to provide alternative education to at-risk students, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	A public entity (e.g., regional program, consortium, cooperative, or another school district)	A private entity contracted by the district	2- or 4-year postsecondary institution in partnership with or contracted by the district	Other entities
All public school districts	1.5	1.8	1.3	0.7
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	2.0	2.5	1.8	1.0
2,500 to 9,999	2.6	2.6	1.7	0.6
10,000 or more	3.5	4.1	2.2	1.4
Community type				
City	3.6	5.0	3.1	1.8
Suburban	3.0	3.7	1.6	0.9
Town	3.5	3.8	2.1	†
Rural	2.7	3.0	2.1	1.3
Region				
Northeast	3.7	4.8	0.9	2.1
Southeast	5.3	6.1	2.8	3.5
Central	2.5	2.3	2.8	†
West	2.8	2.6	1.6	1.9
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/ Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent	3.4	3.2	2.3	1.3
6 to 20 percent	3.1	3.2	2.7	1.7
21 to 49 percent	2.8	4.2	2.4	1.4
50 percent or more	2.4	3.4	1.1	0.5
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent	2.8	3.7	2.3	†
10 to 19 percent	2.2	2.6	1.9	0.9
20 percent or more	3.2	4.1	2.1	2.6

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "Follow-up District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Students Served

Table 4a. Standard errors for the total number of students enrolled in public school districts attending district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, number of students enrolled in district-administered alternative schools and programs and the number of those students receiving special education services, and number of students enrolled in public school districts attending alternative schools and programs administered by an entity other than the district, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Total number of students enrolled in public school districts who attend alternative schools and programs administered by the district or another entity	Students enrolled in alternative schools and programs administered solely by the district		Number of students enrolled in a public school district who attend alternative schools and programs administered solely by another entity
		Number of students	Number of students enrolled in alternative schools and programs who receive special education services	
All public school districts	15,183.3	13,605.2	3,100.8	4,998.6
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	6,998.5	7,524.2	1,893.1	2,160.1
2,500 to 9,999	6,406.3	5,676.2	1,425.7	3,162.5
10,000 or more	11,847.7	9,803.0	1,993.7	3,211.7
Community type				
City	7,241.6	6,424.6	1,617.5	3,206.6
Suburban	12,622.3	11,705.8	2,000.6	2,928.2
Town	6,603.7	6,464.5	1,476.5	1,387.1
Rural	7,813.9	7,676.1	1,343.5	2,231.3
Region				
Northeast	7,697.7	6,959.5	1,413.0	1,823.0
Southeast	6,592.3	5,807.8	1,241.5	1,983.8
Central	8,714.7	7,773.4	1,819.7	3,227.8
West	11,363.8	10,552.9	2,097.7	2,522.0
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent	6,377.1	5,860.4	1,071.3	1,486.3
6 to 20 percent	9,500.9	8,824.3	2,293.2	2,543.8
21 to 49 percent	12,113.3	10,517.5	2,006.0	3,523.6
50 percent or more	11,470.0	10,785.2	1,839.8	2,386.2
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent	9,156.1	8,380.1	1,739.1	2,218.7
10 to 19 percent	14,076.0	13,292.7	2,313.4	3,147.4
20 percent or more	11,105.2	10,679.6	2,192.4	2,769.9

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08" and "Follow-up District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Grades Served

Table 5a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students reporting the grades taught in the alternative schools and programs, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Un-graded
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	0.2	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.3	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.7
District enrollment size															
Less than 2,500	†	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.5	2.3	3.2	3.2	3.0	2.6	1.9	2.3	1.7	1.3
2,500 to 9,999	†	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.5	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8
10,000 or more	0.8	1.5	2.0	1.8	2.5	2.6	2.4	1.9	2.4	2.1	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.8
Community type															
City	0.6	2.2	2.6	2.6	3.1	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.4	2.9	1.5	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.4
Suburban	0.3	0.9	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.8	2.8	3.2	3.1	2.4	1.6	1.7	1.5	0.9
Town	†	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.8	2.2	3.7	4.1	4.1	2.7	2.2	2.2	2.3	1.4
Rural	†	1.6	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.5	4.0	3.5	3.6	2.5	1.8	2.0	1.6	1.4
Region															
Northeast	†	0.4	0.5	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.9	3.2	4.8	4.9	4.0	1.5	2.7	1.8	1.5
Southeast	0.5	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.8	3.0	3.5	2.3	1.9	0.8	1.2	1.5	1.3	1.2
Central	0.6	1.1	1.3	2.0	2.0	1.4	1.8	3.1	4.0	4.1	2.8	2.3	2.5	1.9	1.4
West	0.3	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.2	3.1	3.7	3.9	3.5	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students															
Less than 6 percent	†	1.0	1.1	2.3	2.2	1.1	2.0	3.9	4.5	4.3	3.8	2.3	2.7	2.5	1.3
6 to 20 percent	†	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.9	3.0	3.1	3.1	2.7	2.0	1.9	0.6	1.3
21 to 49 percent	0.4	1.4	1.9	2.0	2.4	2.5	2.9	3.9	3.5	3.0	2.3	2.0	2.1	2.1	1.7
50 percent or more	0.3	1.7	2.1	2.2	2.6	3.0	3.7	4.1	3.9	3.2	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3
Poverty concentration															
Less than 10 percent	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	2.5	3.0	3.1	2.8	2.0	1.8	0.9	1.3
10 to 19 percent	0.3	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.8	2.5	2.8	2.9	1.8	1.4	1.6	1.4	1.1
20 percent or more	0.3	1.3	1.7	2.2	2.4	2.2	2.5	3.4	3.0	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.8	2.0	1.4

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Enrollment Limitations

Table 6a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that were unable to enroll new students because of staffing or space limitations, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Percent
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	1.5
District enrollment size	
Less than 2,500	2.7
2,500 to 9,999	2.1
10,000 or more	2.1
Community type	
City	3.2
Suburban	3.0
Town	3.4
Rural	3.0
Region	
Northeast	3.6
Southeast	3.1
Central	3.1
West	2.8
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/ Alaska Native students	
Less than 6 percent	4.1
6 to 20 percent	3.3
21 to 49 percent	3.1
50 percent or more	2.9
Poverty concentration	
Less than 10 percent	2.8
10 to 19 percent	2.5
20 percent or more	2.6

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Reasons for Transfer

Table 7a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, by reported individual reasons that students could be transferred to an alternative school or program and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Possession or use of a firearm	Possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm	Possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or drugs (excluding tobacco)	Arrest or involvement with the criminal justice system	Physical attacks or fights	Disruptive verbal behavior	Chronic truancy	Continual academic failure	Pregnancy/teen parenthood	Mental health needs	Other
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.9	0.6
District enrollment size											
Less than 2,500	4.1	4.2	3.9	3.1	3.6	3.9	4.2	3.4	3.3	3.6	0.9
2,500 to 9,999	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.7	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.1
10,000 or more	1.9	1.7	1.6	2.4	1.7	1.8	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	1.0
Community type											
City	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.3	3.0	3.2	3.3	1.4
Suburban	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.4	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2	2.8	2.9	1.1
Town	3.9	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.3	4.1	3.5	3.6	1.7
Rural	4.6	4.7	3.8	3.2	3.7	3.9	4.6	3.7	3.8	4.0	0.9
Region											
Northeast	5.2	5.3	5.2	4.3	5.3	5.1	5.4	4.0	3.1	4.0	1.4
Southeast	3.5	2.7	2.8	3.3	2.8	3.0	3.7	3.6	2.5	2.8	1.8
Central	3.6	3.5	2.9	3.3	3.0	3.5	3.6	2.9	3.6	4.0	1.1
West	3.6	3.9	3.2	3.6	3.2	3.6	4.0	3.6	3.3	3.2	0.8
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students											
Less than 6 percent	5.3	5.3	5.3	4.8	5.4	5.4	5.7	3.7	3.9	4.7	1.2
6 to 20 percent	3.3	3.2	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.2	3.2	3.3	1.4
21 to 49 percent	3.6	4.1	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.0	4.2	2.9	3.4	3.5	1.2
50 percent or more	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.4	2.9	3.2	4.3	3.9	3.3	3.2	1.4
Poverty concentration											
Less than 10 percent	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.2	2.9	3.2	1.0
10 to 19 percent	3.1	3.5	3.0	2.9	2.8	3.1	3.3	2.7	3.0	2.8	1.0
20 percent or more	3.0	3.1	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.3	4.2	3.9	3.3	3.6	1.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Means for Placement

Table 8a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that reported the placement of a student in alternative schools and programs was based to a moderate or large extent on various means, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Means that influence placement to moderate or large extent							
	Recommendation of district-level administrator	Recommendation of regular school staff	Recommendation of a committee of teachers, administrators, and counselors	Student request	Parent request	As a result of Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)	Referral by the criminal justice system	Other
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.8	2.0	1.5	0.9
District enrollment size								
Less than 2,500	4.0	3.5	3.5	3.0	3.3	3.7	2.8	1.6
2,500 to 9,999	2.0	1.6	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.2	1.8	1.3
10,000 or more	2.6	2.0	2.4	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.5	1.6
Community type								
City	3.3	2.5	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.1
Suburban	2.9	2.7	2.5	3.1	3.0	2.5	2.3	1.4
Town	4.2	3.8	3.1	3.7	4.2	2.9	3.4	1.8
Rural	3.4	4.0	3.7	3.0	3.1	3.9	3.3	1.5
Region								
Northeast	5.3	4.6	3.5	4.5	4.6	4.1	3.4	2.3
Southeast	3.4	3.0	3.2	2.1	3.1	3.4	3.2	2.1
Central	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	1.6
West	3.9	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.7	2.9	2.9	1.2
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students								
Less than 6 percent	3.8	4.6	3.1	4.5	4.1	4.1	3.8	2.0
6 to 20 percent	3.7	2.8	3.5	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.5	1.4
21 to 49 percent	3.2	3.3	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.0	2.7	1.3
50 percent or more	3.8	3.1	3.0	2.9	4.0	3.1	2.7	1.6
Poverty concentration								
Less than 10 percent	3.5	3.2	3.0	3.6	3.4	3.6	2.5	1.3
10 to 19 percent	3.2	2.2	3.1	2.5	2.6	3.4	2.5	1.3
20 percent or more	3.3	3.1	3.6	3.6	4.0	2.9	2.8	1.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Resolving Parental Objections

Table 9a. Standard errors for the percentage distribution of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students, by means used to resolve parental objections to student placement in an alternative school or program and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Place the student despite parental objections	Resolve the dispute through due process	Withdraw placement recommendation	Other
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	1.3	1.7	1.5	1.5
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	2.2	3.1	2.8	2.8
2,500 to 9,999	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.6
10,000 or more	1.2	2.4	1.5	1.5
Community type				
City	2.2	3.3	2.6	2.2
Suburban	1.8	2.6	2.7	2.4
Town	2.3	3.6	3.5	2.6
Rural	2.5	3.5	3.0	3.0
Region				
Northeast	2.6	4.7	3.9	4.1
Southeast	3.0	3.5	1.6	2.1
Central	2.1	3.5	3.2	3.1
West	2.1	3.4	2.7	2.3
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent	3.2	4.2	3.1	3.9
6 to 20 percent	1.8	3.9	3.4	2.9
21 to 49 percent	2.7	3.3	2.5	2.4
50 percent or more	2.5	3.9	3.2	2.2
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent	2.7	3.2	2.8	2.5
10 to 19 percent	1.9	2.8	2.9	1.9
20 percent or more	1.9	3.1	2.6	2.6

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Policy for Returning to Regular School

Table 10a. Standard errors for the percentage distribution of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that reported a policy that allows all, some, or no students enrolled to return to a regular school, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Policy allows all students to return to a regular school	Policy allows some students to return to a regular school	Policy allows no students to return to a regular school
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	1.9	1.9	0.4
District enrollment size			
Less than 2,500	3.6	3.6	†
2,500 to 9,999	1.8	1.8	0.4
10,000 or more	2.5	2.6	†
Community type			
City	3.1	3.2	†
Suburban	2.9	3.0	0.7
Town	3.6	3.5	†
Rural	3.5	3.4	†
Region			
Northeast	4.4	4.4	†
Southeast	3.2	3.2	†
Central	4.2	4.3	1.2
West	3.2	3.2	†
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students			
Less than 6 percent	4.6	4.5	†
6 to 20 percent	3.3	3.4	0.5
21 to 49 percent	3.1	3.1	†
50 percent or more	3.7	3.7	†
Poverty concentration			
Less than 10 percent	4.1	4.0	1.5
10 to 19 percent	2.4	2.3	†
20 percent or more	3.4	3.4	†

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Reasons for Returning to Regular School

Table 11a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that allowed some or all students to return to regular schools, by factors reported as very important in determining whether students were able to return to a regular school and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Factors deemed very important in determining whether students were able to return to regular school						
	Improved grades	Improved attitude/behavior	Student motivation to return	Student readiness as measured by a standardized assessment	Availability of space in regular school	Approval of the regular school administrator or counselor	Approval of alternative school/program staff (e.g., teacher, administrator, or counselor)
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	2.0	1.8	1.7	1.5	0.7	1.8	2.0
District enrollment size							
Less than 2,500	3.6	3.4	3.1	2.6	1.2	3.4	3.9
2,500 to 9,999	2.5	2.0	2.0	1.8	1.0	1.8	1.7
10,000 or more	1.9	2.4	1.9	1.5	0.9	1.8	2.2
Community type							
City	3.3	3.2	3.1	2.0	1.1	3.4	3.6
Suburban	3.5	3.1	2.6	2.4	1.4	2.8	2.6
Town	3.5	3.0	2.7	3.2	1.1	4.0	4.2
Rural	3.4	3.0	3.0	2.7	1.4	3.5	3.9
Region							
Northeast	4.0	4.0	3.7	2.5	1.6	5.0	5.2
Southeast	3.7	2.7	3.1	2.5	0.7	3.2	3.2
Central	3.1	2.7	2.8	2.4	1.5	4.0	3.8
West	3.5	3.7	2.7	3.0	1.4	2.8	3.3
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students							
Less than 6 percent	3.9	3.4	3.1	3.7	1.7	5.2	5.4
6 to 20 percent	3.6	3.2	3.0	2.6	1.0	3.5	3.6
21 to 49 percent	2.9	3.2	3.0	2.6	1.8	3.4	3.2
50 percent or more	3.4	3.6	3.2	3.3	0.9	3.6	3.5
Poverty concentration							
Less than 10 percent	3.4	3.3	2.9	2.3	1.5	3.5	3.7
10 to 19 percent	3.2	2.9	2.4	2.1	1.2	2.9	3.2
20 percent or more	3.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	1.2	3.3	3.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Reasons for Leaving

Table 12a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students indicating that students leave alternative schools and programs, by reason cited to a moderate or large extent and district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Reasons that explain to a moderate to large extent why students leave alternative schools and programs					
	Returned to regular school	Graduated with a regular high school diploma	Graduated with a nonstandard high school diploma or certificate of completion	Transferred to an adult education or GED program	Dropped out of school	Were transferred to a criminal justice facility
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.7	1.5	0.8
District enrollment size						
Less than 2,500	3.8	3.2	2.7	3.2	2.7	1.4
2,500 to 9,999	1.5	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	0.9
10,000 or more	1.7	2.4	1.8	2.3	2.4	0.7
Community type						
City	3.1	3.2	2.2	3.1	3.0	1.5
Suburban	2.5	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.0	0.8
Town	4.0	3.7	2.4	3.0	3.5	1.8
Rural	4.0	3.4	2.7	2.9	2.5	1.4
Region						
Northeast	4.0	4.5	3.0	4.9	4.1	1.5
Southeast	1.9	3.4	3.0	3.1	2.3	1.3
Central	4.1	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.0
West	3.0	3.3	2.0	2.2	2.3	1.1
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students						
Less than 6 percent	4.9	4.2	3.5	4.3	3.1	1.3
6 to 20 percent	3.3	2.8	2.9	2.5	2.6	1.3
21 to 49 percent	3.4	3.4	2.3	2.8	2.3	1.1
50 percent or more	3.2	3.1	2.4	3.1	2.6	2.6
Poverty concentration						
Less than 10 percent	3.5	2.8	2.6	3.1	2.8	1.5
10 to 19 percent	2.9	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.0	0.8
20 percent or more	2.4	3.2	2.1	3.2	2.5	1.6

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Databases for Tracking

Table 13a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that reported having a database to track students after they leave alternative schools and programs, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Percent
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	1.8
District enrollment size	
Less than 2,500	3.4
2,500 to 9,999	2.0
10,000 or more	2.0
Community type	
City	3.4
Suburban	2.7
Town	3.9
Rural	3.2
Region	
Northeast	3.8
Southeast	3.7
Central	3.4
West	3.3
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/ Alaska Native students	
Less than 6 percent	3.8
6 to 20 percent	3.1
21 to 49 percent	3.5
50 percent or more	3.4
Poverty concentration	
Less than 10 percent	2.9
10 to 19 percent	2.9
20 percent or more	3.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Program Requirements

Table 14a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that reported having various requirements for teaching or educating students in an alternative school or program, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Have specific requirements for teaching in alternative schools and programs in addition to regular teacher requirements	Have professional development requirements for teaching in alternative schools and programs in addition to those required of all teachers	Require a written learning plan upon entry into alternative schools and programs for some or all students beyond those receiving special education services
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	1.8	1.9	1.4
District enrollment size			
Less than 2,500	3.5	3.6	2.4
2,500 to 9,999	1.8	2.3	2.3
10,000 or more	2.0	2.3	2.0
Community type			
City	3.2	3.1	3.3
Suburban	2.5	3.1	3.2
Town	3.8	3.7	3.8
Rural	3.2	3.9	2.9
Region			
Northeast	4.7	5.4	4.0
Southeast	3.3	3.5	3.9
Central	4.6	3.9	3.4
West	2.9	3.5	2.7
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students			
Less than 6 percent	4.5	4.6	3.7
6 to 20 percent	3.5	3.9	3.1
21 to 49 percent	2.9	3.7	3.1
50 percent or more	3.4	3.3	3.8
Poverty concentration			
Less than 10 percent	3.6	3.5	3.5
10 to 19 percent	2.8	3.5	3.0
20 percent or more	3.2	2.8	3.1

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

Collaboration

Table 15a. Standard errors for the percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs for at-risk students that collaborated with various agencies in order to provide services for enrolled students, by district characteristics: School year 2007–08

District characteristic	Child protective services	Community mental health agency	Community organization	Job placement center	Crisis intervention center	Drug and/or alcohol clinic	Family planning/child care/child placement agency	Health clinic or hospital	Criminal justice system	Parks and recreation department	Police or sheriff's department	Other
All public school districts with district-administered alternative schools or programs	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.1	1.8	1.7	2.1	2.0	1.6	1.8	1.9	0.7
District enrollment size												
Less than 2,500	3.5	3.6	3.6	4.1	3.5	3.1	3.9	3.7	3.1	3.6	3.8	1.0
2,500 to 9,999	1.6	1.5	2.2	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.5	2.5	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.2
10,000 or more	1.6	1.7	2.1	2.1	1.6	2.3	2.4	2.0	1.3	2.2	1.5	1.3
Community type												
City	2.4	2.6	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.0	3.3	2.8	2.5	2.9	3.0	2.2
Suburban	2.9	2.2	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.0	3.3	3.3	3.3	2.6	3.4	1.3
Town	2.9	3.2	4.6	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.3	3.9	2.3	4.2	3.1	1.7
Rural	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.8	3.2	3.2	2.3	3.7	1.0
Region												
Northeast	4.5	3.7	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.3	5.4	5.5	4.5	4.1	4.4	1.3
Southeast	3.0	2.4	3.3	2.9	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.0	3.3	3.2	1.6
Central	3.9	3.6	3.7	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	3.2	3.3	3.3	1.0
West	2.9	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.1	2.9	2.9	3.5	2.2	2.9	2.7	1.5
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students												
Less than 6 percent	4.5	3.6	4.0	4.8	4.4	4.3	5.1	4.7	4.4	3.8	4.2	1.0
6 to 20 percent	3.1	3.0	3.4	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.2	2.5	3.0	3.3	1.3
21 to 49 percent	3.6	4.2	3.6	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.7	3.4	2.3	3.1	3.0	1.4
50 percent or more	2.8	2.7	3.3	4.2	4.6	3.9	3.3	3.7	2.5	3.0	3.3	2.1
Poverty concentration												
Less than 10 percent	3.4	3.8	3.9	3.8	4.2	4.0	3.6	4.1	3.2	3.4	3.6	1.2
10 to 19 percent	3.3	2.9	3.1	3.7	2.9	3.0	3.6	2.9	2.9	2.4	3.2	1.2
20 percent or more	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.3	3.0	3.3	3.6	2.6	2.6	2.9	1.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08," FRSS 96, 2008.

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Appendix B
Technical Notes

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Technical Notes

Fast Response Survey System

The Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) was established in 1975 by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education. FRSS is designed to collect issue-oriented data within a relatively short time frame. FRSS collects data from state education agencies, local education agencies, public and private elementary and secondary schools, public school teachers, and public libraries. To ensure minimal burden on respondents, the surveys are generally limited to three pages of questions, with a response burden of about 30 minutes per respondent. Sample sizes are relatively small (usually about 1,200 to 1,800 respondents per survey) so that data collection can be completed quickly. Data are weighted to produce national estimates of the sampled education sector. The sample size permits limited breakouts by classification variables. However, as the number of categories within the classification variables increases, the sample size within categories decreases, which results in larger sampling errors for the breakouts by classification variables.

Sample Design

The sample for the FRSS *District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08* (referred to hereafter as the initial 2007–08 survey) consisted of 1,806 public school districts in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The nationally representative sample was selected from the 2005–06 NCES Common Core of Data (CCD) Local Education Agency (School District) Universe file, which was the most current file available at the time of selection. The sampling frame included 13,799 regular public school districts. For purposes of this study, “regular” school districts included any local school district that was not a component of a supervisory union (i.e., Education Agency type 1 on the CCD) or was a local school district component of a supervisory union sharing a superintendent and administrative services with other local school districts (i.e., Education Agency type 2 on the CCD). Excluded from the sampling frame were districts in the outlying U.S. territories and districts with no enrollments or missing enrollments.

The school district sampling frame was stratified by the presence or absence of alternative schools in the CCD file and whether or not the district serves only elementary grades. Within each of the four categories created by this cross-classification, the sample was allocated to size strata in rough proportion to the aggregate square root of the enrollment in the stratum. Districts in the sampling frame were then sorted by metropolitan status⁴ and region to induce additional implicit stratification. Within each primary stratum, districts were selected systematically and with equal probabilities.

In addition to district-administered alternative schools and programs, alternative education for students at risk of educational failure could be provided through alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than the district. To provide a more complete picture of the total number of alternative schools and programs and the total number of students served, a follow-up survey on the use of alternative schools and programs run by entities other than the district was conducted after the initial data collection. The sample for the follow-up survey consisted of all eligible districts that responded to the initial 2007–08 survey (1,698).

⁴ The variable Metropolitan status, based on the 2005–06 CCD variable MSC05, was used in sampling. Estimates presented by Community type in this report are based on the urban-centric district locale variable discussed further in the Definitions of Analysis Variables section of this report.

Data Collection and Response Rates

Questionnaires and cover letters for the initial study were mailed to the superintendent of each sampled school district in August 2008. The letter introduced the study and requested that the questionnaire be completed by the person most knowledgeable about alternative schools and programs in the district for students at risk of educational failure. Respondents were offered the option of completing the survey via the Web. Telephone follow-up for survey nonresponse and data clarification was initiated in September 2008 and completed in January 2009.

Questionnaires and cover letters for the follow-up study were mailed in April 2009 to the respondents who completed the initial 2007–08 survey. A Web completion option was not offered for the follow-up survey. Telephone follow-up for survey nonresponse and data clarification was initiated in May 2009 and completed in August 2009.

Of the 1,806 districts in the sample, 9 districts were found to be ineligible for the survey because they had merged with another district and 1 additional district was found to be ineligible because it only served students who received special education services (i.e., it was not a regular school district). This left a total of 1,796 eligible districts in the sample. Completed questionnaires for the initial 2007–08 survey were received from 1,698 districts, or 95 percent of the eligible districts (table B-1). Of the districts that completed the initial 2007–08 survey, 37 percent completed it via the Web, 39 percent completed it by mail, 13 percent completed it by fax, and 11 percent completed it by telephone. The weighted response rate was 96 percent. For the follow-up survey, completed questionnaires were received from 1,679 districts, or 99 percent of the districts that responded to the initial 2007–08 survey. Of the districts that completed the follow-up survey, 74 percent completed it by mail, 3 percent completed it by fax, and 22 percent completed it by telephone. For districts that did not respond to the follow-up survey, the missing information was treated as item nonresponse. The weighted number of eligible districts in the survey represents the estimated universe of public school districts in the 50 states and the District of Columbia with one or more regular schools.⁵

Table B-1. Number and percent of responding public school districts in the study sample, and estimated number and percent of public school districts the sample represents, by selected district characteristics: School year 2007–08

Selected characteristic	Respondent sample (unweighted)		National estimate (weighted)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All public school districts	1,698	100	13,500	100
District enrollment size				
Less than 2,500	738	43	9,600	71
2,500 to 9,999	598	35	3,100	23
10,000 or more	362	21	900	6
Community type				
City	224	13	700	5
Suburban	493	29	2,900	21
Town	314	18	2,500	19
Rural	667	39	7,500	55
Region				
Northeast	349	21	2,900	21
Southeast	302	18	1,600	12
Central	538	32	5,100	38
West	509	30	4,000	29

See notes at end of table.

⁵ For more details about the development of survey weights, see the section of this report on Sampling Errors.

Table B-1. Number and percent of responding public school districts in the study sample, and estimated number and percent of public school districts the sample represents, by selected district characteristics: School year 2007–08—Continued

Selected characteristic	Respondent sample (unweighted)		National estimate (weighted)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students				
Less than 6 percent.....	479	28	5,300	39
6 to 20 percent.....	467	28	3,600	26
21 to 49 percent.....	374	22	2,500	18
50 percent or more.....	378	22	2,200	16
Poverty concentration				
Less than 10 percent.....	524	31	3,900	29
10 to 19 percent.....	699	41	5,800	43
20 percent or more.....	469	28	3,800	28

NOTE: There were a few cases for which poverty concentration was missing. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding or missing data for poverty concentration.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08,” FRSS 96, 2008.

Imputation for Item Nonresponse

Although item nonresponse for key items was very low, missing data were imputed for the items with a response rate of less than 100 percent (table B-2).⁶ The missing items included both categorical data, such as whether districts had alternative schools and programs designed to serve students who were highly disruptive, as well as numerical data, such as the number of students enrolled in the district who attended alternative schools and programs administered by an entity other than the district. The missing data were imputed using a “hot-deck” approach to obtain a “donor” district from which the imputed values were derived. Under the hot-deck approach, a donor district that matched selected characteristics of the district with missing data (the recipient district) was identified. The matching characteristics included community type, geographic region, district enrollment size, percent enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students, poverty concentration, and alternative school status (indicating the presence of an alternative school as found on the CCD files). In addition, relevant questionnaire items were used to form appropriate imputation groupings. Once a donor was found, it was used to obtain the imputed values for the district with missing data. The imputed values were the corresponding value from the donor district.

⁶ Per NCES standards, all missing questionnaire data are imputed.

Table B-2. Percent of cases with imputed data in the study sample, and percent of cases with imputed data the sample represents, by questionnaire item: School year 2007–08

Questionnaire item	Respondent sample (unweighted)	National estimate (weighted)
Question 5. In your district, were there any alternative schools and programs in 2007–08 designed solely for:		
Q5e Students who were highly disruptive?	0.06	0.06
Question 10. Can students in your district be transferred to alternative schools and programs solely on the basis of any of the following reasons?		
Q10g Chronic truancy	0.06	0.04
Q10i Pregnancy/teen parenthood	0.06	0.08
Q10j Mental health needs	0.06	0.06
Question 11. To what extent are students are placed in alternative schools and programs through the following means?		
Q11a Recommendation of district-level administrator (e.g., Director of Special Education or Director of Alternative Education)	0.06	0.08
Q11b Recommendation of regular school staff (e.g., teacher, administrator, or counselor)	0.12	0.09
Q11d Student request	0.18	0.24
Q11e Parent request	0.18	0.22
Q11f A result of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)	0.24	0.31
Q11g Referral by the criminal justice system	0.06	0.08
Question 14. According to your district’s policy, how important are each of the following in determining whether a student is able to return to a regular school?		
Q14a Improved grades	0.06	0.04
Q14b Improved attitude/behavior	0.06	0.04
Q14d Student readiness as measured by a standardized assessment	0.06	0.02
Q14f Approval of the regular school administrator or counselor	0.18	0.09
Q14g Approval of alternative school/program staff (e.g., teacher, administrator, or counselor)	0.06	0.02
Question 15. When students leave an alternative school or program in your district, to what extent do they leave because....		
Q15c They graduated with a nonstandard high school diploma or certificate of completion?	0.06	0.02
Q15d They transferred to an adult education or GED program?	0.06	0.02
Q15e They dropped out of school?	0.06	0.14
Q15f They were transferred to a criminal justice facility?	0.12	0.16
Q16. Does your district have a database to track students after they leave alternative schools and programs?	0.12	0.06
Q18. Does your district have ongoing professional development requirements for teaching in an alternative school or program, in addition to those required of all teachers?	0.06	0.04
Q19. Is a written learning plan required for students who are not special education students upon entry into an alternative school or program in your district?	0.06	0.04
Question 20. Does your district collaborate with any of the following agencies to provide services to students in alternative schools and programs?		
Q20c Community organization (e.g., Boys & Girls Club, United Way, Lion’s Club)	0.06	0.01
Q20g Family planning/child care/child placement agency	0.06	0.04
Q20h Health clinic or hospital.....	0.06	0.04
Q20j Parks and recreation department.....	0.06	0.02

See notes at end of table.

Table B-2. Percent of cases with imputed data in the study sample, and percent of cases with imputed data the sample represents, by questionnaire item: School year 2007–08—Continued

Questionnaire item	Respondent sample (unweighted)	National estimate (weighted)
Question 21. According to district policy, are any of the following services or practices required to be made routinely available in alternative schools and programs?		
Q21a Smaller class size than regular schools	0.06	0.08
Q21e Career counseling	0.12	0.04
Q21g Substance abuse counseling	0.06	0.12
Q21h Crisis/behavioral intervention.....	0.06	0.04
Q21j Peer mediation	0.12	0.16
Q21m Evening or weekend classes	0.06	0.04
Q21n Curricula leading toward a regular high school diploma	0.06	0.14
Q21o Preparation for the GED exam.....	0.06	0.04
Q21q Opportunity to take classes at other schools, colleges, or local institutions	0.06	0.02
Q21r Security personnel on site.....	0.06	0.02
Q21s Opportunities for self-paced instruction	0.06	0.02
Q21t Opportunities for alternative modes of learning (e.g., Internet-based curriculum, group or service learning projects).....	0.06	0.03
FQ1. During the 2007–08 school year, were there any students enrolled in your district who attended an alternative school or program that was administered by an entity other than your district?	1.12	0.94
FQ2. As of October 1, 2007, how many students enrolled in your district attended an alternative school or program administered by an entity other than your district?.....	1.24	0.98
FQ3. During the 2007–08 school year, which of the following entities administered these alternative schools and programs attended by students enrolled in your district?		
FQ3a A public entity such as a regional program, consortium, cooperative, or another school district.....	1.12	0.94
FQ3b A private entity contracted by the district.....	1.12	0.94
FQ3c Two- or 4-year postsecondary institutions in partnership with or contracted by the district....	1.12	0.94
FQ3d Other(<i>specify</i>).....	1.12	0.94

NOTE: Data were imputed using hot-deck imputation procedures. All questionnaire item names preceded by “F” (e.g., FQ1) were asked in the follow-up survey.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08” FRSS 96, 2008.

Data Reliability

Although the district survey on alternative schools and programs was designed to account for sampling error and to minimize nonsampling error, estimates produced from the data collected are subject to both types of error. Sampling error occurs because the data are collected from a sample rather than a census of the population, and nonsampling errors are errors made during the collection and processing of the data.

Sampling Errors

The responses were weighted to produce national estimates (table B-1). The weights were designed to reflect the variable probabilities of selection of the sampled districts and were adjusted for differential unit (questionnaire) nonresponse. The nonresponse weighting adjustments were made within classes defined by variables used in sampling and expected to be correlated with response propensity: district level (i.e., elementary or unified/secondary), presence of one or more alternative schools in the CCD School Universe

file, district size class, metropolitan status of the district, and region. Within the final weighting classes, the base weights (i.e., the reciprocal of districts' probabilities of selection) of the responding districts were inflated by the inverse of the weighted response rate for the class. The findings in this report are estimates based on the sample selected and, consequently, are subject to sampling variability. Jackknife replication was used to estimate the sampling variability of the estimates and to test for statistically significant differences between estimates.

The standard error is a measure of the variability of an estimate due to sampling. It indicates the variability of a sample estimate that would be obtained from all possible samples of a given design and size. Standard errors are used as a measure of the precision expected from a particular sample. If all possible samples were surveyed under similar conditions, intervals of 1.96 standard errors below to 1.96 standard errors above a particular statistic would include the true population parameter being estimated in about 95 percent of the samples. This is a 95 percent confidence interval. For example, the estimated percent of districts with district-administered alternative schools and programs is 39.8 percent, and the standard error is 1.14 percent (tables 1 and 1a). The 95 percent confidence interval for the statistic extends from $[39.8 - (1.14 \times 1.96)]$ to $[39.8 + (1.14 \times 1.96)]$, or from 37.6 to 42.0 percent. The 1.96 is the critical value for a statistical test at the 0.05 significance level (where 0.05 indicates the 5 percent of all possible samples that would be outside the range of the confidence interval).

Because the data from the FRSS district survey on alternative schools and programs were collected using a complex sampling design, the variances of the estimates from this survey (e.g., estimates of proportions) are typically different from what would be expected from data collected with a simple random sample. Not taking the complex sample design into account can lead to an underestimation of the standard errors associated with such estimates. To generate accurate standard errors for the estimates in this report, standard errors were computed using a technique known as jackknife replication. As with any replication method, jackknife replication involves constructing a number of subsamples (replicates) from the full sample and computing the statistic of interest for each replicate. The mean square error of the replicate estimates around the full sample estimate provides an estimate of the variance of the statistic. To construct the replications, 100 stratified subsamples of the full sample were created and then dropped one at a time to define 100 jackknife replicates. A computer program (WesVar) was used to calculate the estimates of standard errors.

All specific statements of comparisons made in this report have been tested for statistical significance at the .05 level using Student's *t*-statistic to ensure that the differences are larger than those that might be expected due to sampling variation. Adjustments for multiple comparisons were not included. Student's *t* values were computed to test the difference between estimates with the following formula:

$$t = \frac{E_1 - E_2}{\sqrt{se_1^2 + se_2^2}}$$

where E_1 and E_2 are the estimates to be compared and se_1 and se_2 are their corresponding standard errors. Many of the variables examined are related to one another, and complex interactions and relationships have not been explored.

Nonsampling Errors

Nonsampling error is the term used to describe variations in the estimates that may be caused by population coverage limitations and data collection, processing, and reporting procedures. The sources of nonsampling errors are typically problems like unit and item nonresponse, differences in respondents' interpretations of the meaning of questions, response differences related to the particular time the survey was conducted, and mistakes made during data preparation. It is difficult to identify and estimate either the amount of nonsampling error or the bias caused by this error. To minimize the potential for nonsampling error, this study used a variety of procedures, including a pretest of the questionnaire with school district respondents.

The pretest provided the opportunity to check for consistency of interpretation of questions and definitions and to eliminate ambiguous items. The questionnaire and instructions were also extensively reviewed by NCES and the data requester at the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), U.S. Department of Education. In addition, manual and machine editing of the questionnaire responses were conducted to check the data for accuracy and consistency. Cases with missing or inconsistent items were recontacted by telephone to resolve problems. Data were keyed with 100 percent verification for surveys received by mail, fax, or telephone.

Questionnaire Limitations

As with any study, there are limitations that researchers should take into consideration. One limitation of this study is that only selected questions were asked. While districts were asked to provide information on a wide range of topics, not all research questions were covered in the short questionnaire. For example, districts were not asked about all types of alternative schools and programs. Districts were asked to report the number of only a few types of alternative schools and programs. Other types of alternative schools and programs may exist within districts, including schools that exclusively offer alternative education for students at risk of educational failure.

Definitions of Analysis Variables

Many of the district characteristics, described below, may be related to each other. For example, district enrollment size and locale are related, with urban districts typically being larger than rural districts. Other relationships between these analysis variables may exist. However, this *First Look* report focuses on national estimates and bivariate relationships between the analysis variables and questionnaire variables rather than more complex analyses.

District Enrollment Size – This variable indicates the total number of students enrolled in the district based on data from the 2005–06 CCD. The variable was collapsed into the following three categories:

Less than 2,500 students

2,500 to 9,999 students

10,000 or more students

Community Type – A created variable collapsed from the 12-category urban-centric district locale code (ULOCAL) that was assigned using the 2000 Decennial Census data. Data were obtained from the 2005–06 CCD Local Education Agency (School District) Locale Code files. The data were collapsed into four categories:

City – Includes large, midsize, and small principal cities

Suburban – Includes large, midsize, and small urbanized territories outside principal cities

Town – Includes fringe, distant, and remote territories that are inside an urban cluster

Rural – Includes fringe, distant, and remote territories that are outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters

Region – This variable classifies districts into one of the four geographic regions used by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Data were obtained from the 2005–06 CCD Local Education Agency Universe file. The geographic regions are as follows:

Northeast – Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont

Southeast – Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia

Central – Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin

West – Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming

Percent combined enrollment of Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native students – The percent of students enrolled in the district whose race or ethnicity is classified as one of the following: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black (non-Hispanic), or Hispanic. Data were obtained from the 2005–06 CCD School Universe file and aggregated up to the district level.

Less than 6 percent

6 to 20 percent

21 to 49 percent

50 percent or more

Poverty Concentration – This variable indicates the percentage of children in the district ages 5–17 in families living below the poverty level, based on the Title I data provided to the U.S. Department of Education by the U.S. Census Bureau, “Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.” For detailed information on the methodology used to create these estimates, please refer to <http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/index.html>.

Data on this variable were missing for a small number of responding districts; districts with missing data were excluded from all analyses involving poverty concentration. The variable was collapsed into the following three categories:

Less than 10 percent

10 to 19 percent

20 percent or more

Contact Information

For more information about the survey, contact Peter Tice, Early Childhood, International, and Crosscutting Studies Division, National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20006, e-mail: Peter.Tice@ed.gov; telephone: (202) 502-7497.

Appendix C
Questionnaires

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006-5651

FORM APPROVED
O.M.B. No.: 1850-0733
EXPIRATION DATE: 10/2009

DISTRICT SURVEY OF ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS: 2007-08

FAST RESPONSE SURVEY SYSTEM

This survey is authorized by law (P.L. 103-382). While participation in this survey is voluntary, your cooperation is critical to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose unless otherwise compelled by law. (Public Law 107-279, Education Sciences Reform Act, Section 183.)

This survey is designed to be completed by the person or persons most knowledgeable about the alternative schools and programs in your school district. Please consult with others who can help provide the requested information.

LABEL

IF ABOVE DISTRICT INFORMATION IS INCORRECT, PLEASE UPDATE DIRECTLY ON LABEL.

Name of Person Completing This Form: _____

Title/Position: _____

Telephone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Best days and times to reach you (in case of questions): _____

THANK YOU. PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THE SURVEY FOR YOUR RECORDS.

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:

Mail: Priscilla Carver (8096.16.03)
Westat
1650 Research Boulevard
Rockville, Maryland 20850-3195
Fax: 800-254-0984

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, CONTACT:

Priscilla Carver at Westat
800-937-8281, Ext. 4596 or 301-279-4596
E-mail: priscillacarver@westat.com

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-0733. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

INSTRUCTIONS AND DEFINITIONS FOR THIS SURVEY

Alternative schools and programs are designed to address the needs of students that typically cannot be met in regular schools. The students who attend alternative schools and programs are typically *at risk* of educational failure (as indicated by poor grades, truancy, disruptive behavior, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with temporary or permanent withdrawal from school).

Alternative schools are usually housed in separate facilities where students are removed from regular schools. *Alternative programs* are usually housed within regular schools.

For the purposes of this survey, **include**:

- only alternative schools or programs for *at-risk* students,
- only alternative schools or programs *administered by your district*,
- only alternative schools or programs where the majority of students attend for at least *half* of their instructional time,
- charter schools for students at risk of educational failure,
- alternative schools or programs (administered by your district) within criminal detention centers,
- community-based schools or programs (administered by your district but located within community organizations (e.g., Boys and Girls Clubs, community or recreational centers)), and
- alternative schools or programs that operate during weekday evenings or weekends.

For the purposes of this survey, **exclude**:

- alternative schools or programs that are *not* for at-risk students (e.g., gifted and talented programs, magnet schools),
- alternative schools or programs *not* administered by your district,
- alternative schools or programs where the majority of students attend for less than half of their instructional time,
- schools or programs that exclusively serve special education students,
- career/technical education programs (unless specifically designated for at-risk students),
- child care/day care centers,
- privately run sites contracted by your district,
- short-term in-school suspension programs (lasting 2 weeks or less), detention, or in-home programs for ill or injured students, and
- charter schools that are not for at-risk students.

The questions in this survey are about the 2007–08 school year.

For purposes of this survey, the terms **enrolled**, **placed**, and **transferred** are used interchangeably and may include parent or student involvement in the process used to determine attendance at an alternative school or program for at-risk students.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is a systematic process for describing problem behavior, identifying environmental factors and setting events that predict the problem behavior, and guiding the development of effective and efficient behavior support plans.

The term **written learning plan**, as used here, refers to a written document that states the educational goals of a student, similar to that of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that is developed for students in special education.

Before you answer the questions in this survey, please carefully read the instructions and definitions page.

I. Basic Information About Alternative Schools and Programs in Your District

1. During the 2007–08 school year, were there any alternative schools or programs in your district?

Yes 1 (Continue with question 2.) No 2 (Stop. Complete respondent section on front and return questionnaire.)

2. How many alternative schools and programs were there in your district in 2007–08? _____

3. Of those schools and programs in question 2, how many were housed within a regular school? _____

4. Of the alternative schools and programs in your district in 2007–08, how many:

- a. Operated as charter schools?..... _____
- b. Were located in juvenile detention centers?..... _____
- c. Used distance education as an instructional delivery mode?..... _____

5. Some school districts have alternative schools or programs designed to serve specific types of students at risk of educational failure (e.g., an alternative school **solely** for students with substance abuse problems). Not all districts will have such programs. In your district, were there any alternative schools or programs in 2007–08 designed **solely** for:

	Yes	No
a. Students who dropped out of regular school	1	2
b. Students with substance abuse problems	1	2
c. Students who were expelled or as an alternative to expulsion	1	2
d. Students who were involved with the criminal justice system	1	2
e. Students who were highly disruptive	1	2
f. Other(<i>specify</i>) _____	1	2

6. During the 2007–08 school year, what grades were taught in your district’s alternative schools and programs? (Circle all that apply.)

PK K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Ungraded

II. Enrollment

7. As of October 1, 2007, about how many students in your district were enrolled in alternative schools and programs?
_____ students

8. Of those students, about how many were special education students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?
_____ students

9. In any month during the 2007–08 school year, were **any** of your district’s alternative schools and programs unable to enroll new students because of staffing or space limitations?

Yes 1 No 2

III. Entry and Exit Procedures

10. Can students in your district be transferred to alternative schools and programs **solely** on the basis of any of the following reasons? (For purposes of this survey, the term “transferred” may include parent or student involvement in the decision-making process.) (Circle one on each line.)

	Yes	No
a. Possession or use of a firearm.....	1	2
b. Possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm.....	1	2
c. Possession, distribution, or use of alcohol or drugs (excluding tobacco)	1	2
d. Arrest or involvement with the criminal justice system.....	1	2
e. Physical attacks or fights.....	1	2
f. Disruptive verbal behavior.....	1	2
g. Chronic truancy	1	2
h. Continual academic failure	1	2
i. Pregnancy/teen parenthood	1	2
j. Mental health needs	1	2
k. Other(<i>specify</i>) _____	1	2

11. To what extent are students placed in alternative schools or programs through each of the following means? (Circle one on each line.)

Means of placement	Not at all	Small extent	Moderate extent	Large extent
a. Recommendation of district-level administrator (e.g., Director of Special Education or Director of Alternative Education)	1	2	3	4
b. Recommendation of regular school staff (e.g., teacher, administrator, or counselor)	1	2	3	4
c. Recommendation of a committee of teachers, administrators, and counselors (such as an education management team or IEP team).....	1	2	3	4
d. Student request.....	1	2	3	4
e. Parent request.....	1	2	3	4
f. As a result of Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) (see the definition page).....	1	2	3	4
g. Referral by the criminal justice system	1	2	3	4
h. Other(specify).....	1	2	3	4

12. If a parent objects to a recommendation that a student be placed in an alternative school or program in your district, what does the district usually do? (Circle only one.)

Place the student despite parental objections	1
Resolve the dispute through due process	2
Withdraw placement recommendation	3
Other (specify)	4

13. Is it your district's policy to allow students enrolled in alternative schools and programs to return to a regular school in your district? (Circle only one.)

Yes, for all students	1 (Continue with question 14.)
Yes, for some students	2 (Continue with question 14.)
No, never for any students.....	3 (Skip to question 15.)

14. According to your district's policy, how important are each of the following in determining whether a student is able to return to a regular school? (Circle one on each line.)

Factor	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
a. Improved grades	1	2	3
b. Improved attitude/behavior	1	2	3
c. Student motivation to return.....	1	2	3
d. Student readiness as measured by a standardized assessment.....	1	2	3
e. Availability of space in regular school.....	1	2	3
f. Approval of the regular school administrator or counselor	1	2	3
g. Approval of alternative school/program staff (e.g., teacher, administrator, or counselor).....	1	2	3
h. Other(specify).....	1	2	3

15. When students leave an alternative school or program in your district, to what extent do they leave because....(Circle one on each line.)

Exiting alternative school/program	Not at all	Small extent	Moderate extent	Large extent
a. they returned to regular school?	1	2	3	4
b. they graduated with a regular high school diploma?	1	2	3	4
c. they graduated with a nonstandard high school diploma or certificate of completion?.....	1	2	3	4
d. they transferred to an adult education or GED program?	1	2	3	4
e. they dropped out of school?	1	2	3	4
f. they were transferred to a criminal justice facility?	1	2	3	4
g. Other(specify)	1	2	3	4

16. Does your district have a database to track students after they leave alternative schools and programs?

Yes 1 No..... 2

IV. Teacher Training Requirements

17. Does your district have specific requirements for teaching in an alternative school or program, in addition to regular teacher requirements (e.g., specific education or training requirements)?

Yes 1 No..... 2

18. Does your district have ongoing professional development requirements for teaching in an alternative school or program, in addition to those required of all teachers?

Yes 1 No..... 2

V. Curriculum and Services Offered

19. Is a written learning plan required for students who are **not** special education students upon entry into an alternative school or program in your district? *(For clarification on "written learning plan," please refer to the definition page.)*

Yes, for all students 1
 Yes, for some students 2
 No..... 3

20. Does your district collaborate with any of the following agencies to provide services to students in alternative schools and programs? *(Circle one on each line.)*

	Yes	No
a. Child protective services	1	2
b. Community mental health agency	1	2
c. Community organization (e.g., Boys & Girls Club, United Way, Lion's Club)	1	2
d. Job placement center	1	2
e. Crisis intervention center	1	2
f. Drug and/or alcohol clinic	1	2
g. Family planning/child care/child placement agency	1	2
h. Health clinic or hospital	1	2
i. Criminal justice system.....	1	2
j. Parks and recreation department.....	1	2
k. Police or sheriff's department.....	1	2
l. Other(<i>specify</i>) _____	1	2

21. According to district policy, are any of the following services or practices required to be made routinely available in alternative schools and programs? *(Circle one on each line.)*

	Yes	No
a. Smaller class size than regular schools.....	1	2
b. Remedial instruction for students performing below grade level	1	2
c. Credit recovery programs/opportunities.....	1	2
d. Academic counseling	1	2
e. Career counseling	1	2
f. Psychological counseling	1	2
g. Substance abuse counseling	1	2
h. Crisis/behavioral intervention	1	2
i. Social work services.....	1	2
j. Peer mediation	1	2
k. Extended school day or school year	1	2
l. Reduced school day or flexible schedule.....	1	2
m. Evening or weekend classes	1	2
n. Curricula leading toward a regular high school diploma	1	2
o. Preparation for the GED exam.....	1	2
p. Career/technical education or training	1	2
q. Opportunity to take classes at other schools, colleges, or local institutions	1	2
r. Security personnel on site.....	1	2
s. Opportunity for self-paced instruction	1	2
t. Opportunities for alternative modes of learning (e.g., Internet-based curriculum, group or service learning projects)	1	2
u. Other (<i>specify</i>) _____	1	2

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006-5651

**FOLLOW-UP DISTRICT SURVEY
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS: 2007-08**

FAST RESPONSE SURVEY SYSTEM

FORM APPROVED
O.M.B. No.: 1850-0733
EXPIRATION DATE: 10/2009

This survey is authorized by law (P.L. 103-382). While participation in this survey is voluntary, your cooperation is critical to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose unless otherwise compelled by law. (Public Law 107-279, Education Sciences Reform Act, Section 183.)

LABEL

IF ABOVE DISTRICT INFORMATION IS INCORRECT, PLEASE UPDATE DIRECTLY ON LABEL.

Name of person completing this form: _____

Title/position: _____

Telephone number: _____ E-mail: _____

Best days and times to reach you (in case of questions): _____

THANK YOU. PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THE SURVEY FOR YOUR RECORDS.

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:

Mail: Priscilla Carver (8096.16.11)
Westat
1650 Research Boulevard
Rockville, Maryland 20850-3195

Fax: 800-254-0984

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, CONTACT:

Priscilla Carver at Westat
800-937-8281, Ext. 4596 or 301-279-4596
E-mail: priscillacarver@westat.com

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-0733. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

INSTRUCTIONS AND DEFINITIONS FOR THIS SURVEY

In the *District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08*, respondents in some districts indicated that their district used alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than their district to provide alternative education to students **at risk of educational failure**. Examples of other entities may include

- a public entity such as a regional program, consortium, cooperative, or another school district;
- a private entity contracted by the district;
- 2- or 4-year postsecondary institutions in partnership with or contracted by the district; or
- entities other than those listed here.

This short follow-up survey is designed to find out the extent to which districts use alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than their district. It is designed to be completed by the respondent who completed the initial survey in fall 2008. If the person who responded to the initial survey is not available to complete the survey, this follow-up survey can be completed by someone else who is highly knowledgeable about alternative schools and programs used by your district.

Alternative schools and programs are designed to address the needs of students that typically cannot be met in regular schools. The students who attend alternative schools and programs are typically *at risk* of educational failure (as indicated by poor grades, truancy, disruptive behavior, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with temporary or permanent withdrawal from school).

Alternative schools are usually housed in separate facilities where students are removed from regular schools. *Alternative programs* are usually housed within regular schools.

For the purposes of this survey, **include**

- only alternative schools or programs for **at-risk** students;
- only alternative schools and programs attended by students enrolled in your district;
- only alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than your district; examples may include
 - a public entity such as a regional program, consortium, cooperative, or another school district;
 - a private entity contracted by the district; or
 - 2- or 4-year postsecondary institutions in partnership with or contracted by the district;
- only alternative schools or programs where the majority of students attend for at least *half* of their instructional time;
- charter schools for students at risk of educational failure;
- alternative schools or programs within criminal detention centers;
- alternative schools or programs that operate during weekday evenings or weekends.

For the purposes of this survey, **exclude**

- alternative schools or programs administered by your district (information about those administered by your district was previously collected in the *District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08*);
- alternative schools or programs that are *not* for at-risk students (e.g., gifted and talented programs, magnet schools);
- alternative schools or programs where the majority of students attend for less than half of their instructional time;
- schools or programs that exclusively serve special education students;
- career/technical education programs (unless specifically designated for at-risk students);
- child care/day care centers;
- short-term in-school suspension programs (lasting 2 weeks or less), detention, or in-home programs for ill or injured students; and
- charter schools that are not for at-risk students.

The questions in this survey ask about the 2007–08 school year.

In the *District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007–08*, respondents in some districts indicated that their district used alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than their district (for example, regional programs or private entities contracted by the district) to provide alternative education to students at risk of educational failure. The purpose of this short follow-up survey is to find out the extent to which districts use alternative schools and programs administered by entities other than their district.

This survey is designed to be completed by the respondent who completed the initial survey in fall 2008. If the person who responded to the initial survey is not available to complete the survey, this follow-up survey can be completed by someone else who is highly knowledgeable about alternative schools and programs used by your district.

If your district did not use an alternative school or program administered by an entity other than the district in 2007–08, answer “no” to question 1, complete the respondent section on the front, and return the questionnaire.

Before you answer the questions in this survey, please carefully review the list of inclusions and exclusions on the instructions page.

1. During the 2007–08 school year, were there any students enrolled in your district who attended an alternative school or program that was administered by an entity other than your district? *(For examples of entities, see instructions and definitions.)*

Yes 1 *(Continue with question 2.)* No 2 *(Complete respondent section on front and return questionnaire.)*

2. As of October 1, 2007, how many students enrolled in your district attended an alternative school or program administered by an entity other than your district? _____

3. During the 2007–08 school year, which of the following entities administered these alternative schools and programs attended by students enrolled in your district? *(Circle yes or no for each.)*

	Yes	No
a. A public entity such as a regional program, consortium, cooperative, or another school district....	1	2
b. A private entity contracted by the district.....	1	2
c. Two- or 4-year postsecondary institutions in partnership with or contracted by the district.....	1	2
d. Other <i>(specify)</i> _____	1	2