

Executive Summary

- *Characteristics of alternative education students*
- *Characteristics of alternative education programs*
- *Program effectiveness*

Executive Summary: Program Evaluation Findings, 2002-2003
Statewide Alternative Education Program
Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center

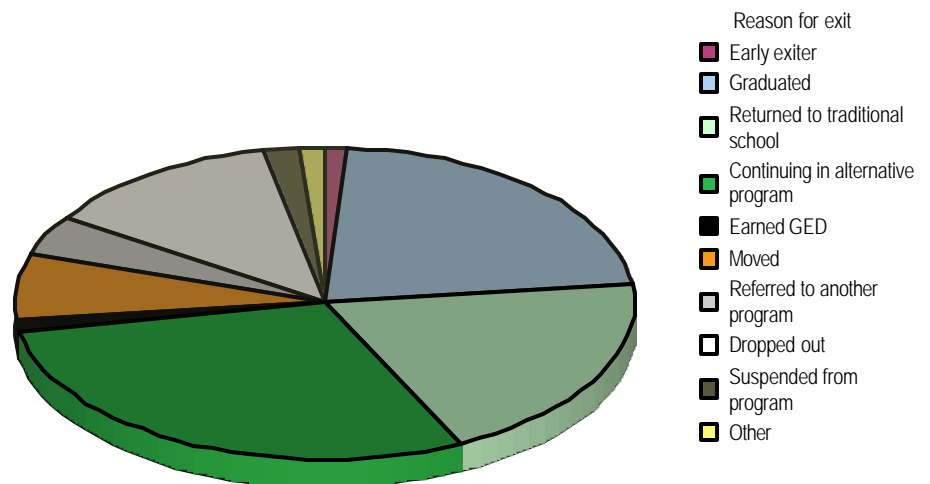
- 467 school districts received a total of \$15,380,104 in Statewide Alternative Education funds.
- 274 alternative education programs were operated in 2002-2003.
- 95 were cooperative programs serving students from 323 school districts. Cooperative programs had higher per-student costs than single-district programs.
- Half of the districts were funded at the base level of \$8,754.

Characteristics of alternative education students

- **13,149** students were served in programs funded by the Statewide Alternative Education program. Academic deficiency was easily the most frequently reported reason for referral to a Statewide program. This was especially true for high school students.
- Middle-grade students were most often referred because of behavioral infractions.
- Students were also referred because of truancy, adjustment problems, and their status as former dropouts or pregnant/parenting teens.
- Most of the students served (84%) were in high school (grades 9-12). Seniors accounted for the largest grade level served (28%).
- 53.8% of the students were male.
- Students between the ages of 16 and 18 accounted for nearly 2/3 of all program participants.
- The percentage of minority students was 42.5%, the highest in the program's history.
- The predominant minorities tended to be African Americans in urban areas and Native Americans in other parts of Oklahoma.
- African American children were referred for behavioral difficulties far more often than any other group.

Student End-of-Year Status

Oklahoma Statewide Alternative Education Program, 2002-03



Characteristics of alternative education programs

- This year, more than half of all programs operated for the full school day.
- 47 of the Statewide Alternative Academies (17.1%) were operated solely in the evening.
- More than 80% of programs were in compliance with all 17 criteria for Statewide programs set out in state law.
- This year, the first substantial reduction in programs’ reliance on pre-packaged courses was noted – only 40% of the programs relied on them.
- In more than half (61%) of all Statewide alternative programs, course credit could be earned by demonstrating competency.
- The savings to the State of Oklahoma, as a result of its \$17 million investment in alternative education, was estimated to be a minimum of \$227,934,000.

Program effectiveness

- This year, the dropout rate for participants in the Statewide Alternative Education was 12.5%. The most frequently recorded end-of-year status for students in grades 6-8 was “returned to home school” and “continuing in the program.” The latter was also the most frequently reported end-of-year status for students in grades 9-11.
- More than two thirds (68.8%) of the seniors graduated; another 1.1% earned GEDs. In addition, 12.7% of the juniors and 3.9% of the sophomores successfully completed their education careers through graduation or GED.
- A quasi-experimental research design demonstrated that *eligible students who were placed in alternative education programs became less at risk; eligible students who were not enrolled in these programs became more at risk.* (See chart below.)

Pre-post means by group. Arrows represent statistically significant changes and direction.					
Variable		Group			
		Alternative	Change	Comparison	Change
Days absent	Pre	15.14	↓	12.55	↑
	Post	11.01		15.47	
GPA	Pre	1.53	↑	1.67	↓
	Post	2.55		1.40	
Days Suspended	Pre	3.23	↓	1.89	↑
	Post	0.66		2.55	
Courses Failed	Pre	2.49	↓	2.01	↑
	Post	0.34		2.32	

End of Executive Summary
