

# Maricopa Unified School District

## Board Policy

### Instruction

#### Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice

**BP 6181**

The Governing Board desires to provide a variety of innovative educational programs to accommodate students' diverse learning needs and interests, foster student engagement in the schools, and enhance student achievement. Toward this end, the Board may establish and maintain alternative schools or programs of choice.

A district alternative school or program of choice may differ from the traditional educational program in its academic emphasis, sequence of curriculum, educational philosophy, instructional strategy, structure, setting, size, scheduling, targeted student population, decision-making process, and/or other components. All alternative schools or programs of choice shall offer enrolled students the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve district content standards in core academic subjects and shall provide access to the course of study required for high school graduation.

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6158 - Independent Study)

(cf. 6172.1 - Concurrent Enrollment in College Classes)

(cf. 6178 - Career Technical Education)

Any staff member, parent/guardian of any student, or other interested person may request the Board to establish an alternative school or program of choice. The Superintendent or designee shall establish procedures and criteria for reviewing proposals. Based on such criteria, he/she shall evaluate all proposals received and present his/her recommendation to the Board for action.

As necessary to provide flexibility to alternative schools or programs of choice to improve student performance and/or streamline operations, the Superintendent or designee may request that the Superintendent of Public Instruction waive any provision of the Education Code except provisions specified in Education Code 58509.

(cf. 0420 - School Plans/Site Councils)

The Superintendent or designee shall establish processes to ensure communication among staff in the alternative schools or programs of choice and staff in the regular educational program in order to share information and ideas.

#### Program Evaluation

The Superintendent or designee shall conduct an annual evaluation of each alternative

school or program of choice which includes testing of basic skills for student participants and which identifies the variables that may have affected student academic achievement. The evaluation process shall include input from teachers, parents/guardians, and students from the alternative school or program of choice. (Education Code 58510)

Evaluation reports shall be sent to the Superintendent of Public Instruction on or before August 1 following the close of the school year. (Education Code 58510)

(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)  
(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)

Prior to submitting the evaluation report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Superintendent or designee shall report the evaluation results to the Board. The Board shall review the effectiveness of the school or program in meeting program objectives, compare student achievement data with that of students in other district schools, evaluate changes in the school or program over time, and make program modifications as needed.

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)  
(cf. 6190 - Evaluation of the Instructional Program)

**Legal Reference:**

**EDUCATION CODE**

35160.5 Intradistrict open enrollment

48980 Parental notifications

52052 Academic Performance Index

58500-58512 Alternative schools and programs of choice

**CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5**

1068-1074 Alternative schools accountability model

11705 Charter schools as alternative schools

**COURT DECISIONS**

American Civil Rights Foundation v. Los Angeles Unified School District, (2008) 169 Cal.App.4th 436

**Management Resources:**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS**

Creating and Sustaining Successful K-8 Magnet Schools, September 2008

Innovations in Education: Successful Magnet High Schools, September 2008

**WEB SITES**

California Department of Education, Alternative Schools of Choice:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/as>

Foundation for California Community Colleges, Early College High School Initiative:

<http://www.foundationccc.org/ECHS>

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii>

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# Maricopa Unified School District

## Administrative Regulation

### Instruction

#### Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice

AR 6181

#### Notifications

The Board may establish and maintain alternative schools or programs of choice. At the beginning of each school year, the "Notice of Alternative Schools" shall be sent to all parents/guardians as set forth in Education Code 58501. During the entire month of March of each year, a copy of this notice shall be posted at each school in at least two places normally visible to students, teachers, and visiting parents/guardians. (Education Code 58501)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

Copies of the law providing for alternative schools or programs of choice (Education Code 58500-58512) shall be made available in the district office and each school office to any interested parent/guardian, teacher, or student. (Education Code 58501)

#### Proposals

All proposals for the establishment of an alternative school or program of choice shall:

1. Address the district's vision, goals, and academic standards

(cf. 0000 - Vision)

(cf. 0200 - Goals for the School District)

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

2. Demonstrate that the number of students interested in enrolling in the alternative school or program of choice is sufficient to meet desired student-teacher staffing ratios

(cf. 6151 - Class Size)

3. Demonstrate that teachers are willing to work within the school or program

4. Demonstrate that the proposed operational plan conforms with district timelines and makes equitable use of district staff, facilities, and resources

5. Provide a statement of the specific anticipated costs of implementing the proposal as well as funding sources, including outside funding sources and/or district support

6. Include a comprehensive plan for an annual evaluation of the program to be carried out by the district

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)

(cf. 6190 - Evaluation of the Instructional Program)

The Superintendent or designee may establish an advisory committee of staff, parents/guardians, and community members to evaluate proposals for alternative schools or programs of choice and make recommendations to the Superintendent.

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

#### Enrollment

The district may establish alternative schools or programs of choice in each attendance area and/or on a districtwide basis with enrollment open to all students districtwide.

(Education Code 58505)

(cf. 5116.1 - Intradistrict Open Enrollment)

Students enrolled in alternative schools or programs of choice shall be selected entirely from volunteers. (Education Code 58503)

Alternative schools and programs of choice shall comply with state and federal law and Board policy regarding nondiscrimination in district programs.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

Previous classroom performance shall not be a criterion limiting any student from the opportunity to attend an alternative school or program of choice. (Education Code 58504)

When an alternative class group is established within a school, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students currently enrolled in the school will not be displaced.

#### Operations

The district shall maintain and fund alternative schools or programs of choice at the same level of support as other district educational programs for students of the same age level. (Education Code 58507)

(cf. 3100 - Budget)

Teachers employed in alternative schools or programs of choice shall be selected entirely from volunteers. (Education Code 58503)

(cf. 4113 - Assignment)

Course credits earned in an alternative school or program of choice shall be equivalent to the credits earned in other district schools. Students enrolled in such schools or programs shall be expected to complete all district graduation requirements and shall earn a regular diploma.

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination)

Students enrolled in alternative schools may be eligible for district transportation in the same manner as students attending other district schools.

(cf. 3250 - Transportation Fees)

(cf. 3540 - Transportation)

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