



Tennessee Department of Education
Office of Safe & Supportive Schools
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Annual Alternative Education Report (2014–15 School Year)

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Governor's Advisory Council for Alternative Education

March 2016

Printable report also available on our website
at: http://www.tn.gov/education/topic/alternative_education

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Alternative Education Annual Report

School Year 2014–15

Introduction

T.C.A. § 49-6-3402 requires that at least one alternative school or program be established for districts serving students in grades seven through twelve and also allows districts to create alternative schools or programs for grades one through six. T.C.A. § 49-6-3404 mandates the establishment of an advisory council that shall advise, assist and consult on alternative education. The advisory council is required to make an annual report to the Governor, the General Assembly, the Commissioner of Education, and the State Board of Education on the status of alternative education in Tennessee. The report presented herewith meets the legislative requirement set forth.

To obtain the needed data, the Governor’s Advisory Council for Alternative Education, in conjunction with the department of education, developed the 2014–15 Annual Alternative Education Survey. A copy of the survey has been included as Appendix A. When reporting on alternative education, districts used the definition supplied by the Governor’s Advisory Council for Alternative Education which states, “A nontraditional academic program or school designed to meet the student’s educational, behavioral, and social needs.” Operating under this definition, districts reported on various aspects of their alternative education programming. Information presented in this report summarizes surveys provided by Tennessee districts.

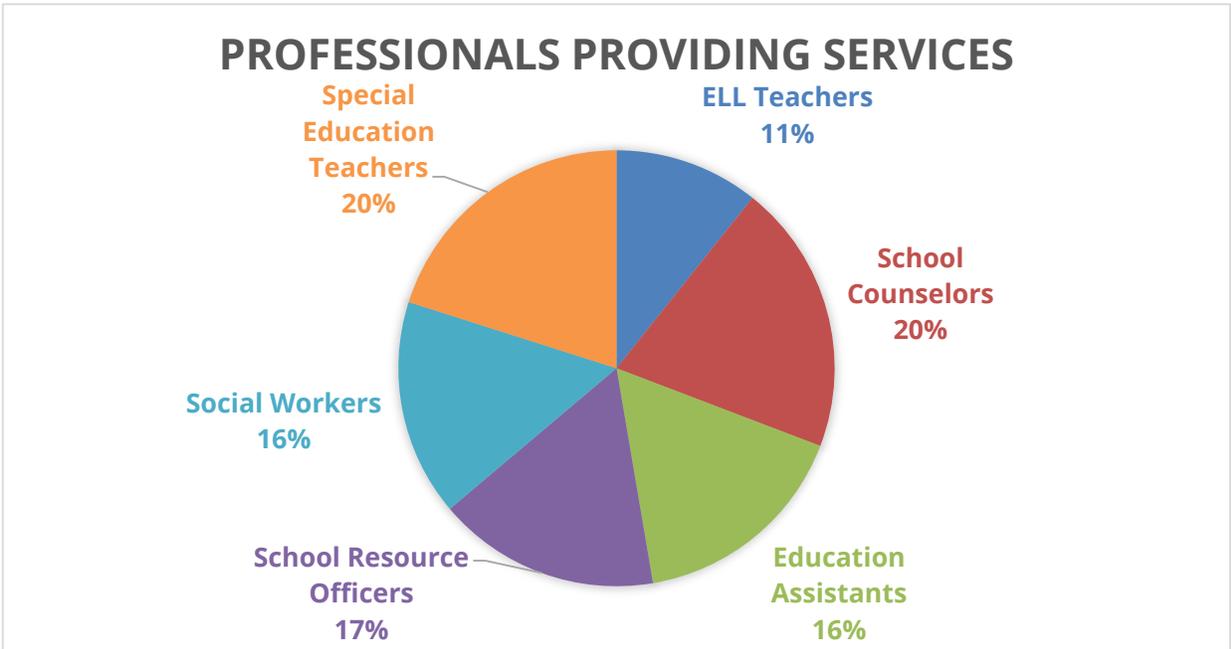
In addition to collecting data on current programming at the local level, districts were also asked a series of questions related to their current needs in the field. Those major findings have also been included in this report. The report also provides a historical background of alternative education in Tennessee, current trends in the field, and stories of success.

Questions regarding this report may be directed to Pat Conner, executive secretary for the advisory council. Ms. Conner may be reached by phone at (615) 253-0018 or via email at Pat.Conner@tn.gov.

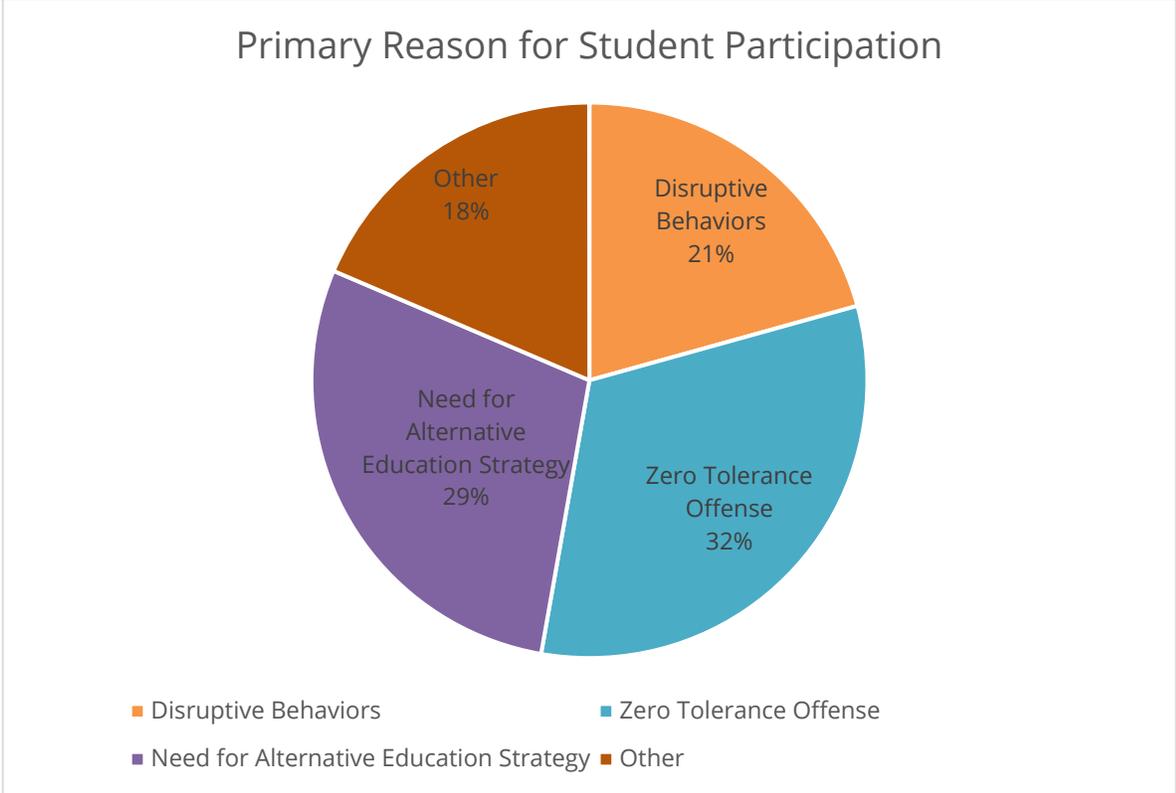
Survey Results & Findings

The annual alternative education survey required each district to identify an alternative education coordinator, thereby providing a framework for networking, collaboration, training, and technical assistance. The designee for every district may be found in Appendix B. Based upon the responses from districts, findings indicate that there are **190** alternative schools and/or programs. This translates to **506** classrooms dedicated to providing alternative education services. The total number served in an alternative setting last school year was **13,320** students. Districts have **20,503** seats in an alternative school or program, indicating that some placements are less than one school year.

On the survey, districts were asked to distinguish between the various types of professionals providing services to students in the alternative school or program. Statewide, there were **343** certified teachers serving students. Of those certified teachers, **45** were certified special education teachers, and **24** were certified English language learner teachers. A total of **45** school counselors are also working with alternative education students. Other groups providing alternative education services include **168** non-certified staff in which **37** were education assistants, **37** were school resource officers (SROs), and **36** were social workers. For a summary of those findings please see Table 1 below.



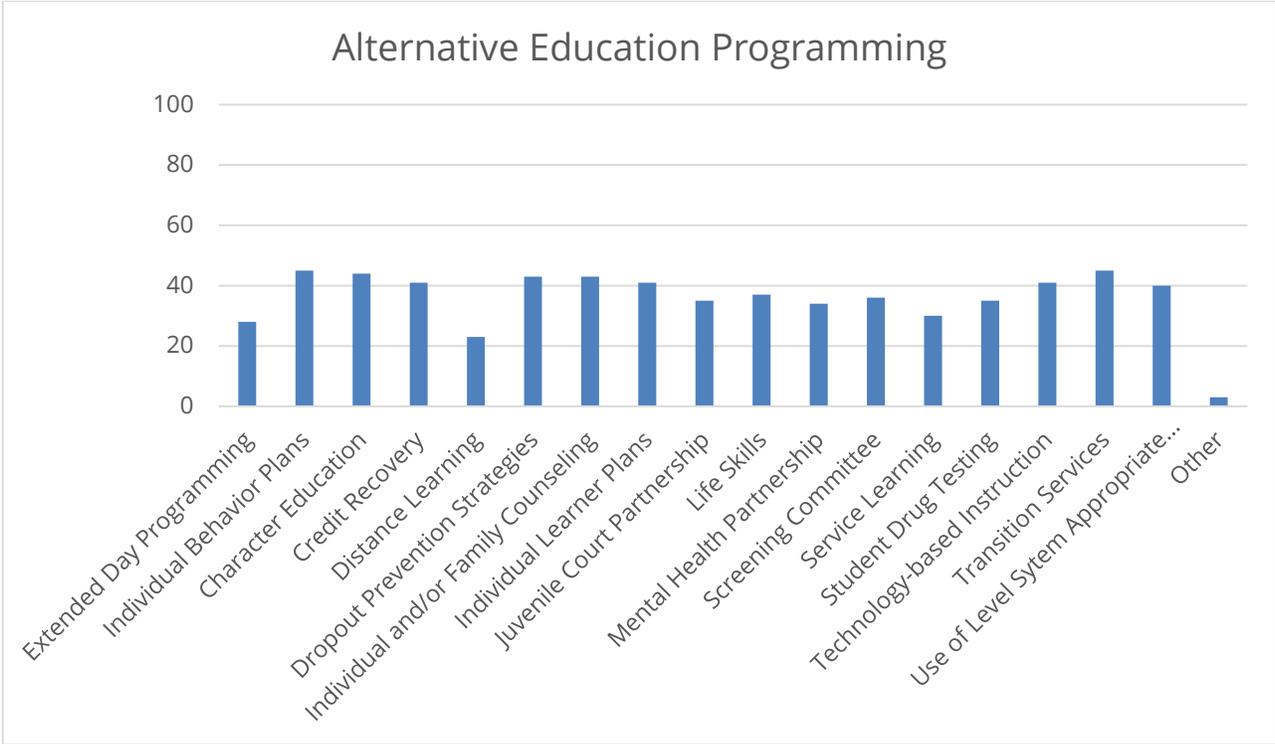
Districts were asked to rate the primary reason for student participation in the alternative school or program. The number one reason for attendance was for committing a *zero tolerance offense* (**32 percent**). The second most cited reason was a *need for an alternative education strategy* (**29 percent**). The culmination of *disruptive behavior* was also noted by districts (**21 percent**). Finally, districts noted *other circumstances warranting participation* (**18 percent**). Table 2 below summarizes those findings.



LEAs were asked to indicate the type of services offered in the alternative school or program. The most prevalent programming/services include the following: individual behavior plans and transition services (**45 reporting**), technology-based instruction (**41 reporting**), character education (**44 reporting**), individual and/or family counseling (**43 reporting**), individual learner plans (**41 reporting**), use of level system appropriate behavior (**40 reporting**) and life skills (**37 reporting**).

Less frequently cited/offered include the following: student drug testing (**35 reporting**), service learning (**30 reporting**), distance learning (**23 reporting**),

screening committee (**36 reporting**), mental health partnership (**34 reporting**), extended day programming (**28 reporting**), and Juvenile Court partnership (**35 reporting**). Table 3 below summarizes those findings:



According to the survey, alternative education programs may be housed in a designated, separate, alternative school building that may or may not have a school number. Districts also report that alternative education programs may be self-contained within a traditional school. Alternative services may be geared toward students who have been suspended or expelled, as well as students that have dropped out of school and are re-entering the education system. Some alternative schools and programs have a mixture of the above elements making them a hybrid school serving various alternative programming purposes.

Districts were asked if they had established an alternative education advisory committee and 34 districts reported having an advisory committee. Districts were also asked the average length of placement (stay) in the alternative setting. The reported average was 100 days.

The survey gave districts an opportunity to discuss the general needs of their program(s) and/or school(s). Sample comments from districts may be found in Appendix C. Comments shed light on the vast needs of alternative education programs. The one need most commonly reported was a need for earmark funding designated specifically for alternative education. Many districts recommended that the current BEP funding be changed to designate specific funding for alternative education.

A history of alternative education in Tennessee is included as Appendix D.

Alternative School Spotlight—Clinch River Community School

For many of us, when we were children, the expectations in our parents' homes were pretty simple, perform a few chores, follow their rules, and attend school every day with at least some degree of success. Countless numbers of people have achieved success because they were raised in homes by people who attached importance to an education for their children. Long before the days of "time-out," our primary caregivers encouraged us to value education as they did. Thus, we grew up imagining that the entire world experienced life in the same way. Then, somewhere along life's journey, we began to realize that not all of our classmates experienced this same world.

In 1996, Anderson County Schools decided to make alternative education a priority within the system. The first step was to find a building to house the program. The solution to the problem quickly presented itself in the form of a building previously used for kindergarten students before they were consolidated into the elementary schools. The next steps were to determine which students would be served under this umbrella and to find the appropriate staff to support them. Once that was completed, we began to develop our educational philosophy. At first, like many in the field of alternative education, we developed a philosophy that was light on the carrot and heavy on the stick. Over the years however, it became clear that this was not an effective model and would require adjusting in order to better serve our students.

During the 1999-2000 school year, we advanced into another building, larger and more comprehensive to support our growing needs, expanding to serve kindergarten through 12 grade students. We added different mental-health components, including

a part-time clinical psychologist and two counselors with an outdoor adventure focus; a teaching assistant for each classroom to provide additional instructional support; a 21st Century workplace program with a greater technological focus; and a community-involvement piece to help foster a bridge between our students and the workforce.

As the program grew, our dreams for alternative education continued to grow. Discussions began in the school community about building a new school specifically for alternative school students. The district reached out to parents, local government, business leaders, faith-based organizations, and other community stakeholders to create a consensus. In 2011, our county commission voted to construct Clinch River Community School (CRCS), a \$6.2 million school built and designed to serve alternative school students.

We opened the doors to CRCS in the fall of 2012. The school has made several different advances throughout the years to better serve our students, leaning much more heavily on the carrot these days rather than the stick. Most recently, our district was one of three districts in Tennessee awarded a federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant to provide additional counselors to support our students. Overall, the staff of CRCS dedicates themselves to improving the lives of our students, both academically and socio-emotionally, believing we must address the whole child in order for them to become an effective learner. Students must realize they are loved, valued, and cared for before the quadratic formula or the literary significance of *To Kill a Mockingbird* carries any relevance.

Success after graduation is not based on academics alone. It is based on learning to obey the law, treat others with respect, and make a positive contribution to the community. Unfortunately, many of our students are faced with a lack of parental/family direction in these areas. Alternative education may be the one opportunity that student has to experience success in school and life. At CRCS, our focus is to ensure our students become active members of society and productive citizens.

**Annual Alternative Education Report
2014–15 School Year**

APPENDICES

Appendix B: Annual Alternative Education Survey

Annual Alternative Education Survey

As Required by T.C.A. § 49-6-3404



Alternative Education as defined by the Advisory Council for Alternative Education:

“A nontraditional academic program designed to meet the student’s educational, behavioral and social needs.”

T.C.A. § 49-6-3402 mandates “at least one (1) alternative school shall be established and available for students in grades seven through twelve (7-12) who have been suspended or expelled.” T.C.A. § 49-6-3404 also requires that the Department of Education submit a report annually on the status of alternative education in Tennessee. In order to gain a better perspective, the following survey was developed. The information provided to the Department will be reported to the Governor, both education committees of the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education. Please complete the following survey and return it to the address listed below.

School System:	Date:
District Alternative Education Coordinator:	Email Address:
Phone Number: () -	Fax: () -
Address:	City and Zip Code:
Person Completing Report (if different from above):	Phone Number: () -

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL(S) OR PROGRAM(S) THAT OPERATED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR:

(For each alternative school/ program, please identify the principal or program coordinator and provide an email address and phone number for each. Please do not include ISS.)

Alternative School/Program Name	Principal/ Program Coordinator	Email Address of Principal/ Program Coordinator	Phone Number for School/ Program
			() -
			() -
			() -
			() -
			() -
			() -
			() -

PARTICIPATION (TOTAL FOR ALL SCHOOL(S)/PROGRAM(S) IN YOUR DISTRICT):

Number of alternative school(s)*:	
Number of alternative education program(s)**:	
Total number of classroom(s) serving alternative education students:	
Total number of students served:	
District’s total capacity (seats):	
Average length of placement (stay) in an alternative setting (number in days):	
Number of certificated staff working in an alternative school/program:	
Number of non-certificated staff assigned to an alternative education setting:	
Has an alternative education advisory committee been established at the district level?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

* **A facility dedicated solely to alternative education**

** **An alternative education program or class within a school**

PRIMARY REASON FOR STUDENT ASSIGNMENT (RANK 1, 2, 3 AND 4)

Need for alternative education strategy	
Other (please describe in space given)	

SCHOOL/ PROGRAM ELEMENTS PRESENT IN YOUR DISTRICT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

Afterschool or other extended day programming	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual behavior plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Character education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit recovery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distance learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dropout prevention strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual and/or family counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual learner plans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Juvenile court partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental health partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening committee (for alternative education placements)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student drug testing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology-based instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transition services (a formal plan)*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of level system or similar behavior support mechanism that encourages appropriate behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please describe in space given)	

**Mandated requirement under Tenn. Code Ann. §49-6-3402*

SPECIAL GROUPS SERVING THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL/PROGRAM (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

ELL Teachers		
School Counselors		
Special Education Teachers		
Social Workers		
School Resource Officers		
Teaching Assistants		
Other (please describe in space given)		

1. What models or curriculum are you currently implementing in your alternative education classroom(s)?
2. What technical assistance opportunities would help you as an alternative educator?
3. What is the greatest challenge facing your alternative education school(s)/programs(s)?
4. Additional comments/ feedback that would be appropriate for the alternative education report to the General Assembly?
5. Of the students served how many went on to graduate with a regular high school diploma during the current school year?
6. Do you see a growing need for alternatives at the elementary level? Yes No

Please return all forms no later than **June 30** to: Artina.Fossett@tn.gov or 615-741-3248

Appendix B: District Alternative Education Coordinators

School System	Coordinator	E-mail	Phone
Achievement School District	Candice Miller	cmiller@tnasd.org	(601) 624-5879
Alamo City	Not Required		
Alcoa City	Scott Porter	sporter@alcoaschools.net	(865) 982-4631
Alvin C. York Institute	Kaye Copley O'Brien	k.obrien@fentressboe.net	(931) 879-5082
Anderson County	Sue Voskamp	svoskamp@acs.ac	(865) 463-2800, ext. 2821
Arlington Municipal	Felicia Turner	felicia.turner@acsk-12.org	(901) 389-2497
Athens City	Robert Owens	owensr@k12tn.net	(423) 745-1516
Bartlett Municipal	Zoe Anne Bozeman	zbozeman@bartlettschools.org	(901) 202-0855
Bedford County	Janice Womble	womblej@bedfordk12tn.net	(931) 684-3284
Bells City	Pre-K-None Required	-	
Benton County	Dr. Randy Shannon	randy.shannon@tennk12.net	(731) 584-4492
Bledsoe County	Jack Roberson	jackroberson@k12tn.net	(423) 447-2914
Blount County	Jane Morton	jane.morton@blountk12.org	(865) 984-1212
Bradford SSD	Shane Paschall	paschalls2@k12tn.net	(731) 742-3152
Bradley County	Dan Glasscock	dglasscock@bradleyschools.org	(423) 473-8473
Bristol City	Dr. Dixie Bowen	bowend@btcs.org	(423) 652-9225
Campbell County	Larry Nidiffer	nidifferl@k12tn.net	(423) 562-8377
Cannon County	Pamela Parker	pamela.parker@ccstn.net	615-563-5752
Carroll County	David Stone	dstone@carrollschoools.com	(731) 986-8908
Carter County	C.B. Hardin	cbhardin@k12tn.net	(423) 547-4050
Cheatham County	Jo Jones	jo.jones@ccstn.org	(615) 746-1424
Chester County	Bobby Helton	heltonb2@tennk12.net	(731) 989-8144
Claiborne County	Travis Bailey	baileyt21@k12tn.net	(423) 526-9835
Clarksville - Montgomery County	Dr. Kim Sigears	kim.sigears@cmcss.net	(931) 542-5056
Clay County	Diana Monroe	monroed@k12tn.net	(931) 243-5510
Clinton City	No Program	-	
Cleveland City	Jeff Elliott	jelliott@clevelandschools.org	(423) 472-9571
Cocke County	Bryan Douglas	douglasb@cc-boe.net	(423) 625-9768
Coffee County	Major Shelton	sheltonm@k12coffee.net	(931) 723-5189
Collierville Municipal	Nancy Kelley	nkelley@colliervilleschools.org	(901) 286-6396
Crockett County	Jarrod Shelton	jerrod.shelton@crockettschools.net	(731) 696-4525
Cumberland County	Vicki Presson	pressonv@k12tn.net	(931) 456-1228
Dayton City	Chris Tallent	tallentch@daytoncity.net	(423) 775-8414
Decatur County	Jeff Melton	jeff.melton@tennk12.net	(731) 847-6437
DeKalb County	Marshall Ferrell	ferrellm@k12tn.net	(615) 597-4059
Dickson County	Karen I. Willey	kwilley@dcbe.org	(615) 740-6070

Dyer County	See Dyersburg City	-	
Dyersburg City	Lyn Taylor	ltaylor@dyersburgcityschools.org	(731) 286-3611
Elizabethton City	Dr. Corey Gardenhour	gardenhourc@k12tn.net	(423) 547-8000 Ext 8223
Etowah City - no program		-	
Fayette County	Terry Williams	terry.williams@k12tn.net	(901) 465-5260
Fayetteville City	Ron Perrin	perrinr@fcsboe.org	(931) 433-5542
Fentress County	Diana Hannahan	diana.hannahan@fentressboe.com	(931) 879-5082
Franklin County	Diana Spaulding	diana.spaulding@fcstn.net	(931) 967-0626
Franklin SSD	Beth Herren	herrenbet@fssd.org	(615) 794-6624
Germantown Municipal	Chauncey Bland	chauncey.bland@gmsdk12.org	(901) 752-7889
Giles County	Cindy Young	cyoung@giles.k12.tn.us	(931) 363-4558
Grainger County	Keith Lamb	klamb1@k12tn.net	(865) 828-3611
Greene County	Daniel Thompson	thompsond3@greenek12.org	(423) 798-2646
Greeneville City	Jeff Townsley	townsleyj@gcschools.net	(423) 787-8009
Grundy County	Judy Fults	jafults@blomand.net	(931) 692-5427
Hamblen County	Calvin Decker	cdecker@hcboe.net	(423) 585-3785
Hamilton County	Margaret Abernathy	abernathy_margaret@hcde.org	423-209-8453
Hancock County	Tony Seal	tseal2@k12tn.net	(423) 733-4848
Hardeman County	Steve Gibson	gibsons4@k12tn.net	(731) 658-2510
Hardin County	Charles Patton	pattonc5@k12tn.net	(731) 925-3940
Hawkins County	Steve Starnes	steve.starnes@hck12.net	(423) 272-6655
Haywood County	Art Garrett	garretta2@k12tn.net	(731) 772-9613 Ext 2240
Henderson County	David N. Weatherford	weatherford@k12tn.net	(731) 967-9527
Henry County	Michael N. Poteete	poteetem@henryk12.net	(731) 642-7500
Hickman County	Greg McCord	greg.mccord@hickmank12.org	(931) 729-3391 Ext 2251
Hollow Rock-Bruceton	See Carroll Co.	-	
Houston County	Cathy Harvey	harveyc@k12tn.net	(931) 289-4148
Humboldt City	John Bond	john.bond@humboldtschools.com	(731) 784-2781
Humphreys County	Emily Ballard	ballarde@hcss.org	(931) 296-2568 ext. 2243
Huntingdon SSD	Dr. Steve Peery	peerys@k12tn.net	(731) 986-2222
Jackson County	Johnny McLerran	mclerranj1@k12tn.net	(931) 268-6762
Jackson-Madison County	Dr. Tina Williams	trwilliams@jmcass.org	(731) 664-2534
Jefferson County	Mandy Schneitman	schneitmanm@k12tn.net	(865) 397-3194
Johnson City	Dr. Janie H. Snyder	snyderj@jcschools.org	(423) 434-5585
Johnson County	Dr. Mischelle Simcox	msimcox@k12tn.net	(423) 727-2620
Kingsport City	Shanna Hensley	shensley@k12k.com	(423) 378-2138

Knox County	Brian Hartsell	brian.hartsell@knoxschools.org	(865) 594-1506
Lake County	Bret Johnson	johnsonb11@k12tn.net	(731) 253-6601
Lauderdale County	Shirley Robinson	srobinson@lced.net	(731) 635-4856
Lawrence County	Mickey Dunn	mdunn@lcss.us	(931) 762-3581
Lebanon SSD	Beth Goolesby	goolesbyb@k12tn.net	(615) 453-2694
Lenoir City	Laura Dunn	ldunn@lenoircityschools.net	(865) 986-2072
Lewis County	Allen Trull	allen.trull@tennk12.net	(931) 796-3264
Lexington City	Jamie McAdams	mcadamsj3@caywood.org	(731) 967-5591
Lincoln County	Linda G. Tallman	ltallman@lcdoe.org	(931) 433-3565
Loudon County	Tom Hankinson	hankinsont@loudoncounty.org	(865) 986-2036 Ext 4606
Macon County	Brenda Eller	ellerb@k12tn.net	(615) 666-2125
Manchester City	Deborah Williams	dwilliams2@k12tn.net	(931) 728-2316
Marion County	Jennifer Rector	jrector@mctns.net	(423) 298-5218
Marshall County	-	
Maryville City	Rick Wilson	rick.wilson@maryville-schools.org	(865) 982-7121
Maury County	Robert Busch	buschr@mauryk12.org	(931) 381-1474
McKenzie SSD	See Carroll Co.	-	
McMinn County	Gary Bowman	bowmang@k12tn.net	(423)746-4589
McNairy County	Stephanie Brown	browns@mcnairy.org	(731) 645-9366
Meigs County	G. David Brown	david@meigsboe.net	(423) 334-5793
Memphis City	Dr. Joris M. Ray	rayj@mcsk12.net	(901) 416-2200
Metro/Nashville Public	Bruce Curtis	bruce.curtis@mnps.org	(615) 259-8400
Milan SSD	Marilyn Goodman	goodmanm@milanssd.org	(731) 686-0844 ext 2020
Millington Municipal	Jill Church	jchurch@millingtonschools.org	(901) 873-5680
Monroe County	Charlie Lee	leec1@monroe.k12.tn.us	(423) 442-5208
Moore County	Mark Montoye	mark.montoye@moorecountyschools.net	(931) 759-7303
Morgan County	Ronnie Wilson	wilsonr@mcsed.net	(423) 346-6214
Murfreesboro City	No Program	-	
Newport City	None Required	-	
Oak Ridge City	Dr. Larrissa Henderson	lhenderson@ortn.edu	(865) 425-9002
Obion County	Cynthia Rainey	raineyc@k12tn.net	(731) 885-8466
Oneida SSD	Dr. Jeanny Hatfield	jhatfield@oneidaschools.org	(423) 569-8912
Overton County	Mark L. Winningham	mwinningham2@k12tn.net	(931) 823-9388
Paris SSD	Leah Watkins	leah.watkins@parissd.org	(731) 642-9322
Perry County	Gil Webb	webbg2@k12tn.net	(931) 589-2102
Pickett County	Randy Garrett	garretr@k12tn.net	(931) 863-3123
Polk County	James Jones	jonesj17@k12tn.net	(423) 299-0471
Putnam County	Jerry Boyd	boydj2@pcsstn.com	(931) 526-9777
Rhea County	Jerry Levengood	levengoodj@rheacounty.org	(423) 775-6106
Richard City SSD	Beth Webb	bwebb@richardhardy.org	(423) 837-7282

Roane County	Chris B. Johnson	cbjohnson@roaneschools.com	(865) 882-3700
Robertson County	Donna Dorris	donnarae.dorris@rcstn.net	(615) 384-5588
Rogersville City	Rhonda Winstead	winsteadr@rcschool.net	(423) 272-7651
Rutherford County	Richard Zago	zago@rcschools.net	(615) 893-5812
Scott County	Bill Hall	bill.hall@scottcounty.net	(423) 663-2159
Sequatchie County	Melissa Tibbs	mtibbs@sequatchie.k12.tn.us	(423) 949-3617
Sevier County	Dr. John Enloe	johnenloe@sevier.org	865-453-4671
Shelby County	Dr. Joris M. Ray	rayj@scsk12.org	(901) 416-2200
Smith County	Carol Webster	Websterc1@k12tn.net	(615) 735-9646
South Carroll SSD	See Carroll Co.	-	
Stewart County	Betty Boren	bettyboren@stewart.k12.tn.us	(931) 232-3109
Sullivan County	Dr. Gene Johnson	gene.johnson@sullivank12.net	(423) 354-1000
Sumner County	Norma Dam	norma.dam@sumnerschools.org	(615) 451-5200
Sweetwater City	John Ridgell	john.ridgell@scstn.net	(423) 337-4333
Tipton County	Daryl Walker	dwalker@tipton-county.com	(901) 476-7148
Trenton SSD	Steve Nunley	steve.nunley@trentonssd.org	(731) 855-1191
Trousdale County	Toby Woodmore	tobywoodmore@tcschools.org	(615)374-2201
Tullahoma City	Wayland Long	longw@k12tn.net	(931) 461-5893
Unicoi County	Sherry Ray	rays@unicoischools.com	(423) 743-5453
Union City	Donnie Cox	coxd@k12tn.net	(731) 885-2373
Union County	Susan Oaks	oakss@ucps.org	(865)992-5466 ext. 114
Van Buren County	Kurt Powers	powersk@k12tn.net	(931) 946-2442 ext 33
Warren County	Franklin Fisher	fisherf3@k12tn.net	(931) 473-8723
Washington County	James E. Murphy, Jr.	murphyj@wcde.org	423-434-4910
Weakley County	Joyce Hale	halej3@k12tn.net	(731) 364-3979
West Carroll SSD	See Carroll Co.	-	
White County	David Copeland	david.copeland@whitecoschools.net	(931) 836-2229
Williamson County	Judith Carre	judithc@wcs.edu	(615) 472-5981
Wilson County	Rick Miller	millerr@wcschools.com	(615) 453-3400
Wayne County	Dr. Beverly Hall	beverly.hall@waynetn.net	(931) 722-5495

Appendix C: Sample Comments from LEAs (SY 2014–15)

Local education agencies were asked to indicate any comments or feedback they might have for the Tennessee General Assembly. Below are just a few sample comments from districts. Comments shed light on the vast needs of those educators that teach in the alternative setting.

- **Achievement School District:** Getting student buy-in quickly, which will ensure academic goals are attained, truancy reduced, and graduation rate increases.
- **Blount County:** New on-line assessments and local transportation costs for non-disabled students.
- **Bristol City:** More funding is needed in order to facilitate the constant need for updating online courses.
- **Dyersburg City:** Space—we are growing and need more classrooms and staff.
- **Fentress County:** Lack of full-time school counselor and school resource officer.
- **Haywood County:** Aligning local community services with student/family needs.
- **Humphreys County:** Need for grants from department of education for alternative education.
- **Jefferson County:** Substance abuse issues with students and their families, court involved students, and mental health issues.
- **Johnson City:** Lack of funding for additional programs to serve at-risk youth and funding for a full array of CTE programs.
- **Lenoir City:** Lack of family support and dropout rates.
- **Maryville City:** Providing enough emotional, behavioral, and mental health support while continuing to meet the academic needs of students.
- **Metro-Nashville:** Serving exceptional education students and implementing Individual Education Plans, number of students over-age, and academically unsuccessful students.
- **Putnam County:** In the last 3 years, we are experiencing more students who are emotionally fragile. This year alone we have no less than 8 students who are cutters.
- **Robertson County:** Funding for service learning projects to teach students have to give back to the community.
- **Rutherford County:** Increasing numbers of students who are certified emotionally disturbed is a challenge; lack of parental involvement.
- **Sevier County:** We are seeing more dysfunctional families and students who are suffering as a consequence requiring alternative programming and strategies to ensure their success.
- **Warren County:** Acquiring certified personnel interested in alternative education. There is also a need for more consistent communications between alternative and the student's school of origin.
- **White County:** Regardless of how hard we try, it is a disruption of the learning process having students not present in original regular classrooms.

Appendix D: History of Alternative Education in Tennessee

According to the Comptroller's report on alternative education titled *Tennessee's Alternative Schools*, one of the first alternative schools in our state originated in Dickson County in the late seventies (2005, p. 2). Former Juvenile Judge William D. Field, Sr. identified a true need for alternatives to students being expelled or suspended from school (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 2). In 1984, the General Assembly passed a bill authorizing the establishment of alternative schools for those who were continually having disciplinary problems in their traditional school environment (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8). The legislature soon amended that bill in 1986 to *require* an alternative school for students in grades seven through twelve (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8).

The Education Improvement Act (EIA) was passed by the Tennessee General Assembly in 1992. This mandated that any school district serving students in grades seven through twelve have at least one alternative education program (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005 p. 3). The state legislature later authorized LEAs to create alternative programs for grades one through six. The General Assembly also passed legislation that prevented students from graduating from an alternative school (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8).

In 1996, the General Assembly authorized the Department of Education to establish a pilot alternative school program, one in each grand division (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8). The state legislature also mandated that the State Board of Education provide a curriculum for alternative schools focused on reforming students. In response, the Board released *Alternative School Program Standards* in 2000 (Comptroller of the Treasury, 2005, p. 8-9). In 2004, the Senate passed Joint Resolution 746 that required the Office of Education Accountability of the Comptroller's Office to conduct a study of alternative schools in Tennessee. That report was released in April of 2005.

More recently (2006), the General Assembly amended T.C.A. § 49-6-3404 to require the establishment of an Advisory Council, referred to as the Governor's Advisory Council for Alternative Education. The advisory council is charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Consider any issue, problem or matter related to alternative education presented to it by the governor, the commissioner, or the State Board of Education, and give advice thereon.
2. Study proposed plans for alternative education programs or curricula to determine if the plans or curricula should be adopted.
3. Study alternative education programs or curricula implemented in Tennessee school systems to determine the effectiveness of the programs or curricula, and alternative education programs or curricula implemented in other states to determine if the programs or curricula should be adopted in Tennessee schools.

4. Consider rules of governance of alternative schools and make recommendations concerning rules of governance.
5. Make an annual report to the Governor, the education committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education on the status of alternative education in Tennessee.

In 2007, Public Chapter Number 517 mandated a transition plan for students entering and leaving an alternative education setting and establishes greater accountability measures to include monitoring academic and behavioral progress of students. Public Chapter Number 211 required that the Advisory Council for Alternative Education study issues relating to the establishment of pilot alternative school programs. Finally, Bill Public Chapter Number 455 required the Department of Education to create a pilot project for the 2007-2008 school year in Davidson County.

With the release of the first annual Alternative Education Report in January of 2008, the council acknowledged the need to examine the following question, "What do we really mean by alternative education?" Due to the complexity of alternative education in our state, the council proposed that the State Board of Education adopt a much broader definition that encompassed all alternative education programs in Tennessee. The council recommended that the board adopt a new, more contemporary definition of alternative education. The council proposed that the following definition of alternative education be adopted: ***"A nontraditional academic program designed to meet the student's educational, behavioral and social needs."***

In August of 2008, the Governor's Advisory Council for Alternative Education in conjunction with the State Board of Education released *Alternative Education Program Standards*. The model standards address the following broad categories: mission and environment, governance, transitional planning, support services, parent and community engagement, staffing and professional development, individualized learner plans, life skills, curriculum and instruction, student assessment, and monitoring and program assessment. The standards replaced the previously adopted *Alternative School Program Standards* from 2000.

In February of 2009, the Advisory Council released *A Feasibility Study Related to the Establishment of Alternative Programs in Tennessee* with specific recommendations on how to drive quality by enriching funds for alternative education. Additionally, in February of 2009, the Council hosted the first annual Student Discipline and Alternative Education Institute. Over three hundred educators attended the first Institute.

In October of 2009, the council joined with the National Alternative Education Association (NAEA) on the first ever southeastern regional summit on alternative education.

Partnering with the organization, and our friendly neighbors, this conference explored best practice, national trends, and allowed alternative educators an opportunity to collaborate with other practitioners outside of the state. The first summit was held in Rogers, Arkansas.

The council also published (February of 2010) an executive brief entitled *Promoting High Quality Alternative Education: An Update from the Advisory Council*. In the brief the Council set forth several legislative recommendations/priorities which include the following: redefine alternative education, establish an *Exemplary Practices in Alternative Education Award*, investigate ways to enrich funding, and create a state-level position to support alternative teachers, students, and parents.