



North Tonawanda Alternative High School Program Handbook Updated August 2017

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

The purpose of the North Tonawanda Alternative High School Program is to offer a learning environment designed to help students whose life circumstances could result or have resulted in an interruption of their education or in their dropping out of school. The alternative high school population consists of students who need a flexible or extended program to accommodate their work or family requirements, or students who are returning to finish courses to earn their diploma.

The North Tonawanda Alternative High School Program has a student-centered focus, educating students in grades 9 - 12. The small, nurturing environment of these programs affords each student the maximum amount of attention necessary to improve academic and social skills.

This is a full-day high school program that provides a unique opportunity for students to earn a Regents diploma in an alternative setting. Characteristics of the program include small class sizes and the ability to individualize instruction if needed. Students are offered a full range of courses and academically related experiences, similar to those typically found in the traditional school setting. Additionally, students have the opportunity to attend the Orleans-Niagara BOCES Career and Technical Institute for a variety of programs. Further support is available through the North Tonawanda High School Counseling Center, which provides a variety of services, including both individual and group sessions, as well as post- secondary and career counseling

The Alternative Program features independent learning, credit recovery, and intensive individualized tutorial services. This program provides a truly unique option for the potential drop out student and has proven to be highly successful.

The Alternative High School continues to develop new approaches to meet the demands of the 21st century and has as its chief operating philosophy the desire, willingness, and ability to remain flexible and innovative.

The program now utilizes computer technology for many of their distance learning courses. These courses are supplemented by additional curricula to meet the Common Core State Standards. The program provides significant levels of remediation and individualized instruction to prepare students for the NYS Regents exams.

The Alternative High School remains an excellent option for credit recovery and for students at risk of dropping out with average to above average ability.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Alternative High School is to offer a unique learning program that is flexible in order to accommodate their work or family requirements, or students who are returning to finish courses to earn their diploma. The Alternative High School will provide a climate that emphasizes commitment, participation, caring, trust, and respect to all students. The Alternative High School will foster student responsibility and students will be held accountable for their success. This unique mission is accomplished through the following activities:

- Personalized academic program of independent study which places a premium on credit recovery;
- Computer distance learning programs;
- Adult tutors to facilitate the academic learning process;
- Individual counseling services;
- Access to services offered by community agencies;
- Minimum attendance and lesson requirements to foster academic success.

PROGRAM GOAL

The primary goal of the Alternative High School is to enable the disinterested or alienated student to complete their high school education in a flexible and nurturing setting. The expectation of the Alternative High School staff is that ALL students will receive a New York State Regents Diploma.

ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL STAFF

Superintendent of Schools.....Gregory J. Woytila
Alternative High School Supervisor.....Michael P. Tambroni
Placement Coordinator.....Christopher Janicki-Howe
Program Tutor.....Regina Shiesley
Program Tutor.....Daniel Schiesser
Program Tutor.....TBD
Child Associate.....Gretchen Scime

School Counselors: Each student has an individual school counselor assigned to work with them from the North Tonawanda High School while they are at the Alternative High School to plan for their academic and career goals.

ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL SITE

NORTH TONAWANDA MIDDLE SCHOOL
1500 VANDERBILT
NORTH TONAWANDA, NEW YORK 14120
OFFICE PHONE: 807-3700

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Academic Year

Hours of operation are from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Staff is present from 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Physical Education takes place every other day under the supervision of a certified P.E. Teacher.

Social Work services are regularly provided once per week and on an individual basis as needed.

TUTORIAL MODEL

Tutorial Activities:

- Establish schedule with student for course completion and set academic goals
- Review, as needed, procedures for each course
- Provide additional learning material related to course work
- Provide assistance to student with course material

The tutors will provide positive reinforcement to each student and assistance when needed to ensure that the student is achieving success in their course work.

Tutors will utilize positive role modeling to assist students in developing more successful life skills and constructive social values.

Tutors will be assigned specific students to monitor while being available to work with all the students in the program. The tutor will follow their specific students' academic progress, discuss with them any problems that may arise, and speak with the students' parents as needed.

Tutors will be responsible for reviewing all the work of a student prior to having it sent in for final grading purposes.

Tutors will review, prepare and guide students in studying for the New York State Regents exams.

ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL FORMAT

The Alternative High School is based on a **distance learning / tutorial educational model**. Course material is obtained through colleges and private educational programs utilizing the Internet and pen and paper course work. The Internet courses are supplemented by additional pen and paper work to better educate and prepare our students for the NYS Regents exams. The course grades are given by the instructors of the various educational programs that are utilized by the Alternative High School.

The Alternative Program provides the flexibility to students to start a course anytime during the school year to provide credit recovery as needed. Students start all course work from the beginning even if they have taken the course in the traditional high school setting. Students take **TWO** subjects at a time. This allows the student to gain a better understanding of the course work and move more efficiently toward their high school diploma. Once a subject is complete, the student will be given another subject to complete if they are making progress in the other course in which they are enrolled. Students have a minimum standard of completing **SIX** lessons per week. This standard must be met to remain in the program.

Students may be mandated to attend the summer program of the Alternative Program if their current academic pace is below minimum standards. Students will also prepare for the NYS Regents exams at the Alternative Program to be able to pass these exams in order to meet the mandated graduation requirements. Achieving a high school diploma and developing more socially positive behaviors is the goal of the Alternative Program.

Students are allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities at NT High School if they meet all eligibility requirements mandated by the school district.

INTAKE PROCEDURES:

- Individual student cases are reviewed at the Student Support Team and a determination is made if an intake interview will be conducted with the Placement Coordinator.
- The Placement Coordinator completes intake interviews and presents a recommendation to the SST team. If the student is viewed as a viable candidate for the AHS the procedure continues.
- Student and parents visit the AHS. Students will generally spend five days visiting the program, to begin on Monday of that respective week. During the visit the student will be assigned academic work to determine if he or she has the motivation and aptitude to complete the course work at the program.
- Upon completion of the visit, members of the respective SST will be notified on determination of student acceptance to the program.
- If student is accepted to the program they will be on probation for the first month of their enrollment in the program.

- Any changes in the student's program or recommendations to remove student from the Alternative Program will go back to SST for review, and final approval to be made by the AHS Supervisor.

MONITORING PROCEDURES:

- The SST will review all students in the Alternative Program at least once per academic year to ensure that the student is appropriately progressing toward a high school diploma.
- The SST will review individual students if a situation arises that requires a different intervention to assist the student in successfully completing the program.
- The SST will be consulted on any student who is being recommended for removal from the program. If this situation does occur, all possible options will be pursued by the support staff to assist the student in finding an appropriate solution to their educational needs.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

FIELD TRIPS:

The Alternative High School may conduct periodic field trips to help students:

- Learn cooperation, discipline and socially acceptable behaviors outside of the school setting.
- Gain access to diverse cultural and community experiences.
- Participate in activities and enriching experiences not normally available to the student due to their socio-economic background.
- Gain exposure to career opportunities relevant to their current course work.

COUNSELING:

Social Work staff is available at the program one day per week to provide counseling services regarding any issue which is negatively affecting a student's academic performance in school.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Community agencies have always provided services that are appropriate to the issues concerning our students. To supplement these services and the student's academic experiences, the Alternative Program will have speakers present to the students as appropriate.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Students who attend the Alternative High School are eligible to participate in any extra curricular activity that their schedule allows. A student may not be eligible due to attendance or behavior problems. A student also may not be eligible due to individual circumstances outlined by the program in the learning contract.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS:

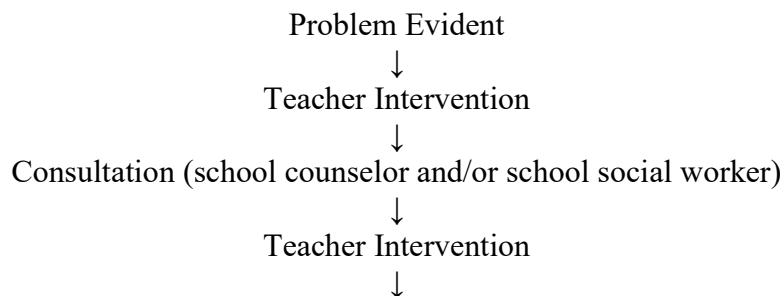
Students are permitted to participate in athletics at NTHS if they meet all Niagara Frontier League, Section VI, and North Tonawanda City School District eligibility standards.

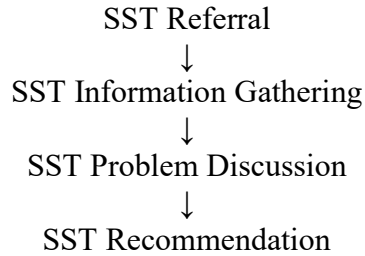
SST MEETINGS

North Tonawanda High School has two SST teams. Two school counselors sit on each team and student cases are discussed at their respective teams. The SST Chairperson provides an agenda to the team members and they present the students for discussion.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM SERVICES

The following flow chart illustrates how a student experiencing a problem affecting their school performance is processed through the SST and, if needed, the Committee on Special Education (CSE). Movement from one level to the next level assumes the problem has not been resolved. **NOTE: Students with a suspected learning disability or condition may be referred to the CSE at any point in this process.**





SST Recommendations may include but are not limited to the following:

- Tiered Interventions
- Adaptive Programming
- School Counselor Services
- School Social Work Services
- Specialized Services
- PASS Mentoring Program
- Referral to CSE
- Referral to the Alternative High School
- Psychological Services

GRADING SYSTEM / REPORT CARDS

LETTER GRADES / NUMERICAL GRADES:

The Alternative High School utilizes a variety of grading systems. All course grades are given by the distance learning courses and NOT the tutors at the Alternative High School. Some of the grades given are in letter grades. These letter grades are then transferred to numerical grades for transcription to district report cards and permanent student transcripts. The translation of letter to numerical grades is as follows:

A+	100
A	95
A-	92
B+	89
B	85
B-	82
C+	79
C	75
C-	72
D+	69
D	67
D-	65

F	60
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REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION:

Students may attend the Alternative High School on a twelve-month basis. With this in mind, the report card distribution is as follows:

Academic Progress Reports are sent home to parents three times a year. These reports are sent in accordance to North Tonawanda High School's 10, 20, and 30 week marking period.

Official District Report Cards* are sent home at the end of each June. These reports include grades for all completed courses converted to numerical grades.

* If a student attends a BOCES vocational program, those students do receive a District Report Card with the BOCES grade at the 10, 20, and 30 week marking periods.

ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL

INTAKE APPLICATION

NAME: _____ D.O.B. _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ SSN: _____

_____ PHONE: _____

SCHOOL COUNSELOR: _____

Parent present at interview ____ yes ____ no If no, why not?

- 1) Why do you want to attend the Alternative High School?

- 2) What problems have you had in school in the past? (attendance, behavior, and grades)

- 3) How do you think the Alternative High School will help you solve these problems?

- 4) Student behavior and performance during visit: ____good ____problematic If so, how?

- 5) Recommendation of tutors: ____accept ____deny State reasons below.

ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL LEARNING CONTRACT

As a participant in the North Tonawanda Alternative High School, I understand that I am responsible for following the North Tonawanda High School Discipline Code as well as the specific building and classroom rules listed below for the program:

Failure to adhere to the rules may result in **my removal from the Alternative High School.**

- 1) **NO SMOKING** – New York State law prohibits smoking in all public buildings. Students are not allowed to leave the building to smoke during the day.
- 2) **Profanity** and **Disrespectful** behavior is not acceptable.
- 3) Students may not leave the classroom area without permission from a staff member.
- 4) Students are not allowed to use the telephone. Should circumstances arise that require the use of a telephone, staff will be involved and must first give permission.
- 5) Lunch period is eating lunch. Game room use will only be by permission of the staff.
- 6) **Attendance Policy**- Minimum daily attendance is 80%. Any student who falls below this rate will be placed on probationary status. A letter will be sent to the student's parent or guardian indicating this status. Once placed on probation the student will have two (2) weeks to improve their attendance or they will be referred to the SST for possible removal from the program.
- 7) **Late-Tardy Policy**- Attending school on time is an important component of the Alternative High School. It is expected that a student will arrive on time for school at least **90%** of the scheduled days. If a student falls below this rate, a letter will be sent home to the students' parent or guardian indicating that the student will be on probation and if the lateness is not rectified within two (2) weeks a referral to SST will be made for possible removal from the program.
- 8) **Detention**- It is the responsibility of the student and the parent to get the student to detention on time.
- 9) **Academic Progress Policy**- Minimum lesson rate per week is **SIX (6)** lessons. If a student falls below the minimum rate they will be placed on academic probation. A letter will be sent to the student's parent or guardian indicating this status. Once placed on probation the student will have two (2) weeks to improve their lesson rate or will be referred to the SST for possible removal from the program.
- 10) **Driving Policy**- Students will be allowed to drive to the Alternative High School with parental permission. Driving privileges will be revoked for 30 days if a student does not maintain a 90% attendance rate each month or violates a school rule.

Continued

- 11) **Academic Dishonesty**- Students who perform any act that can be construed as cheating or illegally using academic materials will be subjects to suspension and review by the SST for further action.
- 12) **Access to Internet Courses**- In order to ensure these courses are properly utilized by students, the following rules will apply for a student to remain eligible for any program through the Alternative High School:
 - a) Any attempt to tamper with any course or student record will lead to immediate withdrawal from the courses offered on line.
 - b) If any evidence is shown that a student has tampered with the courses or records that student will no longer be eligible for any independent study program through the Alternative High School.
- 13) **NO CELL PHONES ALLOWED during the program hours of operation**

EXPULSION GUIDELINES

Immediate Expulsion- The following behaviors will lead to the immediate expulsion of any student from the Alternative High School:

- a) **Possession of illegal substances**- The staff of the Alternative High School may search a student if probable cause exists. The local police authorities will be notified regarding any illegal substances found on a student.
- b) **Vandalism**- Any school property, building, material or school buses. This also includes personal items of staff members.
- c) **Physical violence**- toward any staff member or student during the course of the school day.

I understand that I have agreed in good faith to follow these rules and that any infraction of these rules may lead to my suspension, removal or expulsion from the Alternative High School.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Date

(Student - Print Name)

(Parent - Print Name)

Date