

ALC Vision

Alternate Learning Centers (ALCs) promote pro-social beliefs, attitudes and behaviors in students, offer a core academic program and provide intervention measures that build students' capacity to return to school better able to be productive and engaged members of their school communities.

Alternate Learning Centers (ALCs)

Background:

The Office of Safety and Youth Development (OSYD) manages the Alternate Learning Centers (ALCs) instructional and social emotional program for middle and high school students on Superintendent's Suspension. This program began in FY 2007 to address issues regarding the instruction of suspended students that had been subject to litigation.

Organization:

The ALCs are organized by borough. Each borough has six to eight ALCs, each generally serving a maximum of 80 students with nine core staff members: an assistant principal, core subject area teachers in English, Math, Social Studies, and Science, a special education teacher, an educational paraprofessional, guidance counselors/social workers and a school aide. Each borough ALC is supervised by a principal. Each borough also has a school secretary and there is one citywide parent coordinator. Currently, in SY 16-17 there are a total of 37 sites citywide which includes programs for our middle and high school students on superintendent's suspension.

Goals:

There are two main goals for ALCs: continuity of academic instruction and the development and preservation of social emotional learning for students on superintendent suspension.

Priorities:

Increase student attendance and family/parent involvement; build a strong rich climate & culture in each site; search deeply to identify the specific social emotional needs of our students and their families; deepen our cross-functional experiences and sharing our resources while building each staff members' capacity in their areas of expertise; collaborate with the FSCs and external community partners for continued support and growth; reach 100% ALC staff trained and certified in Restorative and TCIS this school year.

Professional Development:

All staff members at each ALC receive on-going professional development so they can enhance their expertise to develop the social emotional needs of their students as well as their academic achievement. For the SY 16-17 school year, each ALC has developed an individualized professional development plan to support specific areas identified. During this school year, ALC staff will continue to participate in the following: ***intensive training within the common core subject areas; ALC site visitations to study/share best practices together; align benchmark assessments to student work; study student work and enhance student portfolios; study effective use of FBAs and BIPs to support students; attend MDR trainings specific to their needs at their sites; become certified and implement Restorative Approaches and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention in Schools (TCIS) strategies; enhance cohorts in studying Collaborative & Proactive Solutions under Ross Greene; and provide on-going guidance support aligning their professional practice with the ASCA model and Danielson's frameworks.***

Thrive NYC Universal Trainings:

ALC staff will continue to participate with ThriveNYC Universal Trainings in Suicide Prevention & Intervention such as Kognito At-Risk Suite an online training to help recognize early signs and symptoms of psychological distress in students including depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts; Making Educators Partners (MEP) designed to meet the general youth suicide awareness needs of all staff. In addition OSYD will continue to invite ALC staff to their borough-wide trainings: Samaritans of NY sessions in preventing suicide prevention and awareness workshops and Jewish Board workshops in

understanding secondary trauma, responding to crisis and disaster, learning interventions for addressing self-harm, foundations of childhood loss and bereavement, and in providing self-care.

Social Emotional Opportunities:

The ALC school day has been designed to include daily social emotional learning opportunities for students, including a check in at the beginning of the day, a community circle or advisory period and a check out at the end of the day. Staff members debrief daily on the status of their students. In addition, ALC sites are implementing prevention and intervention strategies/programs such as Restorative Circles and Conferencing, Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI), Overcoming Obstacles, and Positive Intervention Behavioral Supports (PBIS). Aligned with the goal of social emotional learning, the ALCs work with community based organizations, such as Partnership with Children, TRIAD, Counseling in Schools, Leadership Program, Enact to improve attendance and support students' social emotional needs. ALCs are supported by the Field Support Centers for Operations and Legal Services.

Parent Involvement:

Parents have expressed that the ALCs provide their children with a successful nurturing learning environment. We also have been told that our ALCs have become 'schools of choice.' Parent workshops are offered to both parents and students in each borough throughout the school year on topics such as: setting college and career goals which include college tours; being resilient-bouncing back and learning specific skills for success in life; developing strong parenting skills; building relationships with community resources; respect for diversity etc This school year, ALCs have increased efforts to engage parents in intervention planning for their child as well as celebrating success.

Student Involvement:

ALC students are involved in amazing educational partnerships with CBOs and university partnerships. For example, in Manhattan, ALC students worked with The School of Visual Arts to develop, produce and display photography exhibitions; several students received scholarships for their work. Students participate in Service Learning Projects, attend cultural trips and are Ambassadors in our sites. Student celebrations are part of each ALC community. Students receive credit for instruction they receive.

Home School Collaboration:

ALC staff members collaborate with home school principals and staff to ensure that instruction and social emotional needs of students are met at the ALC and when the student transitions back to the home school.

Initiatives:

Health and Wellness have grown significantly over the years. Many ALCs offer a variety of activities such as yoga, tai chi, dance, innovative exergaming and rigorous exercise that help our students lead a more healthful lifestyle. Our ALC sites have developed a School Wellness Plan. Each ALC will continue to develop the Anti-gun Violence Program this school year as well having a Respect for All Action Plan in each site.

Summer School Program:

During 2016 Summer School, *Summer in the City*, the ALCs offered a summer school program in each borough to provide instruction to middle and high school wrap around students on Superintendent Suspensions. Approximately 135 students were registered this summer. The attendance for the ALC summer program reached 74.8% for the middle and high school program.

Attendance:

Since the first year of the ALCs, student attendance has increased significantly. In SY07-08 the YTD attendance was 43%. In SY 15-16 YTD attendance reached approximately 69%, an all-time high, plus a 1.5% gain from the SY14-15 school year. Attendance continues to be a challenge for our ALC sites and will continue to be a major priority. With specific interventions and parent involvement we believe that we will continue to see greater gains.