


# Handout C1

**2022 Adequacy Study**  
EDUCATION PROGRAMS - SPECIAL POPULATIONS



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**Today's Presentations**

- APA Task Force Recommendation
- Alternative Learning Environments
- English Language Learners
- Enhanced Student Achievement (FRL)
- Special Education



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**APA: Task Force**

- Page xix of Tab 6 (APA Rec. 3)
- ID/Address Out of School Challenges of At-Risk Students
- Charge: Legislative Solutions to Issues (enrichment for low income; mental health; internet access; wrap-around services)
- Multi-disciplined membership/Research-based



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# 2022 Adequacy Study

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS



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## Introduction

As part of its series of education reforms in response to the Arkansas Supreme Court's 2002 *Lake View* decision, the General Assembly passed legislation to provide funding that addressed issues of adequacy and equity in Arkansas's education system, which included funds for alternative learning environments (ALE).



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## Arkansas Policy

- According to A.C.A. § 6-48-101, "Alternative learning environment" means an alternate class or program within a public school or school district that affords all students an environment that seeks to eliminate barriers to learning for any student whose academic and social progress is negatively affected by the student's personal characteristics or situation.
- Not a punitive environment but one that is conducive to learning.



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## Arkansas Policy

Per A.C.A. § 6-48-102, all school districts in Arkansas are to provide their students with access to an alternative learning environment (ALE) by one or more of the following methods:

- Establish and operate an alternative learning environment (this can be a stand-alone school or a school-imbedded program)
- Cooperate with one or more other school districts to establish and operate an alternative learning environment
- Use an alternative learning environment operated by an education service cooperative
- Partner with an institution of higher education or a technical institute



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## Arkansas Policy

Per A.C.A. § 6-48-103, an ALE is required to:

- Assess a student either before or upon entry into the alternative learning environment, and provide intervention services designed to address a student's specific educational needs.
- Address the behavioral needs of the student (if assigned for behavioral reasons), and provide non-punitive intervention services designed for long-term improvement of the student's ability to control his or her behavior.



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## Arkansas Policy- DESE Responsibilities

- More fully define the student's personal characteristics and situations applicable for placement in an ALE.
- Establish criteria for distributing state funding for ALE programs.
- Identify criteria for teacher training.
- Establish measures of effectiveness for ALE that measure the ALE program's effect on students' 1) school performance, 2) need for intervention, and 3) school attendance and dropout rates.

A.C.A. § 6-48-104



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## Arkansas Policy- DESE Responsibilities

- Evaluate ALE programs to ensure compliance with laws; and effective under the measurements established by DESE.
- Provide a report annually to the Education Committees with information on race and gender of ALE students, and the effectiveness of ALEs.

A.C.A. § 6-48-104



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## ALE Funding



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## ALE Per Pupil Funding

School Year	ALE Categorical Per Pupil Amount
2020-21	\$4,700



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### ALE FTE Calculation

$$\frac{\text{Total number of days in ALE}}{\text{Total number of school days}} \times \frac{\text{Hours per day in ALE}}{6 \text{ hours}}$$



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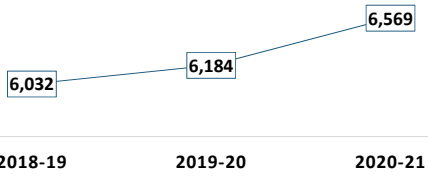
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### ALE Prior Year ALE FTE



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### Districts and Charters Receiving ALE Funding

2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
211	212	213



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## ALE Programs



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## Alternative Learning Oversight

- The Alternative Education Unit (AEU) within DESE approves and oversees public school ALE programs across the state.
- Every three years, ALE programs must submit a program description that documents the program’s compliance with ALE statute and rules.
- Program approval is contingent on satisfactory review of the program description, annual report data, and assurance statement submission.



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## Alternative Education Process Guide

- Assists users with the various aspects of the alternative education process, and provides a list of sample forms with directions that can be used to satisfy regulatory compliance. Additionally, the guide includes best-practice suggestions.
- “ALE has been the moniker historically, even in the law and rules governing alternative education, therefore it is used in this guide; however, a move to the term ‘AE’ will hopefully solidify the understanding that alternative education is much more than a change of locale. It is specialized educational programming designed to eliminate barriers to traditional education faced by some students.”



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## ALE Program General Requirements

- Intervention services to address students' specific educational and behavioral needs, including access to a school counselor, mental health professional, nurse and other support services that are "substantially equivalent" to those provided to students in the traditional school environment.
- Guidance, counseling, and academic support necessary to make progress toward educational goals appropriate to each individual student's specific situation, characteristics, abilities, and aspirations.
- Provide a curriculum that includes the basic subjects – math, science, social studies and English language arts – that adhere to the Arkansas academic standards.
  - ALEs can incorporate computer-based instruction for up to 49% of total instruction in any one course.
  - Students who are at least 16 years old may pursue a curriculum aligned with a high school equivalency test if they lack sufficient credits to graduate by the age of 18 and have their parents' or guardians' consent.




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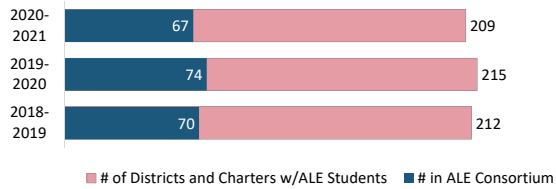
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## District and Charter ALEs




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## ALE Teacher to Student Ratios

Class Size Limits	Traditional Classroom	ALE Classroom
Kindergarten	20, or 22 w/aide	10, or 12 w/aide
Grades 1-3	25	
Grades 4-6	28	15, or 18 w/aide
Grades 7-12	30	




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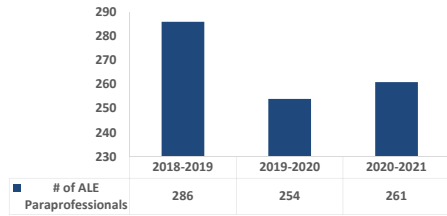
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## ALE Paraprofessionals



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## ALE Monitoring

- Do the grade levels enrolled in the ALE program match the ALE program description submitted to DESE for approval?
- Do ALE students participate in school-wide activities?
- Are the individuals who determine a student's participation in an ALE appropriate for that role?
- Is direct instruction the primary educational component in the ALE?
- Is there evidence demonstrating social skills education, career, college, vocational, and transitional life skills are occurring in the ALE?



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## ALE Reporting

Per A.C.A. § 6-48-102, school districts are required to annually submit to DESE information on race and gender, and any other information regarding students educated in ALEs that DESE requires by rule.



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Data Compiled by DESE (per rules)	Included in ALE Legislative Report
The number of ALE students subdivided by race, gender, and grade level	Y
The number of ALE students who returned to a regular educational environment, dropped out, graduated or received a GED	Provides the district drop-out rate, not the rate for ALE students.
The number of graduating students who were ever in ALE for 20 or more consecutive days	Y
The number of ALE students participating in Workforce/Secondary Career Centers	N
The number of ALE students receiving special education services	Y
The number of students enrolled in an ALE program who had previously exited an ALE program in the second or third prior school year	Provides data in the report for the current and immediate prior year.
The total amount of funds expended to operate the ALE program for the school year	Y
The total amount of ALE funding received that school year	Y
The total number of ALE students per district with grade improvements after beginning ALE	N
The total number of ALE students per district with attendance improvements after beginning ALE	N
The total number of ALE high school students per district with improved credit attainment after participating in ALE	N

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# ALE Students

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## Student Placement

*Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in literacy and math	Single parenting (meaning the student is a single parent)
Abuse: physical, mental, or sexual	Pregnancy
Frequent relocation of residency	Personal or family problems or situations
Homelessness	Recurring absenteeism
Inadequate emotional support	Dropping out of school
Mental/physical health problems	Disruptive behavior

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## Student Placement

Based on recommendation of an Alternative Education Placement Team:

- \*Counselor
- \*Principal or Assistant Principal
- \*One ore more classroom teachers
- \*Special Education or 504 representative (if applicable)
- \*Parents or guardians (if they choose to participate)
- \*ALE administrator and/or teacher
- \*Student (if the district chooses)



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## Student Placement- Assessment

- \*Before or upon entry, an ALE is required to assess each ALE student with effective, research-based assessment tools to determine current academic capability
- \*Current functioning abilities as well as all relevant social, emotional, academic, career and behavioral information to develop a Student Action Plan (SAP).



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## Student Action and Transition Plans

- \*Outlines intervention services to be provided to address the student's specific educational needs and, if appropriate, the student's behavioral needs.
- \*Includes the goals and objectives the student must meet to return to the regular educational environment and specific exit criteria.
- \*Signed agreement between ALE, the parent or guardian, (if they choose to participate), and the student outlining the responsibilities of all parties to provide assurance that each student's plan is successful.
- \*Transition or positive behavioral plan to support the return to the regular classroom.



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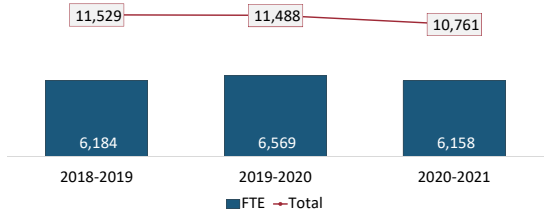
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### ALE FTE and Total Enrollment




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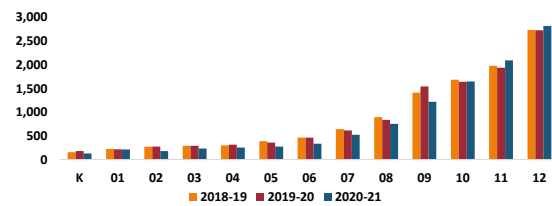
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### ALE Students by Grade




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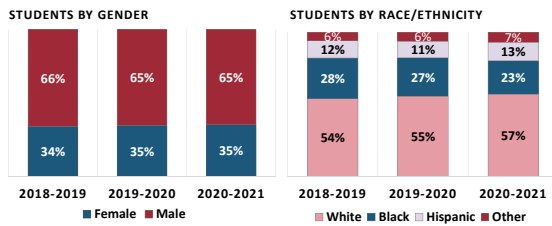
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### ALE Student Demographics




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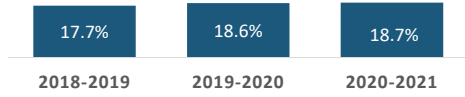
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## ALE Special Education Students




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## ALE Effectiveness Indicators

ALE Indicators	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Exited ALE in the prior school year and returned to ALE in the reporting school year	26%	22%	24%
Returned to Traditional Educational Environment in the same school year	22%	19%	18%
Exited ALE and returned in the same school year	6%	7%	5%
Received GED during the reporting year	1%	1%	1%
Graduated after an ALE Intervention During Any Year*	8%	9%	10%




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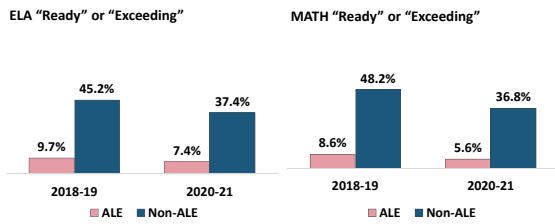
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## Test Scores




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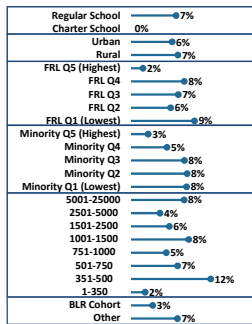
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**ELA: Percent of ALE Students Scoring Ready or Above**




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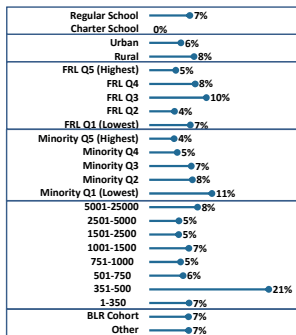
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**Math: Percent of ALE Students Scoring Ready or Above**




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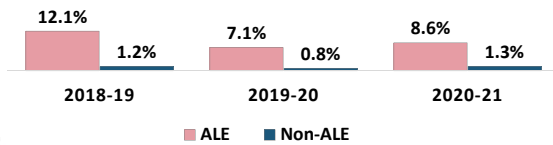
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**Grades 9-12 Dropout Rates**




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# ALE Expenditures




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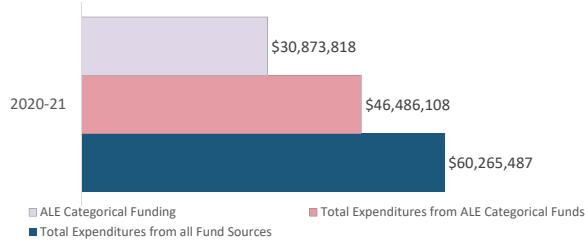
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# ALE Funding vs. Expenditures




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# ALE Program Expenditures

Expenditure Category	2019-20	2020-21
Certified Salaries and Benefits	60.4%	58.6%
Instructional and Non-Instructional	21.9%	24.1%
Support Materials		
Classified Salaries and Benefits	13.7%	13.7%
Operations and Other Reconciling Items	4.0%	3.6%




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# Questions

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