

EXEMPLARY PRACTICES

Introduction to Exemplary Practices 2.0: Standards of Quality and
Program Evaluation

1. Model the way.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 1.0: VISION AND MISSION

- ▶ An exemplary nontraditional or alternative education school develops a guiding vision and mission that drives the overall operation of the program.
- ▶ □ All stakeholders (i.e., administrators, community representatives, parents/guardians, staff, and students) share in developing, implementing, directing and maintaining the vision and mission for the school.
- ▶ □ The vision and mission of the school includes the identification of the target student population and promotes the success of all students.
- ▶ □ Additionally, the vision and mission embody high expectations for academic achievement, and the nurturing of positive social interactions between staff and students.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 2.0: LEADERSHIP

- ▶ An exemplary nontraditional or alternative school employs passionate, innovative, competent, and experienced leadership.
- ▶ □ School leadership purposely engages in opportunities to promote program success and strategically includes community, business, and media in celebrations.
- ▶ □ All stakeholders including administrators, teachers, and staff must be committed to full implementation of the mission and core values of the school.
- ▶ □ On-site leadership utilizes and engages in a collaborative approach that ensures shared decision-making, high expectations and continuous monitoring of program quality.
- ▶ □ The superintendent/designee sustains the independence of the school and allocates sufficient resources (i.e., financial or other necessary resources) to protect the integrity of the program.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 3.0: CLIMATE AND CULTURE

- ▶ A safe, caring, and orderly climate and culture that promotes collegial relationships among students, parents/guardians, and staff is maintained in an exemplary nontraditional or alternative school.
- ▶ □ The school culture and climate are characterized by a positive rather than punitive atmosphere for behavioral management and student discipline.
- ▶ □ School staff establish clear expectations for learning and conduct.
- ▶ □ The staff actively models and rewards appropriate student behavior.
- ▶ □ Proven practices to foster healthy communities are implemented at the school.
- ▶ □ Connections among all stakeholders that are positive and encourage academic, behavioral, and social success are actively promoted at the school.

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2. Inspire a shared vision.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 4.0: STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ □ An exemplary nontraditional or alternative school is staffed with effective, innovative, and qualified individuals trained in current research based teaching methods that facilitate active learning, promote creativity, and encourage self-evaluation.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 5.0: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- ▶ Instructional practices and curriculum are rigorous and inclusive, support the needs of second language and disabled students, and are individualized to meet the needs of all learners.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 6.0: STUDENT ASSESSMENT

- ▶ □ An exemplary nontraditional or alternative school includes screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic and outcome-based measurements and procedures to improve short and long term results at the student level.
- ▶ □ Student assessments are used to measure achievement and identify specific learner needs. The school uses reliable measures to monitor student progress and adjust program services.

3. Challenge the process.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 7.0: TRANSITION PLANNING AND SUPPORT

- ▶ Clear transition criteria and procedures are in place to address student enrollment, transfers, and reintegration, if applicable, to a traditional setting at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.
- ▶ Transition plans include college and career readiness support for high school students.
- ▶ □ School counselors or transition specialists are specifically trained to address student transitions.
- ▶ □ The transition process ensures the nontraditional or alternative school is the most appropriate placement based on the student's effective and affective needs, academic requirements, and post-baccalaureate goals.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 8.0: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- ▶ □ An exemplary nontraditional or alternative school actively involves parents/guardians beyond parent/guardian-teacher meetings.
- ▶ □ Non-judgmental, solution based approaches that incorporate parents/guardians as respected partners throughout the student's length of stay at the school are emphasized in nontraditional and alternative programs.
- ▶ □ The school works with parents/guardians to provide proper training and support to advance the learning and personal success of each student in the program.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 9.0: COLLABORATION

- ▶ Partnerships with community agencies, businesses and groups based on trust, open communication, clearly defined goals, and shared responsibility at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.
- ▶ □ Collaborative efforts enhance the student's performance in the school, home, and community.
- ▶ □ Collaborative partnerships promote opportunities for life skills, soft skills, service learning and career exploration for all students.
- ▶ □ Community representatives have a role in the planning and resource development of the nontraditional or alternative school.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 10.0: PROGRAM EVALUATION

- ▶ □ Systematic program evaluations for continuous school improvement are conducted at exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.
- ▶ □ Data triangulation is employed with three different sources of data:
 - ▶ o program implementation ratings
 - ▶ o student achievement data
 - ▶ o and student/parent surveys
- ▶ □ All sources of data are gathered and used to assess quality, provide a course for improvement,
 - ▶ and direct future activities of the school.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 11.0: School Counseling

- ▶ An exemplary professional school counseling program that serves nontraditional or alternative students targets academic performance, is grounded in research based practices, and addresses
- ▶ the current and future needs of students.
- ▶ □ Effective and affective strategies to enhance student achievement are integrated in exemplary
- ▶ school programs.
- ▶ □ Professional school counselors collaborate with school stakeholders to support best practices, articulate instruction, and create effective citizens.

4. Enable others to act.



EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 12.0 SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

- ▶ A social work program that is proactive, promotes educational equity, and removes barriers to learning is a characteristic of an exemplary nontraditional or alternative school.
- ▶ □ Practices are consistent with local, state, and federal mandates.
- ▶ □ The program promotes the academic mission of the nontraditional or alternative school
- ▶ fostering policies that are responsive, rigorous, and emphasize intervention and prevention services.
- ▶ □ To maintain sustainability, the program is receptive to growth producing feedback from
- ▶ community stakeholders

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 13.0 DIGITAL AND VIRTUAL LEARNING

- ▶ An exemplary digital or virtual learning program implemented in a nontraditional or alternative
- ▶ school is accessible via the World Wide Web and in secure facilities.
- ▶ □ Digital or Virtual courses are aligned to state/national standards and meet local education
- ▶ agency course content guidelines.
- ▶ □ Digital and Virtual courses are rigorous, prescriptive, and standard and assessment based

5. Encourage the heart.

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 14.0 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- ▶ A current policies and procedures manual that is consistent with the vision and mission of the nontraditional or alternative school, approved by the local board of education, and articulated to all stakeholders in the form of standard operating procedures (SOPs) is maintained.
- ▶ □ The manual is reviewed and updated on a yearly basis.
- ▶ □ The manual is made available in an electronic and hardcopy format

EXEMPLARY PRACTICE 15.0 PERSONALIZED EDUCATION PLAN

- ▶ Individualized curriculum and instruction is implemented using individualized learning plans at
- ▶ exemplary nontraditional or alternative schools.
- ▶ □ The individual student plan targets student achievement, effective and affective growth, social
- ▶ skill development, and college and career readiness skills.

references

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