



HAMILTON ALTERNATIVE ACADEMY

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HAMILTON ALTERNATIVE ACADEMY 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT

From the Director – Allyson Price

We welcome you to review Hamilton Alternative Academy's annual report for the 2015-2016 school year. While our contract allows students in grades K-12 our primary goal is to provide at-risk students, ages 16-22, high quality alternative educational options in order to meet individual needs earn a high school diploma and prepare for life after high school. The information that follows provides an overview of our school during the previous academic year. We are pleased with the success many of our students have found and look forward to continued improvement.

To address student performance, the staff creates action plans and reviews data collected during the school year. This methodology is critical to student academic growth. By offering a variety of curriculum options, our students have great learning flexibility, allowing us the ability to provide ongoing academic support on a continual basis.

Hamilton Alternative Academy continues to offer unique opportunities to students where an alternative environment for their education is a valid choice. I know I speak for the entire staff when I say that it is exciting to be part of an organization that is serious about providing such educational experiences for students.

Should you have questions, feel free to contact me through e-mail at: aprice@hlsd or call our office at (614) 491-8044 Ext. 1240.

Allyson Price
Director, Hamilton Alternative Academy

SECTION ONE – ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The State Model Courses of Study are the basis for the curriculum. To develop our curriculum, we follow a multi-factored approach as well as look for a variety of options so we best meet each student's academic and learning needs. We currently utilize locally developed curriculum, on-line coursework from Edgenuity and correspondence courses. These options allow us to align curriculum with student learning needs.

Hamilton Alternative Academy embarked on its initial year of existence on September 15, 2003, with Mr. William Morrison as the Director. Our goal was to provide learning opportunities to students who, for a variety of reasons, could not regularly attend school. Initially, we provided learning opportunities on-line for students in grades 7-12.

During the 2004-2005 school year, the student population increased almost two-fold and the inquiries about this school option became numerous. We became a “mixed” environment with the addition of a correspondence program for high school students in grades 9-12. We also created an alternative classroom for middle school students in grades 7 & 8.

The correspondence program allowed secondary students to work in a familiar environment using textbooks and study guides as the main core of the curriculum. This also enabled us to provide credit recovery courses to students attending our high school. Students who had either failed a course or could not fit one into their schedule could therefore earn credits.

The alternative classroom allowed students the ability to work with an instructor in a small group setting within the school. The instructor worked diligently to provide as much individual attention as possible to the students and to guide them through the state required curriculum as effectively as possible. These additions greatly enhanced our learning community as we continued to grow and improve.

As the alternative classroom proved to be successful for students, we added a second alternative classroom in 2005-2006 for students in high school. The students placed there had the option of obtaining a diploma from the high school or the correspondence program. During this year, we broadened the credit recovery program and were able to meet the needs of more students than in the year before.

During the 2006-2007 school year, we worked diligently to provide additional support for students who were in jeopardy of not being successful. We hired teachers to work one-on-one or in small groups to tutor students. We focused on reaching out to students who were at-risk of dropping out of school all together to attempt to keep them in school. We utilized our district resources, such as the attendance officer and the career based intervention instructor, to help communicate with students about educational options available to them.

The 2006-2007 school year also brought about a change in administration as Mr. Morrison became Hamilton Local’s Assistant Superintendent in February and I assumed the role as Director. As I had held a variety of roles within Hamilton during my career - short-cycle assessment coordinator, assistant principal, instructional support specialist and fourth grade teacher, it was a good fit for me. This continues to be my great pleasure to work with students in this capacity.

In 2007-2008, we were able to add an alternative classroom to the Intermediate School. The teachers in the alternative classrooms helped support and learn from each other. The full-time population continued to grow, as did the students taking credit recovery courses.

We were excited to add an additional staff member in 2008-2009 to help with instruction and tutoring. Mrs. Davisson worked with students daily and provided curriculum support as needed. In addition she helped monitor student work and attendance. We were able to continue this during the 2009-2010 school year as well.

For the 2010-2011 school year we made some staff changes in an effort to provide better support to our students. We maintained the alternative classroom at the high school and moved the teacher in the alternative classroom at the intermediate school to a high school social studies position. Our middle school alternative classroom teacher was moved to the Alternative Academy full time and we hired a 2nd teacher to work with him. Having the instructors here full-

time enabled our students to be more successful and as a result more students have earned high school diplomas.

Another change we implemented was in regards to enrollment in the Alternative Academy. The building principals and I worked closely to ensure students from the local/sponsoring district were allowed to enroll in the Academy only when the student needed this type of learning environment to be successful or for when all other possibilities had been exhausted. The buildings follow a Response to Intervention (RTI) or an Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) process to provide interventions and support as soon as a problem occurs academically, emotionally or medically. This process allows the buildings time to provide assistance and support to the student and collect data on how to best meet the student's needs. Parents are involved with this process and in the decision making from the initial concern to the final outcome.

In 2013-2014 a teacher was replaced with another who also possesses a guidance certification. We utilize him to assist in career planning with students among other guidance responsibilities. Upon enrolling, students complete a Post Secondary Planning Sheet and utilize the Ohio Means Jobs Backback to help prepare for life after high school. A Student Learning Plan is also completed where students describe their learning situation, including any outside factors that affect their success in school, and set goals to accomplish necessary credits for graduation and for their future job or career.

Our students participate in at least 920 hours of instructional time each year. Students are required to be on site weekly for instruction as well as submit work. Students are required to put a minimum of 25 hours per week towards learning opportunities. Students log their time on work logs and our staff calculates their hours based on classroom and home documentation. At the beginning of each school year, students revise their Post-Secondary Planning Sheet as well as a Student Learning Plan as described earlier. Both of these documents serve as the main source of documentation for planning for the year as well as their future.

SECTION TWO – FINANCIAL REPORTING

Hamilton Alternative Academy was last audited in August of 2016 with no irregular findings.

Previous years FTE (Full Time Equivalent) Reviews had come back with no issues. However, the FTE review for 14-15 found that our attendance was not documented appropriately to warrant the money given from the state to support students. There had been many state regulation changes in regards to attendance and documentation which were not clearly delineated until this point. Due to this finding and the amount of time it took to sort out the information the state required the Alternative Academy to repay approximately \$300,000 for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. Since that time, we have changed our practices and documentation procedures to meet the state's expectations. The FTE Review at the end of 2015-2016 was clear of any issues.

Total Receipts and Expenditures for FY 16

Beginning Balance: \$23,987.53

Revenues: \$115,473.24

Expenditures: (\$127,654.51)

Ending Balance: \$11,806.26

SECTION THREE – FAITHFULNESS TO THE SCHOOL’S CONTRACT

Attendance

Student attendance has been a critical emphasis, and we continue to refine what attendance means in a flexible learning environment. Since students have the opportunity to “attend” school 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, documentation of their activities and contact with their teachers is critical. Students are required to participate in learning opportunities 25 hours each week (5 hours per school day is recommended) and are also required to submit work in their courses. All time, spent towards learning opportunities, is recorded on a work log. The teachers keep documentation of all attendance and work submission. Students are marked absent for hours less than 25 that cannot be shown by their time at school and/or their time logs.

Assessment Results

Based upon feedback from all stakeholders, one of the biggest challenges we face is how to effectively deliver quality curriculum, tied to state standards, to best meet a diverse group of student needs. To meet this challenge, we continually work on ways to modify curriculum delivery. We utilize locally developed curriculum wherever possible, which include short cycle assessments to help students be prepared for the Ohio Assessments. We participate in all required state testing as required by state law. In 2012-2013 the Alternative Academy was designated as a Dropout Recovery Community School. This designation better fits our program as we are a community school that serves a majority of students who are credit deficient and at-risk of dropping out and of not earning a diploma.

Below you will find links to our Ohio Department of Education’s School Report Cards.

[2004-2005 Report Card](#)

[2005-2006 Report Card](#)

[2006-2007 Report Card](#)

[2007-2008 Report Card](#)

[2008-2009 Report Card](#)

[2009-2010 Report Card](#)

[2010-2011 Report Card](#)

[2011-2012 Report Card](#)

[2012-2013 Report Card](#)

[2013-2014 Report Card](#)

[2014-2015 Report Card](#)

[2015-2016 Report Card](#)

The 15-16 Report Card puts us as Meeting Standards.

Parent and Community Involvement

The Hamilton Alternative Academy staff strongly encourages parents and guardians to be actively involved in their child’s education. Director Price meets with students and adults prior to enrollment to guide them through how our school works as well as the expectations of enrollment and attendance. Students receive continued support from the teachers daily and progress reports/grade cards are sent home every 4.5 weeks. During the 2014-2015 school year, we organized a task force compromised of board members, parents, staff members and community members to provide input on future direction. Miss Price is available at any time for questions or further explanation of courses and required coursework as well as to help students plan for their future after high school.

Special Needs and Support

As per Ohio Law, students with special needs are admitted to the program and are served in educationally appropriate ways, without discrimination. A special education supervisor

coordinates and oversees appropriate educational services. The HAA Board of Education adopted the current Ohio Model of Policies and Procedures. A certified special education instructor oversees all IEPs/ETRs and implementation of goals.

Future Planning

In closing, our Board of Education, Administration and Staff are committed to providing the highest quality educational options possible to meet students' individual needs. We continually seek methods to improve instruction and student learning. With that in mind, we plan to implement the following for upcoming school-year:

- Because of the diversity of our population and our commitment to provide the best education, we will continue to modify curriculum, programs, delivery, and instruction in order to increase student achievement along with preparing them for the world of work and a democratic society.
- We will work with staff and administration to provide additional services for students participating in all of our tracts so that they may be better prepared for state assessments and for life after high school.
- We will further explore career options and guide students towards their future, including the credentialed pathway to graduation.