

## **Santa Clara County Office of Education: Alternative Schools Department**

### Contact Information

School		District	
<b>School Name</b>	Alternative Schools Department	<b>District Name</b>	Santa Clara County Office of Education
<b>Street</b>	1290 Ridder Park Drive	<b>Phone Number</b>	(408) 453-6500
<b>City, State, Zip</b>	San Jose, CA 95131-2398	<b>Web Site</b>	<a href="http://www.sccoe.org">www.sccoe.org</a>
<b>Phone Number</b>	(408) 453-6968	<b>Superintendent</b>	Charles Weis
<b>Director</b>	Paula Mitchell	<b>E-mail Address</b>	<a href="mailto:Charles_Weis@sccoe.org">Charles_Weis@sccoe.org</a>
<b>E-mail Address</b>	<a href="mailto:Paula_Mitchell@sccoe.org">Paula_Mitchell@sccoe.org</a>		

### School Description and Mission Statement

#### **Alternative Schools Mission**

Our students will learn in a personalized environment  
that fosters human dignity  
and promotes academic, social, emotional and personal success.

Our mission shapes the decisions made in the Alternative Schools Department. The majority of students in alternative schools are 1) high risk for behavioral or educational failure, 2) expelled or under disciplinary action, 3) wards of the court, 4) pregnant and/or parenting, 5) recovering dropouts. We recognize that our students are deficient in the basic academic and social skills which are necessary to lead successful lives in our culture. Therefore we work hard at teaching our students how to read and write with a facility of skill, how to operate efficiently in the world of mathematics, and how to make decisions and act in a pro-social, as opposed to anti-social manner.

We recognize that the fact that we are a school, the educational partner in the continuum of services offered to children and youth.

We serve the critical educational needs of eligible students in Santa Clara County. Eligible students may be referred to our schools by the Probation Department, social service agencies, school districts, and group homes. Since 1958, we have provided quality school services to delinquent, disruptive, disadvantaged, and disabled children and youth. While we continue our historical commitment to education, we realize that we are not the solution to every problem.

During the year 2007-08, The Alternative Schools Department served an average of 914 students per day. These students were served at 14 sites in central and southern Santa Clara County.

## Opportunities for Parental Involvement

<b>Contact Person Name:</b>	Paula Mitchell	<b>Contact Person Phone Number:</b>	408.453.6968
<p>Parent/guardian involvement is actively sought and utilized in the Alternative Schools Department sites. At sites where probation and social services personnel act in the primary parent role, their involvement is systematized. At other sites parent/guardian involvement to support the student's success in school is crucial and energetically solicited.</p>			

## Demographic Information

The percentage of students is the number of students in a racial/ethnic category divided by the school's most recent California Basic Educational Data Systems (CBEDS) total enrollment.

Racial/Ethnic Category	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
African-American	35	5.5%
American Indian or Alaska Native	6	1%
Asian-American	99	15.5%
Filipino-American	19	3%

Racial/Ethnic Category	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Hispanic or Latino	301	47%
Pacific Islander	6	1%
White (Not Hispanic)	156	24.3%
Multiple	18	2.7%

## School Safety and Climate for Learning

### School Programs and Practices that Promote a Positive Learning Environment

Several circumstances, practices and programs keep the learning environment safe in Alternative Schools classes. First, in many of the schools, such as Osborne School at the juvenile hall, supervision by probation department personnel (counselors), as well as the extremely structured environment in the institutions do not permit anti-social behavior. In the community schools small class size and close supervision assist in maintaining a safe environment. Wearing gang colors is prohibited, as is any physical violence. In addition, programs operated under the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force, such as the *Safe School Campus Initiative* and *Bringing Everyone's Strengths Together* (BEST) program, operated through the City of San Jose, bring community resources such as drug counselors, police officers and community workers to the campus.

### Suspensions and Expulsions

In the Alternative Schools Department the rates of expulsions and suspensions may be somewhat lower than those in district schools because of the school environment and setting. Students in juvenile hall and other very restrictive environments do not have the opportunity to engage in the behaviors which commonly result in expulsions, and low class size along with close supervision keeps the rate of suspension very low also. In the community schools parent/guardian contact is so close that effectively students are only suspended when involved in behaviors which are law violations. The following table demonstrates this situation.

	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	School	District	School	District	School	District
Suspensions (number)	73	73	92	92	98	98
Suspensions (rate)	0.11	0.11	0.14	.014	0.15	0.15
Expulsions (number)	0	0	1	1	1	1
Expulsions (rate)	0	0	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002

## School Facilities

At the present time Alternative Schools operates educational programs at 12 sites throughout Santa Clara County. The information below provides a description of each site.

School	Type	Grades	Description
Advent Boys' School	Institutional	9 - 12	This is a one-classroom site on the grounds of South County Community for substance abusing boys. It is in a rural area outside the town of San Martin.
Advent Girls' School	Institutional	9 – 12	This is a one-classroom site on the grounds of South County Community for substance abusing boys. It is in a rural area outside the town of San Martin.
Alternative Placement Academy	Institutional	9 – 12	APA is a joint operation of the Santa Clara County Probation Department and Alternative Schools. It consists of two classrooms located on the grounds of the Sunol Site in San Jose. Students at APA are Juvenile Court referrals who have chosen attendance at APA as an option to placement at one of the County's ranch facilities.
Blue Ridge High School	Institutional	10 - 12	Blue Ridge is the school at the James Boys Ranch, the Santa Clara County Probation Department's residential facility for older juveniles, generally in the 16-18 age range. The maximum capacity of the Ranch is 96 residents.
Calero Community School	County Community	7 - 12	Calero is a large community school located in south San Jose, serving mainly students whose district of residence is the East Side Union High School District. The school has five classes and serves grades 7 –12 with emphasis on the high school grades. It also has an independent study class.
Foundry	Community Day School	8 – 12	The Foundry serves about fifty day students and thirty independent study students with a staff of five teachers. Staff are deeply involved with parents and community organizations in their effort to radically change the anti-social behaviors and low academic achievement of the students.
McKenna School	Institutional	K - 12	McKenna is located on the grounds of the Santa Clara County Children's Shelter. It serves children from grades K – 12 who are residing in the Shelter. Four regular education teachers and a special education teacher form the teaching staff.
Muriel Wright School	Institutional	9 – 12	This three classroom school operates on the site of the Santa Clara County Probation Department's residential facility for female juvenile offenders and for male residents in the Conservation Corps program.
Osborne School	Institutional	7 – 12	Osborne is the school at the Santa Clara County Juvenile Hall. The school serves students in grades 7 – 12 detained by the Juvenile Court. The maximum capacity of the Juvenile Hall is 350 minors.
Santa Clara Community School	County Community	9 – 12	This is a one-teacher site operated in conjunction with the Santa Clara Unified School District. It is located near Reid and Lawrence Expressway near the Santa Clara – Sunnyvale boundary.
South County Community School	County Community	9 – 12	South County is located in San Martin and consists of two classrooms. Most students reside in Morgan Hill and Gilroy.
Stonegate	County	6 – 8	Stonegate is located on the grounds of Stonegate Park Elementary School in

Community School	Community		East San Jose. It is a middle school campus and mainly serves students in Franklin-McKinley and Alum Rock School Districts.
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## Academic Data

### Standardized Testing and Reporting Program (STAR)

Like all California public schools, the Alternative Schools Department participates in the annual state wide student Standardized Assessment and Reporting program called STAR. Below are the results of the 2008 SAT-9 and State Standards Tests. The numbers in each field of the chart below represent the percentile ranking of the averaged Alternative Schools Department scores compared to the national comparison group.

#### Number of Students Tested – 1674

Subject	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11
Reading	19 %ile	19%ile	17%ile	10%ile	14%ile
Mathematics	14%ile	19%ile	20%ile	6%ile	10%ile
Language	19%ile	22%ile	18%ile	16%ile	14%ile
Science			14%ile	15%ile	15%ile
Social Studies			6%ile	7%ile	17%ile
Spelling	18%ile	19%ile			

### Academic Performance Index (API) and Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM)

Under California law, alternative schools do not report their students' academic achievement to the community through the Academic Performance Index (API). There are two reasons for this. First, students in alternative schools generally do not remain in place from year to year. Thus their scores on the various STAR tests do not form a measure of the school's quality of instruction since a different group of students is measured each year. The second reason deals with the types of students who are in alternative schools. The majority of students in alternative schools are 1) at high risk for behavioral or educational failure, 2) expelled or under disciplinary sanction, 3) wards of the court, 4) pregnant and/or parenting, 5) recovering dropouts. Thus the goals of alternative schools differ from those of district schools. Therefore another system for measuring quality of education has been developed for alternative schools throughout the state. The Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM) consists of accountability based on a series of indicators approved by the Board of Education. Each school chooses its own indicators, and no comparisons are made among schools.

The Alternative Schools Department of Santa Clara County has chosen the following indicators.

- Student rates of attendance
- Rates of course and credit completion.
- Rate of GED passage.

In addition, the Department includes the Department-wide STAR-Renaissance Reading Test results as a measure of effective instruction in literacy, one of the Department's primary goals.

## School Completion

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### California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)

Beginning with the graduating class of 2004, students in California public schools must pass the California High School Exit Exam to receive a high school diploma. In March of 2008, the ninth grade students throughout the state were eligible to take the first High School Exit Examination. Fifty-two Alternative Schools students took part in this administration. Of these twelve passed the English/Language Arts section and eleven passed the Mathematics section. Eleven students passed both sections.

### Dropout Rate and Graduation

#### Dropout Rate

The term dropout as generally defined does not apply well to the Alternative Schools Department. Students who attend school on grounds operated by the Probation Department, such as the schools at Juvenile Hall and the Boys' Ranches, do not have the opportunity to absent themselves from school. Students who attend the community schools are released from their districts of residence and referred to Alternative Schools Department sites with the view that time in the alternative school might assist in resolving the truancy or other issues that kept them from success in the district of residence school. Students who do not take advantage of their time in Alternative Schools Department classrooms are referred back to the district of residence. Thus no data on dropout rates are kept by the Alternative Schools Department.

#### Graduation

Alternative Schools Department is authorized by the Santa Clara County Board of Education to grant high school diplomas to those students who meet state and local requirements. During the 2007-08 school year seventy-two students graduated from Alternative Schools Department sites.

## Class Size

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### Class Size

The State Board of Corrections sets the maximum class size for incarcerated youth at 20 students per class. Most Alternative Schools Department classes are smaller, averaging sixteen students in class. In the community school setting a limit of eighteen students per teacher has generally been maintained as a desirable class size.

## Teacher and Staff Information

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### Teacher Credential Information

Data reported are the number of teachers at the school in each category. A part-time teacher is counted as '1.' If a teacher works at two schools, he/she is only counted at one school

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Total Number of Teachers	47	47	47
Full Credential (fully credentialed and teaching in subject area)	37	39	36
Teaching Outside Subject Area (fully credentialed but teaching outside subject area)	0	0	0
Emergency Credential (includes District Internship, University Internship, Pre-interns and Emergency Permits)	10	8	11
Teachers with Waivers (does not have credential and does not qualify for an Emergency Permit)	0	0	0

### Teacher Evaluations

Teachers are evaluated according to a contractual agreement between the Santa Clara County Office of Education and the Association of County Teachers. Under the evaluation plan the teacher and the evaluating administrator mutually develop objectives under seven headings. Achievement of these objectives forms the basis for the evaluation. The seven areas evaluated are:

- The Teacher as Assessor of Student Needs
- The Teacher as Planner of Instruction

- The Teacher as Presenter of Instruction
- The Teacher as Maintainer of Instructional Environment
- The Teacher as Evaluator of Student Progress and Instructional Purposes
- The Teacher as Communicator in the Educational Process
- The Teacher as a Professional

### **Substitute Teachers**

Qualified substitute teachers are arranged through the Santa Clara County Office of Education Sub-Finder System. This computer assisted operation allows teachers to plan ahead for substitutes during periods of planned absences such as vacations and conferences, and also provides for immediate responses in situations such as illnesses.

### **Counselors and Other Support Staff**

The Alternative Schools Department employs three counselors – one community counselor and two academic counselors. The community counselor works exclusively at the Foundry School. The two academic counselors cover the remainder of the school sites. One counselor works with the community schools and the other with the institutional schools.

### **Academic Counselors**

<b>Number of Counselors (FTE)</b>	<b>Ratio of Pupils per Academic Counselor</b>
3	1:213

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

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### **School Instruction and Leadership**

The instructional program for the Alternative Schools is based on the State Academic Standards. These standards are recorded in the Course of Study which has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Education. The Alternative Schools Department emphasizes two instructional areas, literacy and numeracy. As a review of the STAR data shows, Alternative Schools Department students arrive in class far below their peers in academic achievement in these two fundamental areas. For the past four years the Department has turned its resources toward increasing students’ ability in reading and mathematics, their most critical needs. In order to accomplish this the Director and Principals have made instruction in these two areas the prime focus of teacher evaluation. In addition, the majority of the funds expended for instructional materials have been directed to these two areas.

Special Education students are present in the Alternative Schools Department population at a rate far above district averages. In order to meet the needs of these students, special education services are provided from seven resource specialists, two special day class teachers, two school psychologists, one program specialist, two (equivalent) designated instructional services specialists and the equivalent of one and a half school secretaries.

### **Professional Development**

Professional development and teacher training are aligned with the Department’s mission which focuses on increasing students’ levels of literacy and mathematical competence. All teachers have three contracted days of training and three additional optional days of training per year. Areas of emphasis for training in the 2007-08 school year are literacy, numeracy and technology. Literacy training is done in collaboration with the Department’s university partner, Santa Clara University under the direction of Prof. Steve Johnson. Other trainings are usually selected from those offered by the County Office of Education Instructional Services Branch. With approval teachers may attend other trainings.

### **Quality and Currency of Textbooks and Other Instructional Materials**

Textbooks and other instructional materials are present in sufficient quantity and quality to meet students needs. In addition to books and other typical instructional materials, the Department has used funds from the Digital High School Grant to provide a student-computer ratio in Alternative Schools Department classes of four students per computer. All classrooms are connected to the Internet and students have access to a wide variety of computer applications for classroom use. Additionally, ten sites have school libraries which provide additional quality reading opportunities for the students.

**Instructional Year**

The Alternative Schools Department operates under a year-round school calendar. In the institutional school sites classes are closed only on weekends, national holidays, the week in which Christmas occurs, and designated inservice days. The result is a school year of 236 days, compared to a 180 day instructional year in most community and district schools. In community schools longer breaks are taken at Christmas, and spring and summer breaks are taken, so the instructional year averages 180 days.

**Fiscal and Expenditure Data**

**Average Salaries**

The State Data Category used for comparison is the medium high school district, a district whose average daily attendance is between 1,000 and 3,999 students. There are differences in population (i.e., Alternative Schools Department has a small elementary school population, the instructional year is longer and teachers work longer contracts, an average of 205 days as opposed to 185 days in the district school). Therefore, comparisons between Alternative Schools Department finances and state averages can be misleading. Caution should be used in drawing conclusions from this data.

No state average data is available at this time for schools operated by county offices of education.

	<b>Alternative Schools Department Amount</b>	<b>State Average For Districts in the Same Data Category</b>
Beginning Teacher Salary	\$44,761	\$40,115
Mid-Range Teacher Salary	\$69,603	\$65,808
Highest Teacher Salary	\$85,986	\$78,925
Average Principal Salary	\$104,646.60	\$99,769
Superintendent Salary	\$188,500	\$140,582 (This figure is not the amount for the average County Office of Education Superintendent, but for a medium size high school district.)
Percentage of Budget for Teacher Salaries	46%	41%
Percentage of Budget for Administrative Salaries	8%	5.9%

**Expenditures**

<b>2007-2008</b>	
<b>Total dollars</b>	<b>Dollars Per Student</b>
\$9,382,728	\$10,266

**Additional Funds**

The Alternative Schools Department also receives funds from other sources, mainly federal, state and local grants. Current (2007-2008) grants and their amounts are listed below.

**Federal Funds**

*Title I*

Neglected Children \$121,966

Delinquent Children \$458,915

2006-09 Carol White Grant Physical Fitness Grant - \$500,000

**State Funds**

*School Safety and Violence Prevention*

This \$32,286 grant is used to support several programs related to school safety including the Safe School Campus Initiative.

**Local Funds**

*BEST*

This is an annual grant through the City of San Jose in the amount of \$8,000 to provide the services of a part-time drug counselor at the Foundry School.