

Alternative education accountability



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Alternative Education Accountability Name: Institution: Alternative Education Accountability In her article, *Separate and Invisible: Alternative Education Programs and Our Educational Rights*, Emily Barbour argues that alternative education has led to the violation of the parents and students rights.

It has denied the parents the chance to control their children's education, and it has denied the students the right to have the education that they want. She claims that contrary to previous years when the students volunteered for alternative education programs (AEPs), modern day schools have given the educators the right to send students to AEPs against the students and the parents will. Factors such as The No Child Left behind Act and the zero tolerance policy in schools have contributed to the increased number of students taking alternative education programs. Other factors include the need for the transferring schools to continue receiving funding, increased number of students, pressure to improve performance and inadequate training for the teachers. She notes that AEPs have low teacher to student ratio, tend to group students with violent behavior together with students who are at risk of academic failure, rely on strict regulations and controls, and have low-level academic assessments.

She concludes by noting that there is a need to increase accountability in schools offering AEPs, consequently ensuring that they serve their purpose and do not infringe on anybody's rights. Alternative programs in schools should serve as a basis for helping those students who have a problem in learning. Greater accountability will ensure that the teachers in the programs have satisfactory progress in their performance. When they were first began, alternative schools aimed at reducing the dropout rates and encouraging

students to learn, by creating an environment that was different from the traditional classroom. However, this is no longer the case today. School districts have continued to increase the number of alternative schools. These schools are located primarily in areas where poverty is high, and where there is a large concentration of different minorities.

Many people have the perception that alternative schools are a place for juvenile delinquents and students with behavioral problems (Kim & Taylor, 2008). This negative view of alternative schools has contributed to their poor performance, but this does not seem to have deterred schools from continuing to offer alternative education as evidenced by the high number of students in alternative schools. Schools and educators fail when they group the students with behavioral problems together with students who find it hard and challenging to learn. The two groups have different needs, and none of them will benefit from alternative education if the teachers use the same teaching methods. Schools are pressed to perform better, and teachers find it easy to teach when they do not have to deal with slow learners or students with behavioral problems. Some teachers cite the fact that they do not have the necessary qualifications to handle such children, and they consider alternative education as their alternative solution (Barbour, 2009). Alternative education probably encounters the problems identified because it lacks a clear definition.

People have different philosophies concerning alternative education. Some believe that alternative education serves the purpose of changing the students while others believe that it exists as a different form of the education system. The many alternative schools use the different

approaches in their programs, and this would explain why some schools have continued to experience success while others fail to produce the desired results (Quinn et al.

, 2010). There are different types of alternative schools. While some of the schools deal with challenging at-risk students, others deal with students who are not at risk, but who need to attain a certain level of academic achievement. Other schools are alternative because they use a different approach from the traditional system (Bylsma, 2009). Having different kinds of alternative schools will ensure that there is greater accountability, and the students' performance will improve. References Barbour, E. (2009). Separate and invisible: Alternative education programs and our educational rights.

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