

West Virginia Department of Education

**Alternative Education
Elementary/Middle Pilot Report**

Division of School Effectiveness

Office of Student and Community Support



2014-15 SY

Elementary and Middle School Alternative Education Pilot Project

Data Collection

Student-level data for the 2014-2015 school year were collected from all five counties participating in the pilot project as follows:

- the number and general demographic characteristics of the students placed in alternative educational settings as part of the pilot;
- the primary reasons for placement into an alternative setting;
- views about the academic and behavioral progress of students during placement;
- duration of placements; and
- recidivism (i.e., re-referral to the alternative setting after having returned to the regular classroom).

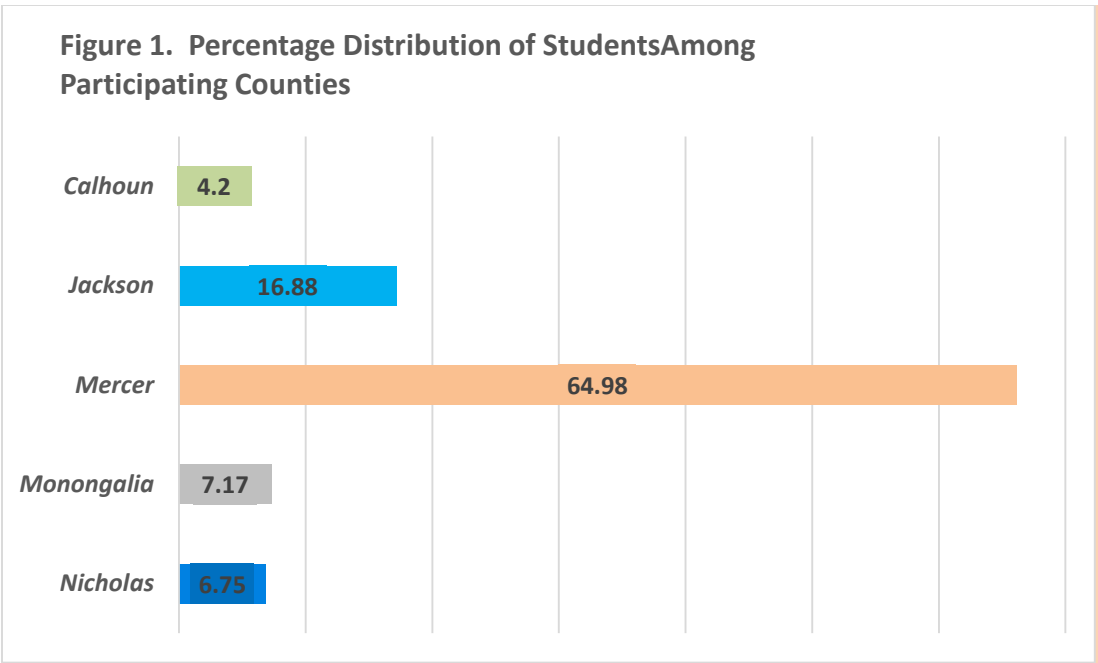
Number and Demographic Characteristics of Students

Counties submitted completed data for a total of 237 students who were placed in an alternative education setting as part of the pilot project. The students were primarily male (188, 83.93%), and 36 (16.07%) were reported to be eligible for special education services or had an established individualized education plan. The students were unevenly distributed among the elementary and middle school grade levels with 204 (86%) students at the elementary level, most in the first thru fifth grades, (Table 1).

Total (all grades)		237
Total Elementary		204
Total Middle School		22
Elementary level of students	Percent	Number
1	27.03	60
2	15.77	35
3	17.57	39
4	17.57	39
5	13.51	31
Middle School level students	Percent	Number

6	.90	3
7	4.05	10
8	3.60	9
Missing Data		11

The participating counties varied substantially in terms of the number of students they had placed in an alternative setting. Mercer County reported placing 154 students (66.09% of the total students), while Monongalia County reported 17, Jackson County reported 40, Calhoun County reported 10, and Nicholas County reported 16 students, (Figure 1).



The Primary Reasons for Placement into an Alternative Setting

Counties indicated reasons for student alternative education placements as being violation of *Expected Behaviors in Safe and Supportive Schools* (Policy 4373), or *Some Other Reason*. By far, the majority of students (209, or 90.48%) were placed for violation of behaviors relative to Policy 4373.

Of the 209 students placed for policy violation, 89 (44.28%) were reported to have committed two or more offenses. Overall, the types of behaviors leading to placement had to do with disrespectful/inappropriate conduct, failure to obey rules or authority, or aggressive conduct. Other types of behaviors such as tardiness, inappropriate substance possession or use, weapons, or legal concerns were infrequently reported.

Academic and Behavioral Progress during Placement

Counties were asked to provide their views about the students' academic and behavioral progress since their initial placement in an alternative educational setting. Responses were remarkably similar to both questions; about 69.87% of the students were reported to have made positive progress academically (Table 1) and about 71.18% behaviorally (Table 2). Conversely, about 20.96% to 24.89% were said not to have made progress, and for a few more it was reported to be too early to tell, not applicable, or the respondent didn't know.

Table 1. County Reports of Student Positive Academic Progress Since Initial Alternative Education Placement

Student has made academic progress	Number	Percent
Total	229	100.0%
Yes	160	69.87%
No	48	20.96%
Too early to tell	10	4.37%
Don't know	1	0.44%
Not applicable	10	4.37%

Table 2. County Reports of Student Positive Behavioral Progress Since Initial Alternative Education Placement

Student has made behavioral progress	Number	Percent
Total	229	100.0%
Yes	163	71.18%
No	57	24.89%
Too early to tell	6	2.62%
Don't know	0	.00%
Not applicable	3	1.31%

Duration of Placement

Two hundred and two, (88.21%) of the students were reported to have been returned to their regular education settings. The other 11.79% students remain in alternative placement.

Recidivism

Of the students returned to their regular classrooms, 89 (44.28%) were referred for a repeated placement. Of those repeat placements, 87 (96.67%) were for similar to or the same initial reasons. Three (3.33%) of those repeat placements were reported to be making positive progress academically and twenty (37.74%) were making progress behaviorally.