



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

SHEILA A. ALLES  
INTERIM STATE SUPERINTENDENT

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** May 16, 2019

**TO:** Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents  
Public School Academy Directors

**FROM:** Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent *V. Keesler*  
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

**SUBJECT:** Alternative Education and Innovative Programs (Hours and Days)  
Waivers 2019-20 Application Process and 2018-19 Required Report

The State School Aid Act, Section 101(9) [MCL 388.1701], permits the State Superintendent to waive the minimum number of hours and days of pupil instruction for alternative education programs or other innovative programs approved by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). This waiver can only be granted for alternative education or innovative programs and is not intended for individual students.

This initiative aligns with the Michigan Department of Education Top 10 in 10 Years Goal number 2, which states, "Implement, with strong district and building leadership, high-quality instruction in every classroom through a highly coherent, child-centered instructional model where students meet their self-determined academic and personal goals to their highest potential."

The State Superintendent will consider applications for waivers of hours for programs that will operate for less than the required 1,098 hours and/or less than the required 180 days during the 2019-20 school year. Before submitting the waiver to operate less than the required 1,098 hours of instruction or less than the required 180 days of instruction, consider very carefully the amount of instruction time needed to deliver the Michigan Merit Curriculum.

The waiver application also allows a district to apply for a 50 percent attendance waiver, as indicated in Section 101(3)(h) when the following criteria are met:

- The district offers the minimum hours of pupil instruction as required under this section.

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – PRESIDENT • PAMELA PUGH – VICE PRESIDENT  
MICHELLE FECTEAU – SECRETARY • TOM MCMILLIN – TREASURER  
TIFFANY D. TILLEY – NASBE DELEGATE • JUDITH PRITCHETT  
LUPE RAMOS-MONTIGNY • NIKKI SNYDER

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909  
www.michigan.gov/mde • 833-633-5788

- For each enrolled pupil, the district uses appropriate academic assessments to develop an individual education plan that leads to a high school diploma.
- The district tests each pupil to determine academic progress at regular intervals and records the results of those tests in that pupil's individual education plan.
- **The 50% waiver is only available to districts not operating full K-12 programming.**

There were several districts that received the 50% attendance waiver in past years which did not meet the full criteria requirements as part of a grandfather clause. The MDE is no longer able to offer the 50% attendance waiver to districts that do not meet the full criteria requirements, including those that were previously included in the grandfather clause.

### **2019-20 Application Information**

The application form can be found [here](#). Submission instructions are included in the application. Please use the application rubric at [www.michigan.gov/alted](http://www.michigan.gov/alted) as a guide when completing the application. The application deadline is August 30, 2019.

Please be advised that by completing this application and participating in the Waiver of Minimum Number of Hours and Days of Pupil Instruction for Alternative Education or other innovative programs, you agree to comply with the reporting requirements established by the MDE.

### **2018-19 Reporting Requirements**

Any entity that received an Alternative Education/Innovative Programs (Hours and Days) Waiver in 2018-19 must complete the end of the year report. The report form can [be found here](#). The reporting deadline is July 31, 2019. **The report is only required for entities that were approved for the waiver in 2018-19.**

If you have any questions regarding the application or reporting processes for this waiver, please contact Eric Lipinski at 517-241-6895, or email at [lipinskie@michigan.gov](mailto:lipinskie@michigan.gov).

cc: Michigan Education Alliance