

**Performance Impact Analysis  
District Alternative Education Program (DAEP)  
Extending Student Enrollment and Providing an Online Option  
December 18, 2024**

**I. Proposed Action.**

The District proposes two changes to enhance the District Alternative Education Program (DAEP). The first proposal is to increase the number of days students can attend DAEP. Currently, the enrollment limit is 45 days. The District proposes to increase the enrollment limit up to 180 days. The second proposal is to offer an online option for those wanting to attend but are not able to for personal or transportation reasons. These changes in extending students' enrollment and offering an online option do not alter DAEP's referral systems, teaching model, program availability, or the resources available to any DAEP classroom. DAEP would not incur any extra funding for these proposed changes.

**II. Issues.**

**A. Extending Enrollment Period for Students.**

As noted above, the current enrollment limit is 45 days. With the recent revisions to the Student Code of Conduct, students are more likely to advance through the consequence progressions as they progress through their grade level bands. Consequently, the length of long-term suspension days will likely increase.

Equally important, DAEP has enrolled students suspended for 180 days pending expulsion. By extending DAEP's enrollment period, students with longer suspensions can take advantage of DAEP services beyond the currently allotted 45-day limit.

**B. Providing an Online Option**

Providing an online option for DAEP services will increase access to families with transportation issues. Over the last three years, approximately 40% of families referred to DAEP,

declined DAEP services due to transportation. Many families do not want their children using public transportation. An online option would allow these students similar services to those participating in the in-person program who receive both academic and social emotional support.

### **III. Objectives.**

The District's objectives for this change are (a) to improve access to DAEP by increasing the enrollment period for students whose long-term suspension extends beyond 45 days and (b) to improve access to DAEP by providing an online option for families who have transportation or personal constraints.

### **IV. USP Program Background.**

The District Alternative Education Program, which has become known by its acronym DAEP, was established in SY2015-16, as part of a multi-faceted, comprehensive effort under the USP to reduce the number of days a student is removed from classroom instruction through disciplinary suspension. The overall effort included strategies (a) to reduce the number of long-term suspensions, through more inclusive school environments, positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), restorative practices, in-school interventions, professional learning, and data monitoring and analysis, and (b) to provide fewer days away from classroom instruction once infractions occurred, through revisions to the Code of Conduct, DAEP and abeyance contracts.

DAEP offers an option for students to continue instruction after committing a violation of the Code of Conduct that requires a long-term suspension away from school as a consequence. The program is voluntary: the student and family make the election to enter DAEP as an alternative consequence to a traditional long-term suspension. Hearing officers are trained to offer the DAEP option to every eligible student. The program is designed to continue the

curriculum offered in the student's home classroom, with as little instructional interruption as practicable in the circumstances, until the student is permitted to return to the home classroom under the terms of the disciplinary consequence.

DAEP students work individually on lessons provided by the home schoolteacher, and the DAEP teacher supervises, supports and facilitates when there are questions from a student. Specifically, the student's work is designed, assigned, and graded by his or her home teacher. DAEP teachers assist through a guided-practice teaching model, where teachers circulate the classroom and support students as they complete assigned work. DAEP is limited to core subjects, as it has been from the start. The DAEP classroom affords a supervised setting to continue lessons from the home teacher, with Wi-Fi, technology and other equipment needed for DAEP's small group guided practice model. Students receive individual or small-group support as they work on their assignments.

The target classroom enrollment will not change, operating on a 1:10 teacher-to-student ratio. Students are provided breakfast and lunch every day. DAEP periods run from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. (with the exception of Wednesday, where DAEP students are released at 2:00 p.m. to allow for teacher collaboration), actually a small increase in daily program length over past years. The District continues to provide transportation for all students in DAEP.

Students also receive social-emotional learning ("SEL") lessons and a behavioral support component in a group setting for at least forty-five minutes per day, to teach DAEP students appropriate behaviors to assist as they re-acclimate into their home school. One exceptional education teacher is assigned exclusively to serve DAEP students.

V. **Impact Analysis: Impact on Protected Classes (AA, LatinX, including EL students).**

Overall, the changes will have a positive impact on all students. Extending the enrollment time limit and providing an online option will increase access to DAEP services for long-term suspended students. These two additional changes can better support the needs of families and the academics of the students during their suspensions. Additionally, these opportunities will maintain students' enrollment and may encourage families to keep their students in our district.

B. **Analysis of Impact on District Obligations under the USP**

1. *Compliance*

The internal compliance monitoring system regarding USP requirements and Court orders within the District will not be altered. Compliance requirements under the USP will continue and be maintained.

2. *Student Assignment*

The proposed changes to DAEP will not impact attendance boundaries, magnet school programs, mandated integration plans, or academic achievement plans for magnet or non-magnet schools. Students remain formally enrolled at their home school, and return to the home school after completing their assignment to DAEP. Accordingly, there is no anticipated effect on the Student Assignment requirements under the USP.

3. *Transportation*

The extended time limit and the online option will not affect transportation for DAEP or other students. The District will continue to provide transportation for all students to DAEP classrooms, as it did in SY2018–19. The average number of students needing transportation to DAEP classrooms will likely remain the same, and in any event is so tiny in comparison to the District's overall transportation effort as to render even a significant increase in DAEP transportation needs absorbable into the system without

measurable impact. The change in locations does not conflict with any requirement under the District's Transportation Plan (last revised in March 2021).

**4.**     *Admin/Certified Staff*

The proposed changes will not remove, eliminate, or otherwise impact obligations relating to administrators and certificated staff under the USP. DAEP is not a school, but rather a program, and thus does not have separate school-based requirements under the USP, but, in any event, the proposals in this PIA do not affect staffing for the program. The District will continue to comply with all USP requirements for recruiting, hiring, and retention for program staff. Accordingly, there is no anticipated effect on Admin/Certified Staff programs or obligations under the USP.

**5.**     *Quality of Education*

The District does not anticipate that the change in extending the time limit and providing an online option to DAEP will have any negative impact any of its programs or obligations under Section V of the USP. The changes will not require additional funding that might impact other programs under Section V.

**6.**     *Discipline*

As set forth above, DAEP remains a part of the District's multi-pronged effort to reduce the impact of exclusionary discipline on target subgroups. Every student facing a long-term suspension will be offered the opportunity to attend DAEP; hearing officers will continue to be trained accordingly. Additionally, as set forth above, the instructional model within DAEP will also not be altered by changing the DAEP time limit and providing an online option.

**7.**     *Family and Community Engagement*

The change in extending the time limit and adding an online option to DAEP will also not alter or affect the District’s compliance with the Family and Community Engagement requirements under the USP. The DAEP classrooms have co-existed peacefully together with the FACE Family Resource Center at the Southwest Educational Center and Menlo Park for years, with no adverse effects.

**8.**     *Extracurricular Activities*

The change in the DAEP time limit extension and online option will have no negative impact on the Extracurricular Activities requirements under the USP.

**9.**     *Facilities and Technology*

The change in the time limit extension and online option will not affect the District’s programs and commitments in the area of facilities or technology. There will be no impact on the DAEP students regarding the quality of facilities or technology. These locations all have classroom settings, with Wi-Fi, computers, projectors, technology and equipment that is equivalent to prior locations. The DAEP classrooms are an appropriate size to meet the needs of the program, with ample desks, large tables, white boards, bookshelves, and ample classroom supplies.

**10.**    *Accountability and Transparency*

The change to DAEP’s time limit extension and online option will have no negative impact on the Accountability and Transparency reporting requirements under the USP.

**C. Data Sources**

The District tracks attendance at each DAEP classroom, including the name of the student, the dates of attendance at DAEP and the home school of the student. Over the last two school years, an average of 30% of long-term suspended students enroll in DAEP. The number of long-term suspensions and DAEP enrollments are presented in **Table 1**.

**Table 1: *Long-Term Suspensions and DAEP Enrollment***

<b>School Year</b>	<b>22-23</b>	<b>23-24</b>
Total Long-Term Suspensions	434	416
DAEP Enrollment	134 (30%)	128 (30%)

**Extending the Enrollment Period**

Anecdotal data suggests a longer period of enrollment could improve the overall process and quality of DAEP. For most students, the 45-day enrollment limit is sufficient. However, for some students, whose long-term suspensions extend beyond 45 days, DAEP services expire so they will lose the opportunity to continue receiving the academic and emotional support that they need. This is the group of students that has initiated the extension of time in this proposal.

**Providing an Online Option**

The reasons for middle and high school students not enrolling in DAEP are represented **Table 2** and **Table 3** respectively. The top three reasons for not enrolling in DAEP are: being offered and accepting an Abeyance Contract, choosing to stay home, and lack of transportation.

**Abeyance Contracts**

The data suggests that one major reason for students not attending DAEP is due to placing students on an Abeyance Contract. An Abeyance Contract may be offered to students facing a suspension and decreases the number of days of their suspension and allows students to stay in school with no interruptions to their schooling. This data point does not indicate a need

for an online option since they are able to continue with classwork in school. However, the following two data points suggest a need for an online option.

### **Choosing to Stay Home**

There was a decrease in both middle and high school in 2023-2024 for parents choosing to keep their student at home. Forty-seven students (inclusive of middle and high school) stayed home resulting in an uncertainty of their academic progress. If those students had been provided an online option, academic loss could have been mitigated.

### **Transportation**

Transportation can be a hindrance for students, especially middle school students. Though the city bus transportation is available, some parents are opposed to having their child ride a city bus. In 2023-2024, 14 students stayed home to serve their suspension, resulting in an uncertainty of their academic progress. This data suggests adding an online option for DAEP services would academically benefit students choosing to stay home or who lack transportation.

**Table 2: Reasons for not attending DAEP - Middle School**

<b>Middle School</b>	<b>22-23</b>	<b>23-24</b>
Abeyance	43	24
Choosing to Stay Home	36	16
Lack of Transportation	36	11
Unable to contact parents/ No show	20	8
Withdrawn	4	7

**Table 3: Reasons for not attending DAEP – High School**

<b>High School</b>	<b>22-23</b>	<b>23-24</b>
Abeyance	33	23
Choosing to Stay Home	42	35
Lack of Transportation	14	3
Unable to contact parents/ No show	7	16
Withdrawn	12	12
Looking for out of district options	0	3



**D. Assumptions**

The analysis assumes that District enrollment in DAEP will increase due to the accessibility through the online option and the term length. Additionally, the foregoing analysis assumes that DAEP referral trends will continue as in previous years.

**E. Research-Based Sources**

The District reviewed available research for studies addressing exclusionary practices. Research on the impact of long-term suspensions on educational success generally highlights negative outcomes for students, both academically and socially. Long-term suspensions, which are often defined as suspensions lasting several days or weeks, can have lasting detrimental effects on students' academic achievement, emotional development, and future behavior. Key findings on this topic include:

**1. Academic Decline**

- **Missing Instruction:** Long-term suspensions typically remove students from the classroom for extended periods, resulting in missed instructional time. This lack of access to educational content can lead to significant gaps in learning, contributing to poor academic performance. Arcia (2006), indicates a strong association between low reading scores and the number of days students spent in suspension.

Arcia, E. (2006). Achievement and Enrollment Status of Suspended Students: Outcomes in a Large, Multicultural School District. *Education and Urban Society*, 38(3), 359-369. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124506286947>

- **Increased Risk of Falling Behind:** Studies show that students who are suspended for long periods often struggle to catch up with their peers once they return to school. They may have trouble mastering new content, and the accumulation of missed work can lower their overall grade point averages (Arcia, 2006).
- **Reduced Graduation Rates:** Research has found that students who are suspended frequently or for long durations are at a higher risk of dropping out of school. Long-term suspensions increase the likelihood that students will disengage from their education and may decrease the likelihood of graduation and increase dropout rates (Arcia, 2016; Lenderman & Hawkins, 2021).

Lenderman, K., & Hawkins, J. (2021). Out of the classroom and less likely to graduate: The relationship between exclusionary discipline and four-year graduation rates in Texas. *Texas Education Review*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.26153/tsw/13913>

## 2. Increased Behavioral Problems

- **Escalation of Problem Behaviors:** Long-term suspensions are often intended to correct disruptive behavior, but research indicates that they can exacerbate the problem. Students may view suspensions as a form of exclusion, which can increase feelings of alienation, resentment, and defiance toward school authority (Noguera, 2003; Cohen, et al., 2023).

Cohen, D. R., Lewis, C., Eddy, C. L., Henry, L., Hodgson, C., L. Huang, F., ... Herman, K. C. (2021). In-School and Out-of-School Suspension: Behavioral and Psychological Outcomes in a Predominately Black Sample of Middle School Students. *School Psychology Review*, 52(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966X.2020.1856628>

Noguera, P. A. (2003). Schools, Prisons, and Social Implications of Punishment: Rethinking Disciplinary Practices. *Theory Into Practice*, 42(4), 341–350. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4204\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4204_12)

- **School-to-Prison Pipeline:** Long-term suspensions are linked to the "school-to-prison pipeline," where students, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, are more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system. The lack of engagement with school can lead to further disciplinary problems and interaction with the justice system, which significantly hinders future opportunities. As students get older, the number and severity of infractions rise. For many, the cycle of punishment culminates in involvement with the law and the criminal justice system (Noguera, 2003).

### 3. Social and Emotional Consequences

- **Social Isolation:** Suspended students are often isolated from their peers and school community. This lack of social interaction can affect their emotional well-being, leading to feelings of loneliness and anxiety. Additionally, students who experience social exclusion are more likely to disengage from school and may develop negative attitudes toward education (Cohen, et al., 2023; Lenderman & Hawkins, 2021; Noguera, 2003).
- **Disrupted Relationships with Teachers:** Long-term suspensions can also strain relationships between students and teachers. These strained relationships can create barriers to learning, as trust and communication are critical for educational success (Cohen, et al., 2023).
- **Increased Risk of Future Suspensions:** Some research suggests that students who are suspended for extended periods are more likely to be suspended again in the future, creating a cycle of suspension and poor academic and behavioral outcomes (Noguera, 2003).
- **Disproportionate Suspension Rates:** Studies consistently show that Black, Latino, and Native American students, as well as students with disabilities, are disproportionately affected by long-term suspensions. These groups are often suspended at higher rates than their peers for similar offenses. The cumulative effect of suspensions on these students can further perpetuate educational inequities (Noguera, 2003).

- **Disparities in Academic Opportunities:** The students most affected by long-term suspensions often already face systemic barriers in education. As a result, the educational and social consequences of being suspended for extended periods are especially pronounced for these vulnerable groups (Noguera, 2003)

## **VI. Conclusion**

Extending the enrollment time limit will increase access to DAEP services for long-term suspended students and students recommended for expulsion. The online option will increase access to DAEP services for long-term suspended students who cannot attend the in-person program. Based on the foregoing, the District concludes that the proposed change to DAEP's time limit and providing an online option will not negatively impact the performance of DAEP or its role and efficacy in the District's overall effort to reduce the impact of exclusionary discipline on target student subgroups.

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Prepared by: Yolanda Nunez

Reviewed and Approved: Dr. Trujillo