Greater Essex County District School Board

Policy: Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)

Reference No: P-AD-56

O. Regulation 374/10, Supervised Alternative Learning and Other Excusals from Attendance at School enables boards to excuse students from fourteen to seventeen years of age from attending school while they continue to participate in learning under the supervision of the board or at a school of the board.

Greater Essex County District School Board

Regulation: Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)

Reference No: R-AD-56

The following regulation has been developed to assist families, students, school and board personnel in their respective responsibilities for the administration and implementation of Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL).

Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) may be used for students who are not otherwise excused under section 21 of the *Education Act*. It is intended to be for a small segment of the student population at risk of leaving or who have left school early, where various retention and/or engagement strategies are not effective or applicable.

SAL is a re-engagement strategy. Regulation 374/10 s.1 states that the requirement is for "an individualized program consisting of one or more activities" for every student.

The primary goal of SAL is to offer a program that is in the student's best interests, reflects the student's input, and supports the student in meeting goals both educational and personal to maintain a connection to learning.

Students leave school for various reasons, needs, and issues including but not limited to those listed:

- Family: the lack of parental/guardian support, to provide caregiver support, or in becoming parents themselves
- Economic: the need to financially assist in supporting their family or to provide for themselves and/or their own children
- Personal: physical and mental health concerns, substance abuse concerns, conflicts with those in authority of the law, or medical issues that interrupts their education
- School experience: not succeeding academically or socially, or an inability to transition back to school after an absence for a long period of time

1.0 DEFINITIONS

1.1 Student: any student between the ages of 14 and 18 years

1.2 Independent student: is included in the "parent/guardian" definition when the student is at least 16 years of age and has withdrawn from parental control.

1.3 Primary contact: an employee of the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) designated to monitor the student's progress while involved in the SAL program to enhance the student's potential for success.

1.4 Re-engagement attendance counsellor (RAC): is the staff member responsible for enforcing mandatory attendance for students of compulsory school age in secondary schools or alternative programs.

1.5 Assigned teacher: a teacher aligned to the SAL program.

1.6 SAL committee: the committee established by the school board to review and make decisions on application submitted for SAL. For the GECDSB, the committee

includes one (1) superintendent of education, one (1) trustee, one (1) administrator, one (1) SAL staff member, and one (1) member of the community.

1.7 Supervised Alternative Learning Plan (SALP): requirement for every student applying for SAL. Developed by the school team in consultation with the student and parent/guardian, the SALP outlines the student's educational and personal goals. It presents the required learning activities the student will participate in through an alternative learning format, lists supports identified to assist the student in addressing barriers to learning, includes methods for assessing progress, outlines the monitoring process and names the student's primary contact. Required activities should include a credit course(s) and may include life skill or other non-credit courses, job-related training and/or certifications, full or part-time employment, volunteering, counselling and any other activity that will help the student reach their education and/or personal goals. The principal is required to sign the SALP.

1.8 School team: the team includes guidance, student success teacher, school administrator and may include re-engagement attendance counsellor, social worker, assigned teacher and other staff as necessary.

A Family and Student Guide to SAL is available (Appendix 1). This document includes the timelines required by the Ministry of Education.

2.0 PRE-SAL

Principals/vice-principals are to use all programs at their disposal to engage students

2.1 Principal/Vice-Principal

- ensures all appropriate alternative options and community supports have been considered,
- ensures that if the student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), behaviour plan or safety plan, the accommodations and modifications are reviewed to optimize student learning,
- refers the student to the Re-engagement Attendance Counsellor and other appropriate supports, if needed, and
- ensures that the parent/guardian and student are informed about SAL as an option.

2.2 Parent/Guardian

- ensures his/her child attends school regularly until approved for SAL, and
- works with the school personnel to explore alternative options.

2.3 Student

- attends school regularly until approved, and
- works with the school personnel to explore alternative options.

2.4 Re-engagement Attendance Counsellor

- receives attendance referral, if appropriate,
- explores all options to improve attendance prior to SAL, and
- considers SAL as a possible solution.

2.5 School Team and Other Staff

- communicates with parent/guardian,
- identifies attendance concern and shares with the principal/vice-principal,
- works closely to address student's attendance concerns, and
- encourages student engagement.

3.0 REQUEST FOR SAL

After a discussion with principal/vice-principal and parent/guardian to pursue SAL, then they proceed to the application phase. If the parent/guardian wants to pursue SAL without a consultation with principal/vice-principal, then they complete Request for Supervised Alternative Learning (Appendix 2) and submit to principal/vice-principal.

4.0 APPLICATION FOR SAL AND DOCUMENT RETENTION

The principal has 15 school days from the receipt of the Request for Supervised Alternative Learning to submit the following forms to the SAL staff member at the board office:

- Request for Supervised Alternative Learning, if applicable (Appendix 2)
- Supervised Alternative Learning Plan (SALP) (Appendix 3A)
- Application for SAL–Employer, if applicable (Appendix 3B)
- Application for SAL–Mental Health Professional, if applicable (Appendix 3C)
- Consent to Release Information, if applicable (Appendix 3D)

Other Attachments:

- Credit summary (Student Credits)
- Medical notes which include start and end dates for the student to be excused from school or recommendations for a modified day
- If the principal receives the parent/guardian request and, is NOT in agreement, they must complete a written report outlining the reasons for their objection and providing recommendations for alternative programming for the student

Parent/Guardian or Independent Student

- completes the Request for Supervised Alternative Learning only if they want to pursue SAL without consultation with administration,
- completes other documentation as required by the principal,
- works with the designated member of the school team to develop the SALP as required,
- provides notes, letters and/or signed forms (e.g. employer, medical or mental health practitioners) as may be required and/or applicable, and
- may make no more than two requests for S.A.L. on behalf of a student in a school year; a second request for the same student in the same school year shall not be made until at least 60 school days have passed since the date the previous request was made.

Re-engagement Attendance Counsellor

- assists with the completion of all documentation, as required, for the SAL application process.

School Team and Other Staff

- assists the principal in the development of the SALP and the gathering of appropriate documentation for submission with the application (credit summary, community service hours, Literacy Test results, attendance report, and as required OSR review, IEP, etc.).

Community Partners

- contributes to the SALP by providing documentation such as "Application for S.A.L. – Employer" (Appendix 3B), if applicable.
- contributes to the SALP by providing documentation such as "Application for S.A.L. Mental Health Professional" (Appendix 3C), if applicable.

5.0 SAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- convenes for the purpose of reviewing SAL applications, approving, modifying or denying applications in meetings chaired by the Superintendent of Education.
- conducts city and county in-person meetings and, in rare circumstances, by teleconference, if required.
- makes decisions at the committee meeting or upon deliberation.
- notifies the parent/guardian, student and principal of the decision of the committee within 5 school days.
- notifies the employer, or mental health professional of the decision of the committee, if applicable.
- addresses requests for re-consideration of a decision by a parent/guardian within 20 days of receipt of the request.
- arranges for year-end review meetings for the renewal of SAL where the parent/guardian agree with the principal's recommendation; where there is a disagreement, in-person meetings are held, following the same process and timelines as SAL review meetings.
- determines and publishes on the board calendar the monthly dates for both the city and county SAL meetings in June or at the beginning of September, with meetings subject to change.

The parent/guardian and student are asked to attend meetings during which their application will be reviewed. They may choose to have a support person join them or to have that person attend in their place. The support person has the same rights to attend and be heard as the student or parent/guardian. Appointments may proceed if the parent/guardian and/or student do not attend but typically the appointment will be rescheduled.

6.0 SALP IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The Supervised Alternative Learning Plan (SALP) approved by the SAL Committee is implemented by school and as required, board staff within the specified timelines.

Monitoring of the student's involvement in SAL will be determined by the student's primary contact and consultation with the school team and confirmed by the SAL committee. By Ministry of Education definition, contact must be successful contact during which the primary contact speaks with the student. Although regular monitoring occurs, some students may require more frequent contact at different times during their involvement in SAL.

6.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- ensures that the SALP is implemented in the timelines approved by the SAL Committee,
- receives updates from the primary contact, and
- reviews SALP when there are significant changes (e.g. employment ceases and not seeking another employment opportunity or the student is not complying with the SALP).

Primary Contact (as determined by the principal at school level)

- communicates with the student at least monthly to monitor their compliance with the SALP,
- completes a site visit at least once per semester for employment / volunteer locations, if applicable,
- completes the Student Contact Log,
- communicates with the principal any concerns regarding the student's compliance with the SALP, and
- assists the student in addressing any concerns which become apparent or arranges for the student to be referred to appropriate board or community resources.

Parent/Guardian

- maintains communication with the primary contact, as required,
- supports their child's participation in the alternative program, and
- advises the primary contact of any concerns which impacts the SALP and may require consideration for intervention and/or support (e.g. loss of employment).

Student

- participates in the alternative program,
- maintains regular communication with the primary contact, as required,
- advises the primary contact and assigned teachers of any concerns which impacts the SALP and may require consideration for intervention and/or support (e.g. loss of employment), and
- if the student turns 18 between January and June, they may continue to participate in SAL until the SALP expires or is terminated.

School Team and Other Staff

- assists in the implementation of the SALP, as required, and
- advises the primary contact of any concerns which may impact the SALP and may require consideration for intervention and/or support (e.g. changed circumstances).

Trustee

- member of the SAL committee, and
- are appointed by the Board of Trustees (one city, one county representative and alternate)

Superintendent

- chair of the SAL committee,
- organization of meetings and overall process,
- liaisons with community agencies, and
- communicates decisions.

Community Partner (if applicable)

- maintains regular contact with the primary contact, as required, and
- advises the primary contact of concerns which impact the SALP and may require consideration for further intervention and/or support.

7.0 REVIEW, RENEWAL AND TRANSITION PLANNING

All SALPs expire on or before June 30th of the current school year.
The SALP is intended to be a working document that is reviewed and revised as appropriate.

The SALP, which describes the student's program, must be reviewed at least 15 school days before the plan expires. However, it is recommended that the SALP be reviewed at least once per semester and whenever a change is required.

After the review, the principal may recommend that the SAL Committee renew the SALP for a maximum of one year.

If the SALP is terminated or not renewed, a transition plan will be developed that supports the student's transition from SAL to their next step.

7.1 Review of the SALP

It is important that input from the student during each review of the SALP include the student's confirmation of intention to return to school or to remain on SAL.

If the primary contact thinks that it would be in the student's best interest to substantially modify the SALP, the primary contact will:

- review the proposed modifications with the principal, the student, the parent/guardian
- make the modifications to the plan if the SAL committee agrees

The principal provides copies of the modified SALP to the student, parent/guardian and SAL Committee.

7.2 Review Process

The review of the SALP is a process that is reviewed over time, and requires the collaboration of the parent/guardian, student, school staff and as required, those from community agencies, each with their own roles and responsibilities.

Principal

- reviews the primary contact's report on the student's SALP a minimum of 15 school days before it expires, with recommendations that the SALP be renewed, modified or terminated,
- reviews the primary contact's report which includes input from student, parent/guardian and others (as required), and

- files the original updated SALP in the OSR.

Primary Contact responsible for the student's SALP:

- maintains regular contact with the student, the assigned teacher and others who are associated with the student as part of the monitoring process,
- provides regular updates to the school team and principal, and
- prepares a report reviewing the student's SALP.

School Team

- reviews the progress of students on SAL.

Parent/Guardian, Student and School Staff

- participate in the review of the SALP, as required.

Community Agency or Employer (if applicable)

- provides input to the review of the SALP, as required.

7.3 Renewal of SAL

Before the SALP expires, the principal may recommend that the SAL Committee renew the SALP for a maximum of one year without requiring the student or parent/guardian to appear at the SAL Committee meeting. This recommendation is based on:

- reviews of the SALP,
- monitoring and progress reports,
- input by school and board staff, and
- written consent of the student and parent/guardian.

The SAL Committee decision must be made within 20 school days of the receipt of the principal's recommendation. The decision options are as follows:

- renew SAL for up to one school year (one time only), without the need for another application or revised SALP (Note: all SALPs expire on or before June 30th of the current year), or
- convene a SAL Committee meeting, including the student and parent/guardian, or
- not renew SAL and the transition plan is followed.

If the plan is expiring and, in the opinion of the principal, the best option for the student is to return to a regular school, or if the student is no longer of compulsory school age, no recommendation for renewal is made to the SAL Committee.

If the decision is made not to renew SAL, the school will:

- develop a transition plan for the student and
- update, if necessary, other educational plans (e.g. IEP) to reflect the change in the student's program and/or placement.

8.0 REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Within 10 school days of receiving the committee's decision, a parent/guardian or independent student may request, and submit in writing to the principal, a reconsideration of the decision.

Within 20 school days, the committee must meet to reconsider the request. Those who were in attendance at the initial SAL meeting are entitled to receive a notice of this meeting and to attend. Please refer to section 5.0 for full explanation of responsibilities.

9.0 TRANSITION PLAN

Transition plans are developed when SAL is terminated or not renewed, to support the student's transition from SAL to their next steps. A transition plan, required for every student in SAL, assists the student in making a successful transition from SAL to a regular school, to an alternative education program, or to the next step after secondary school**.**

9.1 The transition plan will:

- involve the student, parent/guardian, principal, primary contact and others as necessary,
- be coordinated by the primary contact,
- clarify roles and responsibilities of the student, parent/guardian, various members of the school team and if applicable community partners,
- build on student's identified strengths, needs and interests,
- include timetable adjustments and monitoring during the transition period,
- establish timelines for each aspect of the plan, and
- include staff members from the new school location for consultation and meetings.

9.2 The transition plan identifies:

- specific goals,
- aspects of the transition that are realistic and that reflect the strengths, needs and interests of the student,
- social and emotional supports, and/or
- guidance and career counselling.

The transition plan is filed in the OSR.

See Also:

Appendix 1	Supervised Alternative Learning – Family and Student Guide
Appendix 2	Request for Supervised Alternative Learning
Appendix 3B	Application for SAL – Employer
Appendix 3C	Application for SAL – Mental Health Professional
Appendix 3D	Consent to Release Information

R-AD-56

Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)

A Family & Student Guide to SAL

Supervised Alternative Learning Program (SAL) is for students ages 14 to 17 who are at risk of leaving school early.

The program:

- could be an option to help students experience success and re-engage with learning
- allows students, parent/guardian, school and the board to determine an appropriate individualized plan to support students in learning that is based on their strengths and needs
- could be considered after various school and board retention strategies have been attempted

Program Description

The program is suitable for students who:

- may have had numerous unauthorized absences from school
- may have experienced a lack of academic success
- may have a job or be interested in working
- may be interested in continuing to earn credits through enrolment in one or more courses at the home school, an alternative school or online
- may require intensive counseling or medical treatment before they can fully engage in learning
- have not responded to early interventions at the home school

While in SAL, students will have a Supervised Alternative Learning Plan (SALP) which will enable them to progress towards obtaining their Ontario Secondary School Diploma or achieving other educational and personal goals.

SAL allows the student, parent/guardian, school and board to determine an appropriate individualized plan to support the student in learning, based on the student's strengths and needs. The activities provided are those that enable continued learning in a planned process. Returning to their home school or entering the board's alternative education programs is the goal.

Requirements of being on SAL

Students who are approved to be on SAL are required to:

- follow their SALP, which could include taking courses, being employed, meeting regularly with SAL teacher, regularly attending counseling
- meet the timelines for completion of course work
- communicate with their primary contact
- attend meeting and activities aligned with their SALP

If the student is not adhering to the SALP, the transition plan, which was developed within the SALP, must be followed. This could include the student being removed from SAL with an expectation for the student to return to their home school.

Admission Process

Referrals to the SAL program must be made through the student's home school.

Please contact your home school or visit the Regulation - Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) for more information. We are happy to help you!

REQUEST FOR SUPERVISED ALTERNATIVE LEARNING (SAL)

Please submit to Principal / Vice-Principal

Requested by:

- ☐ **Independent Student**
- ☐ **Parent / Guardian**

School Name: _____

Student:

Name: _____ OEN # _____

Address with postal code: _____

DOB: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

Phone number: _____

Parent/Guardian:

Name: _____

Last day of attendance: _____

Reason for applying:

- ☐ **Employment/volunteer opportunity**
- ☐ **Life skills**
- ☐ **Certification** ☐ **Credit** ☐ **Non credit**
- ☐ **Diploma** ☐ **Credit** ☐ **Non credit**
- ☐ **Personal interest**

Pathways:

- ☐ **Employment Destination Program**
- ☐ **Workplace/Locally Developed**
- ☐ **Apprenticeship**
- ☐ **College/Applied**
- ☐ **University/Academic**

Comments:

_____

_____ _____

Independent Student signature Parent/Guardian signature

_____ _____

Date Date

Greater Essex County District School Board
SUPERVISED ALTERNATIVE LEARNING (SAL)
Employer Form

Under the *Education Act*, youth must attend school until the age of 18, and employers are prohibited from employing youth during school hours UNLESS the student is approved to be excused from school to pursue employment. Youth, 14 to 17 years old may be excused from school to attend Supervised Alternative Learning programs which may include Employment (*Education Act*, ss. 21 and 30, Ontario Regulation 374/10 "Supervised Alternative Learning and Other Excusals from Attendance at School").

Please complete this employment agreement which expresses your interest to offer employment for the student as named in this application. This declares your willingness to adhere to the guidelines in the following "Employer Agreement Section."

This employer agreement is undertaken under the provision of Section 10, Subsection 7 of *The Education Act* 1980 and on the understanding that there is no contravention of the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act 2002, or the Ontario Work Place Safety Insurance Act 2001 (see reverse).

EMPLOYER AGREEMENT:

If the SAL Committee approves the student's application for SAL, the employer will be notified that the student is permitted to be employed. It the student's work placement in SAL is approved, the employer agrees to the following:

- Monthly contact between the school board primary contact person as named in the approval letter and the employer contact person named on this form.
- Contact with the student once per semester, during work hours at their work site. The date and time for the visits will be arranged by the school board primary contact and the employer contact as named in this agreement.
- Telephone notification within 5 days of the end of the student's employment by the employer contact to the student's school primary contact. The name of the person reporting this information, the business name, name of the SAL student, and the date and reason employment ceased is required.
- The student will be covered under my Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Plan during the period of their employment.
- The student is of compulsory school age. Consent to be absent from school may be automatically withdrawn if the employment conditions change.
- The student is old enough to engage in the employment as described above and will not be placed in a work situation that contravenes the Employment Standards Act, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Act or the Occupation Health and Safety Act.

Signature of Employer	Title	Name Printed	Date Signed

Greater Essex County District School Board
SUPERVISED ALTERNATIVE LEARNING (SAL)
Employer Form

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____
First Name, Last Name

Home School: _____

EMPLOYER INFORMATION:

Name of Business: _____

Mailing Address of Business: _____ Town/City: _____ Postal: _____

Student's Work Location Address (if different): _____

Telephone Number of Business: _____ Alternate Phone No: _____

Supervisor/ Supervisor Contact Person: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name _____ Title _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Type of Business: _____

Brief Description of Job/Student Duties:

_____

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

Hours per week: _____

Duration: Seasonal ☐ Annual ☐

Start Date: _____ Projected End Date: _____ Starting Rate of Pay: $ _____

EMPLOYER ACTION REQUIRED:

1. Retain a copy of this application for your files.
2. Submit this form to the Greater Essex County District School Board by a) requesting that the student return the form to the school or b) you may forward a copy electronically to:

Greater Essex County District School Board
SUPERVISED ALTERNATIVE LEARNING (SAL)
Mental Health Professional Form

Under the *Education Act*, youth must attend school until the age of 18 or graduation. However, 14 to 17 year old youth may be excused from school to attend supervised alternative learning programs which may include addressing barriers to learning (*Education Act*, ss. 21 and 30, Ontario Regulation 374/10 "Supervised Alternative Learning").

Please complete this agreement which expresses your interest to provide mental health intervention for the under-signed student. This declares your willingness to adhere to the guidelines as outlined below in the "agreement section".

Student:

Name: _____ D.O.B. _____

Address: _____

School: _____

Mental Health Professional:

Name: _____

Address of Business: _____

Telephone Number of Business: _____

E-mail address: _____

Brief Description of Intervention:

Mental Health Intervention:

Frequency of sessions: _____

Starting Date: _____

(It is understood that frequency and type of intervention may change to address the specific needs of the student)

Agreement:

If the SAL Committee approves the application, you will be notified of the student's permission to be out of school to receive counselling intervention. If approved, you agree to the following:

Contact will take place between the primary contact identified by the Committee, and noted in the approval letter, and the above named student to ensure compliance with the mental health intervention.

The above named professional will inform the primary contact by telephone within five school days of cessation of mental health intervention of the above named student. At that time please state your name, the name of the student, and the date and reason intervention ceased.

Signature of Student	Signature of the Mental Health Professional
Signature of Parent/Guardian	Print name of Mental Health Professional
Date	Date

Greater Essex County District School Board

CONSENT TO OBTAIN / RELEASE INFORMATION

Complete electronically or print and complete in ink

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student's name: _____ **Date of Birth (yr/m/d):** _____

School: _____

CONSENT

I authorize the following person to provide consent:

Parent/legal guardian or student age 16 or older _____

Information regarding the student named above may be shared between:

School & designated and/or personnel _____

And name of agency designates and/or personnel _____

TYPE OF INFORMATION SHARING

☐ **Discussion –** Allows for ongoing discussion between individuals

☐ **Release -** Enables the school to release information/reports to agency

☐ **Copy of records (specify)**

_____

☐ **Obtain-** Enables the school to obtain copies of specific reports/information from agency for inclusion in OSR

☐ **Copy of records (specify)**

_____

☐ **For the purpose of:** Description of why the information is required and specific e.g. to help transition student to school.

_____

☐ **Other (please specify)** _____

CONSENT SIGNATURES

_____ _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian/Independent Student | Witness, 16 years of age or older

_____ _____

Signature of Student | Date

CONSENT UPDATE

☐ As stated above

☐ Additional information to be obtained/release:

Witness, 16 years of age or older Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian/Students 16 or older _____

Date (yr-m-d)

The witness must be a person other than family member. All signatures must be in ink. This form is valid for six months from most recent date signed.

Greater Essex County District School Board

Instructions for Ensuring Informed Consent for the Release of Confidential Information

These instructions accompany the "Consent to Obtain / Release Information" form. To complete this consent, a parent, guardian and student must be fully informed and clearly understand the following:

- What specific information is to be disclosed. The specific type of information should be indicated, for example: Psychiatric information, Psychological information, Physiotherapy information, Occupational Therapy information, Social Work information and/or Speech-Language information. Parents, guardians or students where applicable have the right to determine which information is to be released and need to be informed about which information is relevant for the purpose specified (see below). They also need to be aware that limiting access to pertinent information can make it difficult to meet the student's needs appropriately.

- To whom the information will be disclosed. The person to receive the information should be specified on this line.

The signed consent is time-limited. The consent to release the information is valid for no more than six months and may be specified to be less than six months or rescinded at any time.