

SOAR

**Bald Knob Public School's
Alternative Learning
Program**

“Standing Out Above the Rest”

Student Handbook

2013-2014

Mission Statement

The SOAR program, in cooperation with the home and community, will provide the opportunity and encouragement for each student to meet his/her educational needs. We will make available to our students the tools necessary to achieve the highest levels of success in current and future challenges, both in academics and life skills. We will accept each of our students as a unique individual and encourage them toward the development of social, emotional, and civic accountability, enabling each to contribute positively to society.

How do we achieve these goals?

Attendance:

Students are more likely to attend because of the small group setting and because they are learning more than just academics. They are learning how to be responsible and respectful. They are also learning how to change their behaviors and how to improve their grades. The SOAR attendance policy will follow guidelines of the Bald Knob High School Handbook.

Behavior:

The SOAR teacher will work with students on identifying inappropriate behaviors and triggers that may be causing them. They will develop strategies for preventing that behavior and replacing the less desirable behaviors with more appropriate ones.

Character:

SOAR students will participate in a character education each week. This will focus on a different character quality each week. Community based projects will be developed each semester to provide students with the opportunity to serve as productive member of the community and to help develop a sense of social awareness which includes the needs of their community.

Scores:

SOAR students will receive direct instruction from highly qualified teachers, as well as have the opportunity to improve social skills, participate in character education, receive additional help with academics, and have access to mental health care services. Because of all these programming features, we believe classroom scores and outcomes on standardized tests will improve.

Physical Needs: Each SOAR student will have access to medical services provided by the Bald Knob school nurse. The SOAR staff will help link students to the proper agency if any physical need such as food, housing, clothing, etc, is identified.

Academic Needs:

Academic needs will be assessed by the SOAR team. This team will help determine what interventions would best meet each student's needs.

Social Needs:

Each SOAR student's social needs will be identified by the On Target team. In the event that additional services are needed the counselor and/or human services worker will assist the family in accessing services. School-based mental health care services will be available to all SOAR students if needed.

Structure of the Program:**Intake Process**

Students may be referred to SOAR in several different ways. Students may be identified during grade level meetings. Others may be referred by a teacher, counselor, or principal. A referral form will be filled out and sent to the principal along with the student's class schedule, grades and APSCN Discipline Report.

See *Referral Criteria and Checklist/ Appendix A*.

If the committee determines a need for an expedited referral for SOAR is necessary, the members assemble and complete the SOAR referral. Each committee member must sign including the parent.

When all required components of the referral are completed, the referral is sent to the SOAR Director. The referral is presented to the Alternative Education Placement Team. The Alternative Education Placement Team consists of the District SOAR Director/ Director of Special Services, School Counselor, one or more Classroom Teacher(s) and/or Special Education Teacher(s), Parent or Guardian, and Student. Any others that may provide relevant information about the student may also be invited. The school maintains documented efforts to contact the parent or guardian to participate in the placement meeting at the convenience of the parent or guardian in the student's Student Action Plan (SAP).

The team reviews the referral and determines if the student is eligible for placement in the SOAR program. Students who are placed in SOAR shall exhibit at least two of the following characteristics:

- Disruptive behavior
- Drop out from school
- Personal or family problems or situations
- Recurring absenteeism
- Transition to or from residential programs

For the purposes of SOAR, personal or family problems or situations are conditions that negatively affect the student's academic and social progress. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in literacy and mathematics

- Abuse: physical, mental, or sexual
- Frequent relocation of residency
- Homelessness
- Inadequate emotional support
- Mental/physical health problem
- Pregnancy
- Single parenting

A student with an IEP, 504 plan, or any other special programming needs will be accommodated in the SOAR classroom.

The Alternative Education Placement Team will establish an intake date and time that is no later than one (1) week after a student has been placed in SOAR. When the intake conference is held, the SOAR Director, parent, and student will sign an agreement outlining the responsibilities of the SOAR program, parent or guardian, and the student to provide assurance that the plan for the student is successful. In addition, the SOAR Director will review the point level system, arrival and dismissal procedures, attendance policy, mental health services available, and the exit criteria with the parent and student. The parent and student will review the student's transcript and coordinate the student's schedule with the school counselor. The school counselor will enroll the student in the appropriate classes. Upon enrollment in SOAR, the counselor will assist the student to his/her first SOAR class. See *ALE Agreement/Appendix A*.

The student is assessed before entry into the SOAR program. Members of the Alternative Education Placement Team assess the student's current functioning abilities and all relevant social, emotional, academic, career, and behavioral information. The Alternative Education Placement Team will develop a Student Action Plan (SAP). The SAP will consist of intervention services to be provided to address the student's specific educational needs and, if appropriate, the student's behavioral needs. In addition, goals and objectives necessary to achieve positive reintegration into the regular educational environment will be stated in the student's Student Action Plan outlining the intervention services to be provided to the student. Goals and objectives will be monitored quarterly, or more frequently if necessary, to ensure progression toward the goals. Modifications or adjustments to the goals will be made as found appropriate. Exit criteria will be identified and included in the SAP, which will provide a base for a student's return to the regular educational environment. Students have access to staff members, principal, and school-based counselor. See *ALE Exit Criteria/Appendix A*.

Progress:

After placement in SOAR, the student's goals and objectives will be monitored quarterly, or more frequently if necessary, to ensure progression toward the goals. Students meet with staff and counselor on a regular basis to discuss their progress. Modifications or adjustments to the goals will be made as found appropriate. Progress is monitored through reviewing report cards,

test scores, individual educational plans, if applicable, intervention meetings, behavior plans, and reports from SOAR faculty and staff. Any member of the Alternative Education Placement Team may at any time request a meeting to discuss the progress of a student. This meeting will be set up within one (1) week of the request.

Transition Monitoring:

When a student meets the exit criteria established in the individual student's SAP, the Alternative Education Placement Team will meet and to create a behavior or transition plan to assist in a smooth transition to the regular educational environment. Transition is monitored for 10-20 academic days with daily communication between program staff and building level teachers (e-mail, phone, and student transition form).

In order to be considered for return to the regular education environment, a student must meet the following criteria in addition to the individualized criteria established in the student's SAP:

- Achieve at the appropriate behavioral level for a full nine weeks
- Attendance is in compliance with the Bald Knob School District student handbook attendance policy
- Discipline meets the established guidelines for behavior in the SOAR student handbook
- Maintain a C average in the four core subjects and have the appropriate number of credits for a regular education student at the same grade level
- Student and teacher/principal narrative stating progress on the goals and objectives established in the student's SAP

During the transition time, the SOAR Director will communicate daily with the SOAR staff and regular classroom teachers through email, phone and classroom visits. If a student demonstrates concerns, the student is returned to the SOAR environment to address behavior, academics and the need for continued support.

SOAR is an available program for all students who meet two or more of the at-risk characteristics. It is also an intervention program that seeks to aid students who have been unsuccessful in the traditional school setting. Discipline is handled on site with an administrator following the SOAR Handbook. All students are treated as valuable individuals with the goal to help the student become successful.

Supportive:

All students are treated as valuable individuals with the goal to help a student become successful in the classroom and the real world setting. The SOAR classroom provides student access to an array of instructional supports: smaller class sizes, mental health resources, flexible scheduling, flexible learning environment to allow for more physical movement opportunities, hands-on instruction, behavior modification, and daily social skills. The SOAR classroom is staffed by licensed teachers who provide curriculum that is appropriately aligned with the general education curriculum. Students will be taught not only the traditional curriculum but also the necessary social skills: communication, conflict resolution, anger management, stress management, decision making, empathy, character education, classroom routines, listening skills, following directions and goal setting. In addition, the school resource officer will be available to help guide the student with good choices.

Technology:

The classroom teacher will enhance instruction in the SOAR classroom with appropriate technology. Students have access to an individual computer daily. The computer has internet accessibility and can be used for research, reports, presentations, tutorials, remediation, etc.

Curriculum:

All instruction is supervised and performed by certified personnel and follows the state adopted Arkansas Frameworks and Common Core State Standards. Curriculum maps and unit plans have been developed in core content areas and are utilized to assist in the progression of the taught Arkansas Frameworks and Common Core State Standards. The core teachers provide the SOAR staff with course outlines and grading period lessons which are used to guide academic instruction in the SOAR classrooms. Block classes such as art, library, music, computer lab, and physical education are also daily activities for the SOAR students.

The Bald Knob School District has adopted MAP for quarterly assessments in reading, math, and language. The MAP assessment results are aligned with our web-based remediation/intervention program, Classworks, to address individual student's needs by prescription within the Classworks program. This program, along with the MAP assessment results will enable the SOAR teacher to further isolate areas of need for individual students in the SOAR program.

Instructional Methods:

The instructional methods utilized in the SOAR program are differentiated to meet student needs:

- Lecture

- Cooperative learning
- Modeling
- Assistance from inclusion teachers
- Direct instruction
- Peer tutoring

Transition to Regular Campus

Prior to returning to the campus the student must:

1. Provide proof of completion of the Program and responsible behavior (project) (Secondary)
2. Provide a written paper explaining what behavior has changed and taking responsibility for the behaviors that resulted in the placement into SOAR (Secondary)
3. SOAR staff will set final transition meeting with building Principal, Counselor and student to address transition plan and return to the traditional campus
4. Student must have level 4 to be considered for transition
5. Student must maintain level 4, moving to level 5 for 20 days of sustained behavior and academic success
6. Prior to transition the SOAR teacher will meet with the core teachers to determine current classroom lessons
7. SOAR staff will begin using lessons and content being taught in the general setting during the level 4 period (traditional education)
8. SOAR staff will set a meeting with the Principal and General Education teachers prior to transition starting
9. Counselor will be informed and begin working with student on goals for returning to school
10. Counselor and SOAR teacher will develop a PLAN for transition
11. At level 5 student will begin transition
 1. 1st week ½ day transition
 2. 2nd week full day transition
 3. 3rd week SOAR to monitor student progress
 4. 4th week student is released back to general setting
12. If at any point during the transition the student demonstrates concerns the student will return to the SOAR setting at level 4 and begin transition process over
13. The process begins at day 1 of level 4
14. A student is NOT eligible for transition if they are failing academically, regardless of level

Discipline:

Students and staff require a safe and orderly learning environment that is conducive to high student achievement. Certain student behaviors are unacceptable in such an environment and are hereby prohibited by the Board. Prohibited behaviors include, but shall not be limited to the following.

1. Disrespect for school employees and failing to comply with their reasonable directions or otherwise demonstrating insubordination;
2. Disruptive behavior that interferes with orderly school operations;
3. Willfully and intentionally assaulting or threatening to assault or physically abusing any student or school employee;
4. Possession of any weapon that can reasonably be considered capable of causing bodily harm to another individual;
5. Possession or use of tobacco in any form on any property owned or leased by any public school;
6. Willfully or intentionally damaging, destroying, or stealing school property;
7. Use of any paging device, beeper, or similar electronic communication devices, cameras, MP3 players, iPods, and other portable music devices on the school campus during normal school hours (unless stored in silent mode in the student's locker or vehicle) unless specifically exempted by the administration for health or other compelling reasons;
8. Possession, selling, distributing, or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, any illegal drug, unauthorized inhalants, or the inappropriate use or sharing of prescription or over the counter drugs, or other intoxicants, or anything represented to be a drug;
9. Inappropriate public displays of affection;
10. Cheating, copying, or claiming another person's work to be his/her own;
11. Gambling;
12. Inappropriate student dress;
13. Use of vulgar, profane, or obscene language or gestures;
14. Truancy;
15. Excessive tardiness;
16. Engaging in behavior designed to taunt, degrade, or ridicule another person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, or disability;
17. Possess, view, distribute or electronically transmit sexually explicit or vulgar images or representations, whether electronically, on a data storage device, or in hard copy form;
18. Hazing, or aiding in the hazing of another student;
19. Gangs or gang-related activities, including belonging to secret societies of any kind, are forbidden on school property. Gang insignias, clothing, "throwing signs" or other gestures associated with gangs are prohibited;
20. Sexual harassment; and
21. Bullying.

Each Individual student enrolled in the SOAR program will have a Student Action Plan (SAP). Behavior goals will be addressed on an individual basis as appropriate.

The Bald Knob School Handbook is followed for infractions – Principal discretion for In school suspension or suspension that results in out of school time for student

- In school suspension isolation will be in SOAR – no longer than 2 days at a time
- Point and level system is followed consistently
- Point and Level System
 - ✘ Students earn points based on rules

- ✘ Student actions must maintain a safe environment for self and others
- ✘ Words must be appropriate
- ✘ Behave in a manner that is appropriate in public
- ✘ Behave in manner that allows program activities to continue smoothly
- ✘ Interact positively with staff and peers

Point and Level System

- ✘ Students earn level based on maintenance of points over time
- ✘ Level 1 – 15 consecutive days of maintenance
- ✘ Level 2 – 15 consecutive days of maintenance
- ✘ Level 3 – 15 consecutive days of maintenance
- ✘ Level 4 – 20 consecutive days of maintenance
- ✘ Level 5 – 5 consecutive days of maintenance

ALE Building level

- ✘ Removal of privileges
- ✘ Automatic level drop
- ✘ Parent contact
- ✘ Parent and student conference
- ✘ Isolation/ In SOAR classroom for up to 2 days
- ✘ Removal from SOAR classroom for 1 day with work sent home (emergency)

Consortia School Campus level – involves SOAR Director and Consortia School

Principal

- ✘ SOAR teacher completes incident report which is provided to the SOAR Director
- ✘ Consortia school Principal and SOAR Director complete required discipline action
 - ✘ Student may be placed in isolation during the investigation of the incident
 - ✘ Levels of disciplinary actions by consortia home campus and Bald Knob School District will be reviewed
 - ✘ Isolation may be final decision
 - ✘ Parent phone contact/conference
 - ✘ Out of school suspension (principal and the SOAR director decide amount of days)

If a student is a danger to self or others the SOAR Director may send home for the remainder of the school day and next day only (notify Principal)

Consortia School District Level Discipline – involves SOAR Director, Consortia School Principal, and Consortia School Superintendents.

1. Expulsion – will only be used when the pattern of behavior/noncompliance is such and of duration, with intervention as to impede the student’s progress in the program.

2. Prior to consideration of expulsion the Superintendent, Principal and SOAR Director will address alternatives that may be available to ensure the student remains in school
 - ✘ Homebound services
 - ✘ Day school placement
 - ✘ Residential placement

Extra Curricular Participation:

Students placed in the SOAR program based on the result of disciplinary infractions are not eligible to participate in or attend school athletics, activities, student groups, and special school functions. At level 3, students will be considered on an individual basis. Students placed for non-disciplinary reasons will be considered eligible with specific requirements within the individual plans.

Transportation:

Transportation to and from the SOAR campus will be provided by the student's home district. The SOAR program's school day starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Attendance will be reported to the student's home district daily by the SOAR staff.

Meals:

Students transported to the Bald Knob campus will eat lunch in the Bulldog Café daily. Lunch money will be paid to the home district.

APPENDIX A

SOAR FORMS

ALE Referral

Criteria for Admission

STUDENT NAME: _____ DATE: ____/____/____

Eligible students shall exhibit two (2) or more of the characteristics identified in the checklist below.

Students placed at risk, though intelligent and capable, typically manifest one or more of the following characteristics:

- ____ Disruptive behavior
- ____ Drop out from school
- ____ Personal problems or situations
- ____ Family problems or situations
- ____ Recurring absenteeism
- ____ Transition to or from residential programs

Program: _____

Situations that negatively affect the student's academic and social progress may include, but are not limited to:

- ____ Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in literacy
- ____ Ongoing, persistent lack of attaining proficiency levels in math
- ____ Suspected or confirmed abuse: physical, mental, or sexual
- ____ Frequent relocation of residency
- ____ Homelessness
- ____ Inadequate emotional support
- ____ Mental/physical health problems
- ____ Pregnancy
- ____ Single parenting
- ____ Other: _____

REFERRAL CHECKLIST

- Teacher/s and parents have met to discuss student concerns**
- Statement of academic, social and behavioral concerns seen by teacher/s**
- Social Developmental History**
- ADHD and/or Behavior Rating Scale (*as applicable*)**
- Documentation of strategies and interventions that have been implements**
- Current grades**
- Class schedule**
- Attendance records**
- Discipline records**
- Student Interest Survey**
- Reading and Math Skills Inventory
(i.e. Brigance Employability Skills Inventory, MAP assessments)**
- If appropriate, copy of student 504 plan or IEP**
 - 504 Plan**
 - Individual Improvement Plan**
 - Special Education**
 - IEP**
 - Functional Analysis**
 - Behavior Intervention Plan**
- Transcript (*high school students only*)**
- Met with Principal**
- RtI Packet completed**
- Return to: ALE Director**

EXIT CRITERIA

Student: _____

Exit Date: _____

SOAR Classroom Entry Date: _____

Total number of school days enrolled in the SOAR Classroom this year? _____

Originating school: _____ Teacher: _____

Process for Exit: Respond "yes" or "no".

_____ Does the student have an IEP or 504? If no, consider the need for a referral.

_____ Consider the need for a behavior plan to transition into the general education classroom.

Exit Criteria:

- _____ Appropriate behavior level for a full nine weeks
- _____ Attendance is in compliance with the student handbook attendance policy
- _____ Discipline meets the established guidelines for behavior in the alternative learning environment student handbook
- _____ Maintain a C average in the four core subjects and have the appropriate number of credits for a regular education student at the same grade level
- _____ Student and teacher/principal narrative stating progress on the goals and objectives established in the student's SAP

Individual Student Action Plan Exit Criteria:

- _____ *(Type Individual Student Action Plan Exit Criteria)*
- _____ *(Type Individual Student Action Plan Exit Criteria)*
- _____ *(Type Individual Student Action Plan Exit Criteria)*
- _____ *(Type Individual Student Action Plan Exit Criteria)*

Committee Signatures:

Position:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Bald Knob School District

SOAR Program Agreement

Student's Name _____ Gender _____

D.O.B. _____ SS#/ID _____ Grade _____

Above named student will attend the alternative learning environment where he/she will participate in a program designed to assist him/her toward better social, behavioral, and academic school performance and adjustment. The school will provide my child with access to all support services available to other students. The student will be provided with the opportunity for needed school counseling services, as well as daily social skills instruction and other supports.

The length of time my child will be in the alternative learning environment will depend on his/her progress toward meeting the program goals. When my child demonstrates adequate achievement of specific goals, he/she will be eligible for committee review to determine if he/she is ready to transition to the original classroom placement prior to entering the alternative learning environment. When he/she has met all exit criteria, he/she will be dismissed from the program. This process is detailed in your copy of the Policy and Procedures for the alternative learning environment. By signing this agreement, you agree that you have received a copy of the Policy and Procedures.

Consequences are sometimes necessary to help a student learn to self-manage their behavior.

Consequences will be administered as needed by the SOAR staff.

My signature below reflects personal acknowledgement that my child is enrolled in the alternative learning environment and my child will participate ONLY in activities provided by the alternative learning environment which EXCLUDES participation by my child in extracurricular activities or field trips with the originating school as part of the alternative learning environment policy. In addition, as a means of assisting in my child's progress, I agree to attend all scheduled parent conferences and to read, sign and return communications that come home from school.

The best time/method to contact me is:

_____ during lunch: time _____ phone _____

_____ any time during the school day: phone _____

_____ during the evening: time _____ phone _____

_____ by email: email address: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____