



ALBANY LEADERSHIP

CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

A 6-12 Academy of Excellence

Parent Handbook Important Information

To maintain our high academic, cultural, and college-bound standards, ALCS students must:

1. Respect all members of the ALCS community.
2. Honor and practice ALCS' CLEAR values.
3. Adhere to all ALCS policies including the dress code, food/beverage, attendance/tardiness.
4. Attend school daily, arriving on time and remaining in school for the entire day.
5. Be prepared for every class by arriving with the necessary tools to successfully participate.
6. Focus on learning and leadership-development in every class.
7. Complete all assignments with academic honesty and integrity.
8. Reject and report any act of bullying.
9. Refrain from using electronic devices in the building during school hours.
10. Practice "I am my sister's keeper".

School Mission: Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls (ALCS) prepares young women to graduate from high school with the **academic and leadership skills** necessary to succeed in college and the career of their choosing.

School Vision: Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls will be a **recognized leader in single-sex secondary education for young women**. It will foster a **community of scholars** dedicated to life-long learning and committed to improving their communities through their pursuit of post- secondary endeavors.

School Purpose: Girls in urban America have been **negatively affected by a mediocre educational system, low expectations, and high drop-out rates**. Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls is charged to eliminate this historical reality with the support of the ALCS Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, families, and the community at large whose core values influence student success.

DRESS CODE

Every student MUST follow the dress code Monday through Friday. If there is a school event on the weekend, students will be advised of the uniform expectation accordingly.

To foster an environment where students focus on learning and to create a sense of community,

ALCS has a MANDATORY student dress code. Uniforms worn by students at ALCS reflect a level of professionalism we expect at ALCS (which is also expected in a formal work environment).

At the beginning of the day students must be in proper uniform. Upon exiting the building students are required to leave in full uniform unless they are in a work uniform.

Student uniforms should always be neat and tidy. This means that clothing is clean and pressed; shirts are tucked in; socks, if worn, are always pulled up, and stockings/pantyhose do not have holes or tears.

Students are not permitted to wear non-dress code clothing that is visible under their uniform.

The principal and/or principal's designee reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of students' dress with respect to the dress code and the commitment to preserving a distraction-free environment. **Students, at any time, are subject to being asked to remove/alter parts of their uniform to reflect the standard of professionalism expected at ALCS.**

A student will not be permitted to go to any classes if she is not in proper uniform.

Appropriate interventions will be used to ensure the student has access to a proper uniform, including parent contact and our uniform loaner program. If a student is unable to obtain a proper uniform for that day (or refuses to wear proper uniform), she will be assigned to the Alternative Learning Center for the remainder of the day. If a student chronically comes to school out of uniform compliance, the student will be administered progressive disciplinary action by the principal/principal's designee.

REQUIRED

Students can tote plain water in an ALCS issued or clear water bottle during class times. ALCS personnel reserve the right to ask any student about the contents of her water bottle at any time.

APPEARANCE/TOILETRIES

Hair should be groomed appropriately for the professional setting of ALCS. **Hair that is disheveled, unkempt, is deemed unprofessional/distracting in the ALCS setting is not acceptable.** Students who enter the building in this manner will be asked to fashion their hair appropriately before they will be allowed to enter any class. If the student refuses to comply, she will be referred to the Social Work suite.

Hair products and appliances (i.e., hair grease, flat irons, hair dryers, etc....) are not to be used during school hours. The use of combs and brushes is permitted only in the restrooms. Likewise, personal products like lotion, Vaseline, lip gloss, body sprays and the like should not be seen in the classrooms.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Consistent student attendance is vital for academic success. It is each student's

responsibility as a member of the ALCS community to be on time and attend all classes. ALCS's attendance procedures are required by New York State law. Below is an outline of ALCS's attendance procedures. Please contact the Middle School Main Office by calling 518-694-5300 for questions about student attendance.

- Attendance is crucial to every student's success at ALCS. We expect students, when healthy, to be at school every day for the entire school day.
- If your student is sick, please keep them home. We strongly recommend that you contact your medical care provider when your student is sick.

ABSENCES

In the case of an absence:

- Parents/guardians must call before 7:50 am to inform the school that their child will not be attending. If you are unable to speak to someone at the front desk, please leave a message stating the student's name, the reason for missing school, a phone number where you can be reached and a convenient time to call you.
- Students who are absent or tardy due to medical appointments or illness must bring in a doctor's note immediately following the absence/tardiness to ensure the absence is classified as excused. This note should include the following:
 - Doctor's letterhead
 - Student's name
 - Date of the tardy/absence
 - Reason for the tardy/absence
- Absent students should make every attempt to get their assignments for the day they miss by having someone contact the school to pick up assignments or by calling fellow students that evening. Due to our integration of Schoology, many students may be able to obtain missed work via their Schoology accounts.
- Upon their return, students should be prepared to hand in any homework or assignment(s) previously assigned or to take any quiz or test previously announced.
- If students have an unexcused absence on the day of a school function or event, they cannot participate in that event or in any extracurricular activity that day. Please refer to the athletic handbook for additional information around attendance in reference to sporting events.

Chronic Absenteeism

School attendance is both a right and responsibility in the State of New York. The compulsory education requirements in New York State Education Law, Article 65, §3205 and §3212 requires every parent, guardian, or other person in this state having control and charges of a child from the ages of 6 to 16 to send the child to school regularly.

- Students who are absent 2 or more days per month or are present less than 90% of the year are considered chronically absent. Students who are chronically absent are less likely to graduate high school. We understand that absences do occur, however we expect parents/guardians will notify the school each time their student is absent. ALCS is required by New York State law to report chronic absenteeism. Administrative interventions may be taken to address students that are chronically absent. These interventions may include meetings with the parent and student, home visits, or referrals to county services (Prevention Referrals/CPS referral).

Skipping Classes

- Skipping class is an egregious offense at ALCS. If a student skips a class OR is intentionally late in order to miss the class, her family will be contacted, and the student will be administered progressive disciplinary action by the principal/principal's designee. If a student exhibits a pattern of habitually skipping class or intentionally missing class via tardiness, a student will be administered more intense disciplinary action by the principal/principal's designee. (Please refer to the section, "Consequences/Interventions" on pg. 35 to learn more.)

TARDINESS

- Students arriving after 7:50 am or 9:50 am on late start Wednesdays are LATE but will be allowed entry into class. Students who arrive at school after the late bell will be charged with an **unexcused tardy** unless they have a medical note or note that falls under "non-medical excused absences."
- Please note that any students who are late to school, or any classes, will be administered progressive disciplinary action by the principal/principal's designee and/or may be prohibited from participating in school or extracurricular events such as field trips, athletic events, etc.
- Typical consequences for tardiness include, but are not limited to:
 1. Detention
 2. Parent Meeting
 3. Revocation of school privileges - I.e., attending field drips, participating in athletics/athletic events, etc.
 4. Referral to county services. (Please refer to the section, "Consequences/Interventions," to learn more.)

SCHOOL SAFETY

School safety is ALCS's top priority. To ensure the safety of our community, we have developed a strong relationship with local law enforcement, and continuously provide our staff with training to ensure we are prepared to respond to school emergencies. We encourage all students and community members to report safety concerns, threats of violence, or other information that may negatively impact the safe operation of our school to a school official.

ALCS's School Safety Plan is available on the website and details all ALCS's efforts to keep all school community members safe.

Reporting a Safety Concern

To report a safety concern (non-emergency) please contact us at 518-694-5300 or call 911.

School ID Procedures

To enhance school safety and security for our school, we have implemented a school-wide identification (ID) badge system. School IDs provide a safe and orderly learning environment for our school community. School IDs allow everyone to identify official members of our school, provide emergency personnel the ability to quickly identify students in an emergency, and ensure students are in correct locations. IDs and lanyards will be issued to all students. Students are required to wear their school ID while in school and must present their ID when requested by a school official.

PHONE NUMBERS AND STUDENT INFORMATION

Each family must be diligent in providing the school with a list of current, working phone numbers – including cellular phones – for when the school needs to contact a student's parents or guardians. Please update us of any changes immediately to ensure proper and necessary communication.

Please note that charter school regulations have been updated, which require schools to collect this information annually. Failure to submit these in a timely manner will prohibit your child from starting school on time.

Similarly, it is imperative that any legal documentation indicating a change in family circumstances (custody, Order of Protection, PINS, restraining order, etc.) that is in effect and comes from the proper judicial authorities, be forwarded to the school as soon as possible. It is only with proper documentation that ALCS personnel can respectfully and lawfully act in the best interest of the student and family.

STANDARDS-BASED GRADING

ALCS has adopted a research driven, Standards Based Grading system, which is based on determining standards-aligned content knowledge and skill sets and measuring student proficiency therein.

Standards-Based Grading provides students with a score by standard for each assessment. Students will receive their overall course grades via eight Periods of Progress, or POPs, every five weeks. A final year long (Y1) grade will be calculated at the 8th POP.

Throughout the year, teachers will provide support to students based on targeted course standards through intervention periods, spiral review, and flex time (after school).

Advanced students will be provided opportunities to enhance course grades by tutoring peers in structured learning environments and/or completing extension activities.

STANDARDS ARE:

- Aligned to each course and lesson
- Research & evidence based
- Clear, understandable, & consistent
- Aligned with college & career expectations
- Based on rigorous content & the application of knowledge through higher-order thinking skills
- Built upon the strengths and lessons of current state standards
- Informed by top-performing countries to prepare all students for success in our global economy and society

Cell Phone Policy

ALCS recognizes that cell phones and other electronic devices are convenient and commonplace in our culture. However, students need to learn how to use these devices appropriately and to avoid them as a means of distraction and a cause for disruptions.

Thus, as a college preparatory high school with high academic and behavioral expectations for our students, cell phones and all other electronic devices must not be visible, audible, or used by any student once they enter the school. All students will be required to turn in their cellphone to the Dean of Student, Assistant Principal, and/or Hall & Behavior Support Specialist each day during first period (or whenever a student arrives, whichever comes first). Please do not call or text your daughter during school hours. Contact the school with any messages or emergency information. Otherwise, you are placing your daughter in a compromising situation that could result in disciplinary action.

Any student who violates the policy, will have her phone/device confiscated, and the student will be administered progressive disciplinary action by the Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, or designee.