



# **Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls**

## **Parent/Guardian Handbook and Conduct and Discipline Policy 2025-2026**

**Middle School**

**19 Hackett Blvd., Albany, New York 12208**

[www.albanyleadership.org](http://www.albanyleadership.org)

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## INTRODUCTION

### *School Overview: Mission, Vision, Purpose and Core Values*

#### School Mission

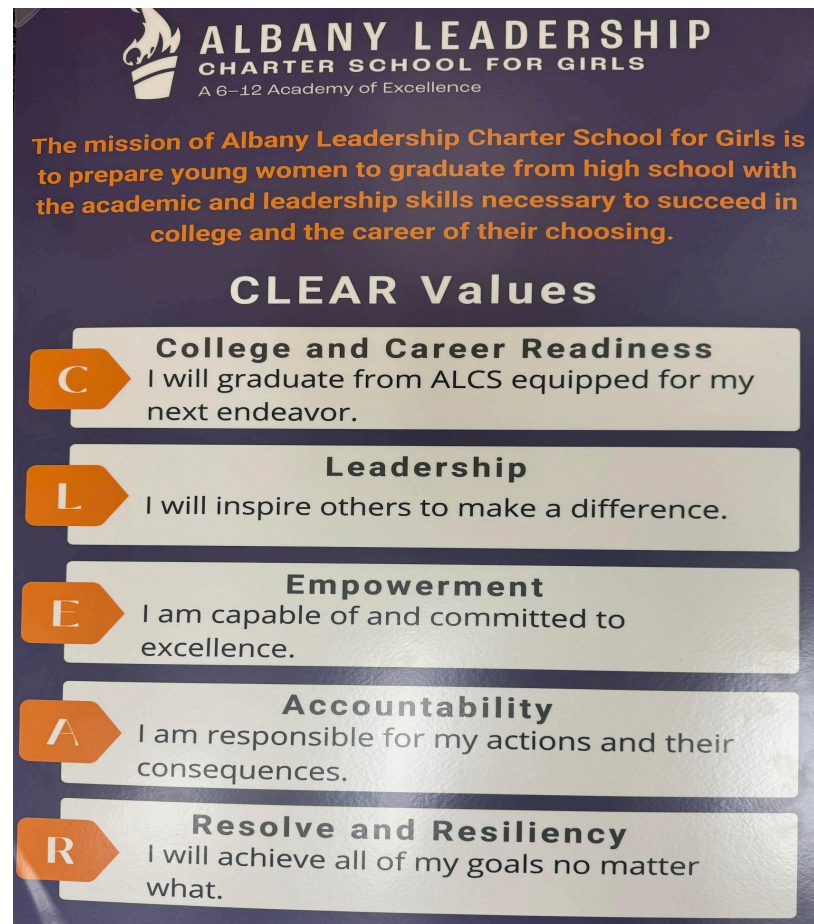
Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls (ALCS) prepares young women to graduate from high school with the **academic** and **leadership skills** necessary to succeed in college and the career of their choosing.

#### 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

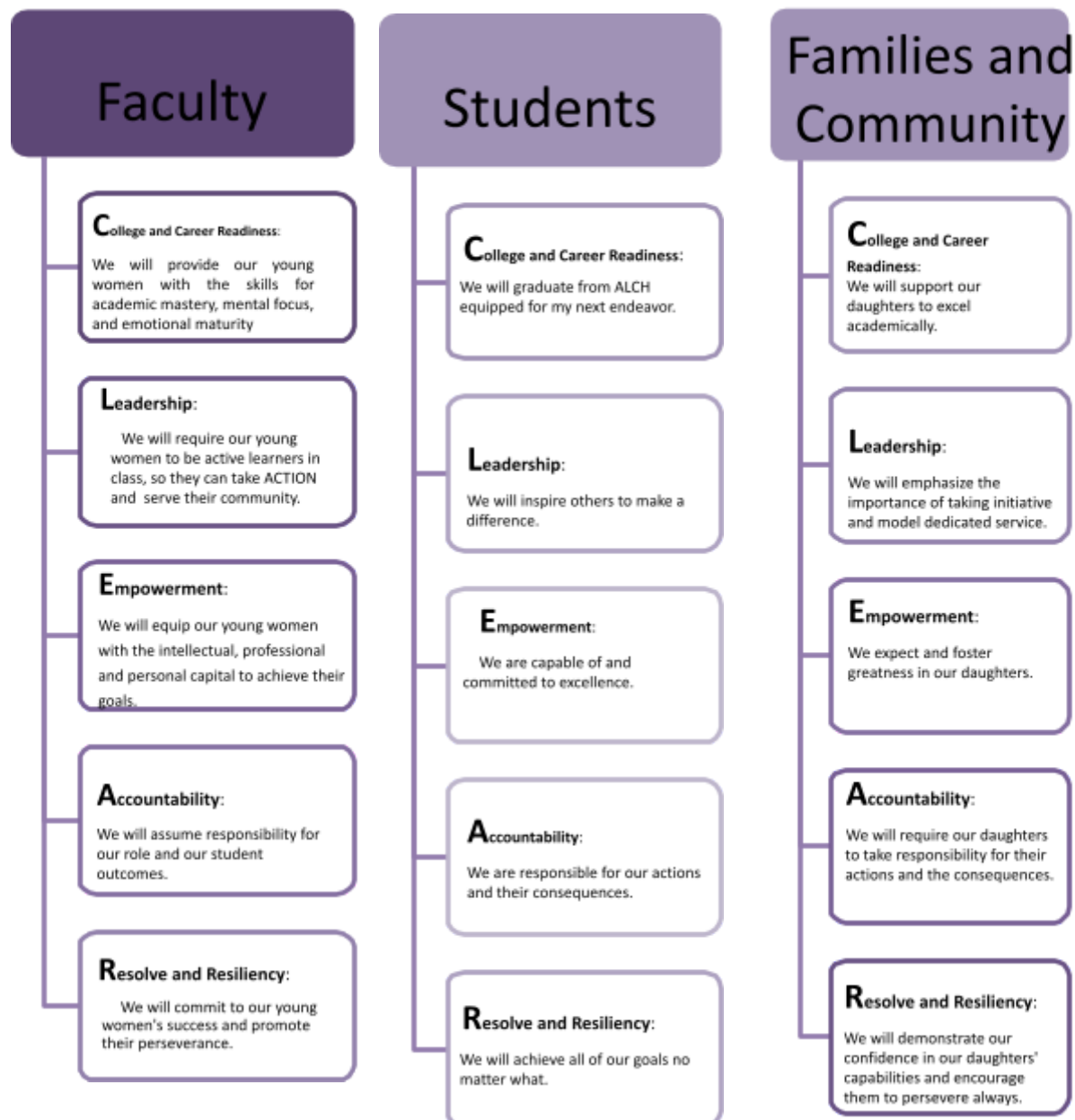
Girls in urban America have been **negatively affected by a mediocre educational system, low expectations, and high drop-out rates**. Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls' charge is to eliminate this historical reality with the support of the ALCS Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, families,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



## Core Values

The ALCS CLEAR Values: Our high academic and behavioral standards are embedded in our *Core Values*. These values are the foundation upon which every administrator, faculty member, student, family, and community member must acknowledge and practice in order to achieve our mission:

The ALCS CLEAR Values approach can only be achieved when all stakeholders understand their role in our school community.



## ***Roles and Expectations***

### **Students' Role in the ALCS Community**

ALCS expects students to honor and embody the CLEAR core values. Moreover, we require students to come to school on time each day, prepared and ready to learn. In addition to our high expectations for academic performance and respectful conduct, ALCS also obligates each student to take a proactive role in making ALCS a better place. Students are expected to be engaged participants in ***service learning*** to ensure they learn the true meaning of leadership while strengthening and improving the local community.

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 (except School-issued Chromebooks) in the building during school hours.
10. Practice "I am my sister's keeper".

### **Families' Role in the ALCS Community**

ALCS needs the support of parents/guardians to successfully achieve our mission and to provide our students the maximum opportunity to succeed. We realize that ALCS is a demanding place, not only for students but also for parents/guardians, and ask that families remember that every rule, every policy, and every decision is grounded in the mission, vision, and purpose of ALCS. Therefore, we need families to respect and support the school's values and edicts. ALCS promises to keep an open relationship with parents/guardians by communicating via letters, emails, phone calls, and meetings.

### **Faculty's Role in the ALCS Community**

ALCS employs competent, passionate, and hard-working educators who are equipped with the necessary skills and expertise to ensure that the ALCS mission is accomplished. They are committed to each scholar's success and seek a partnership with families to maximize each student's potential.

### **Leadership Team's Role in the ALCS Community**

ALCS employs an experienced, passionate, and competent leadership team with strong pedagogical, practical, and public education experience to ensure that each ALCS member is supported and held accountable for the academic success of every student enrolled at ALCS as our mission is achieved.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy and Equity Statement**

ALCS, in accordance with its non-discrimination policy, does not discriminate in its programs, activities, facilities, employment, or educational opportunities on the basis of race, color, age, disability, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal or state law and

does not tolerate any form of discrimination, intimidation, threat, coercion, and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others by interfering with their freedom to learn and to work.

We further consider LOW ACADEMIC AND/OR BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS based on race, color, disability, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation a form of discrimination. We believe all our students can succeed in college, regardless of their background. Our commitment to our CLEAR core values means that all students are expected to succeed academically and adhere to the Conduct and Discipline Policy.

ALCS has a solid commitment to ensuring that every single student has the opportunity to succeed. In meeting this goal, ALCS also understands there is no “one size fits all” approach to addressing students’ needs, and therefore operates the school through an equity lens. This means not all students are treated equally; rather students are treated with fairness in an equitable manner in that she gets what she needs to succeed. However, what your daughter receives will not always be equal to that received by others. For example, she may not receive the same exact supports another student receives by way of consequence or incentive. ALCS discourages students from engaging in the “sin of comparison” because it dissuades them from taking responsibility for their actions and impedes their ability to recognize what it is that they, individually and solely, must address or change within themselves to optimize their school’s experience. By enrolling your child at ALCS, you agree to understand and respect this framework, particularly when a question arises about how your daughter has been treated as compared to another individual. Moreover, ALCS administration respects the privacy of individual students and their families and is prohibited from discussing another student’s actions, circumstances or consequences with you or share any information about another student. Our primary goal is to partner with you to ensure that your child receives the support she needs to succeed.

## SCHOOL YEAR AND DAY 2025-2026



## 2025-2026 School Calendar

19 Hackett Blvd. • Albany, NY 12208  
Phone (518) 694-5300 • Fax (518) 694-5307  
[www.albanyleadership.org](http://www.albanyleadership.org)

July 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

August 2025						
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31						

September 2025						
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October 2025						
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30						

December 2025						
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28	29	30	31			

January 2026						
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February 2026						
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March 2026						
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April 2026						
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May 2026						
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

2025		2026		Key
Jul. 4	Independence Day	Jan. 5	Professional Development	Half-Day AM (Classes end at 12 p.m.)
Aug. 18 – Sep. 3	Professional Development	Jan. 19	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	School Closed
Aug. 19-20	Regents Exams	Jan. 20-23	Regents Exams	Staff Only (No Classes)
Aug. 25-28	Material Pick Up	Feb. 16-20	February Recess	Mock Regents (No HS Classes)
Sep. 1	Labor Day	Feb. 17	Lunar New Year	Regents Exams (No HS Classes)
Sep. 4	First Day of Classes	Mar. 13	Professional Development	
Sep. 5	ALCS Back-to-School BBQ	Mar. 20	Eid al-Fitr	
Oct. 13	Indigenous Peoples Day	Apr. 3-10	Spring Recess	
Oct. 23	Emergency Early Release Drill	Apr. 6 – May 15	ELA, Math, Sci. Assessments Gr. 6-8	
Oct. 24	Professional Development	Apr. 22-24	HS Mock Regents	
Nov. 11	Veterans Day	May 22-25	Memorial Day Recess	
Nov. 20	ALCS Community Dinner	Jun. 9-10, 17-26	Regents Exams	
Nov. 26-28	Thanksgiving Recess	Jun. 19	Juneteenth	
Dec. 24 – Jan. 2	Winter Recess	Jun. 24	Middle School Graduation	
		Jun. 26	High School Graduation	

Appv. 06-24-2025



## ***School Day Schedules***

### **Regular School Days**

The school day begins at 7:50 am and ends at 3:30 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Flextime/tutoring is offered for 30 minutes after school on regular school days and concludes at 3:30 pm. Breakfast is from **7:10 am – 7:40 am**. The kitchen closes at 7:40 am and students are dismissed from the Student Union to class at **7:40 am**.

### **Fridays – Professional Development Days**

On most Fridays, the school day begins at 7:50 am and ends at 12:00 pm (for weekly faculty professional development (PD)). The calendar indicates which Fridays follow a regular school day schedule and which ones follow a modified PD Day schedule.

### **Bell Schedule**

<b><i>Regular School Day</i></b>	
ADV	07:50 – 08:20
1	08:23 – 09:10
2	09:13 – 10:00
3	10:03 – 10:50
4	10:53 – 11:40
4A	10:53 – 11:15
4B	11:18 – 11:40
5	11:43 – 12:30
5C	11:43 – 12:05
5D	12:08 – 12:30
6	12:33 – 01:20
6E	12:33 – 12:55
6F	12:58 – 01:20
7	01:23 – 02:10
8	02:13 – 03:00

<b><i>Friday Half School Day</i></b>	
1	07:50 – 08:16
2	08:19 – 08:45
ADV	08:48 – 09:03
3	09:06 – 09:32
7	09:35 – 10:01
4	10:04 – 10:31
5	10:34 – 11:01
6	11:04 – 11:31
8	11:34 – 12:00

## ***School Closures***

ALCS may be closed at any time due to inclement or dangerous weather, or due to a local condition that prevents our operating ALCS safely. In the event that ALCS closes for any reason, including, for example, utility problems, ice, environmental threat, etc., notification and updates will be made via our One-Call System, the school website: [www.albanyleadership.org](http://www.albanyleadership.org), social media platforms, and local media news stations.

## **ACADEMICS**

### ***Reporting Student Progress***

#### **Standards-Based Grading**

ALCS has a research-driven, New York State Learning Standards-based grading system, which is used to represent each student's content knowledge, skill sets, and levels of proficiency. "Standards" means the expectations for what students should know and be able to do.

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 after the 8th POP.

Throughout the year, teachers provide support to students based on targeted course standards through intervention periods, spiral review, and flex time (after school). Advanced students are provided opportunities to enhance course grades by tutoring peers in structured learning environments and/or completing extension activities.

Standards are:

- Aligned to each course
- 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

#### **Grading Guidelines**

<b>Period of Progress (POP)</b>	POP's reflect cumulative standards covered throughout the year to date.  The grade at the end of the POP indicates the proficiency level that a student has demonstrated on the standards assessed.
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<b>Score vs. Grade</b>	<p>Score: Number scores (1-5) are assigned to each standard on a given assessment based on demonstrated level of proficiency.</p> <p>Grade: Converted scores on all cumulative standards assessed throughout the year to date.</p>
<b>Levels of Performance</b>	<p>In the standards-based grading system, a standard score, and subsequent POP grade, represents the proficiency level based on student demonstration of understanding of the knowledge, skills, and concepts in the subject area, as well as the student's ability to apply that understanding to a variety of performance tasks.</p> <p>5 – Mastery 4 – Proficient 3 – Partially Proficient 2 - Below 1 – Far Below</p>
<b>Amelioration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students will track their own progress on each standard assessed for their courses; thus, students will know which standards they have mastered and which standards they need to improve knowledge and understanding</li> <li>- Teachers will provide amelioration opportunities during class and flex time; scores will be updated accordingly.</li> </ul>

<b>Body of Evidence</b>	POP grades are based on the evidence collected during the POP, (typically 3 pieces of standards-aligned assessments) or cumulatively throughout the year.
<b>Current Learning Trend</b>	Averaging by standard is the default grade in the system; however, teachers will use the student's more recent, most consistent level of performance to determine a student's POP grade. Teacher comments will support grades.
<b>Interval Assessments</b>	<p>Interval Assessments are cumulative and occur three times a year. These assessments are also scored by standard.</p> <p>Students will track interval standard proficiency and receive a "Grade Level Comparison Score" so students can track minimum standard obtainment.</p>

### Grading Scale

GRADES EARNED	GPA VALUE (UNWEIGHTED)	ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL
89-95	4.0	MASTERY
86-88	3.7	MASTERY
83-85	3.3	PROFICIENT
79-82	3.0	PROFICIENT
76-78	2.7	PROFICIENT

73-75	2.3	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT
70-72	2.0	PARTIALLY PROFICIENT
69 and Below	0	BELOW/FAR BELOW

### Grade Point Average (GPA)

GPA is calculated using the 4-point scale and is calculated based on credit-bearing classes, factoring in any appropriate weighting. Pass/Fail classes will not be calculated into the GPA.

### Pass/Fail Classes

For “pass” or “fail” classes, students must demonstrate a minimum proficiency in the course’s standards in order to pass for the year. However, teacher and administrative discretion can be used to grant credit based on extenuating circumstances and the submission of additional work and/or exceptional performance on cumulative assessments/NYS Regents examinations.

### Honor Roll - Dean and Principal List

Honor Roll determinations are made eight times per year at the end of each POP. Students who receive a 3.3 through 3.69 GPA in any even-numbered Period of Progress (POP) will receive Dean List recognition. Students who receive a 3.7 and above GPA in any even-numbered POP will receive Principal List recognition.

### ***Grade Promotion and Retention – Expectations and Policies***

#### Homework

Homework includes, but is not limited to, a review of skills and concepts students have learned that day in school and is an extension for further learning. This helps students move toward mastery of the skills and concepts they encounter. All students are provided with an ALCS-issued Student Planner and are expected to utilize this support tool to record assignment due dates and improve their time management skills to become college and career ready. We strongly encourage parents/guardians to check the Student Planner on a daily basis so they can support their child’s academic success. Student Planners are also required to be used as a hall pass.

Completing homework is not optional at ALCS. It is essential that all of our student’s complete homework regularly to both reinforce what they are learning at school and to equip them for the increased demands of college. Students are expected to submit all homework assignments ON TIME! Homework assignments include, but are not limited to, worksheets, readings, informal research, written responses, practice assessments and other assigned tasks that are expected to be completed by the next school day/class. For formal assignments, including research papers, group projects, and independent study, students are given firm due dates and are expected to submit assignments on time in class. Students jeopardize both their class grade and their promotion status if they do not complete AND submit their assignments on the due dates.

\*Teachers reserve the right to assign students mandatory Flex Time if they do not hand in homework or a formal long-term assignment on time.

### Flex Time

Flex Time takes place every day after the 8th period until 3:30 pm. This is the space where opportunity meets responsibility. Teachers are available for our scholars every day after school to receive additional academic assistance, to improve previously submitted work and/or to make up missed work (due to either excused or unexcused absences from class). Teachers are empowered to ASSIGN Flex Time for students whom they believe are in NEED of serious remediation or support. Students who fail to attend assigned Flex Time (without a legitimate excuse) will be informed that any academic consequences for their negligence will not be negotiated or changed in the future. Should a student choose to be disruptive, disrespectful or disengaged in the mini lesson within Flex Time, she will be asked to leave and will serve the appropriately designated consequence based on the egregiousness of the offense.

### Assessments

Frequent assessment is a central component of ALCS's instructional program. Assessments in every subject are used to (1) adjust instruction and inform tutoring and enrichment programs to meet the needs of every student; (2) hold students, faculty and staff accountable for student learning outcomes; and (3) track growth and progress so that every student is prepared to succeed and graduate from college. ALCS uses the data from assessments on a daily, weekly, quarterly and annual basis. Assessments take many forms, including but not limited to, daily quizzes and homework, weekly tasks and projects, portfolios and presentations, unit assessments, interval assessments, mock Regents exams and New York State and national norm-referenced exams.

Student attendance and participation in the assessment program is essential in order to fully understand each student's academic standing.

Students who are absent for assessments are required to make up the assessment during school, after school, or on a designated Saturday. ALCS provides multiple opportunities and communication tools for parents/guardians to have their daughter's most current assessment outcomes.

### Promotion and Retention Policy

Middle school academically prepares students to achieve success in high school. Promotion/retention should be considered from the point of view of what is in the best interest of the child. ALCS's Middle School Promotion/Retention Policy encourages personal responsibility and accountability by the student, family, and school community. Every middle school course is important to the social, emotional, and academic development of that child.

The full-year subjects include: English, mathematics, social studies, science, and foreign language. A student must meet the following minimum requirements for promotion to the next grade level:

- o The passing grade for a course is 70 percent.
- o One core course failure: it is recommended the student attend summer academy.
- o Two or three core course failures: the student is required to attend summer academy in order to be promoted to the next grade level.
- o Four or more core course failures: the student is retained and required to repeat the grade level the following school year.

All final grade level placement decisions rest with the administration.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

### *Academic Honesty*

ALCS students are expected to complete assignments and assessments based only on what they know. Academic honesty is required to ensure students are ready for and successful in college. “Cheating” is defined as receiving or giving unauthorized help on any assignment. “Plagiarism” means copying another’s work without proper permissions and/or citations and is a form of cheating.

Examples of cheating include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Copying another person's work during an exam or assessment, or while completing an assignment including homework;
- Allowing someone to copy work on an exam, quiz, assessment or assignment, including a “Do Now” or “Exit Ticket”;
- Using any unauthorized materials not specifically approved by the faculty member during any exam or for any academic assignment; including but not limited to the use of spark notes, cliff notes, grade saver and classic notes;
- Providing assistance to another student on any individual assignment, including homework, quizzes, tests, papers or projects, without the direct permission of the faculty member;
- Stealing, reproducing, circulating, or otherwise gaining access to examination materials prior to the time authorized by the faculty member;
- Citing a source that does not exist, falsely attributing ideas and information to a source, or citing a source when the source was not consulted;
- Inventing data or statistical results to support conclusions; and
- Asking fellow students for answers without teacher permission.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own work;
- Using any other person or organization to prepare work and then submitting it as one’s own;
- Quoting or paraphrasing the thoughts of another writer without acknowledgement;
- Changing the words another writer wrote but still conveying the same thought without acknowledgement; and
- Copying and using information from websites or other sources without properly citing the source.

Procedures for cheating violations:

1. A staff member initially meets with the student regarding the potential cheating violation and contacts the parent/guardian if the teacher determines cheating occurred. The teacher may request a conference.
2. The student may receive a new or modified assignment or may receive no credit for the assignment, which may ultimately impact the student’s ability to pass a course.
3. The incident will be documented in the student’s educational records.
4. The staff member may collaborate with the Principal/Principal’s designee on appropriate consequences.
5. If cheating/plagiarism becomes a chronic offense, progressive discipline maybe applied in accordance with the Conduct and Discipline Policy.

## ***Attendance Policy and Procedures***

### ***Attendance Policy and Procedures***

One of the greatest barriers to learning is absenteeism. For this reason, ALCS maintains a strict attendance policy and expects every student to be at school every day. ALCS tracks daily and class period attendance, and any absences are marked as either excused or unexcused.

Sometimes students and/or families experience unique or extenuating circumstances that create barriers to attendance. In these instances, the student or parent/guardian should contact the Principal for assistance. If families are experiencing homelessness, please contact the homeless liaison, **Ms. Moesha Smith**, [msmith@albanyleadership.org](mailto:msmith@albanyleadership.org), and (518)-694-5300 ext. 400]. The role of the liaison is to assist families with ensuring their child has necessary resources and supports to get to school each day and be successful.

### Notice

- To ensure that students, parents/guardians, teachers and administrators are notified of and understand this policy, the following procedures shall be implemented:
- The attendance policy will be viewable on the ALCS website and will be reviewed with students at the start of the school year.
- Parents/guardians will receive a copy of this policy in the Family Handbook.
- ALCS will provide a copy of the attendance policy and any amendments thereto to faculty and staff. New faculty and staff will receive a copy upon their employment.

### Excused and Unexcused Absences and Tardies

Excused absences require either a doctor's note (in the case of a medical appointment causing tardiness or absence of three or more days due to illness) or a parent/guardian's note (in the case of a medical appointment causing tardiness, 1–2-day absence for illness, and all non-medical reasons). All written excuses are subject to verification. For homeless students, the homeless liaison will assist the student in providing or obtaining documentation if needed. Students are tardy if they are not in class at 8:01 a.m. Parents/guardians are required to call the school each morning prior to 7:50 a.m. that a student will be absent or tardy and state the reason. The parent/guardian must leave a message stating the student's name, the reason for missing school, a phone number where a parent/guardian can be reached, and a convenient time to call. Alternatively, the parent/guardian can provide a note which must be brought to the main office at drop-off or return to school. The absence or tardy will be noted and considered "unexcused" until such time as the required documentation is received by the main office.

Excused absences and tardies include:

- Illness, quarantine, or serious physical injury requiring medical treatment
- Death of a family member (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or cousin)
- Impassable roads or weather
- College visit
- Court appearance
- Medical or psychological test with note from evaluator
- Religious holy days
- Other extraordinary situations approved by the Principal

Unexcused absences and tardies include:

- Being sick at home without providing the required documentation
- Babysitting
- Lack of transportation
- Family vacation
- Personal travel, including travel for religious reasons
- Job interviews
- Extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar and/or beyond the customary requirements of the religious observance (as applicable).
- Any other absence not approved by the Principal as excused

Students arriving after 7:50am but prior to second period are late to school, but will allowed entry into their first period class. Students who arrive after the late bell will be marked as “unexcused tardy” unless they have proper documentation (see above). A student who attends school for less than a half-day is considered absent. Students will not be allowed to enter the building after 11:00 am without documentation.

If a student has an *unexcused* absence or tardy (past 10:00am) on the day of a school function or event, the student may not 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.

Students who are tardy are subject to the Conduct and Discipline Policy, and consequences may include, but not be limited to:

- Mandatory Flex
- Parent/guardian meeting
- Revocation of school privileges
- Referral to the County Department of Social Services/PINS process

#### Chronic Tardiness and/or Absenteeism

The following chart explains the general action steps the administration takes to communicate and work with parents and families to ensure students attend school every day:

<b>Cumulative Number of Absences/Tardies (in a school year)</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>School Point Person</b>
3 Unexcused Absences or 5 Unexcused Tardies	Phone call and conversation with parent/guardian.  Review attendance policy.	School Attendance Officer
5 Unexcused Absences or 10 Unexcused Tardies	Phone call, letter sent home	School Culture Coordinator
8 Total Absences (Excused + Unexcused) or 15 or more Total Tardies (Excused + Unexcused)	School Culture Coordinator will work with family to create an attendance plan  Parent/guardian given warning about educational impact.	School Culture Coordinator



10 Total Absences (Excused + Unexcused)	Parent/guardian is contacted for a meeting with Principal/designee.  Attendance plan is updated or revised.	Principal/Designee
15 Total Absences (Excused + Unexcused)	Parent/guardian is contacted for meeting with Principal.  Attendance plan is updated or revised.	Principal/Designee
20+ Total Absences (Excused + Unexcused)	The individualized attendance plan will be revisited.	Principal/Designee

If students are not in school at the beginning of the day, and the school has not already been notified of an absence, parents/guardians will receive a phone call from the school.

If we cannot contact you to schedule a meeting, after 3 attempts, you and your child will move to the next action step.

If concerning patterns are noted, the Principal reserves the right to accelerate certain actions and consequences. For example, if a student has 5 absences in a row, a parent meeting may be called to resolve the situation. If a student is absent for several days without parent communication, the school may conduct a home visit or other investigation.

### Reporting Chronic Absenteeism

School attendance is both a student right and a parent/guardian responsibility in the State of New York. The compulsory education requirements in New York State require parents/guardians to ensure their child is enrolled in school through the end of the school year in which they turn 16 years old. ALCS is required by New York State law to report student chronic absenteeism. Because you have chosen to enroll your child at ALCS, she is expected to be in attendance regularly regardless of age and through graduation.

Students who are absent two or more days per month or are absent 10% or more of the school year are considered chronically absent. Administrative interventions may be taken to address students that are chronically absent. These interventions may include meetings with the parent and student, home visits, recommending services from partner agencies, or referrals to the County Department of Social Services for prevention or child protective referrals.

### Early Dismissal

For students who must leave early while school is still in session, parents/guardians are required to sign-out students from the Main Office. At ALCS, an early dismissal constitutes any pickup prior to the official school dismissal time. A child will be dismissed early only to a parent/guardian or a properly

authorized, and identified, adult. A letter from you authorizing another adult to pick up your child is required, if you did not previously list that adult as an authorized adult. Please do not request to pick up students within 30 minutes of regular dismissal time.

If you need to pick up your student early for a scheduled appointment, please aim to do so prior to 2:30pm. After 2:30pm, our focus will be on managing traffic flow, ensuring students get on the correct buses, checking in and moving the car rider line, and securing the campus for dismissal.

Procedure for changing your child's dismissal plan: Parents/guardians are asked to send in a note on the day a change to their child's dismissal plan is needed. If a note isn't possible (something arises after school has already started), parents/guardians should call the school before noon with the updated information.

### **Skiping Classes**

Skiping class is an egregious offense at ALCS. If a student skips a class OR is intentionally late in order to miss class time, 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 skiping class or intentionally missing class via tardiness, a student will be administered more intense disciplinary action by the Principal/Principal's designee.

### ***Dress Code***

All Albany Leadership Middle School students are required to wear the complete uniform every day. In keeping with our commitment to excellence, the dress code helps students come to school every day ready to grow their brains and take their education seriously. 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. Students are not permitted to go to any classes if they are not in proper uniform. Student uniforms must 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.

If a student is not in dress code, the parent/guardian is called and ALCS works with parents/guardians to determine whether there are barriers to dress code compliance. ALCS also confiscates and sends home any accessory or article of clothing that becomes a distraction with a note. Students who re-wear confiscated articles are cited for dress code violations and the Conduct and Discipline Policy applies. Students are not permitted to wear non-dress code clothing that is visible under their uniforms. The Principal/Principal's designee reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of students' dress with respect to the dress code in support of the commitment to preserving a distraction-free environment. Failure to adhere to the dress code can result in students sitting in the main office or Alternative Learning Center until someone brings appropriate uniform attire to school. There will be no exceptions. 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.

The ALCS Dress Code requirements are as follows:

Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls Dress Code			
ITEM	ACCEPTABLE	COLOR	NOT ALLOWED

	STYLE		
Pants	ALCS-issued only	Gray	·Unhemmed pants
Skirts	ALCS-issued only	Gray	·Non-ALCS-issued skirts, skirts hemmed or rolled at the top to a length shorter than 1 inch above the knee.
Polo	ALCS-issued only	Charcoal Grey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Unbuttoned and/or untucked shirt.</li> <li>·Tight or short top exposing midriff.</li> <li>·Blouses worn inside out or half on and half off.</li> <li>·Logos or designs visible beneath ALCS shirt.</li> <li>·Any long-sleeved shirt color other than black, white, and gray under short-sleeved shirt.</li> </ul>
Black Sweater/ ALCS Fleece	ALCS-issued only	ALCS black fleece or black sweater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Unkept/unclean ALCS sweaters.</li> <li>·Jackets/coats, sweatshirts, hoodies</li> <li>·Any sweater/fleece NOT issued by ALCS</li> </ul>
Shoes, Sneakers, Boots	Any appropriate sneaker, shoe, or boots.	Student choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Shoes/boots with spikes or sharp, protruding gems/designs.</li> <li>·Open-toed or open-back shoes, flip-flops, sandals, slip-on, slippers/slides, or cros.</li> <li>·Heels more than 2 inches high.</li> </ul>
Accessories	Socks, stockings, pantyhose, headbands, and/or ALCS -issued book bag.	Solid Black, White, or Grey <b>ONLY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Fishnet, lace-designed or multi-colored.</li> <li>·Footless tights</li> <li>·Weather or athletic headgear</li> <li>·Bandanas, head scarves, durag, or bonnets.</li> </ul>
Physical Education Uniform	Shorts, yoga pants, or sweatpants T-shirt	Student choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Skin-tight, see-through or inappropriately fitting and/or revealing.</li> <li>·Anything with logos, profanity, inappropriate pictures and/or references.</li> </ul>
Hijab	ALCS-issued or one of the designated colors	Solid white, black, grey, blue, or purple	·No patterns or designs

Abaya	Any appropriate abaya	Solid black, grey, blue, or purple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·No patterns or designs</li> <li>·Black or gray leggings underneath ONLY.</li> </ul>
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### Hairstyles/Makeup/Perfume/Toiletries

ALCS complies with the CROWN Act provisions of the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) which prohibits discrimination based on hair texture and protective hairstyles. ALCS students have a right to self-expression through hairstyle. At the same time, hair should be groomed appropriately for the professional setting of ALCS.

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 other toiletries may not be used or taken out of backpacks in classrooms.

### ***Cell Phones and Electronics***

At Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls (ALCS), we recognize that cell phones and other personal electronic devices have become a common part of everyday life. However, as educators committed to fostering academic excellence and a focused learning environment, we also understand the significant distractions these devices can pose during the school day.

In accordance with the updated New York State law, beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, **students are prohibited from using personal cell phones and electronic devices during school hours in all public and charter schools across the state.**

#### **ALCS Policy Implementation:**

- **All students will be required to turn in their cell phones and personal electronic devices upon entry into the building each morning.**
- These devices will be securely stored and returned at the end of the school day.
- **Use of cell phones or other electronic devices is not permitted at any time during the school day**—this includes texting, calling, or messaging parents or guardians.
- If a student needs to make an urgent or emergency call, they will be permitted to do so using a school-provided phone.
- **We ask families not to call or text students during the school day.** If you need to contact your child, please call the main office so we can ensure timely and appropriate communication.

#### **Violation of Policy:**

- If a student is found in possession of or using a phone/electronic device during the school day, the device will be confiscated.

- Progressive disciplinary action will follow, and the device may be held until a parent or guardian comes to the school to retrieve it.
- If a student **refuses to comply** with a request to surrender a device, this will be treated as insubordination and may result in further disciplinary action, including possible suspension.

This policy is intended to support a focused, respectful, and distraction-free learning environment for all scholars. We appreciate your partnership and cooperation as we uphold the expectations aligned to state law and our school's values of **Leadership, Scholarship, Service, and Sisterhood**.

### ***Money/Valuable Property***

ALCS Middle School students do not need money for school purchases unless parents/guardians are informed of an event/activity in advance. Students are encouraged to leave all money and other valuable property, including electronic devices, at home. ALCS assumes NO responsibility for the loss or theft of such items and is not obligated to conduct any searches, should such articles be presumed stolen.

ALCS assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of personal items. ALCS does not investigate allegations of loss/theft when a student leaves her locker unsecured or has shared her locker and/or lock combination with other students.

ALCS students are solely responsible for any possessions stolen due to their own negligence by leaving items unattended and unsecured. The school is not responsible for books, clothing, or valuables left in lockers. A student shall not place or keep in a locker any article or material which is of a non-school nature and may cause or tend to cause the disruption of the mission of the school. ALCS officials will not unlock one student's locker for another student or parent/guardian to retrieve items

### ***Food/Drinks/Candy/Toys***

Students may not bring or eat food, including candy and gum, in ALCS classrooms. Only clear or ALCS water bottles, with only water in them, are permitted in classrooms. Toys, games, stuffed animals, virtual pets, cameras, iPods, blankets of any type, etc. are not allowed in school without advance permission of the Principal/Principal's designee.

### ***Lockers/Backpacks***

Every student is assigned a locker with a built-in combination lock in order to secure her belongings. Students are always expected to keep their locker secured with their assigned lock. Outside locks are not permitted. Should a student use an outside lock to secure her locker, ALCS shall remove the lock and discard it.

Students are NOT allowed to utilize backpacks throughout the day. Students are only allowed to go to their lockers during passing time and between periods. Students are not permitted to go to their lockers during class time.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### ***Student Enrollment and Contact Information***

#### **Required Enrollment Paperwork**

To ensure that ALCS satisfies all mandates of the New York State Education and Health Departments, students must submit ALL required documentation before they are enrolled at ALCS and officially start school. Students who fail to submit any of the below documents are prohibited from attending school until following paperwork is turned in and approved by ALCS:

- Proof of Residency
- Proof of Immunizations
- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Provision 2 non-base year Household Income Eligibility Form (Child Nutrition Lunch Form)
- Student Emergency (Blue) Card with Current Contact Information
- Parent Password Sign Off

#### **Contact 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 parent/guardian. Please update us of any changes immediately to ensure proper and necessary communication.

### ***Student Support Services Team***

The SST is a student-centered team, and its members include knowledgeable staff and teachers who problem-solve the needs of any student who might have academic or behavioral concerns that interfere with her academic success. Any teacher, staff member, or parent/guardian may refer a student to the SST through the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) protocol. Should parents/guardians wish to refer their daughter to MTSS, they should contact the Middle School counselor to schedule a meeting. The team reviews all referrals and collects data, develops a plan of action that includes a timeline for review, informs appropriate staff and teachers of the plan, and determines the need for future interventions. Parents/guardians are notified if the SST deems it necessary to create a plan of action and are invited to participate in future meetings. A plan of action may include, but not be limited to, academic or behavioral modifications within the classroom, mentoring, tutoring, counseling, crisis intervention, or other special services of either a temporary or permanent nature.

#### **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**

MTSS is a school-wide intervention model addressing the academic and behavioral concerns of a student. There are three *tiers* within the model.

*Tier One* includes school-wide intervention strategies using research-based curriculum and instruction in core classes. It also includes school-wide behavioral expectations for all students.

*Tier Two* is used for students who continue to struggle academically or behaviorally even with *Tier One* interventions and supports. These students are moved into *Tier Two* based on MTSS protocol. Examples of Tier Two interventions include small-group instruction and targeted/customized behavioral strategies.

*Tier Three* is for students who require more support than what is offered in *Tier Two*. Instruction at this level is still evidence-based but is provided on a more individualized level for at least 27 minutes four days per week *in addition to regular classroom instruction and Tier 2*. Tier 3 behavioral interventions may include student-specific behavior support plans and, for students with IEPs, a functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention plan.

Progress of all students at every tier is monitored regularly.

### Students with Disabilities

Albany Leadership is committed to supporting the academic, social, and emotional success of all students, including those with disabilities. We provide a range of services to meet the diverse needs of our students in accordance with their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 Plans.

Our Special Education services include:

- Push-In Support: Special Education teachers work alongside general education teachers in the classroom to provide targeted instruction and accommodations as outlined in each student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- Pull-Out Services: For students who require additional support outside the classroom, we offer a dedicated Resource Room where individualized or small group instruction is provided.

Our team is committed to ensuring students receive the services and accommodations necessary for their success. If you believe your child may be in need of special education services or testing, please reach out to your school counselor at 518-604-5300 to discuss next steps and the evaluation process.

### English Language Learners

Albany Leadership Charter School is dedicated to supporting the academic success and language development of our English Language Learners (ELLs). We provide tailored services based on each student's English proficiency level as determined by the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL) and the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT).

Our ENL (English as a New Language) services include:

- Stand-Alone ENL Classes: Students who are identified as Entering or Emerging based on their NYSITELL/NYSESLAT scores receive daily stand-alone ENL instruction focused on developing foundational English language skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- Push-In Support: An ENL teacher also provides push-in support during core academic classes such as English, Math, Science, and Social Studies to help students access grade-level content

while continuing to develop their English language proficiency.

Our ENL program is designed to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment where multilingual learners can thrive academically and socially. If you have any questions about your child's ENL services, please contact your school counselor at 518-604-5300.

## ***Student Safety***

### **Searches**

ALCS conducts daily scanning of students upon entry to the building. Students should expect to be required to empty their pockets and open their bookbags for scanning every day upon entry to the school building. All prohibited items are immediately confiscated, and students may be subject to discipline. In some instances, law enforcement and/or the County Department of Social Services may be contacted.

Student lockers and desks are not private and remain the property of the school. Students have no right to or reasonable expectation of privacy in their desks or lockers. ALCS may inspect desks and lockers without prior notice or student consent at any time, per the school's discretion.

At any time after a student has entered the school building for the day, a student and/or the student's personal belongings may be searched by a school official if the official has a reasonable suspicion to believe that a search of the ALCS student or her personal belongings will result in evidence that the student violated the law or a school rule. Personal belongings include, but are not limited to cell phones, backpacks, pockets, water bottle contents, and shoes.

### **Release of Students**

ALCS Middle School only releases a student to someone other than the student's parent/legal guardian in accordance with the prior written Blue Card instructions of the parent/guardian. In these instances, the identity of the person requesting the release/picking up the student is verified against the list of names provided by the student's parent/guardian at the time of the child's enrollment in the school and updated on the student's Blue Card.

Students may not be released to someone whose name has not previously been listed by the parent/guardian unless the parent/guardian has contacted the school and provided required information in advance and the Principal/Principal's designee approves the release. This procedure, however, does not apply to the release of a student under the protective custody of the Social Services Law and the Family Court Act Education Law.

Students are released to either legal parent/guardian, regardless of marital status, student residency, or living arrangements. Only in instances where a parent/guardian has provided a certified copy of a court order indicating a non-custodial parent does not have the right to pick their child up from school will ALCS decline to release a student to a parent/guardian. It is the sole obligation of the parent/guardian to ensure the school has on file the most recent version of such orders before the school will place any limitations on another parent/guardian.



## Child Abuse and Mandated Reporting

Every ALCS staff member is required to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the County Department of Social Services. ALCS requires staff to strictly abide by the laws governing mandated reporting. ALCS fully cooperates with, and complies with the directives of, law enforcement and the Social Services.

## Student ID Badges

To enhance school safety and security for our school, we have implemented a school-wide identification (ID) badge system. ID badges provide a safe and orderly learning environment for our school community and 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. ID badges and lanyards are issued to all students. Students are required to wear their school ID badges while in school and must present their ID badges when requested by a school official.

## ***Food Services***

ALCS participates in the Community Eligibility Program for school breakfasts and lunches, and students receive free breakfasts and free lunches on each school day. In addition, students who participate in after-school tutoring or other programs, such as Flex, are provided with free snacks.

## ***Medical Services***

ALCS has a full-time, on-site nurse to assist students who are ill or injured. Parents/guardians are notified whenever a student has been referred to the nurse's office and requires medical attention.

The school nurse can be reached at [ahaigh@albanyleadership.org](mailto:ahaigh@albanyleadership.org) and (518)-694-5300. Parents/guardians and students should keep the nurse informed of any concerns/changes in hygiene, nutrition/diet, substance abuse, medical conditions, allergies, and/or child abuse or neglect. Students may request medical accommodations by providing the nurse with a note from the student's healthcare provider. The school reviews requests to determine whether it is a necessary and reasonable accommodation.

If a child becomes ill or injured during the school day and is not well enough to stay in class, the parent/guardian will be called to pick the child up. If the person picking up the child is not the parent/guardian of the child, the school confirms the person is listed on the student's Blue Card. Only in emergency circumstances will a student be released to an adult who is neither the parent/guardian nor listed on the Blue Card. Any such determination is within the sole discretion of the Principal.

## Medication

ALCS strongly encourages families to dispense both temporary and maintenance medications outside of school hours. Ask your physician for a medication schedule that will accomplish this. In those few cases where this is not possible, please bring in the medication to the main office.

Medication may not be given without the completion of the Medication Administration Form (MAF), which must be completed by a healthcare provider. Families can obtain a MAF by calling or stopping by the school. All medications, including all other over-the-counter medicines as well as prescriptions require a MAF.

All medication must be in the original container with the appropriate prescription label (including the name of the student, the name of the medicine, the date, the dosage information, and directions for administering the medication).

Medication is stored in a secure location and may not travel back and forth to school. Once medication is provided to the school, it must remain at school until it needs to be refilled or the nurse is provided with a note of discontinuance from a healthcare provider. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to ask for two separate prescriptions when at the doctor's office with your child.

Aside from the nurse, ALCS staff are not authorized or permitted to administer medication except in life-threatening emergencies. With limited exceptions, students are not allowed to have medication (prescription or non-prescription) of any kind in their possession at school, including but not limited to in bookbags, lockers, lunch boxes, and jacket pockets. Parents/guardians are responsible for bringing medications to the Main Office along with the MAP in the beginning of the year or as soon as a medication that must be or could need to be administered at school is prescribed.

#### Independent Students and Self-Administration:

Students who can self-administer their own medications without any assistance are considered Independent Students. These students' medications are kept in the health office for the student to obtain and administer to themselves. This is due to the school's need to ensure the safety of students and to account for and document when the student takes their medication.

In some situations, Independent Students are permitted to carry their medication with them because the medicine needs rapid administration. Students who require rescue medications for respiratory conditions, allergies, or diabetes are permitted to self-carry and self-administer their medications if they have a healthcare provider order authorizing them to self-carry and self-administer their medications and written parent/guardian consent. The healthcare provider's medication order must attest that the healthcare provider has determined the student is able to self-administer their own medication effectively.

#### Medical Emergencies

As a school, the safety of all of our students, staff members and families is of the utmost importance. If an emergency arises that requires urgent medical attention which the nurse cannot attend to, we will call 911. We will immediately then call all contacts on the emergency contact list until we are able to speak with someone who can meet us at the school or the hospital. If a family member cannot make it to the school, a staff member will accompany the student to the hospital and will remain with them until the family member arrives. ALCS is not financially liable for any emergency medical services.

#### Substance Use Assessment

A student may be subject to a Substance Use Assessment should the student's behavior, including their demeanor, actions, and/or physical appearance, warrant reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs, including a controlled substance ("drugs") The assessment is performed by the school nurse to gauge the student's vital signs, orientation, and coordination. The Principal/Principal's designee may also search a student's bag, locker, and/or pockets if there is reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of drugs.

If this primary assessment indicates that the student is under the influence, the parent/guardian and the department of social services are immediately notified. Law enforcement may be notified. The student

may be subject to disciplinary action. The student may not remain in school for at least the remainder of that school day.

### Accidents

The school nurse will administer initial treatments for minor injuries. The student's emergency contact will be notified immediately by phone whenever medical treatment is administered to a student, and an Incident Report will be kept in the student's permanent file. In such cases, it is especially crucial that ALCS has working phone numbers for a student's parents/guardians and for alternative contacts if a parent/guardian is unavailable.

### ***Transportation Services***

The Albany City District provides transportation to students who reside in Albany City limits and live 1.5 miles or greater from ALCS via CDTA (public transportation). These students receive a CDTA Swiper Card if the parent/guardian has submitted a transportation application to the school district each year by April 1<sup>st</sup> for the following school year. Students residing less than 1.5 miles from ALCS or outside of Albany City limits are not eligible for a CDTA Swiper Card.

Students who live in a suburb of Albany within 15 miles of ALCS are eligible to receive transportation from their district of residence if a transportation request form is submitted to the district by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

ALCS does not oversee or have control over transportation provided by school districts. Students are required to follow the rules of the district that provides the transportation while waiting for, riding on, or exiting buses. A student's bus privilege can be restricted at any time at the discretion of CDTA and/or school district administration. Disruptive behavior by students, parents or guardians that jeopardizes the safety and/or the comfortable ridership of others can result in a suspension or removal of transportation.

If a student's bus privileges are taken away, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide transportation to and from school. Additionally, the Principal/ Principal's designee may require parents/guardians to secure transportation for students should any safety issues arise during the school day.

To replace your school issued Swiper Card, there will be a \$15 replacement fee.

### Specialized Transportation

Occasionally, students with Individualized Educational Plans or Section 504 Plans require specialized transportation. In these instances, ALCS works with the student's school district to ensure the student receives the legally mandated transportation. Parents/guardians must immediately notify the school if they believe their child is entitled to specialized transportation but is not receiving it.

### ***Athletic Programs***

ALCS offers interscholastic sports programs in the fall, winter, and spring. Participation in, and eligibility for, these programs is determined first by academic and behavioral standing. Once the student has satisfied these requirements, she must obtain medical clearance via a sports physical. Lastly, the student must try out for the team.

The Athletic Department posts schedules for all athletic events, including tryouts, by sports season, throughout the school building. The athletic programs offered at ALCS include the following:

- Volleyball (fall)
- Basketball (winter)
- Outdoor Track and Field (spring)

### ***Off-Campus Events***

Students at school-sponsored, off-campus events shall be governed by all the policies and guidelines of the school and are subject to the authority of ALCS school officials. Failure to obey instructions of school officials shall result in a loss of eligibility to attend school-sponsored, off-campus events and may result in additional disciplinary measures in accordance with the Conduct and Discipline Policy.

### **Educational Events**

Students are required to attend all educational events including field trips and college visits that are part of the School's curricula. Students who are absent from educational events must comply with the Attendance Policy.

### **Extracurricular Events**

Extracurricular events, including off-campus events are a privilege and students who are not in good academic/behavioral standing at ALCS will not be allowed to off-campus events.

In order to be in good standing for purposes of attending extracurricular events, a student MUST:

- Not have been found in violation of a school policy 30 days prior to the event
- Not have an unexcused absenteeism rate over 10%
- Not have a grade of less than 70% in any one of their classes
- Have all school forms/permission slips turned in on time
- Attend school the day before and day of the event
- Meet any additional eligibility requirements (which are communicated in advance)

Administration reserves the right to adjust the participation requirements at their discretion.

### ***Parent/Guardian Conferences***

Parent/guardian meetings are conducted to communicate student concerns or needed supports to families. Typically, parent/guardian meetings are conducted by the SST team for:

- Discipline
- Academic Performance
- Attendance
- Social-Emotional Concerns

For the success of their child, it is vital that parents/guardians attend meetings scheduled by the school. If a parent/guardian cannot physically attend a meeting, alternative arrangements are made. A parent's/guardian's failure to attend a parent/guardian meeting may result in administrative actions by the school such as:

- The meeting is rescheduled.

- Home visit.
- For student discipline matters, the student may be assigned to LABS until the parent/guardian meeting is held.
- Referral to county services or partner agencies.

### ***Mediation***

Mediation is a restorative practice and is often used before a conflict occurs, during a conflict, or following completion of consequences that resulted from misconduct. Mediations are designed to resolve conflict between two or more students, or between a student and a teacher. They are held in a neutral location and are voluntary – they are only conducted when all involved parties agree to actively participate.

Generally, only those directly involved in the conflict work with the mediator (e.g., one-on-one).

Mediations are scheduled between 1st period and 8th period during times that do not negatively impact student academics.

When possible, the parent/guardian of the involved student(s) is notified by the mediator or staff member prior to the mediation. Parents/guardians may be invited to attend a mediation where ALCS believes it is appropriate.

Most mediations are successful. However, if an agreement cannot be reached or the participants cannot abide by the mediation expectations the mediator may end a mediation early. In those instances, students are separated, not immediately permitted to return to class, and the mediator works with the School and Community Safety Coordinator to determine whether it is safe for both students to remain in school.

- *If it is safe for both parties to remain in school:*
  - The students sign an agreement of No Contact.
  - Students return to class.
  - The parent/guardian of the involved parties are informed of the unsuccessful mediation.
- *If there are safety concerns:*
  - The students sign an agreement of no contact which applies to both in and out of school conduct (including social media; texting; etc.)
  - The parent/guardian or emergency contact of the involved parties are informed of the unsuccessful mediation and are required to pick up the student.

If a student violates a mediation agreement following a mediation, the student may be asked to participate in another mediation, be disciplined in accordance with the Conduct and Discipline Policy, and/or be asked to sign a “no contact” agreement.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN/FAMILY/VISITOR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### ***Family Engagement – The Family Action Committee (FAC)***

“It takes a village to raise a child” is an African proverb that means an entire community of people must be present, active, and accountable in children’s lives for those children to experience and grow in a safe and healthy environment. A successful student has many advocates. Our “village” calls itself the Family Action Committee and we invite you to become a part of it. It is our goal to support our students in whatever way possible through academics and social and emotional development.

Members of the Family Action Committee regularly meet and discuss membership, student needs, recruitment, fundraising and all things ALCS! Believing that every member of our village can be of value, we ask that you take an active role in the support we try to provide to “our” daughters. Meeting dates and times are determined at the first meeting of the school year, typically held in September. The Family Action Committee generally meets monthly. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to join the Family Action Committee as a way to get together to discuss parents’/guardians’ concerns and share ideas on how to better ALCS life for our scholars.

### ***School Visitation***

#### **Parent/Guardian Class Observation**

Parents and guardians may request to observe their child’s class. Requests to observe a class must be made two school days in advance. If these visits are reasonable in frequency and duration, and do not interfere with any students’ learning or specific classroom activities, permission will be granted as determined by the Principal. Parents/guardians who visit classrooms are expected to respect the confidentiality rights of other students and may not share information they gather or learn as a result of their visit(s) about other students with others (with the exception of a school official where the parent/guardian believes there is a safety risk to a student/others).

#### **Prospective Students**

ALCS invites prospective students to spend a half or full day visiting Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls. A visit is a great way for students to see what it would be like to attend our school. Prospective students will be matched with a host student who will take them to classes, introduce them to other students and faculty members, and answer their questions. Visits can be scheduled on the ALCS website or calling the Main Office at 518-694-5300.

#### **Visitor Parking**

There is very limited parking available at 75 Park Ave. To avoid paying for parking, park either in the loop or in Lincoln Park.

#### **Visitor Conduct**

Parents/guardians are visitors and are required to follow the school’s Conduct and Discipline Policy while on school property and attending school-sponsored events. Any parent/guardian who violates a school policy may be barred from school property and/or school events and law enforcement may be contacted.

### ***Custody Rights and Responsibility***

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, ALCS does not manage or mediate custody and/or visitation arrangements. Parents/guardians are required to work with Family Court if they have concerns that impact their child’s education. No parent/guardian is denied the ability to pick their child up from school, visit classrooms, participate in FACs, or otherwise be excluded by ALCS from carrying out their parental rights and obligations unless ALCS is directed by a court with proper jurisdiction to do so.

### ***PINS Petitions***

A PINS Petition is a referral to Family Court that may be submitted by ALCS when a student does not attend school or engages in conduct which makes them “ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond lawful control of the school”. ALCS only pursues PINS after all school-based and outside (human resources agencies) intervention measures have been exhausted with the student and her family. The Student Support Team is responsible for determining whether ALCS needs to request Family Court intervention via the PINS process. The school social worker is generally the point of contact for the probation department, child welfare, Family Court, and police departments.

### ***Education Records and Student Data Privacy***

#### **Annual Notification of Rights under FERPA and Education Law §2-d, Notification Regarding Limited Disclosure of Directory Information and Notice of Disclosure to Military Recruiters**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and New York State Education Law §2-d affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child’s or their education records should submit to the our School Counselor(s) a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The School will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend their child’s or their education record should write the Program Administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they believe should be changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the School discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. (See below)
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

The School is required to have a Parent's Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security. The Bill of Rights may be accessed here:

<https://www.albanyleadership.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Parents-Bill-of-Rights.pdf>

#### Disclosures Without Prior Written Consent

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, the FERPA regulations require the School to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. The School may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the School has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the School has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in the statute are met.

A school official typically includes a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the School with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to certain statutory requirements.

Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met.



- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to certain statutory requirements.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the School, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met.
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to certain statutory limitations.
- If the information has been designated by the School as "directory information" (if certain statutory requirements are met).

#### Directory Information Notice

The School has designated the following information as directory information: student's name, address, email address, telephone number, photograph/image, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and honors and awards received.

The School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent if the School determines the disclosure would not be harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, unless you have advised the School to the contrary in accordance with its procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include information from your child's education records in certain school or School publications. Examples include: social media, the annual yearbook, honor roll or other recognition lists, graduation programs, and activity sheets and information.

Directory information can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent, such as companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

School by law will disclose directory information, including students' names, addresses, and telephone listings, to military recruiters upon request.

If you do not want the School to disclose any or all of the types of information designated above as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Carina Cook, CEO/Superintendent, 19 Hackett Boulevard, Albany, New York 12208, in writing, prior to September 1, 2024. You may use the following form:

Opt-Out Request Form:

Dear Dr. Ron Large,

We **DO NOT** want the School to disclose **DIRECTORY INFORMATION** from our child's education records.

Full Name of Child:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Homeroom if secondary)

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone  
Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Note: The School is not responsible for media coverage of school events that are open to the public.

- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement.
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions.

## ***Complaint Policy***

### **Informal Complaint Procedures**

An informal complaint is a complaint that does not concern the alleged violation of law or charter (examples include, but are not limited to, the following: a concern about an academic grade, the school's uniform policy, the school's cell phone policy, or the bus schedule, etc.). If you have an informal complaint, you are encouraged to contact the appropriate staff member at the School by telephone. All staff members are committed to responding promptly to informal complaints, either in person, by telephone, or in writing. If an informal complaint is not responded to and resolved promptly or satisfactorily, you may contact the Principal to discuss the matter. The Principal shall respond in person, by telephone, or in writing.

### **Formal Complaint Procedures**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome or decision pertaining to the informal complaint, and if your complaint alleges a violation of the school's charter or law, you may file a formal complaint in writing to the Chair of the School's Board of Trustees. The contact information for the School's Board of Trustees designee can be obtained in person at the School's main office. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Chair of the Board of Trustees shall appoint a designee to review the complaint. After reviewing the complaint, the designee(s) will respond in writing to the complainant within a reasonable amount of time (within forty-five (45) days from the date of receipt of the complaint by the Board of Trustees).

If you are not satisfied with the response from the Chair of the Board of Trustees and/or the Chair's designee, you may submit a formal complaint to the School's authorizer, the SUNY Charter Schools Institute. Instructions on how to submit a complaint to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute can be found in the Institute's grievance guidelines available at [www.newyorkcharters.org/contact/](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/contact/). The Charter Schools Institute, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York, will investigate and respond. If, after presentation of the complaint to the Charter Schools Institute, you determine that the Charter Schools Institute has not adequately addressed the complaint, you may present the case to the State Education Department, acting on behalf of the Board of Regents, which shall investigate and respond. The Charter Schools Institute and the State Education Department each has the power and the duty to take remedial action to resolve the complaint, as appropriate.

**If you elect to follow the informal complaint procedures to resolve a formal complaint, you shall be permitted at any time to stop the informal complaint procedures and initiate formal complaint procedures. If an individual or group voices a complaint at a public meeting of the School's Board of Trustees or to individual trustees, trustees shall not respond to the substance of the complaint, but instead shall thank the individual or group for their time and direct them to the relevant complaint procedures.**

## **CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The Conduct and Discipline Policy has been established to promote a safe and respectful learning environment. The Conduct and Discipline Policy identifies behaviors that are prohibited at ALCS. Students enrolled at ALCS are required to abide by the Code of Excellent Conduct. Parents/guardians and families are given a copy of the Conduct and Discipline Policy at the September Open House, and a copy is available on the ALCS website.

Responses are restorative practices and consequences designed to restore safe and positive learning

environments, deter repeat violations, assist those impacted by misconduct, reaffirm community expectations, and provide educational and reflective opportunities for students.

This Policy, including the examples of misconduct and lists of consequences in Tiers 2-4, are not intended to be exhaustive but to provide a guide and framework for the School and community to understand expectations. Consequences are assigned based on the nature and gravity of the violations, the student's age, and disciplinary history. Consequences assigned by ALCS are additive and cumulative, thus, future violations of school policy typically result in more significant consequences, especially for the same or similar repeated conduct.

### ***Scope of Authority***

The Conduct and Discipline Policy applies to all students while on school property and at off-school property school-sponsored events beginning from the time the student applies to ALCS until the actual awarding of a degree or when a student withdraws or is dismissed from ALCS. This includes, at the discretion of the school, during school break periods and periods of suspension.

### ***Restorative Practices***

Restorative practices means strategies, systems and programs designed to repair harm caused by misconduct with the goal of maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment. ALCS uses restorative practices as part of all student discipline interventions. Examples of restorative practices include peace circles, mediations, and parent/guardian conferences, and they may be used at all Tiers prior to, during, or after the misconduct occurs.

### ***Prohibited Conduct and Responses***

ALCS uses a Four-Tiered System to progressively align prohibited conduct (behavior) with interventions and penalties. Tier 1 behaviors are considered low level and can be managed outside of the traditional student discipline process. Tiers 2, 3, and 4 and repeated Tier 1 behaviors are managed via the student discipline process. Examples of prohibited conduct are outlined under each Tier.

#### **Tier 1 Prohibited Conduct**

Minor acts of misconduct that interfere with the orderly operation of a classroom, school building, or school activity. Tier 1 Prohibited Conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Loud or inappropriate language or gestures
- Abuse of hall or bathroom privileges
- Teasing
- Being in an unauthorized area without permission
- Interfering with the behavior of others
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices, or misuse of computers
- Careless, unauthorized use of, loss of, or damage to school property and facilities
- Recurring failure to be prepared with class materials, supplies
- Minor disruptive behavior

- Failure to comply with the dress code
- Unexcused tardiness to class
- Cutting class (skipping)
- Statements or actions, written, verbal or electronic, that disrupt the educational process
- Littering
- Failure to comply with teacher instructions (i.e. sitting in assigned seat)

### Tier 1 Responses

Tier 1 behaviors are typically managed by the teacher (or staff member). When these behaviors are displayed, teachers address the behavior with the student in a manner that is least disruptive to the academic environment. Interventions a teacher may use to address the student include, but are not limited to:

- Talking with the student outside of class
- Talking with the student after class
- Redirecting the student
- Providing a student with a break

If the student's behaviors are not corrected as a result of the teacher's/staff's interventions, the teacher/staff:

- If the desired outcome is not achieved, the teacher may call a Student Support Team Member (SST) for assistance.
- Upon the Student Support Team member's arrival, the teacher is expected to provide the SST with the nature of the incident, the student's response, and all interventions applied.
- The SST member will ascertain the steps that are appropriate to the given situation. These can include, but are not limited to:
  - Discussion with the teacher and student outside of the classroom.
  - Private conversation between the Student Support Team Member and the student.
  - Private conversation between another member of the Student Support Team Member and the student.
- At the conclusion of the incident, the Teacher and SST member will complete the call to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) by the end of the business day.

If the student fails to meet the expectations or it is determined by the teacher and SST member that the student cannot return to the classroom, Tier 2 Responses, below, are used.

### Tier 2 Prohibited Conduct

Tier 2 Prohibited Conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Cheating, plagiarism, copyright infringement
- Repeated teasing
- Unauthorized distribution or posting of any written material, pamphlets, posters or other inappropriate material without prior approval of the Principal or designee
- Unauthorized use of school property, logo, or school name
- Repeated cutting of classes (skipping)
- Cutting detention
- Possession or use of tobacco, nicotine products such as e-cigarettes (vaping) or any paraphernalia products on school grounds or at school functions (regardless of where such event or activity takes place)
- Threat or harassment/intimidation/bullying

- Throwing or propelling objects that can result in physical injury
- Trespassing or unauthorized entry, presence, or use of school facilities

### Tier 2 Responses

- A member of the SST will respond to the behavior.
- When members of the SST respond, their primary responsibility is to maintain safety, which may include calling for additional support.
- Typically, when responding to these behaviors the responding SST member(s):
  - Remove the student(s) of concern from the classroom or incident location.
  - Separate the involved students.
  - Meet and gather information from all involved parties(respondent, complainant, teacher, etc.), and obtain a written referral from the teacher.
  - Escort involved the student(s) to a safe location.
  - Contact the Principal.
- The Principal or designee will:
  - Evaluate all information, including information from the respondent.
  - Assign the consequence.
  - Inform all parties of the resolution in accordance with school policies.
  - Contact involved students' parent(s)/guardian(s).
  - Document incident and resolution.

Tier 2 consequences can include but are not limited to:

- Parent/guardian meeting
- Loss of school privileges
- Mandatory participation in flex
- Detention
- Alternative Learning Center placement
- Mandatory or administrative flex time
- Detention
- Behavioral contract
- Suspension from extra-curricular and/or interscholastic activities
- In-school suspension

### Tier 3 Prohibited Conduct

Tier 3 misconduct typically involves serious or disruptive acts directed against people or property that can or do endanger the health or safety of oneself or others.

Tier 3 Prohibited Conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Repeated Tier 2 Prohibited Conduct
- Abusive or disrespectful language (verbal or written) towards a teacher or staff member.
- Ongoing bullying, as defined by DASA (though the bullying need not be based on a covered status)
- Cell phone violation
- Coercion
- Failure to comply with directives of school officials
- Extortion
- Harassment, including but not limited to harassment based on a person's actual or perceived: race,

color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression) or other protected class, or other violations of the Dignity for All Students Act (“DASA”) and policy (see below)

- Insubordination
- The unauthorized possession or misuse of prescription medication or any over the counter medication
- Theft
- Vandalism or destruction of personal property or school property

### Tier 3 Responses

- A member of the SST will respond to the behavior.
- When members of the SST respond the primary responsibility is to maintain safety, which may include calling for additional support.
- Typically, when responding to these behaviors the responding SST will:
  - Remove the student(s) of concern from the classroom or incident location.
  - Separate the involved students.
  - Meet and gather information from all involved parties (respondent, complainant, teacher, etc.), and obtain the written referral from the teacher.
  - Escort involved the student(s) to a safe location.
  - Contact the Principal.
- Students who exhibit behaviors that can result in an out of school suspension will meet with the Principal, or designee.
- The Principal or designee will:
  - Evaluate all information, including information from the respondent.
  - Assign the consequence.
  - Inform all parties of the resolution in accordance with school policies.
  - Contact involved students’ parent(s)/guardian(s).
  - Document incident and resolution.

Tier 3 Consequences can include but are not limited to:

- Parent/guardian Meeting
- Alternative Learning Center placement
- Mandatory Flex
- Detention
- Loss of school privileges
- Mandatory or administrative flex time
- Detention
- Behavioral contract
- Suspension from extra-curricular and/or interscholastic activities
- In-school suspension (LABS)
- Short-term out of school suspension (suspension lasting no more than 10 school days)
- Long-term out of school Suspension (suspension lasting greater than 10 school days)
- Off-site tutoring
- Modified school schedule
- Expulsion

### Tier 4 Prohibited Conduct



Extremely serious or disruptive acts directed against people or property that can cause significant danger the health or safety of oneself or others.

Tier 4 Prohibited Conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Repeated Tier 3 Prohibited Conduct
- Arson
- Attempted or actual sale, distribution, or manufacture of alcohol, marijuana, illegal substances, prescription drugs or drug paraphernalia on school property or at a school function.
- Possession, use of alcohol, marijuana, illegal substances, or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school functions.
- Intoxication or impairment due to the misuse of prescription or over the counter medication.
- Endangering the safety of oneself or others with the intent to inflict harm (e.g., throwing desk, chairs, objects)
- Assault with intent to or that causes physical injury
- Committing an act of violence upon a school employee
- Fighting
- Displaying what appears to be or is a weapon, while on school property or attending a school sponsored event
- Possession of a weapon at school, or any device that could be potentially detonated or exploded on school grounds or at school function, (e.g., live ammunition, fireworks, etc.)
- Threatening to use a weapon, while on school property or attending a school sponsored event
- Participating in the planning of or making a bomb threat or other threat to cause harm to the school community, regardless of whether the threat is intended to cause distress to others
- Tampering with or creating a false fire alarm

#### Tier 4 Responses

- A member of the SST will respond to the behavior.
- When members of the SST respond the primary responsibility is to maintain safety, which may include calling for additional support.
- Typically, when responding to these behaviors the responding SST will:
  - Remove the student(s) of concern from the classroom or incident location.
  - Separate the involved students.
  - Gather information from all involved parties, including a referral from the teacher
  - Escort involved student(s) to safe location.
  - Contact the Principal or designee.
- The Principal or designee will:
  - Gather any additional information.
  - Evaluate all information, including information from the respondent.
  - Assign the consequence.
  - Inform all parties of the resolution in accordance with school policies.
  - Contact involved students' parent(s)/guardian(s).
  - Document Incident and resolution.

Tier 4 Consequences may include but are not limited to:

- Parent/guardian meeting
- Alternative Learning Center placement

- Loss of school privileges
- Mandatory or administrative flex time
- Detention
- Proposed behavior contract
- Suspension from extra-curricular and/or interscholastic activities
- In-school suspension
- Short-term out of school suspension (suspension lasting no more than 10 school days)
- Long-term Out of school suspension (suspension lasting greater than 10 school days)
- Off-site tutoring
- Modified school schedule
- Expulsion
- Law enforcement involvement/referral

### ***Procedures for Disciplinary Consequences***

#### **Proposed Behavior Contract**

School staff may develop and propose written agreements between the school and students subject to punishment under this policy. The purpose of a behavior contract is to identify target behaviors, define expectations, and describe consequences that may be imposed if the student violates the contract. While the decision to enter into a behavior contract is voluntary, if the parent/guardian declines, other disciplinary action may be imposed.

#### **Suspension from Transportation:**

Transportation is not provided by ALCS. Students who use school district transportation may be subject to discipline by the school district and/or ALCS. ALCS has no decision-making authority for school-district-imposed discipline relative to transportation, and parents/guardians seeking information related to such disciplinary action should contact the transportation department of their school district.

If a student is suspended from transportation, the parent/guardian is responsible for providing alternative transportation during the period of suspension. Absences of students who do not attend school because they are suspended from transportation are considered unexcused.

#### **Classroom Removal**

Students may be removed from class as a result of their misconduct. Removals are typically short-term (e.g., for a cooling-off period). Parents/guardians are not notified of one removal but are notified if there is a pattern of removals (e.g., three removals within a short period of time, such as one instructional day or within one week for similar behaviors). The student and parent/guardian shall be given an opportunity to meet informally with the Principal/Principal's designee, however the removal will not be delayed pending such meeting.

#### **Loss of School Privileges**

Loss of school privileges means a student is suspended from participation in one or more activity that ALCS considers a *school privilege*, which includes any or all extracurricular activities and interscholastic

sports. Students who lose school privileges are informed via letter home. The student and parent(s) or guardian(s) have the opportunity to meet informally with the Principal/Principal's designee if so requested. While the meeting is held as soon as possible, loss of school privileges is enforced as administered. In other words, a student will not be permitted to participate pending the outcome of the meeting. If a student is suspended from school privileges multiple times, the student may lose privileges for the remainder of the year or another specified period based upon the level and frequency of infractions.

### Assignment to Learning and Behavior Supports (LABS)

Students assigned to Alternative Learning report to the building's Learning and Behavior Support Center (LABS). While in LABS, students are permitted to enter the LABS facility but are prohibited from attending their scheduled class and/or school-sponsored activities, including college tours and class trips. Instead, students report to LABS to complete their assignments in a smaller, more focused space with a Teaching Assistant. The duration of LABS time is determined by the Principal or principal's designee.

### Short-Term Suspension

A short-term suspension is the removal of a student from school for a period of ten or less school days. The Principal shall determine the period of suspension on a case-by-case basis. Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Principal shall explain the alleged misconduct to the student and, if the student denies or disagrees with the information, the Principal shall provide an explanation of the evidence in support of the finding that the misconduct occurred. The student will also be provided with the opportunity to present their version of events.

Before imposing a short-term suspension the Principal/Principal's designee shall notify the parent/guardian that the student may be suspended from school. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or express mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to impose the suspension. The notice will be sent to the address on file in the dominant language or mode of communication of the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are given the option to receive communications via email at the beginning of each year, in which case notice will be sent via email. Wherever possible, notice shall also be provided via telephone call.

Written and telephone notice shall: (1) include a description of the incident(s) for which the suspension is proposed; and (2) inform the parent/guardian of their right to request an informal conference with the Principal/Principal's designee. The Principal/Principal's designee shall schedule an informal conference as soon as possible. The informal conference shall be provided in the dominant language or mode of communication of the parent/guardian.

If the student's presence on school grounds pending notice poses a danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process, the short-term suspension may be imposed prior to the informal conference.

If a parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the Principal/Principal's designee, the parent/guardian may file a written appeal to the Board of Trustees via the Principal within five business days of the date of the decision. The appeal to the Board will be handled by the Board's designee, the CEO, or his/her designee.

### Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from school for a period of more than ten days; and an expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from ALCS. When the Principal believes a long-term suspension or expulsion may be warranted, the Principal shall impose a ten-day suspension and refer the student to the CEO for further disciplinary action. The CEO or designee shall serve as the hearing officer and a formal long-term suspension/expulsion hearing shall be held. Prior to imposing a long-term suspension, the following steps shall be taken:

1. If the student poses a danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process, the student shall be immediately removed from class and/or school.
2. Once the Principal has determined s/he is going to refer the student for a long-term suspension/expulsion, the Principal shall inform the student that s/he is being suspended and is being referred to the CEO for consideration for a long-term suspension/expulsion, and explain the reasons for that referral.
3. The parent/guardian shall be notified of the referral in writing by personal delivery or express mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to refer the student for a long-term suspension/expulsion. Where possible, the notice shall also be provided by telephone call. The notice shall be in the dominant language/mode of communication of the parent/guardian.
4. The notice shall:
  - a. include a description of the incident or incidents which resulted in the suspension;
  - b. indicate that a formal disciplinary hearing will be held on the matter;
  - c. include the date, time, and location of the hearing;
  - d. notify the parent/caregiver of the student's right to representation by counsel or a non-attorney advocate of the parent's/guardian's choosing, the right to present evidence, and the right to call and/or question witnesses;
  - e. the right to request a record of the hearing (via audiotape); and
  - f. state that a written decision will be provided.
5. The hearing officer (the CEO or designee) shall oversee the hearing and the hearing shall be recorded. The hearing officer will listen to both sides and ask clarifying questions as needed. The hearing officer shall issue a written decision that includes the findings of fact related to the charges and the disciplinary decision reached. The written decision shall be sent to the parent/guardian within seven school days after the hearing.
6. If the hearing officer is a designee, and the student is found to have engaged in misconduct, the hearing officer may make a recommendation to the CEO related to the penalty. The CEO shall determine the appropriate penalty and notify the parent/guardian of such in writing within seven school days of the determination. The CEO shall consider the student's prior disciplinary history when determining the penalty.

#### Appeals from Long-Term Suspensions/Expulsions

If a parent/guardian disagrees with a long-term suspension/expulsion, they may appeal the decision in writing to the Board of Trustees. The appeal must be received by the Board within three weeks of the date on the written decision. On appeal, the Board or a group of three board members appointed by the Board Chairperson will review the "record." The record includes any written statements relied on as part of the decision to suspend the student, the suspension letters to the parent/guardian, and any written summary of the reasons for the appeal from the parent/guardian. For long-term suspensions/expulsions, the record also includes the audio-recording of the hearing and any tangible evidence (e.g., hearing exhibits) presented at the hearing. The Board may elect to ask questions of the parent/guardian and/or CEO, but the parent/guardian does not have a right to present any oral argument or attend the Board's deliberations of the matter. The Board will consider the appeal at its next regularly scheduled meeting and issue a written decision within seven school days of the meeting. The Board's decision may be

further appealed to the School's authorizer pursuant to the Complaint Policy, which can be found on the School's website..

#### Alternative Instruction

Students who are removed from school as a result of out-of-school suspensions are entitled to receive alternative instruction. Alternative instruction should begin on the first day of the student's suspension or as soon as practicable. "Alternative instruction" means instruction which is substantially equivalent to the school program and ALCS will develop an alternative instruction plan designed to meet this requirement, recognizing it may be different for each student. Alternative instruction usually begins by the second day of suspension, and is provided for approximately two hours per day, generally between the hours of 3:30 PM and 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday). Students who are expelled are no longer enrolled at ALCS and are not entitled to alternative instruction as of the effective date of the expulsion.

#### Procedures for Disciplining Students with Disabilities:

In addition to the disciplinary procedures applicable to all students, ALCS follows all federal laws applicable to students with disabilities. A student not specifically identified as having a disability but whose school district of residence or ALCS, prior to the behavior which is the subject of the disciplinary action, has a basis of knowledge that a disability exists may request to be disciplined in accordance with these provisions.

ALCS shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

For penalties that do not constitute a disciplinary change in placement (10 days or less), students with disabilities shall be subject to the same disciplinary policy as students without disabilities. Students will receive the same legally required alternative instruction as other students.

#### Manifestation Determination and Cooperation with the School District of Residence

Whenever a suspension of a student with an IEP or a student suspected of having an education-related disability exceeds ten days in a school year (either through a series of short-term suspensions for a pattern of behavior or a referral for a long-term suspension that will exceed ten days), ALCS shall notify the student's district of residence of the need for a manifestation determination review (MDR). In the event a MDR determines that the conduct of a student with a disability is attributable to that disability, the student shall immediately be permitted to return to the school, in lieu of beginning or completing the period of suspension. If a student's behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the student shall be disciplined in the same manner as the school's general education students.

#### Students with Section 504 Plans

Students with 504 plans are subject to the same disciplinary processes as students with IEPs, except that in the case of a change in placement totaling more than 10 days, the student shall not be referred to the CSE. Instead, ALCS will conduct its own meeting to determine whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability.

#### Gun-Free Schools Act:

Federal law requires the suspension from school for at least one calendar year of a student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school or to have possessed a firearm at school. The CEO may modify this requirement on a case-by-case basis, including imposing an expulsion. Any modification must be in writing in accordance with the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994.

### **Title IX Sexual Harassment**

ALCS complies with Title IX of the Civil Rights Act, which prohibits sexual harassment of students. If you believe your child has been sexually harassed, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, Jeremiah Kelliehan for assistance. The Title IX Coordinator will provide you with a copy of the Title IX policy and assist you with understanding the process for filing a formal complaint.

### ***Dignity for All Students Act (“DASA”) Policy***

In accordance with New York State’s Dignity for All Students Act (“DASA”), ALCS is committed to providing its students, Employees, volunteers and visitors with an educational and working environment that is safe and secure, promotes respect, dignity and equality, and is free from bullying, discrimination or other forms of harassment or intimidation.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is strictly prohibited on school property and at any school function, as well as any other place or time when the effects of such conduct would reasonably be expected to impact the educational process or create a risk disruption within the school environment.

“Bullying” is defined as harassment, aggressive behavior or other intentional action, whether verbal or physical, which is intended, or could reasonably be expected, to cause emotional harm, distress, fear, ridicule, humiliation and/or intimidation.

Bullying can be face-to-face, or carried out by phone, over the internet and other ways directed at another person through the "posting" of sensitive and/or private information, including cyberbullying.

“Cyberbullying” means bullying through any form of electronic communication, such as email, text, and social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram).

Bullying can take many forms, such as slurs, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, cartoons, pranks, gestures, and physical attacks (“Intentional action” refers to the individual’s choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).) This policy includes Bullying of students (by other students, employees, volunteers and visitors) and by students (of employees, volunteers and visitors). Bullying by students will result in discipline, up to and including expulsion. Bullying by employees will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Harassment and Discrimination**

All students are entitled to a learning environment free from harassment and discrimination. No student or employee shall be subjected to discrimination or harassment by other students, employees or visitors on the basis of physical, cultural or even social differences, including, without limitation based on their actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, or gender. “Harassment” includes any action (verbal or physical)

which tends to create a hostile environment (including bullying and cyberbullying) and has substantially interfered with a student's educational opportunities or benefits or the terms and conditions of an employee's employment, reasonably causes a student or employee to fear for their physical safety, or reasonably poses a risk to a student's or employee's physical or emotional well-being. Just like bullying, harassment that occurs off school property is prohibited when the effects of such conduct would reasonably be expected to impact the educational process or create risk of disruption within the school environment. Harassment by students will result in discipline, up to and including expulsion. Harassment by employees will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. ALCS values and embraces its inclusive and diverse school communities and strives to provide a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for all students and families regardless of their race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. If a student or their family would like to explore a particular accommodation based upon cultural or religious practices, or due to one's disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity, the student or the student's families or guardian should contact the Principal to schedule a meeting to discuss a plan to address the student's particular circumstances and needs.

### Reporting and Investigation of Complaints

Any staff member who witnesses, receives an oral or written account of, or otherwise reasonably suspects the occurrence of, any act constituting harassment, discrimination or bullying must promptly notify the Principal and Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) Coordinator of such occurrence as soon as reasonably practicable, but no later than one school day of witnessing or receiving a report of harassment, discrimination or bullying. Such staff members are required to file a written report with the Principal and DASA Coordinator no later than two school days after such oral report or notification. Reporting forms are available in the Main Office.

The ALCS Middle School DASA Coordinator is: Jerimah Kelliehan, School Counselor, [jkelliehan@albanyleadership.org](mailto:jkelliehan@albanyleadership.org), and (518)-694-5300. The DASA Coordinator is trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity. The DASA Coordinator will be accessible to students and staff members for consultation and advice. All students, families/guardians, visitors and others are strongly encouraged to report any such conduct.

Retaliation or reprisal by any staff member, student or family/guardian against any individual who, in good faith, reports or assists in the investigation of harassment, discrimination or bullying is strictly prohibited (and, for students and staff members, will result in severe discipline).

All complaints will be treated in a confidential manner to the maximum extent possible. Please note that anonymous reports may limit the school's ability to effectively and efficiently respond to the complaint. The Principal or DASA Coordinator will lead or supervise the prompt and thorough investigation of all such reports. If such investigation results in a finding of a violation of the school's policies, the school will take prompt action, reasonably calculated to end the harassment/discrimination or bullying, eliminate any hostile environment, prevent recurrence of the behavior, and ensure the safety and educational opportunities of the student(s) or staff member(s) against whom such behavior was directed.

ALCS applies the same disciplinary framework to misconduct covered by DASA as it does to other misconduct. ALCS reserves the right to notify an appropriate law enforcement agency when it is believed that any harassment/discrimination/bullying may constitute criminal conduct. Material incidents of discrimination and harassment will be reported to the State Education Department as required by law.