



# **Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls**

## **Parent/Guardian Handbook and**

**Code of Conduct 2022-2023**

**75 Park Ave., Albany, New  
York 12202**

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

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## A. INTRODUCTION

**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.



**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 will be engaged participants in *service learning* to ensure our young ladies will learn the true meaning of leadership while strengthening and improving the local community.

**Families' role in the ALCS community:** ALCS needs the support of parents 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, 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 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 daughter'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 girl enrolled at ALCS as our mission is achieved.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** 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 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 values means that **all** students will be expected to succeed academically and adhere to the Code of excellent conduct. On the next page are the non-negotiables which help us achieve and maintain high expectations and high performance.

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

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

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

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

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



# 2022-2023 School Calendar

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

July 2022						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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August 2022						
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September 2022						
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October 2022						
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30	31					

November 2022						
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December 2022						
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January 2023						
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29	30	31				

February 2023						
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26	27	28				

March 2023						
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26	27	28	29	30	31	

April 2023						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2023						
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28	29	30	31			

June 2023						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	

2022		2023		Key	
July 4	July 4 <sup>th</sup>	Jan. 3	Professional Development		Late Start (9:50 a.m.)
Aug. 16-17	Regents Exams	Jan. 16	Martin Luther King Jr. Day		School Closed
Aug. 29 – Sept. 1	Material Pick Up	Jan. 24-27	Regents Exams		Staff Only (No Classes)
Sept. 5	Labor Day	Feb. 20-24	February Recess		Middle School Testing
Sept. 6	First Day of Classes	March 17	Professional Development		Regents Exams
Oct. 6	Emergency Early Release Drill	April 7-14	Spring Recess		
Oct. 7	Professional Development	April 19-21	ELA Assessments 6-8 grade		
Oct. 10	Indigenous Peoples Day	May 2-4	Math Assessments 6-8 grade		
Nov. 11	Veterans' Day Holiday	May 26 & 29	Memorial Day Observed		
Nov. 23-25	Thanksgiving Holiday	June 5	Science Assessment 8 grade		
Dec. 23 – Jan. 2	Winter Recess	June 19	Juneteenth		
		June 14-16 & 20-22	Regents Exams		

## B. REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL DAY

### DRESS CODE

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

To foster an environment where students focus on learning and to create a sense of community, ALCS has a MANDATORY student dress code. Uniforms worn by students at ALCS reflect a level of professionalism we expect at ALCS (which is also expected in a formal work environment).

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

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

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

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

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

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

### REQUIRED

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

### APPEARANCE/TOILETRIES

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

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

**Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls Dress Code Expectations**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACCEPTABLE STYLE</b>	<b>COLOR</b>	<b>NOT ALLOWED</b>
<b>Pants</b>	ALCS-issued only	Gray	·Unhemmed pants
<b>Skirts</b>	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.
<b>Polo</b>	ALCS-issued only	Yellow/6th Grade	·Unbuttoned and/or untucked shirt. ·Tight or short top exposing midriff. ·Blouses worn inside out or half on and half off. ·Logos or designs visible beneath ALCS shirt. ·Any long-sleeved shirt color other than black, white, and gray under short-sleeved shirt.
<b>Black Sweater/ ALCS Fleece</b>	ALCS-issued only	ALCS black fleece or black sweater	·Unkept/unclean ALCS sweaters. ·Jackets/coats, sweatshirts, hoodies ·Any sweater/fleece NOT issued by ALCS
<b>Shoes, Sneakers, Boots</b>	Any appropriate sneaker, shoe, or boots.	Student choice	·Shoes/boots with spikes or sharp, protruding gems/designs. ·Open-toed or open-back shoes, flip-flops, sandals, slip-on, slippers/slides, or crocs. ·Heels more than 2 inches high.
<b>Accessories</b>	Socks, stockings, pantyhose Headbands (ALCS-issued)	Solid Black, White, or Grey <b>ONLY</b>	·Fishnet, lace-designed or multi-colored. ·Footless tights

	only) ALCS-issued drawstring bag.		·Weather or athletic headgear ·Bandanas, head scarves, durag, or bonnets.
Physical Education Uniform	Shorts, yoga pants, or sweatpants T-shirt	Student choice	·Skin-tight, see-through or inappropriately fitting and/or revealing. ·Anything with logos, profanity, inappropriate pictures and/or references.
Hijab	ALCS-issued or one of the designated colors	Solid white, black, grey, or purple	·No patterns or designs
Abaya	Any appropriate abaya	Solid black, grey or purple	·No patterns or designs ·Black or gray leggings underneath <b>ONLY.</b>

## OPERATIONS

### REQUIRED ENROLLMENT PAPERWORK

To ensure that ALCS satisfies all New York State Education Department mandates for student safety, data collection and funding, students must submit ALL required documentation **BEFORE** they can officially start school. Students who fail to submit any of the below documents will be prohibited from attending classes until paperwork is turned in.

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

### THE SCHOOL DAY

The school day begins at 7:50 am and ends at 3:00 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. On most Wednesdays, the school day begins at 9:50 am and ends at 3:00 pm (weekly faculty professional development). The calendar indicates which Wednesdays will follow a regular school day schedule and which ones will follow a modified PD day schedule. Flextime/tutoring is offered for 30 minutes after school every day and concludes at 3:30 pm. Breakfast is from **7:10 am – 7:40 am**. The kitchen closes at 7:40 am. All students will be dismissed from the Student Union at **7:40 am**.

Students arriving late to school prior to second period can pick up breakfast bars at the late sign in station and immediately report to class.

The bell schedule is as follows:

<i>Regular School Day</i>		<i>PD Wednesday/2-hour delay</i>		<i>Half-Day of School</i>		<i>C.L.E.A.R Day</i>	
							7:50-8:47
1	7:50 – 8:40	1	9:50 – 10:25	1	7:50 – 8:19	1	8:50 – 9:32
2	8:43 – 9:36	2	10:28 – 11:06	2	8:22 – 8:51	2	9:35 – 10:21
3	9:39 – 10:29	3	11:09 – 11:44	3	8:54 – 9:23	3	10:24 – 11:06
4	10:32 – 11:24	4	11:47 – 12:24	7	9:26 – 9:55	4	11:09 – 11:54
5	11:27 – 12:19	5	12:27 – 1:04	8	9:58 – 10:27	5	11:57 – 12:42
6	12:22 – 1:14	6	1:07 – 1:44	4	10:30 – 10:58	6	12:45 – 1:30
8	2:10 – 3:00	8	2:25 – 3:00	6	11:32-12:00	7	1:33 – 2:15
Flex	3:00 – 3:30	Flex	3:00 – 3:30			8	2:18 – 3:00
						Flex	3:00 – 3:30

## ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Consistent student attendance is vital for academic success. It is each student's responsibility as a member of the ALCS community to be on time and attend all classes. ALCS's attendance procedures are required by New York State law. Below is an outline of ALCS's attendance procedures. Additional information about ALCS's attendance procedures can be found in our Student Code of Excellent Conduct. Please contact the Main Office at 518-694-5300 for questions about student attendance.
- Attendance is crucial to every student's success at ALCS. We expect students, when healthy, to be at school every day for the entire school day.
- If your student is sick, please keep them home. We strongly recommend that you contact your medical care provider when your student is sick.

## ABSENCES

In the case of an absence:

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



## Excused Absences and Unexcused Absences

Excused absences include:

- Medical Absence:
  - To be considered for an excused medical absence, the student must bring a written note from a doctor on letterhead, with the student's name, excused dates and reason for absence.
- Non-Medical Excused Absence:
  - To be considered for an excused non-medical absence, a parent/guardian must provide a signed written note stating the reason for the absence. The Principal/principal's designee with sole discretion, may request additional information to verify the reason for the absence. Missing too many classes jeopardizes a student's chance of promotion. Non-medical excused absences include:
    - A death in the family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin)
    - Court appearance
    - Medical or psychological tests with note from test provider
    - Religious holy days as defined by a religious calendar
    - Other extraordinary situations approved by the Principal.

Unexcused Absences Include (but are not limited to):

- Being sick at home without a doctor's note
- Babysitting
- Missed transportation
- Family vacation
- Trips to homeland/extensive travel
- 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

### Chronic Absenteeism

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

- For a student to receive credit for a full-year course, she must attend regular class meetings. Eighteen unexcused absences (including absences from tardiness), in any year, may result in a student being denied credit in each course and/or promotion to the next grade. Nine unexcused absences from semester classes, may result in a student being denied credit in each course and/or promotion to the next grade. This decision will be made at the sole discretion of the administration with input from faculty, student, and family. Please note that excessive absences can also affect summer school eligibility as well as participation in school field trips and other ALCS sanctioned events.

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

### **Skipping Classes**

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

### **TARDINESS**

- Students arriving after 7:50 am or 9:50 am on late start Wednesdays are LATE but will be allowed entry into their first period class. Students who arrive at school after the late bell will be charged with an **unexcused tardy** unless they have a medical note or note that falls under "non-medical excused absences."
- Please note that any students who are late to school, or any classes, will be administered progressive disciplinary action by the Principal/principal's designee and/or may be prohibited from participating in school or extracurricular events such as field trips, athletic events, etc.
- Typical consequences for tardiness include, but are not limited to:
  1. Detention
  2. Parent Meeting
  3. Revocation of school privileges - I.e., attending field drips, participating in athletics/athletic events, etc.
  4. Referral to county services. (Please refer to the section, "Consequences/Interventions" on pg. 35 to learn more.)
- Please note that for a student to receive credit for a full-year course, she must attend classes regularly. ALCS upholds NYS Laws regarding required student seat time for credit accumulation.

### **Absent / Tardy Verification:**

- ALCS will make daily absent calls and tardy calls via our One Call System to parents/guardians of students that are absent or arrive at school late. These calls are typically made to parents/guardians that do not inform the school of a student's absence or lateness. If you receive a call and you believe your student is present in school or was on time to school, please call ALCS at 518-694- 5300

## EARLY DISMISSAL

- We realize that students have doctors', dentists', and other appointments. Every effort should be made to schedule these appointments during vacation days or other times when the student is less likely to have school. Missing too many classes may jeopardize a student's chances of promotion.
- Students will be granted early dismissal only when the school has received a signed note from the student's parent/ guardian. The note must state the reason for the early dismissal and a phone number where the parent/guardian can be contacted. The Main Office may call the parent/guardian to verify every note. Exceptions for phone call permission in emergency situations will be granted when the parent/guardian provides the password that they submitted with the early dismissal form.
- A student who would like to leave because she is not feeling well cannot obtain permission from any school employee. A student will only be dismissed if parent/guardian (or a designee as documented on the student's Blue Card) signs out the student.
- If students are chronically dismissed early without legal excuses, administrative interventions may be taken to ensure that the parents/guardians understand the significant negative impact such absences can have on academic performance. These interventions may include meetings with the parent and student, home visits, or referrals to county services.
- A student leaving school without permission will be marked unexcused absent and is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary system.

## VISITING

### ***General Guidelines:***

- Community members may typically visit our school during normal school hours. To access our building, visitors must ring the bell at the Main Entrance, once buzzed in, visitors will be greeted by an ALCS employee at the transaction window. For safety reasons, visitors may be asked to show picture ID before entering the building and visitors will be required to sign in and out of the building. All visitors are required to wear a visitor badge while in the building.

### ***Parent & Guardian Class Observation:***

- Parents and guardians may request to observe their child's class. Requests to observe a class must be made two business 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.

### ***Prospective Students***

- Albany Leadership welcomes 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 faculty members and answer all their questions. Visits can be scheduled on the ALCS website or calling the Main Office at 518-694-5300.

## PARKING

Whenever possible, please park in the “Visitor” marked spots. In addition, during dismissal, please refrain from parking in the “Bus Loading Only” lane as this can cause accidents and/or delay bus departures for students.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS**

New York State Education Law states that we may release a student to someone other than the student’s parent/legal guardian in accordance with the prior written instructions of the parent/guardian (a.k.a. “person in parental relation”). This can only happen if the identity of the person requesting the release is verified against a list of names provided by the student’s parent or person in parental relation at the time of the child’s enrollment in the school and updated on the student’s Blue Card. If someone whose name is not on the list attempts to obtain the release of a student, that student may not be released, except in the case of any emergency as determined in the sole discretion of the Principal/principal’s designee (§3210(1)(c)).

Furthermore, a school can release a student to someone whose name is not on a list previously provided by the student’s parent or person in parental relation only in case of an emergency. No situation will be deemed an emergency until the Principal/ principal’s designee verifies the facts of the situation, contacts the student’s parent or person in parental relation, and the student’s parent or person in parental relation agrees to 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 (§ 3210(1)(c)).

Finally, a student may not be released to a non-custodial parent if the district has been provided with a “certified copy of a legally binding instrument, such as a court order or decree of divorce, separation, or custody” that indicates the non-custodial parent does not have the right to obtain such release (§3210(1)(c)).

## **SCHOOL SAFETY**

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

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

### **Reporting a Safety Concern**

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

### **School ID Procedures**

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

## **PHONE NUMBERS AND STUDENT INFORMATION**

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

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

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

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees ensures that ALCS adheres to the mission, goals and all other terms and conditions of the school's charter. The Board supervises and holds accountable the performance of ALCS's Principal, who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of ALCS. Additionally, the Board approves the appointment of ALCS's School Business Administrator.

The Board of Trustees is also responsible for the establishment and maintenance of all policies governing the operation of ALCS. It responds to complaints submitted to the Board pursuant to ALCS's complaints process, including matters of enforcement of ALCS's discipline code which governs long-term suspensions and expulsions.

Trustees of Albany Leadership Charter School Board of Trustees include:

Name	Name
Elizabeth Robertson	Eldon Harris
Margaret Moree	James Celestine
Etwin Bowman	Arricka Harrison
	Sojourner Brice-Clark

\*One parent or guardian from ALCS can serve as a member of the ALCS Board of Trustees, providing direct representation on ALCS's governing body.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT-FAMILY ACTION COMMITTEE AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

“It takes a village to raise a child” is an African proverb that means that 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. It is our goal to support our students in whatever way possible; through, academics and social and emotional development. Parents 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. Dates and times for each school year will be determined at our first meeting. We meet once a month. Join us as we come together to discuss parents' concerns and share ideas on how to better ALCS life for our scholars. The committee will set a date at the beginning of each year and then additional dates and times will be provided throughout the school year based upon the needs of and feedback from families.

## **WEATHER AND EMERGENCY**

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.

## **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM**

All students will receive free breakfast and free lunch due to our qualifying for the Community Eligibility Program. Breakfast and lunch will be made available to all of our students each day. From 3-3:20, snacks will also be provided to any students that are participating in after school programs.

## **MEDICAL**

- **NURSE**

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

Parents/guardians and students should keep the nurse informed of any concerns/changes in hygiene, nutrition/diet, substance abuse, medical diagnoses, child abuse or neglect. No special accommodations (elevator use, excuse from P.E, special shoes, etc....) will be given unless a medical note has been forwarded to the nurse's attention.

- **MEDICATION**

The school nurse should be informed of any prescription and/or non-prescription medication that a student is required to take at school. To dispense prescription and/or non-prescription medication (this includes over-the-counter drugs like Tylenol, Motrin, and Advil) to students, ALCS must receive a completed Medication Permission Form filled out by the student's physician. Parents can retrieve this form from the nurse's office, the main office or download from the ALCS website.

Medication can only be administered by the nurse or nurse's designee. Per New York State Law, "...only health care practitioners licensed or certified in New York State (physicians' assistants, registered professional nurses and licensed practical nurses) may administer medication under Title VIII of the Education Law."

If the same prescription for a student is to continue beyond the present school year, a new Medication Permission Form must be filled out every year. In addition, please notify the nurse in writing if your child has a chronic illness that may affect her performance at ALCS.

- **SUBSTANCE USE ASSESSMENT**

A student may be subject to a Substance Use Assessment should the student's behavior warrant suspicion of her being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or a controlled substance. The assessment is performed by the school nurse to gauge the student's vital signs, orientation, and coordination. The evaluation is strictly a superficial evaluation – no bodily fluids are drawn, and nothing is done invasively.

If this primary assessment indicates that the student is under the influence, the parent/guardian and/or law enforcement will be notified, and the school reserves the right to refer the matter to the disciplinary system and require the student to go home for the remainder of the day to ensure her own safety and the safety of others.

- **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**

In the Albany City District, students who live 1.5 miles or greater from ALCS receive a CDTA Swiper Card to ride CDTA (public transportation) if the transportation application has been submitted to the school by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Students living less than 1.5 miles or outside of the Albany area are not eligible for a CDTA Swiper. Many students are eligible to ride out-of-district buses. Riding buses is a **privilege- and not a right**. Any student riding the CDTA or school bus to and from school must adhere to the rules and guidelines set forth by those governing bodies. A student's bus privilege can be restricted at any time at the discretion of both CDTA and school administration. Disruptive behavior by students, parents or guardians that jeopardizes the safety and/or the comfortable ridership of others can result in a suspension of bus privileges.

**If a student's bus privileges are taken away, it will be the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide transportation to and from school. 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 there will be a \$15 replacement fee.



## D. ACADEMICS & CULTURE

### EQUITABLE VS. EQUAL

ALCS has a solid commitment to ensuring that every single student has the opportunity to succeed. In meeting this goal, we also understand that there is no “one size fits all” approach as it relates to addressing students’ needs. *Equitable vs. Equal* speaks to this. Your daughter will be treated with *fairness* in an *equitable* manner- in that she will always get what she needs to succeed; however, what your daughter receives will not always be *equal* to others – in that she may not receive the same exact support another student receives by way of consequence or incentive. We discourage our girls from engaging in the “sin of comparison” because it dissuades them from taking responsibility for their actions and impedes them from recognizing what it is that *they*, individually and solely, must address or change within themselves in order to optimize their school’s experience. We considerately ask families 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 will **NOT** discuss another student’s circumstances or consequences with you. Our primary goal is to partner with you to ensure that *your* child receives the support she needs to succeed.

### Freedom of Expression

Students are entitled to express their personal opinions verbally, in writing, or by artistic expression. The expression of such opinions, however, shall not interfere with the freedom of others to express their beliefs. Written expression of an opinion must be signed by the author. Any form of expression that involves libel, slander, obscenity, personal attacks, or that otherwise substantially disrupts the educational process, or threatens the physical, emotional, spiritual, or mental well-being of another individual is prohibited. All forms of expression also must follow the Code of Excellent Conduct and the school dress code. Violations are punishable as stated in the Code.

Student participation in the publication of school-sponsored student newsletters, yearbooks, literary magazines, and similar publications is encouraged as a learning and educational experience. These publications, if any, shall be supervised by qualified faculty advisors and shall strive to meet high standards of journalism. To maintain consistency with the school's basic educational mission, the content of such publications is controlled by school authorities.

No person shall distribute any printed or written materials on school property without the prior permission of the Principal. The Principal may regulate the content of materials to be distributed on school property to the extent necessary to avoid material and substantial interference with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. The Principal may also regulate the time, place, manner and duration of such distribution.



## STANDARDS-BASED GRADING

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

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

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

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

### STANDARDS ARE:

- Aligned to each course
- 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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- POP's reflect cumulative standards covered throughout the year to date.</li> <li>- The <b>grade</b> at the end of the POP indicates the proficiency level that a student has demonstrated on the standards assessed.</li> </ul>
<b>Score vs. Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Score:</b> Number scores (1-5) are assigned to each standard on a given assessment based on demonstrated level of proficiency.</li> <li>- <b>Grade:</b> Converted scores on all cumulative standards assessed throughout the year to date.</li> </ul>
<b>Levels of Performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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.</li> </ul> <p><b>5 – Mastery 4 – Proficient 3 – Partially Proficient 2 - Below 1 – Far below</b></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 a preponderance of evidence, (typically 3 pieces of standards-aligned assessments), during the POP 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>	- <b>Interval Assessments</b> are cumulative and occur three times a year. These assessments are also scored by standard. - Students will track interval standard proficiency and receive a " <b>Grade Level Comparison Score</b> " so students can track minimum standard obtainment

## GRADING SCALE

<b>GRADES EARNED</b>	<b>GPA VALUE (UNWEIGHTED)</b>	<b>ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL</b>
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/HIGH HONOR ROLL

Students who receive a 3.3 through 3.69 GPA in any even numbered Period of Progress (POP) will receive Honor Roll recognition. Students who receive a 3.7 and above GPA in any even numbered POP will receive High Honor Roll recognition.

## HOMEWORK

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

## **LATE WORK**

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 will be given a firm due date and expected to submit the assignment on that day 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 our program. Assessments in every subject at ALCS are used to adjust instruction and inform tutoring and enrichment programs to meet the needs of every student; hold students, faculty and staff accountable for student learning outcomes; and to 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 assessment, 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. Your daughter's performance and strengths and needs on assessments.

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

## **HEALTH CLASS**

New York State requires that every student take one health class during a student's middle school experience. The following includes some of the topics that will be covered in health class:

- Physical, Mental and Sexual Health
- Sociological Health Problems
- Environmental
- Community Health and Safety

**NOTE:** The New York State Education Department Commissioner's Regulations Section 135.3 (c) (2) (i) states that no pupil shall be required to receive instruction concerning the methods of prevention of HIV/AIDS, if the parent or legal guardian of such pupil has filed a letter with the principal of the school which the student attends stating that the pupil will receive such instruction at home.

## **PROMOTION POLICY**

Middle school academically prepares students to achieve success. Promotion/retention should be considered from the point of view of what is in the best interest of the child. Middle school promotion/retention should encourage a personal responsibility and accountability factor within the student, family, and school community. Every course that the middle school child is exposed to 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 child must meet the following minimum requirements for promotion to the next grade level. The passing grade for a course is 70 percent.

### **Grade 6-8**

- One core course failure
  - Recommended to attend summer academy
- Two or more core course failures
  - Must attend summer academy

All final grade placement decisions rest with the administration.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)**

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 Assistant Principal to schedule a meeting. The team reviews all referrals and collects data, develops a plan of action to include 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.

*(Academic) Tier One* includes school-wide intervention using research-based curriculum and instruction in core classes. Student progress is monitored regularly. Students who struggle academically at *Tier One* are moved into *Tier Two* based on MTSS protocol. Should a student require more support than what is offered in *Tier Two*, she will be moved to *Tier Three*. 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*. Progress is monitored regularly.

## **CHEATING VIOLATIONS**

Violations in this category threaten our ability to successfully fulfill our mission of college readiness and success. Cheating violations represent actions in which students receive or give unauthorized help on any assignment. Committing a cheating violation represents an act of academic dishonesty – essentially students are lying about the work that they or others are completing. Without academic honesty, we cannot be sure if students are making actual academic progress towards our learning goals.

### **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;
- Altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for re-grading;
- Stealing, reproducing, circulating, or otherwise gaining access to examination materials prior to the time authorized by the faculty member;
- Intentionally continuing work on an exam or assignment after the allocated time has elapsed;
- Citing a source that does not exist, attributing to source ideas and information that are not included in the source, or citing a source in a bibliography when the source was neither consulted nor cited in the body of the paper;
- Inventing data or statistical results to support conclusions;
- 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;
- Copying and using information from websites or other sources without properly citing the source.

### **Procedure for cheating violations:**

1. The staff member will initially meet with the student regarding the potential cheating violation and contact the parent if the teacher determines cheating occurred.
2. The staff member may collaborate with the Principal/principal's designee on appropriate consequences.
3. If cheating/plagiarism becomes a chronic offense, progressive discipline will typically be applied.

### **Consequences for cheating or plagiarizing:**

Final consequences are at the discretion of the Principal/principal's designee. The history of a student's cheating violations, the circumstances surrounding the cheating violation and whether the student was

forthright and honest about the violation will be taken into consideration. Each offense remains with the student until graduation. A new academic year does not erase previous offenses.

**Any offense will result in one or more of the following consequences:**

- Parent notification and/or in-school meeting
- A new/modified assignment to assess the student's true abilities and knowledge
- Letter in permanent school file
- No school activities or extra-curricular involvement as defined by the Principal/principal's designee
- Alternative Learning Center
- Out of School Suspension
- Denied course credit

### **CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS**

All classrooms will be a cell phone free zone. ALCS believes that students having phones off and away, so the phone is physically off the student, is the best practice. Cell phones, smart watches, and all other communication devices will be placed in a secure cell phone box during the beginning of their homeroom/AVID class and will be collected at the end of the day. These items will remain there for the entire school day.

If a student needs to make an urgent call, she will be able to do so on an ALCS phone. Please contact the school with any messages or emergency information.

Should a student violate the policy, the phone/device will be confiscated, and the student will be administered progressive disciplinary action by the Principal/principal's designee. This could include that the phone or device is held at the school until an adult family member comes to the school to sign for its return. If a student refuses to relinquish the cell phone/electronic device to any staff member, the student will be subject to disciplinary action. A meeting between the family, student and Principal/principal's designee may need to take place.

### **SOLICITATION**

Solicitation of or by any student, parent, or staff member on ALCS property for any cause, except those authorized by the Principal, is strictly prohibited.

### **MONEY/VALUABLE PROPERTY**

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 prioritize any searches should such articles be presumed stolen.

### **FOOD, BEVERAGES, CANDY, GUM, TOYS, & BLANKETS**

Students are not to bring or eat food, including candy and gum, in ALCS classrooms. Toys and blankets are a distraction and therefore should not be brought into the school. Games, stuffed animals, virtual pets, cameras, iPods, blankets of any type, etc. are not allowed in classes without authorized permission and must remain secured in assigned lockers. Only clear or ALCS approved water bottles, with only water, are permitted in classrooms.



## LOCKERS, SEARCH, AND SEIZURE

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. ALCS assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of personal items. **ALCS will not consider any investigation of loss/theft when a student leaves her locker unsecured or has shared her locker and/or lock combination with other students.** Likewise, ALCS officials will not unlock one student's locker for another student to retrieve items. In addition, ALCS students must accept **ALL** responsibility for any possessions that are stolen due to their own negligence by leaving these items unattended and unsecured.

Outside locks are not permitted. Should a student use an outside lock to secure her locker, ALCS reserves the right to remove the lock and discard it.

Students are **NOT** allowed to utilize backpacks throughout the day. Students will only be 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 lockers and desks remain the property of the school. Students have no right or reasonable expectation of privacy in their desks or lockers. ALCS reserves the right to inspect desks and lockers without prior notice or student consent at any time, per the school's discretion. Also, 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.

A student and/or the student's 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 locker will result in evidence that the student violated the law or a school rule. Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from the student by ALCS authorities. In some instances, law enforcement may be contacted. **With this, students are prohibited from sharing lockers and should they choose to do so, they risk any potential resulting consequences.**

## 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 will 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
- Basketball
- Outdoor Track and Field

Students must maintain an acceptable academic and behavioral standing in order to remain eligible for athletic participation.

## OFF-CAMPUS EVENTS

College-readiness cannot be wholly accomplished if our students are not afforded the occasion to visit college/university campuses. It is ALCS' vision to have frequent trips to institutions of higher learning. Students at school-sponsored, off-campus events shall be governed by all the guidelines of the school and are subject to the

authority of school officials. Failure to obey the lawful 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 Code of Excellent Conduct.

Off-campus events are a privilege at ALCS 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, a student MUST:**

- Not have been found in violation of a school policy 30 days prior to the event
- Have a 90% attendance rate 30 days prior to the event
- Not have a grade of less than 70% in their classes
- Have all school forms/permission slips turned in on time
- Attend school the day before and day of the event

For all trips, the criteria must be met in addition to any specific conditions required by the trip organizers. Additional eligibility requirements will be communicated to students and parents, as necessary. Administration reserves the right to adjust at their discretion.

**E. DISCIPLINE CODE**

The Code of Excellent Conduct has been established to promote a safe and respectful learning environment. The Code of Excellent Conduct identifies behaviors that are prohibited at ALCS. Students enrolled at ALCS are required to abide by the Code of Excellent Conduct.

Faculty and staff are well-informed about the Code of Excellent Conduct. During pre-service training, all staff members are given a copy of the same Code of Excellent Conduct and disciplinary procedures that are given to parents and students within the Code of Excellent Conduct (which is officially given to families during the September Open House but is available online at any time, and additional copies are available in the main office as well). Whole-group conferences are then scheduled for various procedures to be discussed so that the practice of said procedures is in sync and uniform throughout the school. The regularly scheduled Professional Development days spiral in strategies to support staff in reaffirming and reinforcing the expectations and/or address issues of concern to better serve our students.

At the conclusion of our school year, the Code of Excellent Conduct is reviewed in order to assess the present policies and/or to update said policies according to the changing needs of our students. Should there be any amendments, adoptions and/or modifications to the Code of Excellent Conduct, those changes are forwarded to the ALCS Board of Trustees for their review and approval. The newly adopted Code of Excellent Conduct is then forwarded, no later than 30 days, to the Commissioner of Education and Coordinator of Safety (Safe Schools) offices located at 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.

**LEVELS OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT, PROCEDURES, & CONSEQUENCES**

ALCS uses a Four-Tiered System to progressively align prohibited conduct (behavior) with a resolution or consequence. 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.

- ***Scope of Authority***

The prohibited conduct listed under each Tier, including all school policies and all Federal, state or local laws or ordinances, shall govern all students on and off school property beginning at the time of application until the actual awarding of a degree or when a student withdraws or is dismissed from ALCS. This includes during school break periods, student leaves of absences, and periods of suspension. Additionally, ALCS's prohibited conduct, including

all school policies and all Federal, state and local laws or ordinances, shall govern teachers, staff, licensees, and visitors, whether or not their presence is authorized, on all property, school events or facilities operated under the auspices of ALCS.

- ***Due Process:***

The Due Process is the process used to investigate and resolve reported prohibited conduct and all Code of Excellent Conduct violations. Reports that a student engaged in a violation of the Code of Excellent Conduct will be referred to the Principal or principal's designee for review and resolution. All concerns are addressed in a fair and impartial manner. All students reported to have engaged in a Code of Excellent Conduct violation will be provided advance notice to participate in a meeting, facilitated by the Principal or principal's designee. This meeting will allow a student to present their version of the facts and circumstances regarding the reported violation(s)

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Principal or principal's designee will determine if the student has violated the Code of Excellent Conduct and if so, they will administer an appropriate consequence/intervention. The student will be informed of the Principal or principal's designee decision and, if applicable, consequence(s)/intervention(s). (This meeting constitutes the student's "due process.")

A student may be suspended from instruction only after her rights to due process have been observed, and in all instances a student has the right to due process.

- ***Interim Administrative Measures***

If upon review of a report or incident, ALCS determines that an individual is considered an imminent threat to the community, or when advisable to protect the physical, social, or emotional well-being of the student and/or school community, the Principal or Principal's designee may automatically invoke interim administrative measures which can include but are not limited to, immediate in or out of school suspension, pending the outcome of an internal investigation.

- ***Prohibited Conduct:***

All prohibited conduct is 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.

Listed below are examples, but are not all-inclusive, of Tier 1 Prohibited Conduct. (This is not an exhaustive list)

- Loud or inappropriate language or gestures
- Abuse of hall or bathroom privileges 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
- Tardiness

- 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 will 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 may 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 behaviors are corrected the teacher/staff will:
  - Call the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) by the end of the business day.
- If the desired outcome is not achieved, the teacher has the ability to 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.
  - 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 procedures will begin.
  - 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.
  - Cheating, plagiarism, copyright infringement
  - 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**

### ***Referral to Student Discipline Process***

Procedures:

- A member of the SST will respond to the behavior via the Continuum of Care.
- When members of the SST respond the primary responsibility is to maintain safety, this may be 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. This includes obtaining the written referral from the teacher.
  - Escort involved the student(s) to a safe location.
  - Contact the Assistant Principal.
- The Assistant 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 policy and FERPA.
  - Contact involved students' parent(s)/guardian(s).
  - Document incident and resolution.

## **Tier 2 Consequences**

- Tier 2 Consequences can include but are not limited to:
  - Parent/guardian Meeting
  - Loss of School Privileges
  - Mandatory Flex
  - Detention
  - Alternative Learning Center Placement

- In-school suspension

### **Tier 3 Prohibited Conduct**

Serious or disruptive acts directed against people or property that can endanger the health or safety of others.

Listed below are examples, but not all inclusive, of Tier 3 Prohibited Conduct (This is not an exhaustive list)

- Repeated Tier 2 Prohibited Conduct
- Abusive or disrespectful language (verbal or written) towards a teacher or staff member.
- Bullying
- Cell phone violation
- Coercion
- Failure to comply with school officials
- Endangering the safety of oneself or others
- Extortion
- Harassment including but not limited to 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).
- Insubordination
- The possession or misuse prescription medication or any over the counter medication
- Theft
- Vandalism or destruction of personal property or school property

### **Tier 3 Response**

#### ***Referral to Student Discipline Process***

Procedures:

- A member of the SST will respond to the behavior via the Continuum of Care.
- When members of the SST respond the primary responsibility is to maintain safety, this may be 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. This includes obtaining the written referral from the teacher.
  - Escort involved the student(s) to a safe location.
  - Contact the **Assistant Principal**.

- Students that exhibit behaviors that can result in an out of school suspension will meet with the **Assistant Principal**, or designee.
- The **Assistant 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 policy and FERPA.
  - Contact involved students' parent(s)/guardian(s).
  - Document incident and resolution.

### **Tier 3 Consequences**

- Tier 3 Consequences can include but are not limited to:
  - Parent/guardian Meeting
  - Alternative Learning Center Placement
  - Mandatory Flex
  - Detention
  - Loss of School Privileges
  - In-school suspension
  - Short-term Out of School Suspension (suspension lasting no more than 5 school days)
  - Long-term Out of School Suspension (suspension lasting greater than 5 school days)
  - Off-site tutoring
  - Amended 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 others.

Listed below are examples, but not all inclusive, of Tier 4 Prohibited Conduct. (This is not an exhaustive list)

- Repeated Tier 3 Prohibited Conduct
- Arson
- Attempted or actual sale, distribution, or manufacture of alcohol, illegal substances, or drug paraphernalia on school property or at a school function.
- Possession or use of alcohol, illegal substances, or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school functions.
- Intoxication or impairment due to the use of illegal substances or alcohol; or misuse of prescription or over the counter medication.
- Endangering the safety of oneself or others with the intent to inflict harm (i.e. 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 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, (i.e. live ammunition, fireworks, etc.)
- Threatening to use a weapon, while on school property or attending a school sponsored event
- Bomb threat
- Tampering with or creating a false fire alarm

#### **Tier 4 Response**

##### ***Referral to Student Discipline Process***

Procedures:

- A member of the SST will respond to the behavior via the Continuum of Care.
- When members of the SST respond the primary responsibility is to maintain safety, this may be 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, respondent, complainant, teacher, etc. This included obtaining the referral from the teacher.
  - Escort involved student(s) to safe location.
  - Contact the **Assistant Principal**.
- The **Assistant 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 policy and FERPA.
  - Contact involved students' parent(s)/guardian(s).
  - Document Incident and resolution.

#### **Tier 4 Consequences**

- - Tier 4 Consequences can include but are not limited to:
    - Parent/guardian Meeting
    - Alternative Learning Center Placement
    - Loss of School Privileges
    - In-school suspension
    - Short-term Out of School Suspension (suspension lasting no more than 5 school days)



- Long-term Out of School Suspension (suspension lasting greater than 5 school days)
- Off-site tutoring
- Amended school schedule
- Expulsion

## CONSEQUENCES:

The consequences identified in Tiers 2-4 are designed to restore safe and positive environments, deter repeat violations, assist those impacted by the misconduct, reaffirm community expectations, and provide educational and reflective opportunities for students.

The list of consequences listed in Tiers 2-4 are not intended to be an exhaustive list but provide a guide of consequences that may be assigned to a student. Consequences are assigned based on the nature and gravity of the violations, the student's age, and a student's disciplinary history. Consequences assigned by ALCS are additive and cumulative, thus, future violations of school policy can result in more significant consequences.

Consequences at ALCS include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Detention
- Mandatory Flex Time
- Administrative Flex Time
- Alternative Learning
- Parent/Guardian Meeting
- Behavioral Contract
- Suspension from extra-curricular activities (temporarily or permanently)
- Out of School Suspension – short term
- Expulsion

### Loss of School Privileges

A student may be suspended from participation in any or all extracurricular activities based upon their academic and/or behavioral standing. Students with behavioral infractions will be informed via their suspension letters of the loss of privileges. The student and parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be given an opportunity to meet informally with the Principal, Athletic Director or other faculty member involved or designated by the Principal if a request is made. The Principal, faculty member involved, or principal's designee shall hold any requested meeting as soon as possible; however, the suspension from participation in extracurricular activities will still be enforced as administered. If a student is suspended from school privileges multiple times, the administration reserves the right to preclude them from participating in extracurricular activities- including sports (based upon the Athletic Handbook) for the remainder of the year or another specified period based upon the level and frequency of infractions.

### Out of School Suspension

Students assigned to Out of School Suspension (OSS) may be prohibited from attending school events and/or school-sponsored activities, including college tours and class trips for the duration of the OSS. The duration of an OSS is determined by the Principal or principal's designee. Students placed on OSS are prohibited from returning to school until the student's parent/guardian participates in a meeting with the Principal/principal's designee unless authorization is provided by the Principal/principal's designee.

- Short-term OSS shall refer to an OSS for a period of **five** or fewer days.

### Expulsion

Indicates that a student's permanent removal from the ALCS community for disciplinary reasons. Students expelled from

ALCS are not permitted on ALCS property and are prohibited from attending or participating in any ALCS activity or event. Any student subject to expulsion will participate in an Expulsion Hearing. Refer to Notification of Procedure for Expulsion for more information on the expulsion hearing process.

### **NOTIFICATION OF PROCEDURES FOR SHORT-TERM OSS**

- The Principal or principal's designee will inform a student placed on an OSS of the reason(s) for the suspension.
- The Principal or principal's designee will immediately notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing of a student placed on OSS. Written notice shall be sent to the last known address provided by the family. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident or incidents that resulted in the suspension and shall offer the opportunity for an informal conference with whoever has imposed the suspension. The notification and informal conference shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s).
- In appropriate instances, ALCS will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a student who has been suspended or removed to help that child progress in the school's general curriculum. For a student who has been suspended, alternative instruction will be provided during the period of suspension (2.0 hours of instruction between the hours of 8:30 am and 10:30 am, Monday through Friday); for a student who has been expelled, alternative instruction will be provided until the student enrolls in another school or until the end of the school year, whichever comes first.

### **NOTIFICATION OF PROCEDURE FOR EXPULSION**

A student who is determined to have committed any of the Code of Excellent Conduct violations below, has repeatedly violated the Code of Excellent Conduct, or engages in behavior that school officials reasonably conclude could warrant an expulsion shall be subject to an Expulsion Hearing to determine if the offense is egregious enough to warrant expulsion.

#### **Code of Excellent Conduct Violations that may result in expulsion:**

- Possessing, using, attempting to use, or transferring any firearm, knife, razor blade, explosives, mace, tear gas, or other dangerous object
- Setting off false alarms or safety showers
- Setting a fire
- Possessing, using, or being under the influence of drugs, or attempting to use or distribute drugs (including look-alike substances) or drug paraphernalia
- Possessing, using, being under the influence of alcohol, or attempting to use or distribute alcohol
- Assault of a student or staff member
- Fighting
- Repeated offenses under short-term suspensions
- Committing any other act which school officials reasonably conclude warrants an expulsion.

*Through the discipline process or via Interim Measure, a student may be placed on Out of School Suspension prior to and during the expulsion hearing process.*

**An Expulsion Hearing will follow the steps described below:**

1. The Principal or another representative of the school's administration will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) immediately of the incident.
2. The student will be removed from school.
3. The Principal or principal's designee will take all possible steps to ensure that the student and her parent(s) or guardian(s) are fully informed of their rights. These steps may include arranging a meeting between a representative of the school's administration, parent(s) or guardian(s), and the student to discuss the rights of the student before the hearing itself. The incident itself will not be discussed in this meeting. The meeting is to clarify the *process* and establish a date for the hearing.
4. A hearing date will be set by the Principal or principal's designee, and the student and her parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified in writing of the date, time, and place of the hearing at least seven business days prior to the hearing. The student will have the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing and have the right to have an attorney present.
  - a. If parents request a hearing, students will continue in their current placement and program until such a hearing takes place, another program or placement is agreed upon by the parties, or a court order permits a change of placement based on a showing that the student's continued presence in school presents a substantial likelihood of injury to the student or to others.
5. After the hearing, the Principal will determine the appropriate course of action. A written decision will be made within three business days of the formal hearing, and copies will be forwarded to the student, the parent(s) or guardian(s), the school's Board of Trustees, and the student's permanent record file.
6. A student who is expelled will have the right to appeal the Principal's decision in writing to the school's Board of Trustees within seven business days of that decision and will have the right to counsel (at families' expense) at that appeal. The ALCS Board of Trustees will review the appeal and determine whether or not they will uphold the original decision. A binding decision will be provided orally and in writing shortly thereafter.
7. In cases where a student is receiving special education services, ALCS will:
  - a. Provide an alternative plan for the delivery of special education services during the period of suspension.
  - b. Obtain approval for the alternative plan by the New York State Department of Education.
  - c. Present the alternative plan and an explanation of parental rights to the student's parent or guardian prior to the plan's implementation. The failure or refusal of the parent to consent to the provision of services under the alternative plan will not prevent implementation of the expulsion.

## **NOTIFICATION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Disciplinary actions are maintained in accordance with FERPA. The school reserves the right to disclose reported Code of excellent conduct violations and any disciplinary action with a student's parent or guardian. **Disciplinary actions are communicated to a student's parent or guardian.**

Where appropriate, ALCS will contact law enforcement. Furthermore, ALCS will comply with court order requests or subpoenas of student records.

## **NOTIFICATION OF SERVICES DURING REMOVAL**

In appropriate instances, ALCS will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a student who has been suspended or removed to help that child progress in the school's general curriculum. For a student who has been suspended, alternative instruction will be provided during the period of suspension (2.0 hours of instruction between the hours of 8:30 am and 10:30 am, Monday through Friday); for a student who has been expelled, alternative instruction will be provided until the student enrolls in another school or until the end of the school year, whichever comes first.

## **STATEMENT ON HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING**

ALCS stands firm in its commitment to protecting the physical and emotional well-being of all students. To that end, ALCS will **not** tolerate the following forms of bullying, harassment or intimidation:

- Verbal or written threats of violence or other harm.
- Instigating (verbal/written)
- Unwelcome physical contact (pushing/bumping/pulling hair/etc...)
- Name-calling (verbal/written)
- Gossiping
- Stalking
- Cyber-bullying
- Text-bullying
- Taunting
- Trespassing (going into/taking others' lockers/belongings)
- Any action deemed inappropriate by the Principal or principal's designee

At ALCS, the safety of our girls is a top priority, and prevention is the cornerstone of ALCS's effort to address bullying, discrimination and harassment. Whatever form bullying/harassment takes the form of (a note in a locker, a statement on any form of Social Media, a comment in the back a classroom, repeated taunting the hallway, forcing one to give up her homework, pressuring a student to think or act in a certain way), it will NOT be tolerated and the severest of consequences will be administered according to the level of the offense.

## **PINS (Persons in Need of Supervision) PETITIONS**

PINS Petitions are referrals to Probation/Family Court when students under the age of 18 engage in conduct which makes them 'ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond lawful control of the school'... Per New York State Law, we are sanctioned to initiate a Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) petition in Family Court if a student's behavior falls under this definition; however, the school will take this position only after all school-based and outside (human resources agencies) intervention measures have been exhausted with the student and her family. The Student Support Team will be responsible for determining a student's eligibility for this program. The school social worker will also serve as the representative of contact for the probation department, child welfare, family court and the police department, who are active agents in the PINS process.

## **FEDERAL GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT OF 1994**

The Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, which applies to public schools and thus presumably to this charter school,

states that a student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school must be suspended for at least one calendar year. This suspension requirement may be modified by school administrators, however, on a case-by-case basis. Weapons as used in this law means a "firearm," as defined by 18 USC §§8921, and includes firearms and explosives. (New York Education Law §§3214(3)(d) effectuates this federal law.)

In the event a student commits an offense involving a gun or drugs or acts in any way that can be interpreted as criminal, school officials, in the interest of the safety of others and in accordance with the law, will contact local law enforcement and said student's family immediately.

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN MEETING PROCESS**

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

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

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

- The meeting is rescheduled.
- Home visit.
- The student is restricted from school property until the parent meeting is held (this is reserved for disciplinary or safety matters).
- Referral to county services

### **MEDIATION PROCESS**

Mediations are designed to resolve conflict between students, teachers, and families. Mediations at ALCS are limited to:

- Student/Teacher
- Student/Student
- Parent/Teacher

Mediations are voluntary and are only conducted when all involved parties agree to participate in a mediation.

- Mediations can be used to resolve conflict concerning:
  - Social media improprieties
  - Relationship difficulties
  - Rumor and gossip
  - Cheating and stealing
  - Racial and cultural confrontations

- Vandalism
- Classroom or extracurricular disputes
- Bullying, minor altercations, and fighting
- Participants must be directly involved in the conflict

Mediations are conducted on a one on one - individual basis. Mediations are scheduled between 1st period and 8th period during times that do not negatively impact student academics. Mediations are held in a neutral space where involved parties can appropriately social distance.

When possible, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the involved student(s) will be notified by the Mediation Facilitator (or other SST member) prior to the mediation. The following will be communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s):

- Nature of conflict.
- Goal of mediation.
- Any interim measures taken to address the conflict.
- If the mediation is between a student and teacher, the parent will be invited to join the mediation.

#### **When the mediation process is unsuccessful....**

An unsuccessful mediation is a mediation where agreement cannot be reached or where participants cannot abide by the mediation expectations. The Mediation Facilitator has the authority to end a mediation when these circumstances arise.

The following will occur if a mediation is unsuccessful:

- The Mediation Facilitator will separate the students.
  - The students will not be permitted to return to class.
- The Mediation Facilitator, in collaboration with School & Community Safety Coordinator, will determine if it is safe for both parties to remain in school.
  - *If it is safe for both parties to remain in school:*
    - The students will sign an agreement of No Contact.
    - Students will return to class.
    - The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the involved parties will be informed of the unsuccessful mediation.
  - *If it is not safe for the students to remain in school:*
    - The students will sign an agreement of No Contact.
    - The parent(s)/guardian(s) or emergency contact of the involved parties will be informed of the unsuccessful mediation and will be required to dismiss the students.
    - Students will remain out of school until a resolution can be reached where both students can safely remain in school together.
    - Two hours of tutoring will be arranged for students that remain out of school for more than one school day.
- Resolution can include but are not limited to:

- A new mediation
- Agreement of No Contact
- Alternative learning location

### **Mediation Accountability**

Reported violations of the Mediation Agreement Form will be addressed with the involved parties by the Mediation Facilitator. Only incidents where a student can present evidence that a Mediation Agreement was violated will be investigated by the Mediation Facilitator.

If it is determined that there are violations of the Mediation Agreement Form, the following actions may occur, but are not limited to:

- No action.
- Involved parties mediate.
- Violations are referred to the disciplinary system or employee supervisor.
- Student consequences may include: detention, ALC, or out of school suspension.
- Agreement of No Contact.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of both involved students will be notified of violations of a Mediation Agreement Form and ALCS's response to the violations.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities have the same basic rights and responsibilities as other students, and as more fully explained below, may be disciplined for the same behavioral offenses, albeit with certain limitations that are not applicable to their non-disabled peers. In the event that this policy is inconsistent with federal law, regulations, or guidance, however, such federal law, regulations, or guidance shall govern. Discipline of a student identified as having a disability will be in accordance with the following:

1. Except for as set forth herein, students for whom the Individualized Educational Program ("IEP") includes a Behavior Intervention Plan ("BIP") which sets forth specific disciplinary guidelines will be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines. If the disciplinary guidelines appear not to be effective or if there is concern for the health and safety of the student or others if those guidelines are followed with respect to a specific infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the local school district's Committee on Special Education ("CSE") for consideration of a change in the BIP and these guidelines.
2. Except for as set forth herein, (when a student is suspended for ten days or more alone or in the aggregate and a manifestation is found between the student's conduct and disability) students for whom the IEP does not include a BIP with these specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with standard school policy relating to each infraction. The school district's CSE shall be notified immediately of any suspension or removal from classes, and the school shall work with the CSE to arrange appropriate alternate instruction.

If there is a change in the student's placement in that the student has been or, as a result of this infraction, may be suspended for more than ten (10) school days (alone or in the aggregate) during any one school year, a referral shall be made to the student's resident school district to hold a manifestation determination. If a manifestation is found, no penalty may be imposed, and the school will work with the resident school district to consider what if any changes need to be made to the student's IEP, and conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless one has already been

conducted by the resident school district before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; or if a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent, school and the resident school district agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of eight (8) days, such student will immediately be referred to the resident district's CSE to review the Student's IEP, including, but not limited to reconsider the student's educational placement.

3. The school will notify the resident district's CSE of any disciplinary actions taken in regard to any of its students. The school will notify the resident district CSE whenever a procedural safeguards notice is issued to a resident student's parents or guardians pursuant to 34 CFR §300.504.
4. The school shall work with the resident district to ensure that the resident district's CSE meets within ten (10) school days, or if possible immediately upon notification of any of the following, for the purpose of considering a change in placement or any other changes to the IEP for the student involved:
  - a. The commission of any infraction which is a result of the student's disability.
  - b. The commission of any infraction by a disabled student, regardless of whether the student has previously been suspended during the school year if, had such infraction been committed by a non-disabled student, the principal would seek to impose a suspension or removal in excess of five days.
5. School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child –
  - (1) Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the school;
  - (2) Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the school; or
  - (3) Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the school.

On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the school must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents the procedural safeguards notice.

For the purposes of this section the following definitions apply:

- (1) **Controlled substance** means a drug or other substance identified under schedules I, II, III, IV, or V in section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812.(c)).
- (2) **Illegal drug** means a controlled substance, but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under that Act or under any other provision of Federal law.
- (3) **Serious bodily injury** has the meaning given the term "serious bodily injury" under the regulations of New York's Commissioner of Education at 8 N.Y.C.R.R. §201.2(m).
- (4) **Weapon** has the meaning given the term "dangerous weapon" under paragraph (2) of the first subsection (g) of section 930 of title 18 United States Code. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 141(k)(1) and (7)).



**Protection for Children Not Yet Eligible for Special Education and Related Services** ALCS will adhere to the requirements of 34 CFR §300.534. In accordance with such section, students who have not yet been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who have engaged in behavior that violated the charter school's discipline code may assert any of the protections provided in Part 300 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations if the school had knowledge that the student was a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitates the disciplinary action occurred.

The school will be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred (1) the parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate educational agency, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services; (2) the parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child; or (3) the teacher of the child, or other school personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

However, the school will be deemed to have no knowledge if the parent of the child:

- (a) Has not allowed an evaluation of the child: or
- (b) Has refused services under this part: or
- (c) Has been evaluated and determined to not be a child with a disability.

If the school does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measure applied to children without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors.

If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner: until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services: and if the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted and information provided by the parents, the school will consult with the student's resident school district's CSE to regarding the provision of special education and related services.

### **Provision of Services During Removal**

ALCS will adhere to all applicable requirements of 34 CFR §300 to ensure that its students with disabilities have the right to a free appropriate public education. ALCS also will abide by the requirements for compulsory education as provided in §2854(1) (a) and §2854(1)(b) of Article 56 of the New York State Education Law. The charter school will provide related services to a child during his or her suspension or removal from school, regardless of the number of days of such suspension or removal, that are necessary to help that student progress in the school's general curriculum and towards the goals set out in the student's IEP.

In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the child's special education teacher, make the service determination.

As with all students, the Principal shall have final authority to suspend or remove a student with disabilities or suspected of having disabilities for up to five (5) days. The Principal also shall maintain all necessary records regarding the number of days a student with a disability has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

### **DUE PROCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If discipline which would constitute a change in placement is contemplated for any student with a disability or suspected of having a disability, then (1) not later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the parents of the

student with a disability shall be notified of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504; and (2) as stated above, immediately, if possible, but in no case later than ten (10) school days after the date on which such decision is made, a manifestation determination shall be made by the resident school district to review the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action.

If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability, except as provided in 34 CFR §300.121(d) (which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal).

Parents may request an expedited impartial hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement during the pendency of the hearing.

If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal regarding a disciplinary action relating to weapons or drugs to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination, the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and charter school agree otherwise. However, the child's CSE at his resident school district determines the interim alternative educational setting for services.

## **MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ORDER ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The following rules shall govern the conduct of students, teachers, staff, licensees, friends and other invitees, parents, guardians, relatives, and other persons, whether or not their presence is authorized, on all property or facilities operated under the auspices of the ALCS.

These rules and penalties are not to be considered exclusive or to preclude in any way the prosecution and conviction of any person for the violation of any federal, State or local law, rule, regulation or ordinance, or the imposition of a fine or penalty provided for therein. Additionally, these rules and regulations should not be construed to limit, but rather exist in conjunction with any other codes of conduct established for the school, such as a disciplinary code and/or a bill of student rights and responsibilities.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

No person, either singly or in concert, shall:

1. Willfully cause physical injury to any other person or threaten to use force which would result in such injury.
2. Willfully damage or destroy school property, nor remove or use such property without authorization.
3. Without permission, express or implied, enter any private office or classroom of an administrative officer, teacher, or staff member.
4. Without authorization, remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed, nor without permission enter any building or facility prior to its normal opening.
5. Refuse to leave any building or facility after being required to do so by the principal or an authorized administrative officer or his or her designee.
6. Deliberately disrupt or prevent the peaceful and orderly conduct of classes, lectures, and meetings or deliberately interfere with the freedom of any person to express his or her views, unless such disruption is necessary to maintain order of the educational process.
7. Possess on school property any rifle, shotgun, pistol, revolver, knife, chain, club or other weapon, whether or not the person has a license to possess such weapon, except as expressly authorized by NY

Penal Law §265.20. Further, it is the duty of the principal to inform the police of the presence or use of any such weapon or implements used as weapons on school property.

8. Commit acts which threaten the safety and welfare of persons on school property
9. Violate any federal or State statute or regulation, local ordinance or school policy.
10. Possess, use or distribute alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia.
11. Harass or coerce any person.
12. Refuse or fail to comply with a lawful order or direction of a school official in the performance of his or her duty.
13. Distribute or post on school property any written material, pamphlets or posters without the prior approval of the Principal.

### **Penalties and Enforcement**

Penalties for violations of these rules include, but are not limited to:

- The withdrawal of authorization to remain on school property;
- Ejection;
- Arrest;
- For students, suspension or other disciplinary action; and
- For school employees, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

Staff members are required to report known violations of these rules to the principal and to make reasonable efforts to stop the prohibited conduct. Agents of the school, including the school counselors and/or social workers, are held just as accountable. Counseling and family outreach serve as reasonable efforts to intervene when conduct and/or the rationale behind the conduct is questionable. The Principal is responsible for the dispersal and enforcement of these rules.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

In accordance with NYSED law, ALCS does not engage in corporal punishment.

## **F. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS 2021-2022**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK**

**ESSA**

**Written Complaint and Appeal Procedures For Title I, Parts**

**A, C, and D**

**or Section 100.2(ee) of Commissioner's Regulations  
Regarding Academic Intervention Services**

As required by Title IX, General Provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the New York

State Education Department (NYSED) has adopted the following procedures for receiving and resolving complaints and for reviewing appeals from decisions of local educational agencies (LEAs). Complaints concerning violations of ESEA Title I, Parts A, C, and D, or of the General Education Provisions Act; or of Section 100.2(ee) Academic Intervention Services of the Regulations of the Commissioner are covered by these procedures.

LEAs must disseminate free of charge, adequate information about the State Complaint and Appeal Procedures to parents of students, and appropriate private school officials or representatives. [General Provisions Regulations, 34 CFR Sections 299.10-299.12]

### **Procedures for Filing Complaints/Appeals with a LEA:**

#### **Who may submit a complaint?**

Any public or nonpublic school parent or teacher, other interested person, or agency may file a complaint.

#### **What must a complaint contain?**

All complaints must:

- be written;
- be signed by the person or agency representative filing the complaint;
- specify the requirement of law or regulation being violated and the related issue, problem, and/or the concern;
- contain information/evidence supporting the complaint; and
- state the nature of the corrective action desired.

### **What must an appeal from a LEA's response contain?**

An appeal must contain:

- a copy of the original signed complaint (see I-B);
- a copy of the LEA's response to the original complaint or a statement that the LEA failed to respond in 30 business days.

In New York City or rest of State outside of New York City, a copy of the LEA and the Department of Education's response to the original complaint or a statement that the Department of Education failed to respond within 30 business days; and a statement identifying those parts of the LEA's response which the party wishes to appeal.

### **Where should a complaint/appeal to the LEA be sent?**

Complaints/appeals regarding the LEA's administration and implementation of its ESEA Title I Grant or Academic Intervention Services for students identified under Commissioner's Regulations Part 100 should be sent first to the School Superintendent of the LEA against whom the complaint is made. The LEA has a 30-business day period in which to resolve a complaint.

### **Procedures for Filing Complaints/Appeals with the New York State Education Department**

The State Education Department will review complaints when the complaint pertains to:

- the State's administration of the ESEA Title I Basic Grant, Migrant Education, or Neglected or Delinquent Program;
- an appeal from the decision of an LEA regarding an action by the LEA.

Complaints that do not meet any of the above criteria, including complaints concerning the LEA's administration of its Title I Program, will be referred for possible resolution to the LEA against whom the complaint is made.

### **What timelines pertain to the State Education Department's review of complaints/appeals from an LEA action?**

Within 60 business days of the receipt of the complaint/appeal, Department staff will complete an on-site review (if necessary) and/or records examination and will notify all parties of its findings. An extension of the 60-day complaint resolution period is permitted under CFR Part 299.11 (b), for exceptional circumstances.

### **Where shall complaints or appeals to the State Education Department be sent?**

Complaints/appeals regarding Title I for LEAs outside of New York City local school districts/schools should be sent to:

New York State Education Department

Title I School & Community Services Office Room 365  
 EBA  
 89 Washington Avenue  
 Albany, NY 12234

**Who shall conduct the review of complaints or appeals?**

The Title I representative in the State Education Department office who is assigned as the program manager for the LEA against which the complaint is made and other Department staff as may be appropriate shall conduct the review of complaints or appeals.

**What shall the State Education Department's response to the complaint contain?**

The Department's response shall contain:

- the names of persons interviewed;
- the records or other evidence examined;
- relevant dates/times/locations/events;
- summary of findings; and
- nature of corrective action to be taken including applicable timelines.

**How will State Education Department staff monitor the timely and appropriate implementation of the corrective actions called for in the complaint/appeal resolution?**

Failure of the LEA to take corrective action within the time period stipulated in the complaint resolution shall be caused to withhold all, or a portion of, the ESEA Title I allocation to the LEA.

**Does the State Education Department maintain a record of all complaints/appeals?**

Yes. Copies of correspondence, related documents, investigative reports, and summary reports involved in the complaint/appeal resolution will be maintained by the State Education Department for five years. Records will be made available to interested parties in accordance with the provisions of the New York State Freedom of Information Law (Public Officers Law Sections 84-89).

**What shall constitute exceptional circumstances for extending the 60-day limit for State Education Department review of complaints and appeals for relief from an LEA action?**

The State Education Department has determined that exceptional circumstances may include, but need not be limited to, such occurrences as:

- illness of involved parties;
- cancellation of scheduled on-site reviews due to unscheduled school closings;
- the need for extended review activities beyond those specified in the written notification; and/or
- any other mutual agreement to changes in review scope or activity.

When exceptional circumstances are identified, the revised date for the completion of the complaint

review will be provided in writing to all parties involved in the complaint or appeal. All parties to the complaint have the right to initiate a request for an extension beyond the 60-business day complaint resolution period based on exceptional circumstances. All such requests must be presented to the State Education Department.

### **Procedures for Adjudicating Appeals from the Decision of the State Education Department**

#### **May a person/agency have dissatisfied with the State Education Department's complaint resolution file an appeal?**

Yes, parties dissatisfied with the State Education Department's complaint resolution may file an appeal directly with the United States Department of Education at:

United States Department of Education  
Compensatory Education Programs 400  
Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Room 3W230, FOB #6  
Washington, D.C. 20202-6132



**ALBANY LEADERSHIP**  
**CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**  
 A 6-12 Academy of Excellence

**Notification of Rights under FERPA**

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("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 of the day the ALCS receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to **Office and Relations Administrator, 19 Hackett Boulevard, Albany, NY 12208**, a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. **The Office and Relations Administrator** will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. ALCS will **not** make copies available to parents **for free. A charge of \$0.25 per page will be required if parents desire copies.**
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask ALCS to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to **the Principal**, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If ALCS decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, ALCS will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a formal 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 consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

A school official is 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); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, ALCS will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school to make a reasonable



attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

- (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:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education 400  
Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)  
ALCS Notice for Directory Information**

[Note: Per 34 C.F.R. § 99.37(d), a school or school district may adopt a limited directory information policy. If a school or school district does so, the directory information notice to parents and eligible students must specify the parties who may receive directory information and/or the purposes for which directory information may be disclosed.]

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls, may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls the contrary in accordance with Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) 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. [Note: These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).]

If you do not want Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls in writing by upon enrollment, or by last day in September, whichever is the latter. Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph

- Date and place of birth
  - Major field of study
  - Dates of attendance
  - Grade level
  - Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
  - Weight and height of members of athletic teams
  - Degrees, honors, and awards received
  - The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- 
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.
  
  - A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.



### **FERPA Procedures for Storage/Handling of Student Files and Release Procedure**

All student files and a FERPA log are contained in a locked file cabinet located in the main office. Said files are under the guardianship of the Office and Relations Administrator, who has sole access to the files.

Contact the aforementioned representative for documents for retrieval of FERPA files.

At the start of each academic year, parents are asked to sign the following documents either granting or denying the release of student photographs and/or student work:

- b. Photo/Media Release Form: covers photo opportunities, news coverage and interviews, and or usage of personal images for various school and local media.*
- c. Student Academic/Artwork Release Form: covers the display or posting of student academic work and art.*

### **Policy & Procedures for Compliance with Freedom of Information Law**

Requests for public records must be in writing or electronically, and submitted to the Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls' School Business Administrator, who serves as the Records Access Officer. Upon the receipt of a request for school records reasonably described, the request will be responded to in the following manner:

- Within five business days of receipt of a written request, depending on the requested record(s), will make such record(s) available at ALCS during normal business hours to the person requesting the record(s), deny the request in writing, or provide a written acknowledgement of receipt of the request and a statement of the approximate date when the request will be granted or denied.

If ALCS determines to grant access to the requested record(s), and if circumstances prevent disclosure within twenty (20) days of the acknowledgment of receipt of the request, ALCS shall state in writing both the reason for the delay and a date certain, within a reasonable period of time, depending on the circumstances, when the request will be granted in whole or in part.

Failure to conform to the provisions detailed above shall constitute a denial of the request for record(s).

If the person requesting record(s) is denied access to record(s), he or she may, within 30 days, appeal such denial to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees: Margaret Moree. Upon timely receipt of such an appeal, ALCS will fully explain, in writing, the reasons for further denial or provide access to the record (s) sought. This will take place within 10 business days of the receipt of the appeal. ALCS will also immediately forward a copy of the appeal when received, as well as its ultimate determination, to the New York State Committee on Open Government.

In the event an appeal for records is denied, the person requesting the information may bring a proceeding for review of such denial pursuant to Article 78 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules. ALCS may deny access to requested records on one or more of the following grounds as set forth in Public Officers Law §87:

- Such records are specifically exempted from disclosure by state or federal statute;
- Such access would constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
- Such records, if disclosed, would impair present or imminent contract awards or collective bargaining negotiations;
- Such records are trade secrets or are submitted to the School by a commercial enterprise or derived from information obtained from a commercial enterprise and which if disclosed would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of such enterprise;
- Such records are compiled for law enforcement purposes and which, if disclosed, would meet the conditions set forth in Public Officers Law § 87(2)(e)(i) through (iv);
- Such records, if disclosed, would endanger the life or safety of any person;
- If disclosed, would jeopardize the school's capacity to guarantee the security of its information technology assets;
- Such records are inter-agency or intra-agency materials that are not statistical or factual tabulations of data, instructions to staff that affect the public, or a final policy or external audits;
- Examination questions or answers which are requested prior to the final administration of such questions.

Additionally, ALCS shall maintain:

- A record of the final vote of each trustee in every proceeding in which the trustee votes;
- A record setting forth the name, public office address title and salary of every employee of the education corporation; and
- A reasonably detailed current list, by subject matter, of all records in the Education Corporation's custody or possession.

Note: ALCS will charge \$0.25 per page of a record for each page requested to be copied. Additional fees may be charged as authorized by law.

## ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL for GIRLS POLICY & PROCEDURES FOR COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN MEETINGS LAW

Meetings of the Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls' Board of Trustees, including committee meetings, shall be open to the general public.

### Public Notice

1. A calendar of all board meeting dates will be posted at the charter school at all times.
2. The school will provide notice of the time and place of any board meeting that is *scheduled at least one week in advance* to the news media and shall conspicuously post such notice in one or more public locations at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting.
3. The school will provide notice of the time and place of any board meeting that is *scheduled less than one week in advance* to the news media (to the extent practicable) and shall conspicuously post such notice in one or more public locations at a reasonable time in advance of the scheduled meeting. To the extent possible, the school will publicly post notices of board of trustee's meetings immediately after each meeting date is determined.
4. Trustees may participate in board meetings in person or by videoconferencing. The board of trustees shall provide an opportunity for the public to attend at any site where a member participates. If videoconferencing is to be used, then the public notice must say so, identify the locations from which members will participate, and state that the public has a right to attend at any of these locations.

### Minutes of Meetings

1. The secretary of the Board of Trustees will take minutes at all open sessions. All minutes will contain the date of the meeting, a summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions and any other matter formally voted upon as well as a record of how each board member voted.
2. Minutes from open meetings will be made available to the public within two weeks of the meeting date. Minutes will be available at the school.

### Executive Sessions

The charter school Board of Trustees shall conduct all executive sessions as part of an open meeting; they are not considered separate meetings per se. An executive session may be called upon a motion and majority vote by the board of trustees taken in an open meeting. The motion must specifically identify the general area or areas of the subjects to be considered. All board members may participate in executive sessions, and the board may authorize others to attend as well. An executive session shall only be conducted by the board of trustees for one or more of the following matters pursuant to Public Officers Law §105:

1. Matters which will imperil the public safety if disclosed;
2. Any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;
3. Information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;
4. Discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;
5. When such law applies to charter school employees, collective negotiations that are within the scope of Article 14 of the Civil Service Law;

6. The medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;
7. The preparation, grading or administration of examinations; and
8. The proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value.

In no case shall public funds be appropriated during an executive session.

### **Exemptions**

The following matters are exempted from the Open Meetings Law and therefore can be discussed closed to the public, without the need for notice or a motion or vote to convene in executive session:

1. Judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings (for example, suspension hearings and employee grievance hearings); and
2. Any matter made confidential by state or federal law (for example discussions regarding a particular student's records or children with handicapping conditions in violation of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act);
3. Attorney-client privileged communications.

### **Enforcement**

Any individual wishing to assert a violation of the New York State Open Meetings Law has standing to bring a proceeding in accordance with Article 78 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules and/or action for declaratory or injunctive relief.



## Complaint Policy

### Formal Complaint:

Any individual or group may bring a formal complaint regarding an alleged violation of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act), the Charter Schools Act, or other applicable provisions of New York State Law to the principal, as the Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls Board of Trustees designee. If the complaint is against the principal, the complainant should direct the complaint to the Board of Trustees of Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls. Within one week, or as soon thereafter as practicable given the facts and circumstances of the complaint, the complainant will be provided with the following in writing:

- (a) findings and any subsequent action resulting from the investigation of the complaint
- (b) your right to appeal any decision or action to the Charter Schools Institute if the complaint involves a violation of law or our charter; and
- (c) a copy of the Charter Schools Institute's Grievance Guidelines (attached)

### Informal Complaint:

Any individual or group may bring an informal complaint regarding faculty, staff, and/or administrator, a school procedure, etc. to the attention of the **assistant principal**. Upon review and investigation of the allegations and/or concerns, the **assistant principal** will provide, in writing, to the complainant, the following:

- (a) a decision and/or subsequent action;
- (b) the right to appeal to the principal; and
- (c) the principal's decision on an informal complaint is final; there is no right to appeal to the board of trustees or the charter entity from the denial of an informal complaint.



## **GUIDELINES OF THE CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS RECEIVED PURSUANT TO EDUCATION LAW §2855(4)**

### **I. Introduction**

A. Section 2855(4) of the Education Law provides that any individual or group who believes a charter school has violated its charter, the New York Charter Schools Act, or any other law relating to the management or operation of the charter school, can bring a complaint to the charter school's board of trustees (the "school board"). If the individual making the complaint, after presenting the complaint to the school board, is unsatisfied with the school board's response, then he or she has the right to present the complaint to the entity which authorized the charter school (the "Charter Entity"). The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the "State University Trustees") is the Charter Entity for the Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls.

Pursuant to a resolution of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the "State University Trustees"), the Charter Schools Institute has been authorized to handle complaints directed to the State University Trustees in their capacity as a Charter Entity. As such, the Institute will both receive and review complaints on behalf of the State University Trustees and make determinations and issue appropriate remedial orders.

The Charter Entity, upon being presented with a complaint, has the authority to issue remedial orders when appropriate and necessary. If the complainant, after presenting a complaint to the Charter Entity, feels that the complaint has not been adequately addressed by the Charter Entity, he or she may bring the complaint to the Board of Regents, which also has the authority to issue remedial orders. In a sense, this establishes a two-step appeals process for complaints and grievances.

These guidelines replace guidelines adopted on April 30, 2001 and distributed to charter schools on May 1, 2001. The guidelines have been revised to reflect the Board of Trustees grant of increased authority to the Charter Schools Institute to handle complaints received by the Board of Trustees in their capacity as a charter entity.

The guidance that follows below explains how the Charter Schools Institute will handle and review complaints. It is in the form of answers to frequently asked questions. Please note that the words grievance and complaint are used interchangeably throughout.

### **II. General Requirements**

#### **A. When can a complaint be filed with the Charter Schools Institute?**

Please Note: Because, as noted in the Introduction, complaints regarding charter schools authorized by the State University Trustees will be reviewed and acted upon by the Charter Schools Institute, the Institute (and not the State University Trustees), is referred to throughout the Q&A.

By law, the Charter Schools Institute cannot undertake the review of a complaint until the complainant has presented his or her complaint to a school board of a State University authorized

school and the complainant has determined that the school board has not adequately addressed the complaint. In general a group or individual should not file with the Charter Schools Institute until after a school board has acted on the complaint and provided a written response to the complainant. Each charter school, as part of its charter, has agreed to set up a process under which complaints must be reviewed by the school board. You have the right to be provided with a copy of that policy upon request of a charter school.

## **B. What if I file a grievance and the school board fails to act on my grievance?**

If a school board fails to take any action on your grievance in a reasonable time, then you may bring your grievance to the Charter Schools Institute. What is considered reasonable depends on the circumstances. Some grievances may require prompt action by a school board while others may properly be resolved in a longer time frame. Thus, in certain instances where urgent action is required, it may be appropriate for a school board to call an emergency meeting. In general, however, it is appropriate for a school board to take action on your grievance at its regularly scheduled meeting. As most school boards meet monthly, you should not necessarily expect a school board to act immediately. However, you can and should expect that, at a minimum, a school board should take action on your grievance within the time frame set out in the school's grievance policy.

In most cases where the school board has not acted, you should wait at least until the period provided for by the school's grievance policy has passed before filing your grievance with the Charter Schools Institute. As explained more fully below, the Charter Schools Institute, in reviewing and investigating your complaint, will give the school board an opportunity to respond to your grievance. Accordingly, filing a grievance with the Charter Schools Institute, before you have given the school board a reasonable time in which to act on your complaint, may simply delay the Charter Schools Institute from undertaking its own independent review and investigation.

### **What does my grievance have to contain?**

The law does not require that your grievance be in a particular format. However, in order to ensure that your grievance is thoroughly and quickly reviewed, you should provide the following:

1. A detailed statement of the nature of the complaint (including the law or provision of the charter that you allege has been violated), the names of the individuals involved, and the time, date and place the incident(s) at issue occurred;
2. What response, if any, you have received from the school board (a copy of any response should be attached) with any relevant dates;
3. Copies of any correspondence between you and the school or school board; 4. What action or relief you are seeking; and
4. Your name, address and telephone number.

Please note that while the law does not require you to submit your complaint in any particular format, it must include at least one allegation that the school or school board has violated a term of its charter or provision of applicable law. Where there is no such allegation (and a fair reading of the complaint does not involve any violation), the Institute will not review or investigate but limit its response to a statement that no valid complaint has been presented to it. In this regard, please remember that the Charter Schools Institute does not have the power to review complaints (and issue remedial orders) for any and all complaints that you might have about a charter

school. Its review powers are limited quite specifically to those complaints alleging a violation of the charter or a provision of law.

To assist you in fashioning your grievance, the Charter Schools Institute has created a **Grievance Form** on its website, which you can use when submitting grievances to it. As stated above, use of this form is not mandatory and it is provided as a convenience to you.

**C. Where and to whom do I submit my grievance?**

Your grievance should be addressed to the Charter Schools Institute's Grievance Desk, 41 State Street, Suite 700, Albany, New York 12207. As noted above, the Charter Schools Institute will conduct the investigation of your grievance and issue any remedial orders on behalf of the State University Trustees. As also noted, grievances submitted to the Charter Schools Institute must concern a charter school authorized by the State University Trustees. Complaints involving charter schools authorized by other entities, such as the Board of Regents and local school districts, must be filed with those entities.

**D. After the school board responds to my grievance, is there a time period in which I need to file my "appeal" to the Charter Schools Institute for it to be valid?**

The law does not provide a time limit in which you are required to file your grievance with the Charter Schools Institute. However, you should be aware that the Charter Schools Institute, in reviewing your grievance, may take into account any unusually lengthy delays in filing your grievance. Such delays, in appropriate cases, may affect the Institute's determination, including the terms and scope of any remedial order it issues. In general, the Charter Schools Institute would not consider any grievance to be delayed that was filed with it within sixty days of the school board's response or the end of the time period in which the school board, under its grievance policy, has to act (but in which time no action by the school board has been taken).

**III. Grievance Review and Action**

**A. How does the Charter Schools Institute process and investigate grievances that it receives?**

Upon receipt of a grievance, Charter Schools Institute staff will review the grievance and all supporting materials delivered with the grievance. Staff will then contact the person making the grievance to confirm its receipt and, if necessary, request that additional information be supplied. The Charter Schools Institute will also contact the school board and, in most cases, give the school board thirty (30) days to respond.

The Institute will forward to the school board a copy of the grievance along with supporting materials. As noted above, if the Charter Schools Institute receives a grievance from an individual who has not given the school board a reasonable time in which to act, the Charter Schools Institute

may defer its investigation until that reasonable period has passed. In such cases, and where the school board takes the opportunity to then act on the complaint, the Charter Schools Institute will consider the school board's action in fashioning its determination, including the scope and terms of any remedial order it issues. In addition to the above steps, Charter Schools Institute staff will conduct whatever independent factual investigation the Institute deems necessary and appropriate. Such investigation may include, but is not limited to, requesting additional information from the grievant, the school board or other persons, conducting interviews, inspecting relevant documents, or visiting the school. Upon completion of its investigation, the Charter Schools Institute will reach a determination as to appropriate remedial orders, if any. The Institute will provide a copy of the determination, which will include the terms of any remedial order to the person making the grievance, the school board and the Charter Schools Unit of the New York State Education Department.

**B. In presenting my grievance, may I be represented by a lawyer?**

You have the right, though you are not required, to retain an attorney to represent or otherwise assist you in presenting your grievance to the Charter Schools Institute and in any other phase of the review process.

**C. Instead of having the Charter Schools Institute formerly act on my complaint, i.e., issue a written determination, can I ask the Charter Schools Institute to assist me in resolving the matter with the school and school board?**

The Charter Schools Institute appreciates that oftentimes, your complaint can be resolved without the Institute having to take formal action on it. The Charter Schools Institute stands ready to work with you to try to resolve your complaint in this way. Indeed, in many instances, the Institute may suggest that the dispute between the school and you be mediated. However, if you do not wish to try to resolve your complaint informally, you are not required to do so.

**D. What kinds of remedial orders can the Charter Schools Institute issue?**

The Charter Schools Act does not define, and generally does not limit, the remedial powers of a charter entity in regard to complaints. Accordingly, the Charter Schools Institute, acting for the State University Trustees, has wide discretion to determine the remedial order appropriate to a particular situation. There is, however, one clear limitation on the kind of remedial order the Charter Schools Institute can issue. The Institute may not place a charter school on probation or terminate a school's charter except under the specific grounds and pursuant to the procedures set forth at §2855 of the Education Law (The Charter Schools Act). Moreover, even if such grounds exist, remedial orders which involve placing a school on probation or terminating a school's charter, would require approval by the State University Trustees.

**IV. After the Charter Schools Institute Has Acted:**

**A. What if I am not satisfied with the Charter Schools Institute's response to my complaint?**

If you are not satisfied with the Charter Schools Institute's response to your claim, you have the right to "appeal" to the Board of Regents. Complaints made to the Board of Regents may be filed with the Charter Schools Unit, 465 Education Building Annex, Albany, New York 12234. The State Education Department has its own guidelines and procedures for reviewing grievances. Accordingly, you should consult with State Education Department staff in the Charter Schools Unit before filing your grievance.

As a preliminary step to bringing your complaint to the Board of Regents, you may also, but are not required to, request that the Charter Schools Institute review its determination. You may find this step

appropriate if you believe that the Institute has overlooked evidence before it, or if you have additional evidence that was not available to you at the time your complaint was under review. The Institute will review any additional evidence that you have and inform all parties in writing of the results of its review, including any modifications it determines to make to its original determination. Please note that requesting a review is optional and not a prerequisite to a further "appeal." As noted above, you may at any time after an initial determination by the Charter Schools Institute bring your complaint directly to the Board of Regents without having first requested a review of its determination.

**B. If the Charter Schools Institute issues a remedial order but the school does not comply with that order, am I required to bring a complaint to the school board or can I immediately complain to the Charter Schools Institute?**

If the Charter Schools Institute has issued a remedial order which in your view the school is not following, you need not file an additional complaint with the school board but may directly apprise the Charter Schools Institute of your concern. However, if your complaint involves new facts or circumstances which were not part of your previous complaint, you must, by law, first make your complaint to the school board. As always you may contact the Charter Schools Institute for assistance in determining whether your complaint is related to non-compliance with a remedial order or to a new grievance.

The complaint and grievance form you use for formal complaints – the *Complaint Form for Submission to Charter School Board of Trustees* and *Charter School Institute Grievance Form* is available in the main office of ALCS.

On July 1, 2012, The *Dignity for All Students Act* (Education Law Article 2 §§2-18]) became effective in all schools in the State of New York. The *Dignity Act* grants schools more responsibility and leverage in identifying, investigating, and thus, executing proper disciplinary actions when individuals harass, taunt, bully, intimidate, threaten, and/or discriminate against others on *and off* of school property.

Per the *Dignity Act*, the following definitions will be followed to the letter at ALCS:

**Harassment and bullying means:** *...the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or (b) conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause student to fear for his or her physical safety; or (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. For the purposes of this definition the term "threats, intimidation or abuse" shall include verbal and non-verbal actions. Acts of harassment and bullying include, but shall not be limited to those acts based on a person's actual or perceived:*

- *Race*
- *Color*
- *Weight*
- *Sexual orientation*
- *Religion*
- *Religious practice*
- *Disability*
- *Sex*
- *Ethnic group*

- *National origin*
- *Gender (which includes a person's actual or perceived sex, as well as gender identity and expression).*

**Cyberbullying means:** Cyberbullying means harassment or bullying that occurs through any form of electronic communication. Electronic communication includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat and websites. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites and embarrassing pictures, videos websites or fake profiles. ([www.Stopbullying.gov](http://www.Stopbullying.gov))

**Sexual Harassment means:** conduct that is sexual in nature, unwelcome and denies or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from a school's education program.

Examples of sexual conduct include:

- Making sexual propositions or pressuring students for sexual favors;
- Touching of a sexual nature;
- Writing graffiti of a sexual nature;
- Displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures or written materials;
- Performing sexual gestures or touching oneself sexually in front others;
- Telling sexual or dirty jokes;
- Spreading sexual rumors or rating other students as to sexual activity or performance; or
- Circulating or showing emails or websites of a sexual nature.

With this, we have **no tolerance** for bullying or harassment of any kind, and consequently, will take immediate action when alerted that students are engaging in such conduct. If a student is accused of bullying or harassment, the following steps will be taken:

- Complaint filed with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) Coordinator
- Investigation
- Families of both parties contacted per investigation results
- Meeting with alleged bully and Principal or principal's designee to discuss allegations
- Meeting with alleged bully and target for Restorative session (if target is agreeable)
- In-school counseling sessions for bully and target individually (with family's consent) if deemed necessary and beneficial
- Follow-up meeting(s) with bully, target and Principal or principal's designee to ensure the bullying has stopped.

Should further evidence show that the student charged with bullying is continuing to threaten, harass or retaliate, a long-term Out of School Suspension (OSS) may be the immediate course of action. A mandatory meeting will take place with the student, her family and the Principal and/or principal's designee before the student can return to classes. Should the student still continue to harass the same student or others, the school will be forced to meet with the family to re-consider if ALCS is a sound choice for the student and family.

ALCS reserves the right to involve law enforcement at any time in the process of each individual investigation.







