

# Alder Grove Charter School Parent Handbook



Our Mission is to Provide Students with  
Personalized Learning and to Support  
Parental Choice in Education



## **OUR PURPOSE**

Alder Grove Charter School is an independent study charter school that provides a voluntary public educational choice for families of students who choose to educate their children in the home environment. We believe individual differences and the uniqueness of each child are to be supported and celebrated. Thank you for choosing Alder Grove Charter School for your student(s).

## **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE STAFF**

Jenni Allen - San Giovanni, Director

Jenifer Doane, Administrative Assistant; Registrar; Data Manager

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

## **SCHOOL CLASSROOM SITE**

Corner of Sonoma & F Streets

Eureka, CA 95501



## **OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU**

Our mission is to support you as you make choices regarding your child's education. In order to do this, we provide you with a Credentialed Teacher (CT), who is your primary connection to the school and your first source of information. A CT must meet face-to-face with the student and parent at least once every 20 school days.

Your CT should answer any questions that you may have about the school. If s/he is unable to immediately answer your question, s/he will research the answer and get back to you. If at any time you feel that you are not getting adequate help from your CT, please let her/him know. If that does not resolve the issue, please contact the director at the school office.

Options for your student's education include a wide variety of instructional materials and services. Your CT can explain the options available in our library and on our approved vendor list.

We have a list of vendors from whom you may choose curriculum and supplies. Your CT will evaluate your student's needs and help you select the best curriculum. You are welcome to collect catalogs from our vendors and find items yourself, or you can ask your CT to select appropriate educational items for you. Your CT will place all orders for you and keep track of the amount of funding available for each of your students. If you would like to use a vendor not on our list, let your CT know.

You may use instructional funding to provide a computer for use in your home while enrolled in our school. If you do not have a computer, we encourage you to investigate this option with your CT.

We administer all California state-mandated tests. In the spring of each year, we administer the STAR for students in grades 2-11. We administer the California High School Exit Exam three times a year. We administer the state-mandated physical fitness test to 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students each spring. These tests are state and federally mandated and essential for the continued operation of our school.

Alder Grove students will also take a standards-based assessment each school year.

A monthly newsletter will be mailed to all Alder Grove families. It is a valuable source of current information regarding the school.

## A NOTE ABOUT OUR SCHOOL AND VOLUNTEERING

Alder Grove Charter School has experienced many successes. The driving force behind its success is the desire to create a public school in Humboldt County with solid educational standards that honors parent choice.

The requirements placed on public schools by local, state and federal governments are monumental. Alder Grove is constantly working on staying informed of ever-changing mandates. Without a conscientious and reliable group of volunteers, a public school cannot exist. Without volunteers filling positions, Alder Grove cannot continue the excellent service it provides to students and families.

The best way to understand how Alder Grove is run and how public funds are used in education is by becoming involved. Experience is not required. Becoming a **Governance Council Member** or joining the **Leadership Team** is an excellent way to make a difference and help continue to have a successful charter school. Both groups meet regularly, meetings are open to the public, and public comment is welcome.

Please consider becoming involved. The future of our school depends on it.



## **ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

Students wishing to enroll in AGCS will be assigned a Credentialed Teacher (CT), who will be their main liaison with the school and will help the family complete all necessary paperwork for enrollment.

During the initial meeting, the CT and parent will discuss the role of the CT in the education of the students. Parents are able to take full responsibility for choosing curriculum, and giving assignments and instruction to their students. In this case the CT serves more as a facilitator. The parent may also choose to have the CT be responsible for choosing curriculum and giving assignments and instruction. These responsibilities may also be divided in any number of ways. For example, the parent focuses on some subjects while the CT takes care of others or the CT choosing curriculum for some subjects and the parent others.

At this meeting, the parent and student will be advised as to current on-site classes offered by the school that may be helpful and fun. Curriculum options will also be discussed and the student's curriculum will be checked out from the library or ordered. If the student's curriculum needs to be ordered, the student will be given enough materials or assignments for the first 3-4 weeks of school.

Additionally, a student will be assessed upon enrollment. Students who are performing below grade level on these initial assessments or prior year STAR tests will meet with the director, parent(s) and CT to facilitate a plan for academic improvement. This plan will be individualized for each student. It could include tutoring or small group sessions at the school site, a tutor in the home, school selected supplementary materials in specific areas or more frequent meetings with the CT. Once the plan is made and signed, the student, parent and CT will be expected to fulfill their obligations. Failure to do so by the parent, student or CT will result in an intervention (see intervention procedure below).

Students wishing to enroll in Alder Grove who are not transferring from a traditional public school (coming into kindergarten or coming from another charter or private homeschool) will be required to have a copy of their birth certificate and vaccination record (or waiver) before enrollment is possible. Students entering first grade will also be required to have a health exam, oral assessment or waiver.

## **INTERVENTION PROCEDURE**

If a student is not fulfilling the requirements as specified in the master agreement, an intervention with the student, CT, parent(s) and director will be held. Attendance is generated by the amount of work a student completes. If, in the professional opinion of the CT, the student is not completing enough work or has missed meetings, the student is legally truant and an intervention meeting will be held.

The CT will contact the director to schedule an intervention and a letter will be sent to the parent. If the parent and student contact the CT and resolve the problem upon receipt of the letter, no intervention will be held. If the student and parent are not in attendance for the intervention, a second letter will be mailed. If this letter is not replied to within 5 days, the student may be withdrawn from Alder Grove and referred back to the school district of residence.

During the intervention, the team (student, parent, CT, director) will review the master agreement, the curriculum being used and discuss solutions to the problems. An action plan will be developed or the decision will be made that Alder Grove Charter School is not the best option for the student and the student will be referred back to the school district of residence.

**ALDER GROVE CHARTER SCHOOL  
CLASSROOM SITE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

**Classroom Site Rules**

- Students should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before class begins and should be picked up when class is over. Students who are picked up more than 10 minutes late will not be monitored.
- Students will not be directly monitored during breaks on high school class days, although a CT (credentialed teacher) will be onsite.
- Students will be monitored during breaks and lunch on elementary days.
- Parents should pick up their students inside the gate on Sonoma Street where the students will be waiting.
- Parents and other visitors (including non-enrolled students) should not be in the building until classes are over, except to volunteer or observe classes with CT permission.

**Discipline Policy**

Remember that attending Alder Grove’s on-site classes is a privilege. We are working to create a safe, friendly, and educational environment for all of our students. Therefore:

- Students will treat each other and adults respectfully.
- There will be no bullying allowed.
- Students will use appropriate language for a classroom environment.
- Students will not engage in rough play that may endanger other students or damage property.

**If these policies are not followed, the student may be asked to leave Alder Grove’s onsite classes.**

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Please sign to acknowledge agreement in adhering to the above items:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The goal of the charter school, in partnership with the community, is to provide an exceptional education that prepares students to be successful members of our democratic society. Therefore, the graduation requirements stated below have been established. The graduation requirements encompass the knowledge, abilities, and experience necessary to develop the essential aptitudes and skills of successful participants in today's society: development of character, communication, citizenship, intellect, self-direction, teamwork, well-being and productivity.

Students will be provided with assistance to tailor the requirements according to their individual needs and abilities. Students must demonstrate proficiency in reading comprehension, writing and mathematics. Those students not proficient will be provided with remedial programs after consultation with the student's parent/guardian and CT.

**In addition to the following graduation requirements, students must pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) and all other state and federal mandated assessments.**

Additional requirements may be added if the California Ed Codes change.

### SUBJECT AND UNIT REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Subject	Units	Specific Course Requirements
English	40	
Math	20	10 of Algebra
Social Studies	30	10 U.S. History, 10 World History, 5 Economics, 5 Civics
Science	20	10 Life Science, 10 Physical Science
Foreign Language / Visual Performing Arts	10	
Health	5	
Physical Education	20	
Technology	5	
Electives	70	
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	

## CSU & UC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Alder Grove Diploma Requirements</b>	<b>CSU Requirements for Freshman Admission</b>	<b>UC Requirements for Freshman Admission</b>
<b>English</b>	Four years	Four years of approved courses	Four years of approved courses
<b>Math</b>	Two years including Algebra 1	Three years including: Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2	Three years including Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2  Four years recommended
<b>Social Science</b>	Three years including: one year World History, one year US History, half year Economics and half year US Government/Civics	Two years including: One year of US History or half year of US history and half year of Civics or Government and one year of other approved social science	Two years including: One year of US History or half year of US History and half year of Civics or Government and one year of World History, Cultures and Geography
<b>Science</b>	Two years including Biological and Physical Sciences	Two years including one year of Biological and one year of Physical Science with Lab	Two years with lab required chosen from Biology, Chemistry and Physics  Three years recommended
<b>Foreign Language</b>	One year of either Foreign Language or Visual and Performing Arts	Two years in same language	Two years in same language  Three years recommended
<b>Visual and Performing Arts</b>	One year of either Foreign Language or Visual and Performing Arts	One year of Visual and Performing Arts chosen from the following: Dance, Drama/Theater, Music or Visual Art	One year of Visual and Performing Arts chosen from the following: Dance, Drama/Theater, Music or Visual Art
<b>Other requirements</b>	Half year Health Half year Technology Two years Physical Education		
<b>Electives</b>	70 credits	One year chosen from approved academic courses.	



## EXPECTED SCHOOL WIDE LEARNING RESULTS

Alder Grove Charter School will graduate **effective communicators** who...

- Read, comprehend, and interpret a variety of written materials
- Write clear, concise and grammatically correct prose
- Communicate in a responsible and respectful manner
- Evaluate critically oral and written work according to applicable standards
- Create appropriate oral and visual presentations

Alder Grove Charter School will graduate **problem solvers** and **critical thinkers** who...

- Research, identify, access and organize data effectively and arrive at informed conclusions
- Understand and apply principles of consumer economics

Alder Grove Charter School will graduate **capable and responsible citizens** who...

- Make choices that promote good physical and mental health
- Make ethical decisions that promote a healthy society
- Demonstrate knowledge of the democratic process
- Exhibit awareness of environmental issues

## **POLICY FOR MATERIALS THAT CAN BE PURCHASED WITH INSTRUCTIONAL FUNDS**

State funding is provided to each enrolled student in the charter school in order to provide for the education of the student in required academic and elective areas. Each family will work closely with their CT to determine the best use of student resources to achieve these goals. Students must have curriculum for all core subject courses (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies) before funds are spent on elective courses. Students must be making academic progress in core subject areas as shown on school assessments, student work samples and CT observations before funding for non-core classes will be approved. It is recognized that the amount provided for the education of each child may not adequately cover all costs of education; just as in a site based public school, a student's parents may need to pay additional fees for music or sports participation or purchase necessary school supplies.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA) funding is received for the purpose of supporting new learning for a student and some minimal practice of those newly learned skills. Therefore, ADA funding may be spent for basic educational items that support new student learning.

All materials purchased by the school for student use must be on a learning log for that student during that school year or returned unused to the school.

### **Materials must be used to meet student standards for the student for whom the materials are being purchased.**

Students have wide flexibility in the types of curriculum, supplies and materials they are allowed to purchase with their educational funding. Examples include magazine subscriptions, science kits, some on line tutorials, basic school supplies (printer ink and paper, pens, pencils, etc.) and much more. Talk to your CT if you have any questions.

#### **The following purchases are acceptable:**

Basic school supplies adequate for learning basic course skills, e.g. textbooks, workbooks, paper, pencils, books, computer, etc.

Enough basic raw materials (not top-of-the-line) for learning basic or new course skills in one learning record documented educational project, e.g. paint, beads, yarn enough for one project. Exception: no food purchases allowed. (CT's are responsible for monitoring the quantities of items purchased.)

Basic equipment (not top-of-the-line) for documented learning as needed by student, e.g. sewing machine, cassette player, manipulatives, camera, computer, printer, scanner.

#### **The following types of items are unacceptable:**

- Furniture (book shelves, large white boards, etc.)
- Computer parts, equipment and software upgrades for non school-owned computers
- Ready-made clothes or jewelry
- Toys with no educational value
- Personal hygiene items
- Personal PE items: skis, bicycles, tricycles, balance beams, swings, etc.
- Home and Office Equipment: faxes, copiers, phones, dictation equipment, TVs
- Kitchen Equipment: popcorn poppers, trays, plates, silverware
- Yard Equipment: grass watering kits, garden ponds, swimming pools, yard tools, etc.

**Materials must not be sectarian or denominational. Here are some vendors to be particularly careful about when ordering:**

- Rainbow Educational Media
- Rainbow Resource Center
- Beautiful Feet
- Sonlight Curriculum
- Home Science Tools
- Love to Learn
- Winter Promise
- Learning Things
- In the Hands of a Child
- Nature's Workshop Plus

**The following types of items are unacceptable:**

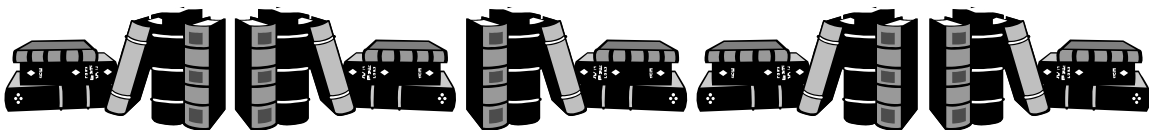
- Religious materials of any type, e.g. books, CD ROMs, CDs, videos, cassette tapes, posters, etc.

**The following curriculum is religious based and unacceptable to order:**

- Bob Jones University
- Abeka
- Alpha Omega
- Horizon math (grade 3+)
- Switched on Schoolhouse CD-Roms
- Apologia
- D.I.V.E. CD's (Saxon math support)
- Rod and Staff

**Materials must not expose the CT or student to danger or serious injury. The following types of items are unacceptable:**

- Poisons
- Knives
- Bows and Arrows
- Darts
- Trampolines
- Swimming pools
- Rocket engines
- Weapons
- Power tools
- Welding equipment
- Large or heavy items must be limited to those items which the CT can transport.





## Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. Is Alder Grove Charter School accredited?**

Yes, we have full accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

### **2. Who should I contact about my student allocation of funds and what is available for use?**

You should work with your Credentialed Teacher (CT) on determining the best uses of the allocated funding for your student's academic growth as well as what is still available for use.

### **3. Where can I find forms that I need?**

Our website ([www.aldergrovecharter.org](http://www.aldergrovecharter.org)) has all of the forms you should need. You can print attendance and PE logs as well as vendor forms. You should work with your CT on filling out vendor forms. This will ensure the student has enough funding left to pay the vendor.

### **4. How old does a student have to be to enroll in Alder Grove Charter School?**

A student who turns 5 on or before December 2 of that school year may start kindergarten on the first day of school. A child who turns five after December 2, but before March 1 is allowed to begin kindergarten on their fifth birthday in our school. Students may enroll in our school before their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, that is up until they are 18 and 364 days old.

### **5. How do we get copies of student report cards?**

End of year report cards are mailed to families. If you would like a mid year report card, please ask your CT for a copy.

### **6. Why does my student have to take STAR tests?**

STAR tests are an important part of the way the state and federal governments hold our school and other public schools accountable. It is the measure the state and federal government use to determine if our school is educating children. The No Child Left Behind Act, enacted by Congress in 2001, mandates testing at least 95% of the enrolled students in all public schools to show that they are making adequate progress. This is especially critical for charter schools. If testing shows inadequate academic progress, the charter may not be renewed and the school closed.

### **7. Do the STAR test results count for grade advancement?**

No. Although in our school we may use the results to make sure we are adequately meeting the academic needs of our students, no child will be "held back" due to low STAR test scores.

### **8. When do we get the STAR test results?**

The results are usually sent to the school in late July and we will mail them to you in August.



## Useful Website Links

CALIFORNIA STATE STANDARDS:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>

CA READING list:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/readinglist.asp>

STAR TEST info:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/css05rtq.asp>

Websites with PRINTABLE WORKSHEETS:

[www.edhelper.com](http://www.edhelper.com)

[www.freeworksheets.com](http://www.freeworksheets.com)

Information for the COLLEGE BOUND STUDENT:

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

Early READING AND PHONICS online activities that kids love:

[www.starfall.com](http://www.starfall.com)