



“Where Parents are Partners and Children Succeed”

Parent/Student Handbook

65 Krank Street
42 South Dove Street

Phone 518-433-1500
Fax: 518-433-1501

Website: www.albanycommunitycharterschool.org



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for choosing Albany Community Charter School. We are delighted to have you as part of our school community. As parents you are partners in your child's education and together we seek to nurture the very best in each of our students. We envision a school that is truly a community, where parents, teachers and students work together and share the commitment and responsibility of preparing young people to be tomorrow's future leaders. Our school will be an open, friendly and active place that welcomes parent participation and community volunteers. We will actively seek to provide and receive the much needed support from our families in order to make Albany Community Charter School, a great school. The success of this vision rests with each of us as we challenge ourselves and our students to achieve their highest potential.

This Handbook is your resource for information about our school-- academic policies and procedures as well as other information you may need throughout the year. Please take the time to read it carefully and discuss the policies and procedures with your child. We ask that you keep it handy for a reference. We hope that you find it helpful and we encourage your questions and suggestions. We are looking forward to a great school year. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

*S. Neal Currie Jr.
Executive Director*

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ALBANY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Albany Community Charter School is to provide a high quality educational experience for children in the Albany area by building a shared responsibility and commitment for student success. We believe all children can excel in a nurturing and supportive environment of high expectations, love and respect giving them the ability to determine their future success in school and life.

Through a relentless focus on academic achievement and character development, we seek to develop in our students the academic and social skills necessary to enable them to discover their unique gifts and talents in order to become responsible public citizens dedicated to the advancement of one's self, one's family and one's community.

Our Vision

We will develop an exceptional school community where student success is truly a shared responsibility of parents, teachers and students and all children will exceed the most challenging standards.

OUR PROGRAM

- ❖ *Small school setting*
- ❖ *Strong parental involvement*
- ❖ *Safe and respectful environment*
- ❖ *Extended school day (7:30am – 4:00pm)*
- ❖ *A longer school year*
- ❖ *Research- based Math and Reading program*
- ❖ *School uniforms*
- ❖ *Two Teachers per class*
- ❖ *Daily tutoring and homework*
- ❖ *High Expectations for every child*

ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSION POLICY

Albany Community Charter School is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language or prior academic achievement when recruiting or admitting students.

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ENROLLMENT PERIOD AND ADMISSIONS LOTTERY

Formal recruitment of incoming students begins during the month of January. The Albany Community Charter School will advertise open registration through the local media and by leafleting in the community. These advertisements announce that applications are being accepted for the upcoming school year, grades the school serves, when open houses are being held, the application deadline and the lottery date, time and location.

Interested families may submit applications beginning on or about January 15 until approximately March 30. If the number of applicants to the charter school exceeds capacity, a random selection process conducted by an individual unaffiliated with the school will be used to assign spaces as described below. This lottery, if necessary, will be held annually during the first week of April. After the April 1st lottery deadline, students will be accepted on a first come first serve basis.

Admission preference shall be granted to applicants in the following manner;

- ❖ First preference will be given to returning students, who will automatically be assigned a space within the school.
- ❖ Second preference will be given to siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school. For definition purposes, “siblings” are two or more children that are related either by birth by means of the same father or mother or by legal adoption.
- ❖ Third preference for admission is for students who reside within the Albany City School District.
- ❖ Any remaining slots shall be available to applicants residing outside the district of location.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY

At Albany Community Charter School parents and staff work together to create a community where learning and hard work are valued. We expect parents to be actively engaged in their child’s school experience. All parents are expected to sign the Parent/School Contract to signify their commitment to participate in their child’s success.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Following are some of the ways you can participate in your child’s success in school:

- ❖ Ensure that your child is at school every day on time.
- ❖ Support our work ethic that every child will have a school "job" and assume responsibility to do it well.
- ❖ Communicate regularly with your child's teacher. This includes: providing needed information, letting us know how things are going and coming to parent meetings and conferences.
- ❖ Participate in creating high standards for behavior, including supporting the school's code of conduct and working with our school in solving any problems which develop.
- ❖ Talk to your child about values such as work, responsibility and the importance of education.

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- ❖ Show interest in your child's homework and schoolwork and follow through on signing papers and participating in family projects.
- ❖ Ensure that your child wears the ACCS uniform daily.
- ❖ Keep your child's emergency phone numbers and information in the school office up to date.
- ❖ Volunteer at the school or do things for the school as often as you can.

Staff and parents have on-going communication with folders sent home daily with children and phone calls, and conferences are held as needed. Interim progress reports are sent home at mid-semester and report cards are required to be picked-up by a parent at the end of each trimester during the parent-teacher conferences. Also, monthly meetings and/or workshops are presented throughout the year to give parents suggestions on how to help their children with academics.

Title 1 (section 1118) Parental Involvement of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication about student academic learning and other school activities. It includes ensuring that parents play an important role in assisting their child's learning; encouraging parents to be actively involved in their child's education at school; making parents full partners in their child's education by including them, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist the education process. Additionally, parents will also be asked to participate in other activities, such as those described below.

In recognition that the parent is the child's first and most important teacher, and the parent's continued involvement is essential for the success of the child, the school is committed to building a strong parent-school partnership. In doing this, the Albany Community Charter School (ACCS) agrees to implement the following statutory requirements outlined in Section 1118 of the Title I Parent Involvement Policy in order to ensure that parents are involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating the Title I program:

- 1) ACCS will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its parent involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:
 - a.) ***Creation of a Title I team that includes the Early Literacy & Math Specialists, building administrators, teachers and parents.***
- 2) ACCS will take the following actions to involve parents in the activities of the Title I school:
 - a.) ***An annual meeting will be held during the fall to which parents of all participating children will be invited. The purpose of this meeting shall be to explain the programs and activities provided with Title I funds including any set aside funds.***
 - b.) ***Public notification of Title I meeting in the Albany Times Union Newspaper as well as information posted on our website. (www.albanycommunitycharterschool.org)***
 - c.) ***Individually solicit parents of Title I students to participate.***
- 3) ACCS will conduct, with involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of Title I schools, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by Title I and use the

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findings of the evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, parental involvement policies as necessary.

a.) The Title I team will meet with the Parent Coordinator and the Parent Advisory Board during the Spring to assess and discuss the effectiveness of the parent involvement program and discuss how the program for the coming year will be designed, operated, and evaluated. Other meetings may be held as needed.

- 4) ACCS will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist in planning, implementing, and effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
 - a.) ***Review current information on research-proven practices to improve parental involvement; our parent coordinator as well as others will attend workshops on best practices for improving parental involvement; and will provide sufficient allocations to allow for specific parental involvement activities as identified.***
- 5) ACCS will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies under the following other programs by:
 - a.) ***Providing parent training in conjunction with other agencies or supplying materials, space or personnel for such training opportunities.***
- 6) ACCS will build the parents' and schools' capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement. In doing so, ACCS shall:
 - a.) ***Provide assistance to parents of children served by the school in understanding such topics as the New York State's academic content standards and New York State's student academic achievement standards, State and local assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children;***
 - b.) ***Provide materials and training to help parents in working with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement;***
 - c.) ***Educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contribution of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school;***
 - d.) ***Coordinate and integrate to the extent feasible and appropriate, parent involvement programs, such as activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, the Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parent as Teachers Program, public preschool and other programs. Other activities will be conducted, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children;***
 - e.) ***Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children.***

PARENT ADVISORY BOARD

The Parent Advisory Board meets regularly, giving parents an opportunity to help plan programs which encourage parental involvement in the school. The PAB addresses a range of issues from academics and curriculum to fundraising. The PAB seeks to represent the concerns of parents of all children at the school, special needs, at-risk, limited English proficient and high achievers. Elected Board members assume

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responsibility for setting and implementing the PAB agenda, but all parents may vote. Meetings are open to all parents as well as to the general public and are held at 6 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. The Parent Advisory Board includes representation across grade levels as well as Elementary and Middle School programs.

VISITOR POLICY

ACCS welcomes parents and other community visitors! Parents and guardians are welcome in the school at all times. All visitors must sign in at the main office and pick up a visitor's pass. Any unidentified adult in the building will be directed to the office by teachers, staff or parents. This includes any time parents need to pickup their child for an early release.

EXPECTATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteer program provides parents and other ACCS supporters with an opportunity to share skills, contribute to our learning environment or show support for our school. As a volunteer, there are a number of guidelines to be remembered:

- ❖ **Confidentiality** - Respect the privacy of each child as you would like other parents to respect your child's privacy. Do not talk to others about a child's ability or any particular events that happen during the day.
- ❖ **Reliability** - Teachers will plan on you being available at a certain time. Please let them know in advance if you cannot come.
- ❖ Children sometimes behave differently when their parents are present. Usually a discussion about appropriate behavior helps. If it is too difficult for you to work in your child's room, we may ask you to work in another room.
- ❖ Do **not** administer discipline. If a student is acting out, talk to the teacher or a school administrator about the situation. We encourage students best by noticing their achievements and giving appropriate praise.
- ❖ Let the staff know what tasks are satisfying to you. We want to utilize volunteers in a mutually fulfilling way.
- ❖ Do **not** administer First Aid or clean up any bodily fluids. Call staff for assistance.
- ❖ Sign in and out each time you volunteer.

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ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance at school is the most basic requirement for learning. In order for students to do their personal best, they must come to school each and every day on time. **At Albany Community Charter School, regular attendance is expected and required, and poor attendance will not be tolerated. Parents are expected to ensure that their child is in school every day. PLEASE do not allow your child to miss a day of school except for serious illnesses. Excessive absences will be considered a violation of the parent-student-school contract and will be documented on Progress Reports and Report Cards. Students that arrive to school after 10:00 a.m. will be marked absent and will not be permitted without a valid doctor's note.**

- ❖ Teachers keep attendance logs on a daily basis and are attentive to excessive absences.
- ❖ Parents must call in if a child is going to be absent.
- ❖ A note must be provided for all excused absences (student illness, religious holiday, family emergency).
- ❖ Parents are expected to make arrangements with the teacher to receive homework for their child during absences.
- ❖ Every effort should be made to schedule appointments and family vacations during times when school is not in session.
- ❖ Any child who is consistently and excessively absent without good reason may not be promoted to the next grade.
- ❖ Parents will be required to conference with the Principal if their child has excessive absences.
- ❖ **More than three absences in a trimester or more than seven absences in a year are considered excessive. Any student with excessive absences is in danger of being retained.**
- ❖ If a student misses school, Albany Community Charter School staff will make reasonable efforts to contact the student's parent/guardian by telephone, writing, or in person.

Excused absence: Absences will be excused only under specific circumstances: student illness (with parent/guardian's note), religious holiday (with parent/guardian's note) and family emergencies (i.e. death in the family). In order for a student to be excused, the school must receive written verification of the reason for the absence from a parent, guardian or doctor within two days of the absence. If a student has a medical appointment, he or she should not be absent for the entire school day.

Unexcused absence: All other absences will be considered unexcused, including those related to transportation problems, and family vacations.

Absences because of a suspension: If a student is absent from school on suspension, these absences will be treated the same as an excused absence.

Albany Community Charter School staff will make a concerted effort to remedy truancy in its early stages for students who are found to be truant.

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The parent has the responsibility to meet with school staff within 5 days of being contacted about the need for an attendance meeting. At the meeting, a written attendance plan will be developed. The plan will document the avoidable obstacles to the student's attendance and the concrete strategies that will be implemented in order to overcome these obstacles. All three parties will sign the plan, pledging to make it a reality. If appropriate, school staff will work with families to make or coordinate referrals to community agencies providing child and family services.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Albany Community Charter School plans for a school year of up to 190 days annually from August through the end of June. It operates on a 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily schedule. The Krank Street school building is generally open from 7:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the school year and from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the summer. The Dove Street building is generally open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the school year and from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the summer. Copies of the school calendar are available in the main office in both buildings.

SNOW DAYS OR SCHOOL CLOSINGS

It is the policy of Albany Community Charter School to only close in cases of extreme weather. In such cases, our closing will follow that of Albany City schools. Please listen to local radio and television stations. If Albany City Schools announces a delayed opening or a closing, Albany Community will also be delayed or closed.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Students may arrive for school at Krank Street at 7:15 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. at Dove Street. Punctuality is mandated to give children the opportunity to gain the most from the day as well as to build good habits. Any arrival after 7:50 a.m. will be considered tardy, and students must be signed in at the office when this occurs. Students with an excessive tardy record will be required to meet with the Executive Director or Principal to develop an alternative plan. Any departure before 3:45 p.m. is considered early release and students must be signed out by an authorized adult.

In order to preserve the personal safety of every student, no child is dismissed to any adult other than the parents, unless there is a note or phone call given to the school, even if the adult is on the emergency or release form.

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Bus transportation to and from Albany Community Charter School is provided by the Albany City School District. ACSD provides bus transportation for any student who lives more than 1.5 miles from the school.

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All Kindergarten Students will receive door to door service. Each child must be met by an adult. Two attempts will be made to drop the child off, before the child is returned to the school. If a child is returned to the school, a parent will be responsible to pick up the child at that point.

First Grade Students will be picked up and dropped off at corner stops. The corner stops will be approximately 2/10 of a mile away from home.

Students in 7th and 8th grades that are eligible for transportation will be issued CDTA bus passes. Students are responsible for maintaining their bus passes. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen bus passes. Parents and students are responsible for replacing missing or stolen bus passes.

Courtesy Bus

Albany Community Charter School will provide transportation for all students who live between .5 miles to 1.5 miles away from the school. All students on the courtesy Bus will get picked up and dropped off at corner stops only. The corner stops will be approximately 2/10 of a mile away from home.

Bus schedules remain scheduled for the trimester and cannot be changed daily.

Morning drop off:

Those students who are not being bused and who are not attending the breakfast program should arrive by 7:50 a.m. for elementary students and 7:30 a.m. for middle school students. Any child arriving after these times shall be considered tardy for that day.

It is important that the drop-off process moves as efficiently as possible. If a parent needs or wishes to speak with someone on the school staff at drop-off time, please park in any available parking space or on the street and walk into the building with your child. Please do not stop your car to get out in the middle of the drop-off line.

For the safety of students, when dropping off or picking up your child, **never** pass the school buses or other drivers in the line.

Dismissal

Parents are required to pick students up on time. If you are unable to pick up your child on time please make alternative arrangements with an authorized adult and notify the main office. The school will attempt to make contact with the parent or other authorized adults listed on student information forms until someone is reached. School dismissal is 4:00pm. Non-bus students will be dismissed from their classroom and escorted to the cafeteria. Parents must park their cars and come inside to the cafeteria to pick up their child.

Elementary students are allowed to walk home only after authorization from a parent or guardian has been given. Elementary students will not be dismissed to walk home without written or verbal clearance to the main office.

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Any departure before 4:00 p.m. is considered early release and students must be signed out by an authorized adult. Any changes in departure process must be submitted in writing at least 24 hours in advance.

DRESS CODE

Student Dress Code

Albany Community Charter School will maintain and enforce a uniform student dress code policy for several important reasons;

1. Uniforms reduce distractions and competition based on clothing;
2. Uniforms reduce costs for parents;
3. Uniforms create a sense of group identity and unite us as a community;
4. Uniforms teach students the importance of dressing appropriately for school and work.

All students must come to school dressed in accordance with the school dress code every day. If a student arrives to school out of code, **parents will be notified and the student will be either sent home or the parents will be required to bring in the proper dress. Students will not be allowed to attend class without proper dress.** In addition every effort must be made to ensure students come to school neat and clean.

**Albany Community Charter School reserves the right to amend the dress code at any time. In all cases, the Executive Director and Principal will have the final authority regarding dress code decisions. **

ALL students at the Albany Community Charter School are expected to wear the following:

- ❖ **Red shirts with collars** (includes mock turtleneck, long or short sleeves, cotton or knit). No sweatshirts or hoods are permitted. No writing or images are permitted to appear on the shirt.
- ❖ Black, red, or black **and** red (loafer-type or casual dress) or ***Athletic shoes or sneakers***. No other colors are permitted to be on the shoes. Boots are permitted as outer wear only.
- ❖ Cold weather attire may include solid color sweaters or vests in red or black.
- ❖ Hats of any kind are not permitted inside of the building.

Boys

- ❖ Black pants (slacks) or shorts (length must not be above the knee); belts must be worn with trousers and shorts having belt loops. (No jeans or excessive pockets)
- ❖ Shirts must stay tucked in pants.
- ❖ Solid black, red or black and red socks.
- ❖ Boys' hairstyles must be conservative with hair being off the collar.
- ❖ Earrings and other body piercing ornaments are not permitted.

Girls

- ❖ Black pants, skirts, skorts or jumpers, must be longer than the fingertips when arms hang at the student's side. Leggings, jeggings, or any other denim style bottoms are not permitted.

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- ❖ Solid black or red socks/tights. No patterns, words, designs or images are permitted to be on socks or tights.
- ❖ A reasonable number of earrings are permitted. Only ears may be pierced.
- ❖ Makeup is not permitted.

ACCS will provide one short sleeve and one long sleeve shirt with our logo embroidered on them for each student.

Additional uniform shirts and pants are available for purchase, and customized uniform apparel can be ordered as well in the main office:

65 Krank Street Albany NY 12202

SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM

We are committed to working with our families to help students enjoy rich, rewarding, and healthy lives. We are working to educate our students about healthy eating habits, and how to avoid the pitfalls and dangers of an unhealthy diet. We firmly believe our healthy food policy will go a long way toward ensuring we meet these goals.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

School lunch and breakfast are served daily Cost is \$1.50 for Breakfast and \$2.00 for Lunch. All Parents must complete the Family Application for Free and Reduced Meals. Reduced rates and free meals are available for those families who qualify. Parents will be notified by mail whether or not the student is eligible for free or reduced price meals. A monthly menu will be distributed to all students.

SNACKS

Students should not bring snack foods to school. All morning and/or afternoon snacks will be provided by the school. The school will serve healthy and nutritional snacks only. Families should not send in bottled drinks, cakes, candy and other junk food snacks to school with children. Students will be instructed to save unauthorized snack until after school hours.

SCHOOL LUNCH BOX AND BAG SUGGESTIONS

Parents should not bring or have delivered to students fast food lunches and/or soft drinks during the school day. Students should refrain from bringing cakes, candy, and other “junk foods” in their school lunches. Whole grain breads, fresh fruit, vegetables, and nuts make lunches nutritious and healthy for growing children.

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ACADEMIC PROGRAM & POLICY

CURRICULUM

Albany Community Charter School utilizes a Common Core Standards based math and reading program. The curriculum is designed to fully address the individual needs of our students while providing a strong focus on attainment and mastery the Common Core State Standards.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Character Development will also be taught and discussed throughout the day. Emphasis will be placed on the necessity and importance of making good choices, proper greetings, eye contact, self-control, handshaking, respect and personal responsibility. Each month a different P.R.O.M.I.S.E. Value will be emphasized. Each class will discuss the value regularly, read stories about the value and provide incentives and awards for students who work hard to demonstrate that P.R.O.M.I.S.E. Value in school.

ASSESSMENT

Albany Community Charter School will provide a comprehensive internal assessment program aligned to the Common Core State standards, in order to closely monitor the academic progress of students. These tests include the Terra Nova Performance Test, The Academic Improvements Measurement System (AIMSweb), teacher developed assessments as well as all tests required by the State of New York. Students, who have been deemed to require accommodations on these tests, will be offered the necessary accommodations.

HOMEWORK POLICY

At Albany Community Charter School, homework is assigned for a variety of reasons:

- ❖ Independent homework helps to develop study skills, including finishing a task, organizing thoughts, and developing responsibility for returning work to school.
- ❖ Homework reinforces skills worked on during the day.
- ❖ Homework helps to define the role of family as supportive of school work. Homework is the responsibility of the student, with support from parents/guardians in the role of consultant or partner with their student.
- ❖ Homework helps to create a dialogue between home and school. Information about current themes and work being studied can be shared by the student with family members.
- ❖ Homework is one means to develop individual skills in a specific area. For instance, spelling words may be assigned according to individual skill levels.
- ❖ At Albany Community Charter School, homework may come in a variety of forms. Some forms of homework include:
 - Reading: alone or with a family member;*
 - Conducting interviews and recording information*
 - Observing and collecting information; Worksheets for drill and practice in spelling, math, or other area.*
 - Creative writing; Creative projects; Research projects*

Recommended Time for Homework

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Kindergarten	10 minutes
First	20 minutes
Second	30 minutes
Third	40 minutes
Fourth	50 minutes
Fifth	60 minutes
Sixth- Eighth	70 minutes

Parents are not expected to do homework with students. Parents are asked to help students find a quiet place for them to do their homework and to be aware of the time spent on homework tasks. Checking the work for completion and making sure it is placed in the homework folder is also helpful.

If a student spends the suggested time period on a task, but is unable to complete the whole assignment, parents are asked to write a note in English explaining the situation, and teachers will arrange for special help. In these cases, there will be no consequence for not completing the work.

REPORT CARDS

Albany Community Charter School uses a grading system of report cards and Progress Reports for each student. Report cards are distributed three times during the academic year (trimester), with parent conferences occurring in conjunction with the fall marking period and thereafter on an as-needed basis.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Personal educational goals are developed for every child at Albany Community Charter School by teachers. The Progress Report outlines the responsibilities shared by teachers, parents, and students for achievement of learning objectives. The support includes remedial academic instruction in the form of one-to-one tutoring and small group instruction. Progress Reports are distributed at the midpoint of each trimester.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are important to the academic program and all students are expected to participate. Parents must complete a permission form. In the event a student misbehaves, permission to participate in the field trip may be withdrawn.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

ACCS holds high expectations for all students and offers programs and support services designed to maximize student performance and participation in the general curriculum. ACCS offers a full special education program to ensure that ACCS students receive special education services designed to develop the student's individual educational potential.

Albany Community Charter School will educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, with their non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's individualized education

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plan (IEP) prepared by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the students' school district of residence and in accordance with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). The school will ensure that the special education programs and services as indicated on each student's IEP will be provided directly to the student during school hours. The support includes remedial academic instruction in the form of one-to-one tutoring and small group instruction, speech and language therapy, counseling, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. The school shall not discriminate in admission and enrollment practices on the basis of a student having or suspected of having a disability.

STUDENT RECORDS/CONFIDENTIALITY

Albany Community Charter School adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. A written copy of the law is available from the school office and general provisions are summarized below. Information contained in a child's official record is privileged and confidential and will not be distributed/released to anyone not directly related to implementing the Albany Community Charter School's educational program without the written consent of students' parents.

Parents shall have access to their child's record at reasonable times, no later than 2 business days after the initial request. Upon request for access, the child's entire record, regardless of the physical location of its parts, shall be made available. The school maintains a permanent, written log in each child's record indicating any persons to whom information has been released. Each person releasing information enters into the log the following: name, signature, position, date, record, portions released, purpose of release and the signature of the person to whom the information is released. Logs are available only to parents and school personnel responsible for the record maintenance.

Parents have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Transfer of Records

Albany Community Charter School must have written permission from the parent in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

School officials with legitimate educational interest;

Other schools to which a student is transferring;

- ❖ Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- ❖ Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- ❖ Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- ❖ Accrediting organizations;
- ❖ To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;

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- ❖ Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- ❖ State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

BEHAVIOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Albany Community Charter School holds the highest expectations for students, faculty, and parents in personal behavior and citizenship. Teachers use discussion and conversation to encourage and support behavior that is acceptable to the school community and to parents.

It is Albany Community Charter School's belief that children need the security of knowing that the adults are in control and have the knowledge and skills necessary to support children. Children will learn skills related to the development of self-control, conflict resolution, problem solving and respect for others. We are aware that given the complex issues of today's families and society, there are individuals who need additional supports and services to be able to function as members of a group. If we find that our strategies and resources are not sufficient to create success for the student in our learning environment, we will work with the family and student to determine if we need to alter the setting, curriculum or strategies for children who require modifications.

The following code of conduct applies to behaviors in many school settings, including: *working in class, being a good audience, eating in the cafeteria, traveling on the bus, participating in field trips, doing community service, playing on the playground, and participating in school related sports activities and other groups.*

ALBANY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

- ❖ *Each individual (student, teacher, parent and administrator) has a right to be treated with respect at all times, even if there are opposing points of view.*
- ❖ *Each individual has a right to be in a climate of physical and emotional safety.*
- ❖ *Each individual has a right to be viewed as a valued, contributing member of our community of learners.*
- ❖ *Each individual has a personal responsibility and investment in making sure that these rights are supported in our learning environment.*
- ❖ *Each individual must clearly understand the values and expectations set forth by our Code of Conduct and understand that violations of this code will lead to consequences.*

Appropriate behavior includes:

- ❖ *Demonstrating respect for self, others, and property*
- ❖ *Using courtesy and kindness for each other*
- ❖ *Assuming responsibility for choices and accepting consequences*
- ❖ *Being honest in all matters*
- ❖ *Using good sportsmanship*

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We are committed to providing a safe learning environment and will ask students to leave the group if their presence is a threat to the well being of other students or impedes the ability of other students to learn. We will not tolerate weapons, use of tobacco products or alcoholic beverages, possession or use of drugs, sexual or racial harassment within our school.

At Albany Community Charter School, students will:

- ❖ Show respect for their teachers, all other adults, all other students, and their property.
- ❖ Heed adult requests or directions at all times.
- ❖ Not engage in aggressive, hands-on behavior.
- ❖ Use acceptable language in school. Profanity and obscene gestures will not be tolerated.
- ❖ Remain on school property during school hours.
- ❖ Be in assigned classes/areas at designated times, and not leave the classroom without permission.
- ❖ Take care of school property, including taking care of books, magazines, workbooks and other materials, as well as not defacing or otherwise damaging school property or facilities.
- ❖ Maintain cleanliness in the classroom, halls, and inside and outside the building.
- ❖ Not consume food or drink (other than water), other than at lunch or recess times unless through prior arrangement with teachers.
- ❖ Bring in school documents or parental notes when due.
- ❖ Bring absentee and tardy notes to school the day after being absent or tardy.
- ❖ Not have in their possession any dangerous or disruptive objects.
- ❖ Follow all other rules established by the school (for example, not wearing hats, using "iPods" or chewing gum in school).
- ❖ Not have in their possession electronic devices including but not limited to cell phones, iPods, iPads, MP3 players, headphones or ear buds, other music players, tablets or electronic devices. Electronic devices will be taken and held until a parent can come retrieve them.

Failure to meet any of these behavioral expectations will, at the discretion of the teachers and administration, and taking into account the age and developmental level of the student, result in a disciplinary action including a warning, detention(s), loss of privileges, suspension and/or expulsion.

Albany Community Charter School Social Media Policy

Social media is defined as any form of online publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, Internet websites, Internet forums, and wikis. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Google+, Oovoo, Snapchat, and Flickr.

Albany Community Charter School students are expected to set and maintain high ethical standards in their use of social networking and social media sites. Since social media reaches audiences far beyond the community, students must use social sites responsibly and be accountable for their actions. If a student sees anything of concern on a fellow ACCS student's social networking page or account, they should immediately bring it to the attention of an Administrator. In addition to the listed guidelines, Albany Community Charter School reserves the right to determine if any guideline not appearing in the list and descriptions below constitutes acceptable or unacceptable social media use.

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Cyber bullying is defined as the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature. Students who are identified as participating in any form of cyber bullying as an individual or part of a group will be subject to disciplinary actions to include but not limited to short term or long term suspension. The Executive Director and Principal have the authority to determine additional or alternative disciplinary actions on a situational basis.

- ❖ In the online environment, students are expected to follow ACCS Code of Conduct and conduct themselves online as is expected while in school.
- ❖ Think before you post. ACCS asks students to use discretion when posting to the internet.
- ❖ ACCS reserves the right to request school-related images or content posted without permission to be removed from the internet.
- ❖ Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
- ❖ Social media venues are public and information can be shared beyond your control. Be conscious of what you post online as you will leave a long-lasting impression on many different audiences.
- ❖ Do not post or link anything (photos, videos, web pages, audio files, forums, groups, fan pages, etc.) to your social networking sites that you wouldn't want friends, peers, parents, teachers, college admissions officers, or future employers to access. What you present on social media forums represents you forever.
- ❖ When responding to others, remember to be respectful and avoid comments that may be hurtful. Do not use profane, obscene, or threatening language.
- ❖ Cyber bullying is considered an act of harassment and will lead to disciplinary actions.
- ❖ Students are not to promote illegal drugs, illegal activities, violence, and drinking.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

All disciplinary procedures are subject to, and students must comply with, all policies adopted by the ACCS Board of Directors (which may change and/or be updated from time to time). No student shall be disciplined without being afforded appropriate due process. Prior to any disciplinary action, the student should be informed of the complaints against him/her and the facts which led to those complaints, and given an opportunity to present his/her side of the story. This meeting must occur before a student may be directed to leave school, unless the student's conduct presents a threat to the physical safety of that student or others or is so disruptive as to make the student's immediate removal necessary to preserve the right of other students to pursue an education. Expulsion or permanent exclusion of a student from school is additionally subject to the policy and procedures set forth in New York State Law.

Albany Community Charter School Policy on Suspension and Expulsion

Overview

Suspension or expulsion from school is considered to be an extreme measure, whose primary purpose is to redirect the attitude and behavior of a student. ***Suspension is the temporary exclusion of a student from the school program. Suspensions may be served out of school or in school at the Executive Director or Principal's discretion.*** This policy describes the process associated with suspension and possible expulsion.

Description and Process for Suspension

The Executive Director, Principal, and Assistant Principals have the power to suspend pupils for sufficient reason for a period not to exceed ten days. The student and his/her parents are given an opportunity to be heard within 24 hours of the completion of the investigation and notice to the parents that the student is facing short-

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term suspension. In all cases of suspension, the suspended student's parents/guardians will be notified by telephone as soon as possible after the suspension is assigned, preferably on the same day. The Executive Director or Principal will also provide the parents with a letter describing the reasons for suspension, the period of suspension, the procedure for reinstatement and the student's right to appeal the decision. This report is given to the parents within one working day of the Administrator's final decision regarding the suspension. As a condition of reinstatement, the student must be accompanied by a parent and complete a reentry meeting with the Administrator. The student must reassure us, in the presence of the parents, of his intent to improve his attitude and behavior.

Grounds for Suspension

1. A serious violation of any of the rules stated above
2. Harassment of other students and adults (including, but not limited to, threats, sexual harassment, or racial, religious, or ethnic slurs)
3. Smoking
4. Actions involving drugs and alcohol
5. Profanity or obscenity directed to or at school personnel
6. Fighting
7. Vandalism
8. Stealing
9. Causing a false fire alarm or other false alarm
10. Possession and/or use of a dangerous weapon or injurious substance or material (suspension or expulsion)
11. Misbehavior by a student that becomes disruptive to the educational process of other students
12. Truancy
13. Severe bus problems

LONG TERM SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

A long-term suspension refers to the removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period of more than ten days. Expulsion refers to the permanent removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons. A student who is determined to have committed any of the infractions listed below shall be subject minimally to a long-term suspension or expulsion, unless the Executive Director or Principal determines that an exception should be made based on the circumstance of the incident and the student's disciplinary record. Such a student may also be subject to any of the disciplinary measures outlined elsewhere in this document including a referral to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Disciplinary Infractions for long term suspension

- ❖ Possess, use, attempt to use, or transfer of any firearm, knife, razor blade, explosive, mace, tear gas, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student in school
- ❖ Commit, or attempt to commit arson on school property
- ❖ Assault any other student or staff member
- ❖ Intentionally causes physical injury to another person, except when student's actions are reasonably necessary to protect him or herself from injury
- ❖ Vandalize school property causing major damage
- ❖ Commit any act, which school officials reasonably conclude warrants a long-term suspension

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A student who commits any of the acts previously described as causes for short term-suspension may, instead or in addition, be subject to a long-term suspension at the Executive Director or Principal's discretion only if the student has committed the act at least three times in the academic year.

Procedures and Due Process for Long Term Suspension

The Executive Director or Principal may impose a long-term suspension. Such a suspension may be imposed only after the student has been found guilty at a formal suspension hearing. In extreme circumstances, the Executive Director or Principal may expel the student from school. Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the Executive Director or Principal shall verbally inform the student that he or she is being suspended and is being considered for a long-term suspension (or expulsion) and state the reasons for such actions. The Executive Director or Principal also shall immediately notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 24 hours of suspension at the last known address. 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(s) which resulted in the suspension and shall indicate that a formal hearing will be held on the matter which may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s). At the formal hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, question witnesses, and present evidence.

If the Executive Director or Principal initiates the suspension proceeding, he or she shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in his or her discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer's report shall be advisory only and the Executive Director or Principal may accept or reject part or all of it. The Executive Director or Principal's decision to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion may be challenged by the parent(s) or guardian(s) in accordance with the charter school's complaint process as described in Attachment 39 of the Albany Community Charter School charter agreement.

Provision of Instruction during Removal

Albany Community Charter School will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a child who has been suspended or removed to help that child progress in the school's general curriculum. The school will not mark the student absent. Any student, who has been suspended, will be provided alternative instruction to the extent required by New York's compensatory education law. Any student, who has been expelled, will be provided alternative instruction in like manner as a suspended student until the student enrolls in another school or until the end of the school year, whichever comes first.

Alternative instruction will be provided to students suspended or expelled in a way that best suits the needs of the student. Instruction for such students shall be sufficient to enable the student to make adequate academic progress, and shall provide them the opportunity to complete the assignments, learn the curriculum and participate in assessments. Instruction will take place in a room at the school during specified hours. During any removal for drug or weapon offenses, additional services shall include strategies designed to prevent such behavior from recurring. Instruction will be provided by one or more of the following individuals who shall be certified in accordance with § 2854(3) (a-1) of the Education Law: the student's teacher(s), aides or trained volunteers, individuals within a contracted facility, and/or a tutor hired for this purpose.

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Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Discipline of students with special needs is subject to the provisions of the New York State General Laws, as well as to the provisions of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended to date.

In general, if your child has violated the school's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove your child from his or her current educational placement for a period not to exceed ten (10) consecutive school days in any school year. If your child possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event or carries a weapon to school or a school function, the school district may place your child in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 calendar days. If your child has been placed in an interim alternative education setting as a result of a disciplinary action, your child may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless either a hearing officer orders another placement or you and the school agree to another placement.

Anytime the school wishes to remove your child from his or her current educational placement for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in any school year, or for more than ten cumulative days when a pattern of removal is occurring, this constitutes a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under the IDEA, the federal special education law. These include the following: (a) Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school district must convene a CSE Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address the problematic behavior. If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team shall review its implementation and modify it if necessary.

(b) Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement; the school district must send you a full statement of your procedural rights (this brochure) and inform you that the Team will consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis for the removal is related to the student's disability. This consideration is called a "manifestation determination." Remember that you, as the parent, always have the right to participate as a member of the Team.

Consideration of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability:

The law provides that the CSE Team must consider evaluation information, observational information, the student's IEP and placement, and must determine whether the behavior prompting disciplinary removal was a manifestation of the student's disability. The Team considers if the student understood the impact and consequences of the behavior, and further considers if the student's disability impaired the student's ability to control his or her behavior.

If the Team determines that the behavior was related to your child's disability, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapon or drug possession or use) until the IEP Team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement and you consent to that new IEP and placement.

If the Team determines the behavior was not related to your child's disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according to the school's code of student conduct, except that for any period of removal exceeding ten days, the school district must provide your child with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The school district must determine the educational services necessary for FAPE and the manner and location for providing those services.

In the case of a disagreement with the Team's determination:

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If you disagree with the Team's decision on the "manifestation determination" or with the decision relating to placement of your child in an interim alternative education setting or any other disciplinary action, you have the right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

Documentation of Discipline Incidents

Students involved in discipline incidents will receive written notices of the incidents and of the actions taken by school personnel. These notices are to be signed by parents and returned to the school. Notices will be placed in the student yearly files, but in accordance with the law, will not become a part of students' permanent school records. Notices will remain in students' working files for the duration of his/her enrollment at Albany Community Charter School. In addition, parents of students who may have been involved in an incident but are not at fault will also receive written documentation of these incidents.

Discipline on the Bus

Students are expected to adhere to the ACCS behavior policies and code of conduct while being transported to and from school if they are utilizing the bussing system. Students are provided with bus transportation to ensure their timely arrival to school as well as timely arrival back home at the end of the day. In an effort to ensure safety, students must also follow the rules of the bus transportation company. In the event that a student does violate bus company rules and/or ACCS transportation expectations, they will receive a formal transportation discipline referral issued by the bus company or the school. When an elementary student receives a transportation discipline referral, the actions below will follow:

- 1st write up: recess detention or writing assignment
- 2nd write up: lunch and recess detention and writing assignment
- 3rd write up: one day of bus suspension
- 4th write up: three days of bus suspension
- 5th write up: one week of bus suspension
- 6th write up: one trimester of bus suspension

ACCS administration reserves the right to make further decisions and changes to bus policy as necessary. If and when an expanded bus suspension is necessary, the Executive Director or Principal will proceed with communication with parents. The bus company also reserves the right to request that students be suspended or removed from the bus. In the event that a request is made, ACCS administration will contact the bus company and they will mutually make the final decision.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL POLICIES

It is the expectation of Albany Community Charter School that any child sent to school is well enough to participate fully in all curriculum activities, outdoor and indoor. Parents will be notified by the school in the event of illness which develops during the course of the day.

NURSING SERVICES

Albany Community Charter School has two registered nurses assigned to both buildings for the full course of the day. The nurses are responsible for maintaining all health records.

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HEALTH RECORDS

Albany Community Charter School requires a New York State School Health Record for each child enrolled, completed and signed by the child's physician. This document must reflect a complete, up-to-date immunization record. Each family must provide documentation of up to date immunizations within 15 days of the start of school.

DOCTOR'S NOTE

In cases where a child is absent due to health related reasons for five or more days, Albany Community Charter School requires that the parent secure a doctor's note explaining the nature of the absence and documenting the appropriateness of the child's return to school.

MEDICATION

Medicine cannot be administered without the written order of a physician which indicates the medication is for the specific child as well as the specific dosage required by that child. Permission statements are available in the main office. It is the policy of Albany Community Charter School to administer medicines only in situations when it is required.

ACCIDENT AND ILLNESS

In the event that a child becomes ill or injured during the course of the school day, first aid will be administered and the child's parent will be notified as necessary. Albany Community Charter School has a registered nurse assigned by the Albany School District for the morning hours and a Registered Nurse during the afternoon hours.

In the case of a serious accident, an accident report is filled out by the staff person who witnessed the injury and the parent will be notified by phone as well as with a note. If a child must go to the hospital, the Executive Director or Principal along with the nurse will determine whether the situation calls for an ambulance to transport the child, at once, or whether the parent can transport the child. In either case, the parent will be notified immediately of the appropriate plan, if possible. Emergency slips and immunization records will accompany the child to the hospital.

- ❖ **It is imperative that up-to-date parent and emergency telephone numbers are on record at Albany Community Charter School for each of our students.**

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES/CONDITIONS:

Children who have contagious diseases or conditions must stay home until all contagion has passed. Parents are required to inform Albany Community Charter School in the event of such incidence, so that the school can notify other parents of the incidence of the condition. When a student is ill and has symptoms of vomiting, have a fever over 100 degrees, or diarrhea parents are required to keep their child home for 24 hours. **More specifically, a student dismissed for any of the above reasons or with a contagious disease may not return to school or attend extracurricular activities the day of dismissal or the following school day.**

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CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

The Albany Community Charter School staff has received training pertaining to the indicators of child abuse and neglect and follow established procedures for notifying the authorities about any issues of suspected child abuse. All ACCS employees have an official professional responsibility and obligation to make a report whenever such abuse is suspected in order to protect the safety and well being of all students.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Albany Community Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or sexual orientation. Jennifer Brady, Business Manager coordinates compliance with equal protection laws and regulations including Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and Section 5 of MGL Ch. 76.

PARENTS RIGHT-TO-KNOW

In compliance with the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind* Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the parents of children attending a school that receives Title I funding may request, and the school must provide in a timely manner, information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals. This information may include the status of a teacher's state qualification or license, graduate or undergraduate degree, or license, graduate or undergraduate degree, or other qualifications. This information is collected and disseminated in a manner that protects the privacy of individuals. Questions regarding the qualifications of the teachers and paraprofessionals serving your child should be directed to: The Executive Director Mr. S. Neal Currie or Principal Mrs. Andrea Ralph 518-433-1500.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Any individual or group may bring complaints to the board of trustees of Albany Community Charter School. Complaints must be submitted in writing to the President of Board of Trustees, **Mr. Michael Strianese 65 Krank Street Albany, NY 12202**. In order for a complaint to be complete it must be; signed by the person filing the complaint; specify the requirement of law or regulation being violated and the related issue; problem and /or concern; contain information/evidence supporting the complaint and state the nature of the corrective action desired. All complaints should be submitted at least one week prior to the next board meeting.

Complaints submitted later will be addressed at the subsequent meeting of the Board of Trustees. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the board responding at or prior to its next regular public meeting. Every effort will be made to respectfully address each matter to the satisfaction of the individual or group that presented the complaint. The Board, as necessary, may direct the Executive Director or other responsible party to act upon the complaint and report to the board. The board of trustees shall render a determination in writing if appropriate or required within 30 business days.

If a complaint alleges violations of applicable New York state and/or federal law, or the school's charter, the board's response will be provided to the individual or group that presented the complaint, along with a copy of the current State University Charter School Institute's appeals process as published on its website (www.newyorkcharters.org).

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In accordance with Education Law § 2855(4), if after presentation of such a complaint to the board of trustees, the individual or group determines that the board has not adequately addressed the complaint, that individual or group may present the complaint to the school's charter entity, the State University of New York Board of Trustees through the Charter Schools Institute, which shall investigate and respond. If, after presentation of the complaint to the Institute, the individual or group determines that it has not adequately addressed the complaint, they may present the complaint to the Board of Regents through the state Education Department, which shall investigate and respond. The SUNY board of trustees and the Board of Regents shall have the power and the duty to issue appropriate remedial orders to the board of trustees of the charter school under their jurisdiction to effectuate the provisions applicable under Education Law.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO SEE PUBLIC RECORDS – FOIL NOTICE

The amended Freedom of Information Law, which first took effect on January 1, 1978, gives you the right of access to many public records, which may include records of Albany Community Charter School.

Albany Community Charter School has adopted regulations governing when, where and how you can see its public records. These regulations and the Public Officers Law, Article 6, Sections 84-90 are available in the Business Office where such records are stored.

According to these regulations, records may be made available for viewing at:

Albany Community Charter School
65 Krank St. Street
Albany, New York 12202
518-433-1500

Requests for public access to records shall be accepted and records produced during all hours regularly open for business. (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

The following official will help you exercise your right to access:

Jennifer Brady, Director of Finance & Operations
Albany Community Charter School
65 Krank Street
Albany, New York 12202

A written request may be required, but oral requests may be accepted when records are readily available. A response shall be given within 5 business days of receipt granting or denying access to records in whole or in part.

There will not be a fee charged for inspection of record. Copies will be made available for \$.25 per page.

A failure to comply with the time limitations described herein shall constitute a denial of a request that may be appealed. If you are denied access to a record, you may appeal to the following person:

Mr. Raimundo Archibold, Board President
ACCS Board of Trustees
65 Krank Street
Albany, NY 12202

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The complete FOIL regulations are available in the school's main office.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Any individual or group may bring complaints to the board of trustees of the Albany Community Charter School. Complaints must be submitted in writing to the President of Board of Trustees, **Mr. Michael** Raimundo Archibold, **65 Krank Street Albany, NY 12202**. In order for a complaint to be complete it must be; signed by the person filing the complaint; specify the requirement of law or regulation being violated and the related issue; problem and /or concern; contain information or evidence supporting the complaint and state the nature of the corrective action desired. All complaints should be submitted at least one week prior to the next board meeting.

Complaints submitted later will be addressed at the subsequent meeting of the Board of Trustees. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the board responding at or prior to its next regular public meeting. Every effort will be made to respectfully address each matter to the satisfaction of the individual or group that presented the complaint. The Board, as necessary, may direct the principal or other responsible party to act upon the complaint and report to the board. The board of trustees shall render a determination in writing if appropriate or required within 30 business days.

If a complaint alleges violations of applicable New York state and/or federal law, or the school's charter, the board's response will be provided to the individual or group that presented the complaint, along with a copy of the current State University Charter School Institute's appeals process as published on its website (www.newyorkcharters.org).

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I. Opening Meeting Law

The charter school will fully abide by New York's Open Meetings Law (Article 7 of New York Public Officers Law § 100 et seq.). As a public body, every meeting of the charter school's Board of Trustees will be open to the general public, and reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that meetings are held in barrier-free facilities to allow all persons an equal opportunity to attend the meetings. Only in limited instances will the charter school's business be transacted in executive sessions (see below), where closed-door discussions will occur.

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II. Covered Bodies

The charter school's Board of Trustees as well as its committees and subcommittees shall fall under the requirements of the state's Open Meetings Law.

III. Covered Meetings

Any time a quorum of the Board of Directors or one of its committees or subcommittees officially gathers for the purpose of discussing public business, the meetings shall be open to the public, whether or not there is an intent to take action and regardless of the manner in which the gathering may be characterized. Specifically, if there is:

1. a quorum
2. an "official" meeting, meaning the meeting is not by chance or a casual encounter such as may happen at a social gathering; and/or
3. The meeting is held to discuss public business; then the meeting shall be open to the public.

IV. Notice Requirements

A calendar of regular meetings shall be posted at the charter school in the main office. If a meeting is scheduled at least one week in advance, notice of its time and place shall be given to the Albany Times Union and be conspicuously posted in one or more designated public locations at least 72 hours before the meeting.

For meetings scheduled less than one week in advance, notice of the time and place of the meeting shall be given to the Albany Times Union, to the extent practicable, and shall be conspicuously posted in one or more designated public locations at a reasonable time before the meeting. Notice of such a meeting shall be provided as soon as possible after the decision has been made to hold the meeting.

V. Minutes of Meetings

Minutes shall be taken at all open meetings. The minutes shall consist of a record or summary of all motions, proposals, resolutions, and any other matter formally voted upon as well as the vote thereon.

Minutes shall be taken at executive sessions of any action that is taken by formal vote which shall consist of a record or summary of the final determination of such action, the date, and the vote thereon. The summary need not include any matter that is not required to be made public by the Freedom of Information Law.

The minutes of an open meeting shall be available to the public within two weeks from the date of the meeting. Minutes of an executive session shall be available within one week from the date of the executive session. Requests for minutes shall be addressed to Gloria Goolsby, Business Manager, 42 South Dove Street, Albany, NY 12202.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Law (Public Officers Law §§84 st seq.), minutes taken of open meetings or executive sessions need not contain any matter that is not required to be public.

VI. Executive Sessions

Executive sessions, when desired by the Board of the charter school, shall be conducted as part of an open meeting and will not be considered as a separate meeting.

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1. Steps to Enter into an Executive Session

- A. A motion for an executive session shall be made during an open meeting.
- B. The motion shall specifically identify the general area or areas of the subject or subjects to be considered.
- C. The motion to conduct an executive session shall be seconded and carried by a majority voted of the body's total membership.

2. Permissible Subjects for an Executive Session

Executive sessions shall be conducted for the following purposes only:

- A. Matters which will imperil the public safety if disclosed.
- B. Any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer.
- C. Information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed.
- D. Discussions regarding proposed, pending, or current litigation.
- E. 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.
- F. The preparation, grading, or administration of examinations.
- G. The proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisitions of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.

The Board shall be prohibited from voting to appropriate public monies during an executive session. Any collective bargaining negotiations pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law, as such law applies to the charter school's employees, shall be permissible topics for discussion in executive session, and collective bargaining negotiations outside the scope of Article 14 shall not permissible topics for executive sessions discussions.

VII. Attendance

An executive session may be attended by any members of the Board. Any other person(s) may attend if they are authorized by the Board, except those prohibited by federal and state law.

VIII. Exemptions from the Law

The following matters are exempted from the Open Meetings Law and therefore need not be discussed at open meetings:

- 1. Judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings (for example: suspension hearings and employee grievance hearings).
- 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).

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IX. Enforcement

Any aggrieved person has standing to enforce the provisions of the Open Meetings Law by commencing an “Article 78 Proceeding” or an action for declaratory or injunctive relief. In any such action or proceeding, the court is authorized, in its discretion and upon a showing of good cause, to declare any action taken in violation of the Open Meetings Law void in whole or in part. Unintentional failures to fully comply with the notice provisions are not alone grounds for invalidating any action taken at a meeting.

Contact Information

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School-Parent Contract

At Albany Community Charter School parents, teachers and students work together to create a community where student success is a shared responsibility to provide the best possible education for our students. In order to achieve our ambitious goals, we must work together in the following ways.

Pledge by the School

- 1. Timeliness – We will arrive every day by 7:15 A.M. to the elementary school and 7:00 A.M. to the middle school and remain at school until 4:15 P.M.
2. High Quality Education – We will always teach in the best way we know how and will do whatever it takes for all our students to learn.
3. Support and Respect – We promise to appreciate, support, and respect every student and parent/guardian
4. Communication – We promise to communicate regularly with parents about their child’s progress and make ourselves available in person and by phone. We will return parent phone calls within 24 hours.
5. Homework – We will assign productive, worthwhile homework each night to reinforce and support skills and concepts learned in class.
6. Fairness – We will enforce Albany Community Charter School’s rules and policies consistently and fairly. When students are disciplined or when students deserve recognition for their accomplishments, we will inform their parents promptly.
7. Safety – We will always protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Pledge by Parents (and Guardians):

- 1. Timeliness – I will make sure my child arrives at school every day on time (by 7:15 A.M. to the elementary school and by 7:05 A.M. to the middle school). If my child takes the bus, I will ensure that he or she is at the bus stop on time.
2. Support – I will always help my child in the best way I know how and I will do whatever it takes for my child to learn by providing a quiet space for my child to study, checking my child’s homework every night and ensuring that my child reads every night. I will volunteer 2 hours per month in partnership with my child’s school.
3. Communication – I will make myself available to my child, the school, and any concerns they might have. I will return phone calls from the school within 24 hours. If I am asked to attend a meeting regarding my child’s education or behavior, I will make every effort to be there.
4. Uniform – I will make sure my child wears the Albany Community Charter School uniform and follows the dress code. My child will not be allowed to start the day unless he or she is wearing the proper uniform.
5. School Rules – I understand the rules and values of Albany Community Charter School, and I will make sure that my child learns to live up to them. I understand that my child must follow these rules to protect the safety, interests, and rights of all individuals. I also understand that my child may lose privileges or have other disciplinary consequences if my child violates the rules and values, and I will support the school in its efforts to enforce high standards for behavior and citizenship.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

“WHERE PARENTS ARE PARTNERS AND CHILDREN SUCCEED”

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