

ALDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

Bulldogs Have Character



2023-2024

At Alden Middle School, we:

- Respect ourselves, others, and the learning environment.
 - Come each day ready to learn.
- Take responsibility for our choices and actions.
 - Strive for Excellence!

This agenda belongs to:

IMPORTANT MIDDLE SCHOOL PHONE NUMBERS

(716) 937-9116

Building Principal (Mr. Smith) – Ext. 2191

Main Office (Mrs. Zulewski) – 937-9116 Ext. 2191

Attendance/ Guidance Office (Mrs. Wesolowski) – Ext. 3111

School Nurse (Mrs. Doering) – Ext. 3118

Transportation (Mrs. Heckathorn)– Ext. 4500

Web Site: www.aldenschools.org

Welcome to Alden Middle School

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! It is our goal as faculty and staff to provide each student with a safe, healthy environment in which to learn and grow. This handbook is an outline of the Alden Central School District Code of Conduct. Parents and students should view the entire document as posted on our school district website (www.aldenschools.org) under the “Parents” tab.

Student Rights

Our school is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law. We expect all students to be respectful and responsible learners. All students have a right to:

- A safe, healthy, orderly, and civil school environment.
- Participate in all school activities without discrimination
- Present their version of relevant events to school staff.
- Access and receive an explanation of school rules from school staff.

Alden Middle School students, faculty, staff, and visitors follow standards of behavior and conduct that maintain an atmosphere that allows our school to run in an efficient and orderly manner.

There are some specific items in the following pages that are of importance to middle school students and parents. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the additional handbook material.

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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Copyright

Copyright refers to the legal right of an author, artist, musician or the right to distribute his or her intellectual property.

You may:

- Make a photocopy of copyrighted material for the purpose of school or personal research
- Get permission from the author to use images, graphics, or portions of the text

You may not:

- Make additional copies beyond what is required
- Sell your copy
- Change the original material
- Display/perform the material outside the domain of your class assignment

Cheating

Cheating is “to violate rules dishonestly” (Merriam-Webster Incorporated, 2015). This includes *all* forms of schoolwork, from formal assignments (tests, quizzes, projects, laboratories, computer projects, etc.) to nightly homework assignments or class work.

Examples of cheating include:

- Bringing answers into the test room
- Copying from another student
- Sharing answers with another student
- Using unauthorized notes or technology (for example calculators, cell phones, etc.)
- Asking/telling other students what is on a test or quiz
- Changing answers after work has been passed back
- Plagiarism: Taking credit for work that you didn’t do, copying word-for-word (using electronic copy-paste functions, using an online translator), or paraphrasing another’s work.

Students’ work should, at all times, be a reflection of their knowledge and abilities. Sources used should be cited by students according to teacher requirements.

Noncompliance

Failure to comply with the guidelines above will result in a grade of zero for the assignment in question. The student may then be required to complete the assignment again, possibly earning back a percentage of the lost points as prescribed by team or individual teacher policy.

A disciplinary referral may be submitted to the office and may result in actions ranging from detention to suspension.

ATTENDANCE

Student Attendance Policy

The Alden Board of Education has adopted the following ATTENDANCE POLICY. Parents and students are to familiarize themselves with the contents of this policy.

Attendance Incentives

The best incentive that we can offer for students to consistently be present in school is a rigorous and relevant educational program for all students. Teams of teachers will meet regularly to discuss interdisciplinary instruction and the success of all students. Additionally, attendance is noted on each quarterly report card and perfect attendance is recognized at an awards program at the end of the school year. This recognition will include perfect attendance for the year, as well as perfect attendance throughout Middle School.

Homework Policy

Homework assignments should be requested for a student on their second day of absence. Please phone to request missed assignments (Guidance Office, 937-9116 ext. 3111) before 10 a.m. and speak with the attendance officer. Homework assignments can then be picked up after 2:30 p.m., preferably by a parent on that day. Work must be made up by dates assigned by teacher.

In order to accommodate vacation work requests, parents should notify the attendance office as far in advance as possible. Teachers will be notified and every effort will be made to honor the requests. Due dates will be assigned at teacher discretion. Some work may need to be made up upon the student’s return. Students should also check the learning platform used in class and team website for missed assignments.

Intervention

In a collaborative effort on behalf of the middle school principal, attendance officer, school counselors, nurse, and classroom teachers, we will monitor students’ attendance throughout the year. Students who accumulate 10 or more absences per year, will be contacted by the principal, to make the parents aware of the situation and to invest them in the process of addressing the attendance. If the pattern continues, a second letter will be sent, and

the parents will be invited to a conference to address the concerns. There are always unique situations within some families, and these will be taken into consideration when addressing attendance issues. The school administration will work closely with the SRO to ascertain the reasons and possible interventions to improve students' attendance. When the attendance pattern appears to be a result of a parent or guardian's failure to enable the student's regular school attendance, the Principal and/or School Counselor will report the situation as educational neglect to Child Protection Services and/or Erie County Family Court.

Some general guidelines are:

- If a student is absent or is sent home ill, they are not allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities. These include sports, musicals, activity nights, and concerts that take place on that day.
- If absent from school, a student must present a note that includes the date and reason for absence from school along with a parent signature.
- Out of school suspension will not count as an absence, provided that the student attends the alternative learning programs offered by the school.
- Students assigned to in-school or out-of-school suspension are prohibited from attending/participating in any extracurricular activity for that day.
- Field trips and extracurricular activities will not count as absences, providing the student is able to obtain the approval of teachers/administration and satisfactorily makes up the class work within a period of time specified by the teacher (s).

Tardiness

Students are to report to the homeroom by 8:55am each school day. Any student who is not in homeroom at 8:55am is tardy. Students who are tardy will be required to sign in at the attendance office with a note.

Early Dismissals

Students must present to the Attendance Office a written permission statement from their parents or the medical office showing the date, reason, and signature.

Parents or guardians must sign students out of the main office if they are being released at any time other than regular daily dismissal.



BUS TRANSPORTATION

Students who are provided district transportation are to remain on school property upon arrival at the middle school. Students leaving school property without permission will be subject to an in-school suspension.

- The bus driver is your supervisor and is in charge. His/her instructions are to be obeyed.
- Profanity will not be tolerated.
- Smoking/vaping, eating, and drinking are not allowed.
- Remain in your seat. The driver is authorized to assign seats.

Drivers will use a written Bus Conduct Report in cases of severe behavior problems. A copy of this report is sent to the parent, Transportation Supervisor, bus driver and retained in the student's file. Students will receive consequences for unsafe and/or inappropriate behavior while on the bus. Parents will be contacted if a student receives a Bus Conduct Report or is to be suspended from the bus or placed in a detention. We believe that all students have the ability to improve their conduct. We strive to help students develop responsibility for their actions and improve their behavior. After the third bus conduct report, a student will be suspended from riding the bus.

CAFETERIA

Our breakfast program is in the cafeteria. Students who participate in the breakfast program may go directly to the cafeteria at 8:45am



To ensure a pleasant and orderly atmosphere, the following regulations are in effect:

- Faculty and staff supervisors' requests and instructions must be followed promptly and politely.
- Students are expected to clean up the area around their own seat. This is not the job of the monitors.
- Students must report promptly to the cafeteria during their assigned lunch period and sit at their regularly assigned table.

- Remain seated in the cafeteria unless you are excused by the supervisor.

Parents requesting to have lunch with their child must notify the main office at least one day before coming in for lunch. A separate table/location will be provided for parents to have lunch with only their child. Students are **not** permitted to eat lunch with other student's parents/family members.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Students are expected to keep cell phones in their locker during the instructional school day. If a student has a cell phone on their person, the following will be enforced:

1st offense: Warning by principal, student can pick up at end of day.

2nd offense: Confiscated phone and parent must pick up.

3rd offense: Confiscated phone and parent must pick up. Student will receive consequence.

**8th grade students will be allowed to use their phone during lunch time.

CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

To assure a safe, positive, and productive learning environment for all students, rules and regulations require compliance by all. Civil and respectful treatment of teachers, school administrators, school personnel, students and visitors are expected at all times. Noncompliance will require disciplinary action. Actions will be taken if individuals are:

- Disorderly: Use of unreasonable noise, vulgar language or gestures, trespassing, causing disruption, misuse of computer/electronic communication devices, gambling, refusing to comply with any reasonable order of school officials performing their duties.
- Insubordinate: Failure to comply promptly and politely with directions of school personnel, lateness or leaving school without permission and skipping detention.
- Disruptive or willfully incites others to violate this code.
- Violent:
 - Hitting, punching, kicking, and scratching upon another individual.
 - Possession of weapon. A weapon is any object that can cause serious injury or death.
 - Displaying what appears to be a weapon.

- Threatening to use a weapon.
- Intentionally damaging or destroying property, including graffiti or arson.

- Endangering the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others, or lying, stealing, discriminating, harassing, or intimidating others.
- Engaging in any form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, cheating, copying, altering records, assisting another student in the before mentioned.
- Distributing or wearing materials on school grounds or at a school function that are obscene, suggestive, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others or are disruptive to school program.
- In possession of, selling, portraying, or using alcoholic beverages, tobacco, e-cigarettes, lighters, inhalants, non-narcotic toxic substances, and/or drugs/drug paraphernalia is prohibited on school property. As warranted, law enforcement agencies will be notified of code violations that constitute a crime.
- Violating the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
- Violating any federal or state statute, local ordinance, or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

Students in violation of these rules will be subject to immediate disciplinary action. As warranted, law enforcement agencies will be notified of code violations that constitute a crime.

A Discipline Referral Form will be submitted to the principal for discussion with the student. It is hoped that the student will learn from their mistake. For repeated occurrences, further actions such as a parent conference, an after-school detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension will occur. Discipline will be progressive in nature.

CONSEQUENCES

Students on out-of-school suspension are not permitted to be on school grounds. Students on in-school or out-of-school suspension may not participate in any other school activities during the duration of the suspension. This includes extra-curricular activities, club and organization activities, and athletic activities.

Students who have been assigned administrative detention are notified of the situation verbally and

through the use of the Discipline Referral Form. A copy of the report is mailed to the students' parents, another remains in the students' discipline folder, and the final copy is returned to the staff member.

Students must be in good behavioral and academic standing, in order to participate in school sponsored field trips.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Standards and procedures to assure security and safety of students and school personnel have been established. Students are expected to immediately comply with all direction from school personnel. All classrooms are equipped with district-wide Emergency Response Guidelines to address the following situations:

- Fire Drills
- Lockdown
- Lockout
- Shelter in Place
- Evacuation

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students are encouraged to participate in our many club and intramural programs. All participants are reminded that academics take priority over all extra-curricular activities. and may include:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| ABC | Health Club |
| Aerobics Club | Jazz Band |
| Art Club | Robotics Club |
| Bulldog Buddies | Running Club |
| Computer Club | Spanish Club |
| Cooking Club | WOW Club |
| Creativity Club | |

GRADING POLICY

The quarterly average is based on all subjects, English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Spanish, Exploratory, Physical Education, Health, Music, and Coding. Please obtain individual course policies at Open House or through individual teacher contact.

Promotion Policy

In order to be promoted to the next grade, a student must:

- Attain an overall average of 65% or better in all subject areas.

- Students who fail 3 or more of the core academic subjects inclusive of English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, and Spanish shall:
 - Repeat the entire grade or
 - Successfully complete course(s) in a summer program, approved by the building administrator.

Student/Parent Portal

- Students and parents are encouraged to use the portal to access assignments and grades throughout the year.
- Additionally, progress reports and report cards will be posted to the portal.
- Please contact the Guidance Office to request a hardcopy.

GUIDANCE

The guidance program is designed to aid the student in whatever problems may arise whether they are of a social, personal, and/or educational. The teachers will also assist in any way possible.

Program planning, future educational or vocational plans or other problems should be brought to your counselor at any time. The guidance department is also responsible for the administration of all standardized tests.

Telephone and Address Changes

Please update the parent demographics in PowerSchool and notify the school office immediately if there is a change in your address, telephone number, cell phone number or person to contact in an emergency. Parents will be asked to make changes in their parent portal account. This information is very important in case your child becomes ill or injured. Our phone number is 937-9116 ext. 3111

HEALTH OFFICE POLICY

Accidents

Any accidents occurring in the school building or on the school grounds must be reported to the teacher in charge of the activity and to the school nurse. A report will be made and signed by the teacher in charge of the student. Parents will be notified immediately upon recommendation of the nurse and child will be referred to his/her doctor.



Illness in School

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she **MUST** obtain a pass from the classroom teacher and report to the school nurse. Students are not to go home without permission from the nurse. The nurse will provide a re-admit slip for the class missed while in the health office. If the nurse is unavailable, a building administrator should be consulted.

Medical Notes

When a student is absent due to medical reasons (ex. E.R. visit or surgery), a note from the physician should be submitted to the school nurse upon the student's return to school. This information should include the date(s) the student was under his/her care. The note should also indicate the student is able to return to school and any restrictions should be specified (ex. participation in sports or P.E.). A note from the physician is required if an absence is for five (5) or more days. The absence will be considered unexcused unless a physician's note is submitted within three (3) days of the student's return.

Returning to School

Students home ill or sent home from school ill must be without fever (100°F or higher), vomiting, or diarrhea for a full 24 hours before returning to school. Students must present a written note upon return indicating the date the student was absent and the reason. This note must be signed by a parent.

Medication during School

NYS regulations require new medication orders for medication administration each school year. This applies to both prescription and non-prescription medications (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, cough drops, and vitamins).

New York State Law requires that:

New medication forms for both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, cough drops, and vitamins) must be signed by the provider and parent annually. Orders are good for one year from the date they are written.

- The parent must sign the medication permission form.
- Medication must remain in the properly labeled pharmacy or original OTC container.
- Parents or guardians must personally deliver all medication to the school health office (unless a self-carry order form is signed by **parent and physician**).

- If your child's provider has determined that your child may self-carry and self-administer their medication, please have your healthcare provider complete the appropriate portion of the medication form which requires provider consent. Parent signature is also required.
- For the safety of all students the sharing of **ANY** medication (prescription or OTC) is strictly prohibited and will result in the appropriate discipline.

LOCKERS

Students will be assigned lockers by the homeroom teachers. Lockers must remain closed and locked at all times. Alden Middle School is not responsible for lost or stolen items. No items may be left outside of lockers on the floor in the hallway.

It is the student's responsibility to keep the locker neat and clean. Inappropriate material should not be in lockers nor should there be any writing on the locker. Students may not use their own locks. The locker in which you are assigned remains the property of the school. It may be opened and examined at any time for any reasonable purpose, without prior notice to students and without their consent.

LOST AND FOUND

Any found articles should be turned over to the office. Anyone wishing to claim lost articles can do so by asking the secretary in the office

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Every student is required to take physical education. The only exceptions are those students who have received a physician's excuse, which states the specific reason for exclusion, sickness and/or injury. The student should report to the school nurse with the excuse prior to his/her physical education class. Students will be expected to complete written work instead of class. Students must be prepared for physical education classes by wearing appropriate clothing. Clothing and other equipment should be taken home at least once a week to be washed. No jewelry may be worn during class.



A student will be excused from physical education, for a piercing, for 4 weeks only. This may occur only once during the school year and must be accompanied by a doctor's note. The student will be expected to complete a written project.

Swimming is part of the regular physical education program. Regulations are established and must be adhered to by all students.

REGULATIONS IN AND ABOUT THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

The school building will be opened to students at 8:45am. We should all take pride in our school building and help to maintain it.

- Electronic devices (such as cell phones, iPods, Airpods, electronic games, laser pointers) found in the possession of pupils in school may be retained in the office until a time that parents claim them. These items should remain locked up in assigned school lockers during the school day.
- Bookbags must be stored in lockers and may not be carried to classrooms. Computer bags will be allowed in classrooms.
- Three minutes are allowed for passing between classes. Experience has shown that this is ample time and provides for students to stop at lockers and the lavatory.
- Students should arrive at school on time.
- Students should not **arrive** early unless they are meeting with a specific teacher. Please drop off children at the Park Street entrance.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

All announcements concerning the closing of school because of bad weather will be made over radio station WBEN which is the radio station authorized by this school to make such announcements. TV stations 2, 4 and 7 also post these announcements. Announcements will also be posted on the District Website. Parents can also sign up for text alerts under the "Parents" tab on the district homepage.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of the Alden Central School District to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment and sexual violence. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee of the Alden Central School District to harass a student or an employee through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee of the Alden Central School District to be sexually violent to a student or employee.

Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment shall report all incidents of such conduct to a staff member. All such reports will be held in strictest confidence.

SPORTS (MODIFIED - 7th & 8th Grade)

Students are encouraged to participate in our interscholastic sports programs. Interested students should attend pre-season meetings as announced/posted by the coaching staff. Alden Central School offers the following modified sports for 7th & 8th grade students:

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>
Girls Volleyball	Boys/Girls Swimming	Boys/Girls Track & Field
Football		
Boys/Girls Cross Country	Boys/Girls Basketball	Baseball Softball
Boys/Girls Soccer		

All participants of a school-wide event are expected to participate in a positive manner. Persons using vulgar language, rowdy behavior, and negative cheers, will be asked to leave, and may not be admitted to future athletic events upon administrative discretion.

Alden Central School's Sportsmanship Pledge

Welcome to Alden Middle School, where sportsmanship is an expectation.

So please... Let the players play. Let the cheerleaders cheer.

Let the coaches coach. Let the officials officiate.

Let the spectators be positive.

Bulldog Pride!

Eligibility Policy

In order to be eligible for sports teams, as well as the school musical, students must be academically eligible. If a student is failing 2 or more subjects,

they will be placed on the list of ineligible students at the beginning of the next marking period.

- When a student is ineligible, he or she must report to the guidance office on Monday morning to receive the “Return to Eligibility” form.
- Students must get the form signed by all his or her teachers in order to participate on the team or in the play.
- If students have each teacher sign the form, they will be allowed to compete with the team in games or matches (or in the production in the case of the play).
- If they do not get the form signed, students will still participate in practices or rehearsals, however, they will not be allowed to play in games or matches (or perform in the play) **for that week only.**
- Students must have the form signed each week, even if there is not a game or match that week.
- Students will remain on the ineligibility list until the end of the marking period.
- Students participating in a fall sport, will be ineligible if they failed 2 or more subjects for the previous 4th quarter, if they were retained from the previous year, or if they attended summer school in order to pass on to the next grade.



STUDENT DRESS

Clothing that is inappropriate or distracting to the learning environment is unacceptable at any time. Students apparel must be safe, appropriate, and not present health or safety hazard to the students or others in school.

A student's dress, grooming and appearance shall:

- Include proper footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
- Ensure that undergarments are completely covered with outerwear.
- Not include items that are vulgar, sexually explicit, obscene, and libelous or that put down others based on race, color, weight, religion or religious beliefs, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic group, political affiliation or disability.
- Not include headwear except for school sanctioned activities and medical or

religious purposes. Hats may be worn on Fridays; however, teachers/staff may ask students to remove hats while in their classroom.

- Hoods must always be worn down.
- Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco products, banned products, illegal drugs, counterfeit and designer drugs, or paraphernalia for the use of such drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

Students in violation of any of the above regulations will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the building principal. Parents will be notified of any violation.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

The building principal or his or her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors to the schools:

- Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the facility will be considered a visitor.
- All visitors to the school must report to the main office upon arrival and provide a government-issued photo ID. They will be required to sign the visitor's log and will be issued a visitor's identification badge, which must be visibly worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, authorized by the administrator, are not required to sign in.
- Visitors should not expect teachers to take time to discuss individual matters, unless pre-arranged.
- Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or his or her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The proper authority may be called if the situation warrants.
- All visitors are to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in the district code of conduct.

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment. It is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school

functions. For purposes of this section of the code, “public” shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function including students, teachers, and district personnel. The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this code are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. This district recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the district. The purpose of this code is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

NOTE:

The content of this handbook representing the school district policy is subject to change by action taken by the Alden Board of Education.

Alden Middle School Library's Online Resources

Database	Username	Password
BrainPOP	aldencsd	aldencsd
Britannica School	No username/password needed for geolocation	
FactCite		
Infobase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferguson's Career Guidance Learn 360 World Almanac Kids 	alden-ms	bulldogs
NoodleTools (Citation Generator)	See Ms. DiSalvo to create an account	
NOVELNY/Gale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erie 1 E-books Gale in Context Middle School OneFile Opposing Viewpoints More! 	No username/password needed for geolocation	
Proquest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CultureGrams SIRS Issues Researcher 	NY6507	14004
Teaching Books	erie1SLS	erie1SLS
Rosen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teen Health & Wellness Digital Literacy 7-12 	aldenms	bulldogs

Bibliography Format: See NoodleTools for more information.

Notes

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ALDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

Bulldogs Have Character



2023-2024

At Alden Middle School, we:

- Respect ourselves, others, and the learning environment.
- Come each day ready to learn.
- Take responsibility for our choices and actions.
- Strive for Excellence!

This handbook includes important and helpful information about school operation, procedures, and policies. Please read and discuss the contents with your child. To ensure you have received your 2023-2024 handbook and covered it with your child, we ask that you sign this page.

We have read and discussed the 2023-2024 Student Handbook

Date: _____

Grade: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____