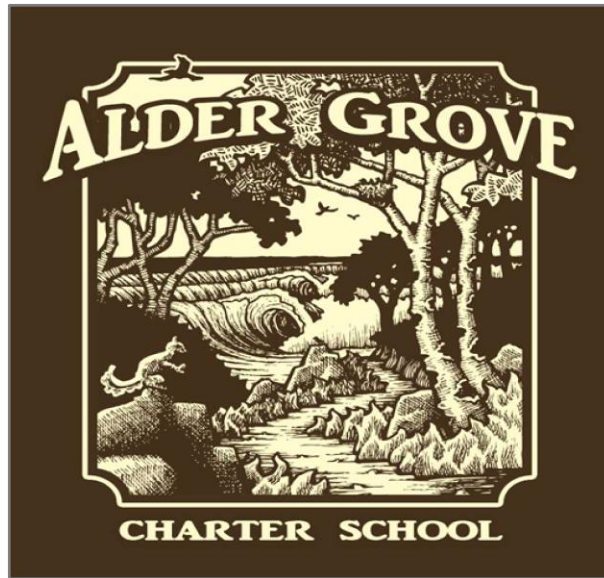


Parent Handbook



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

OUR PURPOSE

Alder Grove Charter School is an independent study charter school that provides public education for parents of students who choose to educate their children in the home environment. We believe individual differences and the uniqueness of each child are to be supported and celebrated.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Alder Grove Charter School
714 F Street
Eureka, CA 95501

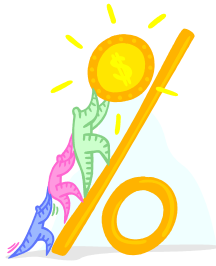
Phone: 707-268-0854

Fax: 707-268-0813

www.aldergrovecharter.org

ADMINISTRATION

Tim Warner
Administrator
tim.warner@aldergrovecharter.org



OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

Our mission is to support you as you make choices regarding your child's education. In order to do this, we provide you with a Credentialed Teacher (CT), who is your primary connection to the school and your first source of information. A CT must meet face-to-face with the student and parent at least once every 10 school days.

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

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

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

We administer all California mandated tests. These tests are state and federally mandated and essential for the continued operation of our school.

Alder Grove students will also take school-wide standards based assessments twice each school year.

A monthly newsletter will be provided by mail or email to all Alder Grove families. It is also available on the school website. It is a valuable source of current information regarding the school.

A NOTE ABOUT OUR SCHOOL AND VOLUNTEERING

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

The requirements placed on public schools by local, state and federal governments are monumental. Without conscientious and reliable volunteers, a public school cannot exist. Without volunteers filling positions, Alder Grove cannot continue the excellent service it provides to students and families.

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

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



ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Parents are required to attend a mandatory school orientation prior to their student(s) being enrolled.

Enrolling students will be assigned a Credentialed Teacher (CT) who will be their main liaison with the school and will help the family complete all necessary paperwork for enrollment.

During the initial meeting, the CT and parent will discuss the role of the CT in the education of the students. Parents are able to take full responsibility for choosing curriculum, and giving assignments and instruction to their students. As long as the students are making adequate progress as determined by the CT, he or she will serve more as a facilitator. The parent may also choose to have the CT be responsible for choosing curriculum and giving assignments and instruction. These responsibilities may also be divided in any number of ways. For example, the CT chooses curriculum for some subjects and the parent chooses for others.

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

All students will be assessed upon enrollment. Students that are performing below grade level on initial assessments or prior year state-mandated assessments will be required to develop an Academic Support Plan with their CT. Academic Support will be required for all low performing students. Once the plan is made and signed, the student, parent and CT will be expected to fulfill their obligations. Failure to do so by the parent, student or CT will result in an intervention (see Intervention Procedure below).

Students entering TK / Kindergarten, or students enrolling in a California public school for the first time are required by California law to provide the following:

- A copy of the student's Birth Certificate
- An up-to-date Immunization Record or signed medical waiver for students grades TK, K, 1st, 7th, and 8th.
- A Report of Health Examination for School Entry Form for students never before enrolled in a CA public school regardless of grade.
- An Oral Health Assessment Form by May 31st of the students 1st year in CA public school regardless of grade.

INTERVENTION PROCEDURE

If a student is not fulfilling the requirements as specified in the Master Agreement or Academic Support Plan, an intervention with the student, CT, parent(s) and director will be held. Attendance is generated by the amount of work a student completes. If, in the professional opinion of the CT, the student is not completing enough work, has missed meetings or academic support classes, the student could be considered truant and an intervention meeting will be held. The CT will contact the director to schedule an intervention and a letter will be sent to the parent. If the parent and student contact the CT and resolve the problem upon receipt of the letter, no intervention will be held.

ON-CAMPUS CLASS DISCIPLINE POLICY

On-campus classes at Alder Grove are optional. Students should come with an attitude of readiness and a willingness to participate. If a student refuses to cooperate or otherwise disturbs the learning environment for others, the parent may be called to pick up the child.

- Students should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before class begins and should be picked up when class is over. Students who are picked up more than 10 minutes late will not be monitored.
- Parents should pick up their students inside the building where the students will be waiting.
- Parents and other visitors (including un-enrolled students) should not be in the building until classes are over, except to volunteer or observe classes with teacher permission.

In order to ensure a safe, friendly, and educational environment for all of our students, these guidelines should be followed:

- Students will treat each other and adults respectfully.
- There will be no bullying allowed.
- Students will use appropriate language for a classroom environment.
- Students will not engage in rough play that may endanger other students.
- Students will not engage in sexual harassment. Verbal, visual, or physical conduct that includes threats, pressure, or demands will not be allowed.
- Students will not engage in behavior that damages or has the potential to damage property.

Teachers and Administration will determine an appropriate consequence if a student disregards these expectations. Possible outcomes include:

- Meeting with student and/or parent.
- Developing a specific behavior plan.
- Suspending the privilege of attending on-campus classes.

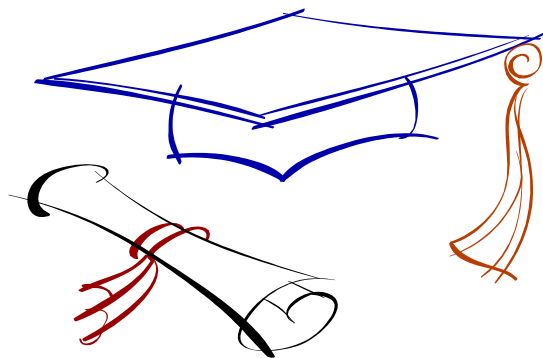
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

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

Students will be provided with assistance to tailor the requirements according to meet their individual needs and abilities. Students must demonstrate proficiency in reading comprehension, writing and mathematics. Those students not proficient will be required to attend Academic Support classes.

A College and Career Counselor is available on-campus to answer any questions parents and students have. Information regarding SATs, college searches, and scholarship information can be found at: www.collegeboard.org and www.aldergrovecharter.org/college.php

In addition to the Alder Grove graduation requirements, students must complete all other state and local mandated requirements.



GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (continued)

Subject Area	Alder Grove Diploma Requirements	Credits
English	Four years	40
Math	Two years including Algebra 1	20
Social Science	Three years including: one year World History, one year US History, half year Economics and half year US Government/Civics	30
Science	Two years including Biological and Physical Sciences.	20
Foreign Language OR	One year of either Foreign Language or Visual and Performing Arts.	10 OR
Visual and Performing Arts	One year of either Foreign Language or Visual and Performing Arts.	10
Other requirements	Half year Health Half year Career/College Readiness Two Years Physical Education	5 5 20
Electives	70 credits	70
Total	220 credits	220 credits

CSU & UC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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

EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Alder Grove Charter School Graduates are:

Aware and confident in their individual abilities, interests and talents and are able to use these individual interests, abilities and talents to successfully transition to the work force or higher education.

Lifelong Learners who meet or exceed California graduation requirements, develop and utilize study and research skills, and demonstrate proficiency in state content standards.

Digital technology users who have the ability to critically evaluate information and use technological tools to enhance their personal and career life.

Effective problem solvers/critical thinkers who are able to research, identify, access and organize data effectively to arrive at informed conclusions and understand and apply principles of consumer economics

Ready to transition to career or college, with an idea of how to learn what they need in order to have a happy, fulfilling life.



INSTRUCTIONAL FUNDS POLICY

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

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

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

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

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

The following purchases are acceptable:

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

Enough basic raw materials (not top-of-the-line) for learning basic or new course skills in one learning record documented educational project, e.g. paint, beads, yarn: enough for one project. Exception: no food purchases allowed. Ink cartridges are limited to 1 per student per semester and reams of paper are limited to 2 reams per student per semester. Your CT is responsible for monitoring the quantities of items purchased.

Basic equipment (not top-of-the-line) for documented learning as needed by student, e.g. sewing machine (if available), microscope, math manipulatives, camera.

The following types of items are unacceptable:

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

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

- Yesterday's Classics Publisher
- Rainbow Resource Center
- Beautiful Feet Books
- Sonlight Curriculum
- Home Science Tools
- Love to Learn
- Winter Promise
- Timberdoodle
- Institute for Excellence in Writing
- Learning Things
- In the Hands of a Child
- Nature's Workshop Plus

The following types of items are unacceptable:

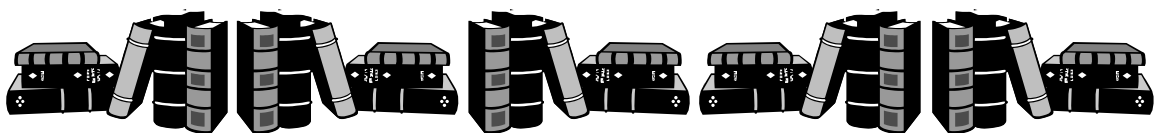
- Religious materials of any type, e.g. books, CD ROMs, CDs, DVDs, curriculum, posters, etc.

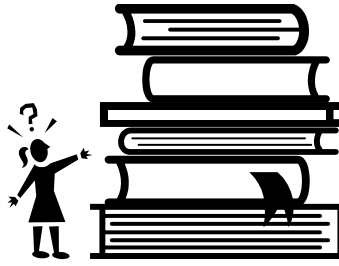
The following curriculum is religious based and unacceptable to order:

- Bob Jones University
- Abeka
- Alpha Omega
- Horizon math (grade 3+) and Health
- Switched on Schoolhouse CD-Roms
- Apologia
- D.I.V.E. CD's (Saxon math support)
- Rod and Staff
- Memoria Press
- My Father's World
- Homeschool in the Woods
- Christian Liberty Press
- Pathway Publishers
- Common Sense Press
- Bright Ideas Press
- Moody Publishers
- Logos School
- Veritas Press
- C.P.R Publishing
- LLATL= Learning Language Arts Through Literature
- Christian Logic (publisher)
- Reading to Learn Series (Christian Light Edu.)

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

- Poisons
- Knives/Razor Blades/ X-acto Knives
- Bows and Arrows
- Darts
- Trampolines
- Swimming Pools
- Rocket Engines
- Weapons
- Power Tools / Wood Burning Equipment/ Carving Tools
- Welding Equipment





Frequently Asked Questions

What is Alder Grove Charter School?

Alder Grove Charter School is a public school, funded through California state educational funds. There is no charge for our school program.

How is Alder Grove different from other public schools?

The primary goal of our school is to maximize parent choice in the education of your own child. We are a personalized learning school, which means we allow for a wide variety of instructional approaches, learning styles, abilities, and interests that are difficult to accommodate in a traditional setting. Our students are primarily taught by their parents in their own home. We also offer a range of individualized, independent study options for students needing more teacher support; for example, if a student is not performing at grade level, they can utilize our math lab and writing labs and participate in our reading intervention program.

How do I know what to teach my child?

We help parents tailor the learning environment to their child, creating a truly personalized program. We provide parents with a credentialed teacher (CT) to guide and assist them with curriculum choices and strategies, while allowing parents to choose instructional material that reflects their attitudes, values, and beliefs.

What if I have a problem?

Your CT is there to guide you and provide assistance every step of the way. Every CT is available through email or by phone. You will meet with him or her at minimum every 10 school days and at maximum one hour each week to discuss your child's progress and any difficulties you may be experiencing. If you think that your child would benefit from additional one-on-one tutoring talk to your CT.

Where do I get curriculum?

Students are allotted educational resource funds which are managed by your CT. Together, you and your CT will determine how to best use these funds for your child's education. Funds may be used for curriculum, books and school supplies, classes at the learning center, classes with community vendors, private tutoring and field trips. Your CT will explain all the different options available to you. All materials remain the property of Alder Grove and must be returned if you transfer to another school.

How do I enroll my child?

The new student orientation is the first step in enrolling. You can sign up for one of two sessions offered every week. After this session, you will be assigned a teacher who will contact you to set up an enrollment meeting.

I'm not ready to enroll, but I need more information.

Our website, www.aldergrovecharter.org, has lots of information to help you decide if our school is a good fit for you and your family. If you have further questions, or would just like to speak to one of our teachers to find out if our school is right for your child, please call us at 707-268-0854.

What are your school's philosophies and goals in educating my child?

The Alder Grove Charter School will enable students to become competent, productive, literate, self-motivated, lifelong learners by providing students and parents the opportunity to design a customized curriculum that is relevant, takes learning styles into consideration, embraces the students' interests and addresses the California State Standards. This approach is known as Personalized Learning. Parents will be assisted, guided, directed and encouraged to be the finest teachers for their children. The school will provide unique enrichment opportunities and diverse resources, including technology, to students so they may develop their academic potential and discover and pursue their unique interests, talents, and passions in life.

Am I, as a parent, solely responsible for my child's education?

No. When you agree to enroll your child in our charter school, you accept responsibility for your child's education, and you become the primary facilitator in your child's learning program. However, you are not solely responsible for facilitating your child's educational program. You and your CT work in partnership to establish the educational opportunities for your child along with having access to the supporting services, staff, and resources of your charter school.

Is there a particular type of curriculum we are required to use?

No. There is no required curriculum. Students are given great latitude in what they learn, as long as they demonstrate adequate and appropriate progress. You may choose from a wide variety of curricula to fit your child's needs. For high school students who are college bound, there will be some specific course work required by most colleges, with the exception being our California community colleges.

Do you offer any on-campus classes?

Yes, we offer the following voluntary on-campus courses: enrichment classes for our K-5 students, math and science classes for middle school students, and core subject courses are offered for high school students. In addition we offer courses in performing arts. On-campus courses are voluntary and not required.

Do you offer any online classes?

Yes. Students can take online classes through BYU, K12, CyberHish, and Scout (many a-g approved). There are also numerous free, online educational websites, including Khan Academy, of which many students take advantage.

Can my high school student take classes at College of the Redwoods?

Yes. We offer concurrent enrollment at CR. We pay for all textbooks and classroom materials. In many cases, based on family income, tuition is waived. However, if your student does not qualify for a tuition waiver, then Alder Grove will pay for CR classes out of your student's budget. Students are limited to 11 credits a semester at CR and must complete at least 20 high school credits with Alder Grove per semester as well.

Do you offer field trips?

Alder Grove offers frequent field trips based on grade levels. We tour local farms, businesses and factories. We attend theatrical and musical shows through HSU Center Arts. We have been kayaking, zip lining, river rafting, bowling, and rock climbing. In addition science, nature, and history excursions are planned throughout the year. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for transportation to and from field trip locations.

Are students required to take standardized tests? If so, at what grade levels?

Yes. According to California state law our public charter school must administer all state-mandated tests. All students in grades 3-8 and 11 will take the Smarter Balanced online assessment in Math and Language Arts. Students in grades 5, 8, and 10 will take a Science test (CAST). Students in grades 5, 7, and 9 participate in a PE test each spring.

When during the school year are the standardized tests given?

The tests are generally administered during the spring. However, the specific test dates will vary by exam and may not be established until sometime during the current school year. Please check with your CT or our website for the specific dates and times assigned for your region.

Are students required to be graded on their work and/or have report cards?

School policy requires grades for students grades 7-12 at the end of each semester. Traditional institutions such as other high schools, colleges, universities, service branches, etc. may require a transcript for admission. High School report cards are created by the CT. Be aware that there is a difference between transcripts and report cards. A report card is the CT's report of grades. A transcript is an official document, embossed with the school stamp, which is issued by the charter school office. It shows all attempted high school courses, grades and credits awarded, and is accepted as an official record by other institutions. Our charter school does not provide transcripts for kindergarten through eighth grade students. Report cards for K-6 are standards aligned and measure growth toward standards, as opposed to letter grades.

Who does the grading and upon what is it based?

The CTs are responsible for evaluating your child's progress toward the state standards. Their professional evaluation is based upon your child making adequate and appropriate progress. Your recommendations for grades will be considered by the CT.

Are there other ways besides grades that my child's work is evaluated and documented?

Yes. While all students will achieve the required standards by graduation, not all will progress at the same rate. Evaluation of that progress is based on individual abilities, interest, and talents. Methods by which student progress is assessed will be through a variety of the following: CT monthly review of all work; parent facilitator and CT observation; current state mandated assessment tool; norm and criterion referenced tests; and student demonstrations, grades, and work samples.

Is my child expected to perform as well academically as in a traditional public school?

Yes. One of the goals of establishing charter schools as an alternative to traditional public education is to demonstrate that students will perform at least as well, if not better, than students in traditional California public schools. For our charter school to continue operating we must demonstrate above average academic performance to the state of California.

Is my child expected to learn and progress academically at the same rate as other students in your school?

No. One of the wonderful advantages of a charter school is the flexibility to facilitate learning programs that are tailored to each individual student's needs and the recognition that students learn both by different styles and at different paces. While there is great latitude in what students learn, the expectation is for students to continually engage in the learning process.

I want my child to have a home-based education, but I'm not equipped to teach her all of the subjects she needs. How can your program help me?

We do not expect the parent to be the only teacher. Many of our educational alternatives provide for others to teach your child. It is the parent's decision how much of the teaching he/she will do. Our independent study option gives the CT most of the responsibility for facilitating and monitoring your child's learning program, although it is your responsibility to provide a quiet place to work and to monitor work each day. If you choose this option, the instructor will be responsible for giving assignments and correcting work, in addition to keeping a record of your child's learning. Our web site and curriculum guides have curriculum suggestions, and there are parent meetings scheduled featuring speakers with information to help you with your homeschooling. On-campus small group instruction, math labs, and tutors are also available. Your CT can answer any questions that you may have regarding additional assistance with instruction.

How do you keep track of my child's attendance?

Your CT will give you a monthly attendance record to keep in your home on which to record daily attendance. He/she will collect the attendance record each learning period.

Do I have to fill in my child's monthly attendance record every day or can I fill it in all at once?

Yes, by California State law you must fill in your child's monthly attendance record every day. It should include one activity or assignment your child completed that day using a past tense verb. For example: Completed all written problems in lesson 3 of math text.

How long must my child be in school each day?

As a charter school we are held accountable for the performance or achievement of our students (performance-based) rather than traditional methods of attendance accounting based on "seat time." Therefore, there is no time requirement, just the expectation that the student continue to learn and progress daily. You are free to structure your child's learning in a way that best suits his/her learning style and individual needs. We have found that usually 3-6 hours per day of time is usually sufficient to meet all assignment requirements.

If I have specific questions about your educational expectations, who can I contact?

Your CT is most qualified to answer the majority of your questions regarding educational expectations and responsibilities.