



Student/Family Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

Alongside Academy's mission is to provide apprentice-style and Authentic Learning opportunities that promote:

- Connection
- Wonder
- Stewardship
- Hands-on-Learning
- Learning from our mistakes/Trial and Error
- Active Participation
- Competence and Confidence

HANDBOOK PURPOSE

This handbook is designed to provide necessary information for you, the student. The information found in this book explains many of the policies and procedures used in our school. All students are responsible for knowing the contents of this handbook and for sharing it with their parents. If you have questions, please reach out to a member of the Alongside Academy staff. We are excited to partner with you in your education, and hope you have a great year!

A. OVERVIEW:

HSE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS:

Homeschool enrichment programs are supplemental programs for your child's educational and social needs. These programs are designed to work in conjunction with homeschooling,

and offer children an opportunity to interact with others near their age. We offer a variety of activities and classes here at Alongside Academy in order to provide these opportunities.

A child may only be enrolled in one homeschool enrichment program, and only if not also enrolled in a full-time public school. Under Colorado law, in order to home school, a notification of intent to homeschool must be provided to a school district office (not CDE). A form to declare homeschooling for your child may be found [here](#). It must be submitted when enrolling your child in any of these homeschool enrichment programs. Guidance on the notice and other applicable requirements are included at the following web address:
<https://www.edreenvisioned.org/Page/381>

PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL: We never hope to see a student withdraw from the program, but understand there are circumstances when this might occur. To withdraw a student the following must be taken.

- (1) Parent or guardian of the student must contact a member of the Alongside Academy's administrative team by email or written notice that they intend to unenroll from the program, and the last day of class the student intends to attend.

B. FEES AND DEPOSITS:

1. **EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS:** Equipment and materials are furnished by Alongside Academy. Any intentional damage will be subject to a fine assessed by the administration.

2. **TUITION FEES:** All instruction, materials, equipment, and take-home supplies will be provided by Alongside Academy at no additional cost to the students or families. This is a completely tuition free program which also supplies everything necessary for completion of each activity and class.

*ALL FEES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE ANNUALLY.

C. REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS:

Alongside Academy is primarily a homeschool enrichment program. As such, we support the parent or guardian as the primary educator and do not assign grades or progress reports. If the primary educator would like to assign a grade they may consult with their student's instructor for a recommendation.

D. ATTENDANCE

1. **ABSENCES:** An absence is defined as not being present for 15 or more minutes, regardless of when in the school day it occurs. Students are expected to attend as many scheduled class hours as possible. However, it is understandable that students may miss classes for various reasons. Regardless of circumstances, students may not miss more than 3 consecutive scheduled class periods at any time. If 4 or more consecutive absences occur, a student's parent/guardian must consult with the administrative team to decide what course of action is needed.

2. **EXCUSED ABSENCES:** A student shall be coded with an excused absence from class for the following reasons when prior notice is provided to the instructor:
(1) Students can be excused by their parent/guardian, for any reason, for up to four consecutive class days a year.

a. Reasons for excused absences include, but are not limited to: the observance of religious holidays consistent with the student's creed or belief, holidays and family events, personal family or mental health days, vacations, and so forth.

b. Advanced notice to the course instructor is appreciated so that reservations and classroom supplies can be accounted for as accurately as possible.

E. SCHOOL AND FACILITY CLOSURES:

Inclement weather, illness, district closures, and facility closures can result in a course being unable to take place as outlined in the schedule. Course directors or staff members will make every effort to communicate any unexpected closures in as timely a manner as possible. Careful consideration is given by staff before any loss of school time is incurred for any reason, which is not serious or in the nature of an emergency. Efforts will be made to make up any missed class time, but the make-up days may be outside of usual classroom times. We ask that families make every effort to attend these alternate meeting times.

F. PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION:

The faculty and administration want you to make friends, but ask that you use good judgment in your behavior. Touching should not occur inside a normally

scheduled class period. Hand-holding, sitting on laps or other physical displays of affection are not appropriate at school.

G. DRESS/APPEARANCE:

The student dress guidelines of Alongside Academy shall contribute to the health and safety of the individual, promote a positive educational environment, and not disrupt the educational activities and processes of the program. These standards of dress apply to all students in the program unless a specific exemption is granted. Most courses follow this basic dress code: Comfortably fitting and not loose shirt, pants, knee-length dresses, skirts or shorts, a hat or other form of sun protection, sunglasses are not required but encouraged, a light to heavy outdoor jacket and closed-toe shoes. This code is strictly for the safety and comfort of each student because of the outdoor and active nature of Alongside Academy's classroom. Parents are encouraged to reach out to the Alongside Academy's administration if they have any questions or concerns or would like to request deviation from this dress code.

1. **SHOES:** Shoes shall be worn at all times and should be safe for the school environment. Closed-toe shoes are required. The following shoes are not acceptable for any student: cleated shoes or shoes with wheels.
2. **DISPLAYS:** Gang paraphernalia, garments and/or jewelry, tattoos, or other insignias, which display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, alcohol, tobacco-related wording/graphics or may tend to provoke violence or disruption in class shall not be worn.
3. **OFFENSIVE WORDING/IMAGERY:** Clothing must not state, imply, or depict hate speech or imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected class.
4. **ACCESSORIES:** Clothing and accessories that endanger students or staff shall not be worn. This includes wearing Leatherman's or pocket knives. Although this is an outdoor classroom, Alongside Academy will provide all equipment necessary to complete each day's activities without the assistance of personal tools from home.
5. **REPRESENTATION:** Alongside Academy encourages students to dress in a manner that reflects positively on themselves and the program when on outings, as there are connections with possible mentors and future employers during these events.

Alongside Academy Course Directors shall use these guidelines as a minimum standard, and reserves the right to determine what appropriate dress is, and to enforce additional dress codes for their classrooms.

H. STUDENT USE OF TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION AND/OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Alongside Academy instructors have limited time to serve our students, and we strive to make the best use of this time. The unnecessary use of communication devices can limit this time even further. Alongside Academy recognizes the legitimate safety purpose that students and parents have in retaining cellular phones and other two-way communication devices during class. Alongside Academy also recognizes the legitimate education right that students have to learn without distraction or disruption from the use of two-way devices or other personal electronic equipment. As such, cell phones and personal music devices such as iPods may only be used before and after class. Use of these devices is prohibited in the classroom and during class time (devices must be turned off and be out of sight during class time), except at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to abide by these guidelines may result in Alongside Academy administration meeting with the parents of the student to determine the next best course of action.

1. **DISCIPLINARY ACTION:** The inappropriate use of personal cell phones or other digital devices by students during the school day are subject to disciplinary action:

(1) 1st Offense - Cell phone is confiscated by the instructors and returned to the student at the end of the class. Parent is notified by the teacher. Infractions will be documented by the course director.

(2) 2nd offense - Cell phone is confiscated and parents/guardians must retrieve the cell phone directly from instructors. Infraction notices will be written by the course director and sent to their supervisor.

(3) 3rd Offense – Cell phone is confiscated and parents/guardians are required to pick up the phone. Administrative action will be taken. This will be considered a school rules violation, which could result in unenrollment from the program.

Violations managed in the classroom environment by instructors will be documented as a minor offense. When actions taken by the instructors have failed or the rule of infraction is of a serious nature, the incident will be reported as a major offense to an administrator for investigation and action. The consequences of the infraction will depend upon the severity of the offense and the previous discipline record of the student.

2. **PRIVACY:** Students may not share or post personal information about or images of any other student or staff members without permission from that student or staff member. The inappropriate use of cameras or electronic communication devices includes but is not limited to the following examples. Cameras or electronic communication devices shall not be used:

(1) in areas where one would reasonably expect privacy, i.e., bathroom, etc.

(2) To engage in cyberbullying – placing cell phone calls or sending text messages that ridicule, threaten or harass other students, staff members or school employees.

3. FAILURE TO FORFEIT: Failure to forfeit an electronic device at the request of an administrator or faculty member will be treated as gross insubordination, and could result in unenrollment from the program.

I. VISITORS:

During school class hours, the front door of the home may be locked and some facilities will require visitors to enter through the side gate. School policy at this time is that there will be no student visitors permitted unless prior approval has been given by both course directors and administrative staff. **Parents and Guardians of students are not considered visitors and are allowed to come and go from the classroom at any time without prior notice or permission.** Other adult visitors will be expected to have a valid reason for entering the facility with prior administrative approval and may be asked to bring along a photo I.D. to gain access into some facilities.

J. LUNCHES:

1. LEAVING THE FACILITY: It is strongly recommended that all students stay and eat lunch at the facility. If a student leaves the facility for lunches for any reason, the instructor must be notified and can deny permission to leave if they deem a situation unsafe, or if it affects the student's ability to return to the class on time. Course instructors retain the right to revoke a student's privilege to leave campus for lunch at any time.

2. PROVIDE MEALS: During most scheduled classes, lunches are not provided for students, and students are encouraged to bring adequate food, snacks, and water for the day. There are on occasion times when food will be supplied. Efforts will be made to notify students of this before the scheduled class day when possible.

3. ALLERGIES: Alongside Academy is sensitive to food allergy concerns. It is the student's responsibility to alert instructors to any food sensitivities. It is also the student's responsibility to avoid items that do not list ingredients, such as homemade items, or shared lunches when allergies are present. Life-threatening allergies should be made known to instructors, as well as any procedures needed to administer lifesaving treatments including epinephrine Auto-Injectors (epi pens).

4. EATING LUNCH: Course directors and staff will determine the areas where food or drinks are allowed and may limit these areas furthermore when necessary if projects are being completed in which it is not safe to consume food and drink. We encourage personal responsibility, and as such, students must keep the area they eat clean. This includes picking up trash and tidying up any messes made.

K. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT/GENERAL RULES

GENERAL BEHAVIOR

- Use appropriate language, voice volume, and manners.
- Alert staff members of unsafe situations.
- Be polite and patient and help others
- Clean up after yourself; leave surrounding areas better than you found them.
- Do your best, ask questions, and be productive.

L. GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

- Rules of common courtesy are to be adhered to at all school activities.
- All instructors and guests should be shown respect at all times.
- The facility grounds and buildings are for you to enjoy; please help keep them clean and neat.
- Healthy beverages will be allowed in classrooms at any time.
- Bullying, harassment, intimidation and/or hazing of individuals will not be tolerated in the program. Anyone who may be involved will be dealt with by the administration. It is Alongside Academy's commitment and obligation to make the program safe for all students.
- Students are responsible for their actions, including paying for any damage they incur.
- Fighting is prohibited. Parents and if needed, authorities will be contacted if fighting occurs.
- Possession of tobacco products or substitute forms of electronic cigarettes by a student on school grounds is prohibited. Offenses will result in a police referral and administrative consequences
- Students should not loiter in restrooms. Students who repeatedly are seen

loitering in restrooms will be referred to administrative staff for consequences.

These rules are not to deny the right of reasonable dissent, but to prevent the disruption of the educational rights of others. Violations managed in the classroom environment by staff will be documented as minor offenses. When actions taken by the teacher have failed or the rule of infraction is of a serious nature, the incident will be reported as a major offense to an administrator for investigation and action. The consequences of the infraction will depend upon the severity of the offense and the previous discipline record of the student.

M. DISCIPLINE ACTIONS:

Alongside Academy is committed to partnering with parents to help every student reach their maximum potential. When a student commits a wrong, restorative practices that focus on personal responsibility and building character, integrity, and empathy will be used.

If a student behaves in a way that is disrespectful or compromises the physical or emotional safety of others, a written incident report will be recorded that same day, detailing the incident and a plan for correction. When appropriate, the family will be contacted to discuss the incident and consequences.

If the child exhibits immediate danger or is a large disruption to the class, the child may be removed from class and parents called to pick up the student for the remainder of the day. A meeting will be scheduled to follow up with the parent(s) and student.

Suspension or expulsion will be considered as consequences in the following scenarios.

- Bullying or Harassment- a student who is consistently in violation will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Drugs, alcohol, smoking- the possession, sale, purchase, or use of illegal drugs or ANY form of smoking materials is subject to disciplinary action.
- The possession or use of knives, firearms, or other weapons that can be used to harm someone.
- Theft
- Threats- any type of verbal, physical, or written intimidation to staff or students.

This list is not meant to be inclusive and administration reserves the right to make decisions regarding any issues that would affect the safety and well-being of the students and staff as well as the best interest of the program.

N. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:

Students at Alongside Academy are expected to adhere to the following expectations:

- Be Prepared:
Be on time, be participatory, be brave, and be prepared to learn.
- Be Responsible:
Come ready to learn, follow directions, take personal responsibility for your actions, accept consequences, and follow expectations.
- Be Upright:
Use appropriate language and voice volume, treat equipment and people with care, respect others' space, follow the dress code, listen to others, follow policies, be polite and kind, and represent Alongside Academy positively within the community.
- Be Patient:
Alongside Academy promotes delayed gratification and working together. This requires that we remain together whether we stumble or succeed. Patience within oneself and with others is key to our success as a class.
- Be Curious:
Let your wonder and imagination drive you. Try something new. Test what you are doing in the classroom with alternative ideas.
- Be Creative:
Dream and envision what you desire to see. See to it that we persevere towards that goal. Bring others alongside you in that pursuit.
- Be Engaged:
Participate positively in learning, set, and obtain goals, use time wisely, and participate in activities.

Following these expectations ensures that all students have the ability to receive an education without disruption.

- Be safe during class.
- Ask questions.
- Give opinions in a mannerly way.
- Learn to make appropriate decisions.

O. PARENT EXPECTATIONS

We believe that communication between the program and the home should be an ongoing process. Many of our expectations involve communication which we feel is the key to successful mentoring and developing students for future endeavors. A parent may expect:

1. A positive environment that promotes success.
2. To have conferences, upon request, with course directors, assistants, or administrative staff.
3. To take part in the decision-making process as we work cooperatively to overcome concerns regarding students' comfort levels by gaining experience in new endeavors that may be outside the student's comfort level or in regard to student behavior.

A parent is expected to:

1. Ensure that their child attends class regularly and punctually.
2. Notify staff if their child has to leave early, will be tardy or absent,
3. Be supportive of the course and encourage a positive attitude to learning.
4. Keep the instructors informed of any situation which might affect the student's learning or behavior.
5. Help develop a positive, secure self-concept by giving praise and encouragement and instill a sense of worth.
6. Accept and love your child as she/he is and do not compare your child with other children.

All students and parents are responsible for knowing and abiding by Alongside Academy's rules and expectations found in this handbook.

P. PRIVACY

Alongside Academy values the privacy of our students, staff, and will follow the laws outlined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) O20 U.S.C.

1. Staff members who post pictures of students are expected to protect the images with the HTML code that prohibits website visitors from right-clicking on the pictures to save or alter them. Staff Members will not post pictures publicly without a student's photo release form being approved.
2. First names & last name initials of students may be used to identify student work.
3. Identifier listings including (any/all) full names, social security numbers, phone numbers, addresses, and email addresses of students may not be used or shared under any circumstance.
4. Identifier listings including (any/all) social security numbers, home phone numbers, home addresses, and personal email addresses of staff may not be used under any circumstance.