

## **Scholar & Family Information for Remote Learning**

### **Mission**

Alma del Mar is an inclusive Expeditionary Learning school that puts New Bedford scholars on a college trajectory and challenges them to be service-minded leaders. By engaging in a rigorous academic program with an emphasis on meaningful work, our scholars will master essential skills and content, take ownership of their learning and think boldly while addressing complex academic and community issues.

### **Alma Habits**

The Alma community lives by a set of Habits of Character that outline the values, mindsets and skills we want our scholars to learn.

- **Responsibility:** I take responsibility for my learning
- **Consideration:** I consider others in my choice of words and actions
- **Service:** I serve my crew and community

### **Protecting the New Bedford Community from COVID-19**

Alma encourages all community members to stay healthy and safe during this unprecedented time by following CDC guidelines related to COVID-19. If you are out in public, Alma encourages you to wear a mask. Please practice social distancing and, when possible, limit the number of people you come in contact with. If you or a member of your household are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (listed below) please seek medical attention.

### **Screening for Symptoms of COVID-19**

The single most important thing to do if any of the following symptoms are present is to STAY HOME. Our collective health relies, in part, on individual attention and responsibility. Note that some symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as the flu or a bad cold; please do not assume it is another condition. When in doubt, stay home.

Please STAY HOME if you have any of the symptoms listed.

Below is the full list of symptoms for which caregivers should monitor their children, and staff should monitor themselves.

- Fever (100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills (CDC has lowered the temperature from 100.4 to 100.0)
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache *when in combination with other symptoms*
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known cause, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

*Taken from DESE Protocols for responding to COVID-19 scenarios; updated August 20, 2020*

### **Immunizations & Flu Shot**

Per the joint DESE/DPH Memo released on August 19, 2020, immunizations are required for all scholars regardless of the model of learning (including scholars who are fully remote).

Immunization requirements are:

Kindergarten - Grade 6	(5) DTaP, (4) Polio, (3) Hepatitis B, (2) MMR, (2) Varicella (1) Influenza- December 31, 2020
Grades 7 - Grade 12	(1) TDaP, (5) DTaP, (4) Polio, (3) Hepatitis B, (2) MMR, (2) Varicella, (1) MenACWY (1) Influenza- December 31, 2020

New this year: All children in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts over the age of 5 are required to have an influenza vaccine by December 31, 2020.

## **Attendance & Work Completion Expectations**

Alma del Mar scholars are expected to participate in their Crew and all synchronous lessons on a daily basis. Alma del Mar scholars are expected to complete all daily assignments by 3:30pm daily.

We will continue to carefully track scholar attendance and work completion so that all scholars receive consistent feedback on their work. We plan to issue report cards quarterly.

Alma del Mar is waiting on DESE guidance regarding remote attendance policies and may update these expectations in the coming weeks.

## **Remote Dress Code Expectations**

Alma scholars are not required to wear a uniform during remote learning. We ask that scholars wear age-appropriate clothing that allows them to be visible to their classmates online. Cameras should be on unless directed by the teacher. Scholars may not wear clothing with inappropriate words or pictures that are visible on camera. Scholars should not have inappropriate words or pictures visible in the background during remote learning.

## **Communication Norms**

- Staff working hours are 7:45am-4:30pm.
- Please feel free to email your child's teacher at any time, but understand that emails will be responded to within 24-48 hours.
- If you reach out to a staff member via phone call or text message, please understand that they are teaching remotely for most of the school day. Staff will do their best to return phone calls and text messages within 24 hours.
- You will receive contact information for your child's teacher at Family Orientation.

## Remote Learning Overview K-1

- **Schedule:** For Kindergarten and First grade scholars, families should expect that scholars will have several small group video lessons scheduled between 8:30-12:00 every day. (A typical schedule would include a scholar on Zoom for 15-30 minute sessions at 8:30, 9:30, 10:30, and 11:30) with additional work to be completed independently later in the day. Teachers will supply all families with their individual daily support schedule within the first two weeks of school.
- **Tech Platforms:** Kindergarten through second grade scholars will access their daily work on the platform SeeSaw. Any videos, texts, links, and tasks will all be organized on SeeSaw. We will use Zoom for all synchronous video lessons.

## Remote Learning Overview 2-8

- **Schedule:** For all Second through Eighth grade scholars, expect that they will have lessons scheduled from 8:30-3:00pm. Again, scholars will almost always have a break after 20-30 minutes of video lesson time, but will have Crew, four academic blocks, and two intervention blocks every day, so all school days will run from 8:30-3:00. Teachers will provide all scholars with their class schedule at Orientation.
- **Tech Platforms:** Second grade scholars will use the platform SeeSaw. Third through eighth grade scholars will access their daily work on the platform Google Classroom. We will use Zoom for all synchronous video lessons.

## Technology & Supplies

Alma is committed to providing all of our scholars and their families with all of the tools needed to successfully access and participate in remote learning this year. All of these supplies will be provided to families at Family Orientation.

All Alma scholars will be provided with a chromebook, if they would like one. Families who have access to a chromebook/computer already may need to use a personal device until Alma has enough in stock.

## **Food Program**

- Alma is following updates and guidance from the FDA and Massachusetts DESE to ensure that all scholars have access to proper food and nutrition while remote learning
- Scholars will have a chance to come during morning hours to pick up meals
- Service will be grab and go style, pre bagged and parents or scholars can pick it up while maintaining social distancing
- The precise details are still being worked out
- If the time slot is a challenge, our Operations team will be in touch to troubleshoot timing

## **Families Helping Families**

The purpose of Families Helping Families is to build community among Alma families. Through FHF, Alma families support each other in meeting the many challenges of parenting. FHF facilitates relationship-building and fosters positive communication between Alma parents and guardians, as well as strong communication between home and school. FHF also supports Alma parents and guardians in becoming advocates on behalf of all families in New Bedford.

Parenting is hard. Every parent and guardian needs help and support from trusted people outside of their home in order to navigate the challenges of raising kids today. Alma parents and guardians have a wealth of experience and knowledge. Our experienced parents and guardians are an untapped resource for each other and for our newer parents and guardians, as well as those who might be facing significant challenges. In bringing our families together and allowing them to form meaningful relationships, FHF facilitates strong, supportive relationships that provide Alma parents and guardians with a well of support. This in turn increases all of our families' ability to support our scholars and teachers in the work they do at school.

### **Key Initiatives:**

- Family Events
- Facilitating Positive Communication
- Support for Families in Crisis and in Need
- Education and Best Practice Sharing for Families
- Resource Sharing
- Advocacy

# ALMA *del* MAR

Learn. Lead. Serve. Succeed!



*To find out more about Families Helping Families, please contact FHF Coordinator Marie Tavares at 508-203-7546 or [marietavares@almadelmar.org](mailto:marietavares@almadelmar.org)*

## **Special Education & Section 504**

Alma will follow all state guidance regarding special education and 504 plans. Though scholar services may look different than in a traditional school year, Alma will ensure that all scholars receive their services either remotely or in person. The Scholar Support Team will ensure all scholars (not just those currently on 504 or IEP plans) are receiving Response to Intervention (RTI) support as needed. Case Managers and the Deans of Scholar Support will also frequently communicate with families regarding their scholar's progress and whether or not they require additional support.

## **English Language Learners**

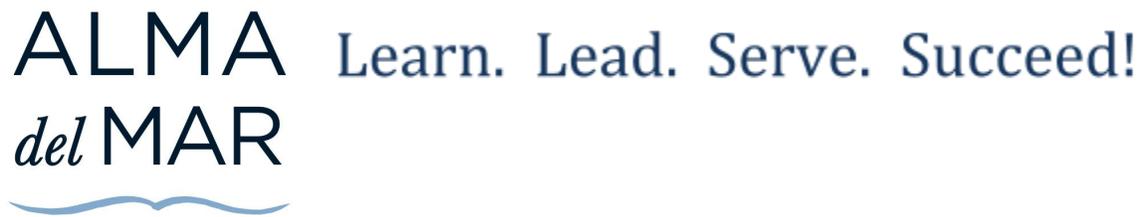
Alma del Mar is very proud to serve scholars and families who represent a multicultural background. When scholars enter Alma del Mar, they are screened to determine if they would benefit from English Language Learner services, and those services are deployed based on the grade level and ELL proficiency level of the particular scholar. ELL services are available for scholars both in person and in remote settings.

## **Counseling & Mental Health Support**

Alma del Mar has a full time School Psychologist on staff as well as a full time School Counselor. These staff members are available to support scholars in person or remotely, in small groups and individually as needed. Our School Psychologist also conducts psychoeducational evaluations. Additionally, Alma has a Social Emotional Specialist who works with small groups or individual scholars on social skills development.

If you have concerns about your scholar's mental health, please contact Jon Fass at [jonfass@almadelmar.org](mailto:jonfass@almadelmar.org).

Alma del Mar also contracts with Child & Family Services to provide one-on-one counseling on a case by case basis.



### **Bringing Back Additional Grades For In Person Learning**

Alma del Mar recognizes that remote learning presents significant challenges for scholars in all grade levels, and particularly our youngest scholars. Alma will prioritize bringing back additional grade levels as soon as the status of the virus in the community allows us to do this safely. Below is a timeline for these transitions:

- September 14: a small number of scholars with significant and complex needs begin in-person learning
- Early October: determine next grade level and/or group of high needs scholars to return to the building
- October 26: welcome additional scholars and staff for in person learning

***Our full Scholar & Family Handbook is available in English and Spanish on [almadelmar.org](http://almadelmar.org)***

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