

along with a variety of other links and information about the program and gifted education.

P

Program Design: Class instruction is 2.5 hours per week, either in the morning from 8:00a.m. -10:30a.m. or in the afternoons 11:30a.m.-2:00p.m., or 11:40a.m.-2:20p.m. depending on the district and the building.

S

Snow Day Policy: The ALPHA teacher follows the Niskayuna School schedule; therefore if Niskayuna has a snow day, the program is canceled in all schools. If a host school has a snow day the program will be canceled for those students attending ALPHA at that school. If a host school is open but the school for the students who are transported is closed, ALPHA will be held at the host school with as many students who can attend. If you are in doubt please call ALPHA program office at 464-3986/3987.

Staff Development Days: When Niskayuna Schools are closed due to staff development or conference days, the program is canceled in all districts.



Host Schools for the ALPHA Program

Berne-Knox Westerlo Elementary School.....	872-2030
Birchwood Elementary School, (Niskayuna).....	785-3445
Craig Elementary School, (Niskayuna).....	377-0156
Glenclyff Elementary School, (Niskayuna).....	399-2323
Hillside Elementary School (Niskayuna).....	377-1856
Rosendale Elementary School (Niskayuna).....	377-3123
Watervliet Elementary School (Incl: Menands, Green Island).....	629-3400

the ABC's of ALPHA



Dear ALPHA Parent/Guardian;

During September your child began our Capital Region BOCES ALPHA (Advanced Learning Program for High Achievers) Program. We are excited to have the opportunity to serve your child's intellectual curiosity in an educationally stimulating learning environment. Our ALPHA program is noted for providing academic experiences that are considered rigorous, dynamic and motivational.



Included with this letter is important parent/student information regarding our program. We encourage you to read it carefully.

Over the summer you were mailed a contact information form, photograph/videotape release and a permission form to take the students outside for educational purposes during ALPHA. Thank you for signing and returning these forms promptly!

The Capital Region BOCES could not operate the ALPHA program without your continued support and we thank you for allowing your child to participate. We encourage you to call us at 464-3986/3987 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Amy Brennan-Strack
ALPHA Teacher
abstrack@gw.neric.org

Mindy Noxon Iannotti
Program Manager
miannotti@gw.neric.org

ALPHA program information

We offer this information to help you and your child have a successful and rewarding school year participating in BOCES ALPHA program. Please take a few minutes to review this material. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these policies and topics, please contact the ALPHA program office at 464-3986/3987.



A

Absentee Policy: If your child is sick or absent and will not be attending the ALPHA program, you (parent/guardian) must call the ALPHA program office at 464-3986/3987 by 8:00am as well as your home school attendance office.

Assessment: The ALPHA teacher will prepare trimester evaluations on each student, which will be mailed to each child's home and your child's building principal. No grades will be given to the students in the ALPHA program.

Attendance: After communicating with the various building principals within our ALPHA schools, we are encouraging a mandatory attendance policy for students attending ALPHA if they are present at school that day. Due to the limited time your child spends in ALPHA weekly, we feel it necessary to encourage attendance even if it means missing in school events and parties. Any questions please call the ALPHA program office at 464-3986/3987.

B

Books and materials: The Capital Region BOCES ALPHA program provides each child with a portfolio. We request you purchase a 3-subject notebook and pocket folder for your child to bring to every class.

C

Communication: Close relationships between parents, home school and the ALPHA program are crucial to the effectiveness of the program in meeting the student's needs. We sincerely hope schoolteachers and parents will contact the ALPHA program at 464-3986/3987 with any questions or important information about individual student problems or successes. Parent e-mail addresses are collected and information regarding assignments, projects and updates will be routinely sent to parents, administrators and classroom teachers as needed.

Curriculum: The ALPHA teacher develops a series of humanities based curriculum units combining critical thinking, problem solving, and persuasive and analytical writing. A strong emphasis is on literature and its connection to the math and sciences. There is a balance of individual and small group activities and projects. Challenging hands on and interactive activities are provided as well as guest speakers to connect the curriculum to real-life.

D

Discipline: Should a circumstance requiring discipline arise during the ALPHA program, a behavior management form will be filled out by the ALPHA teacher and will be sent home to be signed. A copy of this form will then be forwarded to the appropriate house building principal. A phone call home from the ALPHA teacher will also occur.

H

Homework: The ALPHA program will assign occasional homework, no more than 15-30 minutes a week. Homework is expected at the next ALPHA class meeting unless other directions have been given. All ALPHA students are expected to complete homework as assigned. Your child is expected to keep up with all homework assignments for their home schoolteachers as well. Please make sure your child is clear about where and how to get assignments and when they are to be completed and submitted. They will need to develop and practice strong study skills so that they learn to use their time well.

L

Lunch/Snack: All ALPHA students meeting at 11:30/11:50a.m. will eat lunch in the ALPHA classroom. Students are to report to ALPHA first, then proceed to the cafeteria to get lunch and bring it back to our classroom. Morning ALPHA students will have snack around 9:15a.m. Please remember to send a snack in with your child if they have ALPHA in the morning.



M

Medical Issues: If your child has a medical condition you would like the ALPHA teacher to be aware of please send in a note to be kept on file.



N

Newsletters: The ALPHA teacher along with Program Manager prepare a newsletter about current projects and activities that is sent home every two months with the students. It is also e-mailed to the addresses collected at the beginning of the year. The newsletter is also sent to home schoolteachers and building principals via email. Newsletters are posted on the Capital Region BOCES ALPHA website at <http://www.bocesinstructionalresources.org/alpha/mainpage.html>