

# Almira PreK-8 Academy

## October Issue

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216.838.6150



## Message from the Principal

### In this Issue:

- Page 2 Food Programs at Almira
- Page 2 Message from the Assistant Principal
- Page 3 Curriculum Corner
- Page 3 Helping Your Scholars Get to School
- Page 4 New Programs for Parents and Caregivers
- Page 4 Attendance Incentives and Dress-Down Days
- Page 5 Calendar of Events
- Page 5 Don't Fight about It... Talk about It!
- Page 5 Ride-2-Achieve Challenge

Dear Almira Families,

The start of the school year has started in high gear! As you can see, we are in our second month of school. The following are school-wide goals and focuses for the 2017-18 school year:

- Math Proficiency increase 5%
- ELA Proficiency increase 5%
- Attendance – achieve 92.5% school wide

In order to perform to the best of their ability, we need our scholars present and focused. Additionally, our Attendance Committee is providing monthly incentives across all grade levels. For the month of September, scholars will receive a ticket for every day they attend school. This ticket will be placed into a grade level box (e.g., K-2, 3-5, 6-8), and at the end of the month there will be a drawing to win a bicycle. If you have any questions about our school-wide programs, please contact the main office at 216-838-6150.

Sincerely,

Jim Greene  
Principal

### Stay connected with us on social media!



Almira Gators



@AlmiraGators



@AlmiraGators

[www.clevelandmetroschools.org/Almira](http://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/Almira)



# Food Programs Resume at Almira

## Monthly Markets, Weekly Food Bags, Daily Kids Café

### School Market

On the second Tuesday of every month, Almira Academy hosts a School Market in the cafeteria from 4:00 to 5:30. Through this program, we distribute 4,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables for FREE. This event is open to the community, so feel free to invite your neighbors. We also invite various community partners to host a table to share their resources with the community.

**Our next Market is scheduled for Tuesday, October 10, from 4:00 to 5:30.**

### Food Bag Program

The Food Bag Program has resumed at Almira. With this program, parents can sign up their students to receive a bag of pantry food to take home on Friday afternoons. Students should not open the bags until they arrive at home. Please remind students not to waste food or create litter if they receive these bags.

To sign up for the program, complete the registration form located in the office, or contact the Site Coordinator.

### Kids Café

If your student participates in any after-school program, they are able to get a free bagged lunch at the end of the program time.

If you are interested in volunteering to serve Kids Café this year, please contact the Site Coordinator, Mr. Derek Green, at [dgreen@clevelandplayhouse.com](mailto:dgreen@clevelandplayhouse.com) or 216.838.6150.

## Message from the Assistant Principal

Welcome parents and guardians to a wonderful new school year. We have a mandate before us to equip our scholars with the skills needed to be academically successful in high school. I am fortunate to be a part of your child's educational development. **Working together as partners, we can accomplish our goal and provide a quality education for our scholars.**

As the new Assistant Principal for this school year, I look

forward to working with our families and the community. My background in education started in Houston, Texas, teaching Business Education in a high school with a population of 4500 students. I also served in various administration positions in Houston, serving school communities with large minority populations. My first role in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District was working with the students at Luis Muñoz Marin.



It is a privilege to work at Almira with our scholars. I am also a father of five children, with three in high school and one in college.

**Roberto Davila**  
Assistant Principal

## Curriculum Corner: “Reading as Language”

Speaking, listening, writing, and reading: Language is all around us. We use language to tell people what we need, to ask questions, to watch television, to pay bills, to work with others...the list goes on and on. Reading is just one form of language, the written-down version. Knowing how to use all forms of language well—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—is an important goal for all children. And they need support from both the school and home to be successful with language.

Reading involves thinking and problem solving. It requires us to use knowledge we already have. We must know how to figure out what a word says, and how to put words together to make sense of what is being read. Children will use several strategies for reading within the same sentence. Many familiar words are known by sight. When he reaches a word he does not know, he will probably try to “sound it out” and he will use context clues (how it fits with the

other words) to try to make sense of the text.

For example, a child tries to read “The girl ran to the store.” Child reads: The girl ran to the s-s-s-s-t. Then he tries: The girl ran to the stable. But this doesn’t really make sense in this story, so then he tries: The girl ran to the stare. This still doesn’t make sense so he notices another letter, an “o,” and he’s got it: The girl ran to the store.

Children must learn and use many different things to read: They need vocabulary and word recognition skills; they need to know the relationships between sounds and letters, or phonics skills; and they need ways to see if what they are reading makes sense.

As children are emerging as readers in the toddler and preschool stages, they begin learning about reading by being read to and by their attempts to write. Early writing looks a lot like scribbling but it usually represents some thought the child had. Parents can promote children’s

understandings of text by asking children what they are writing and even writing what they say below their scribbling and then reading it back.

**Reading and writing go hand in hand and it’s important to have materials for writing in addition to books in the home.**

Source:

*Davis, Deborah, and Jan Patricia Lewis. “Information and Ideas for Helping Children Through Grade Eight Succeed with Reading: Reading As Language.” Tips for Parents About Reading, Oct. 1997, pp. 4, [thereadingroom.net/pdfs/tipsforparents.pdf](http://thereadingroom.net/pdfs/tipsforparents.pdf).*

## Helping Your Scholars Get to School

Legally, habitual truancy is now defined in hours, rather than days, and hours add up!. Students are considered habitually truant if they are:

- Absent 30 or more consecutive hours
- Absent 42 or more hours in one school month
- Absent 72 or more hours in one school year

Getting your child to school on-time every day, unless they are sick, is something that you can do to ensure your child has a chance to succeed in school. While others can help, you are the bottom line. You can promote good attendance when you:

- Establish and stick to the basic routines (going to bed early, waking up on time, etc.) that will help your child develop the habit of on-time attendance.
- Talk to your child about why going to school every day is critical and important unless they are sick.
- If your child seems reluctant to go to school, find out why and work with the teacher, administrator or afterschool provider to get them excited about going to school.
- Create backup plans for who to turn to (a family member, a neighbor or fellow parents) to

help you get your child to school if something comes up.

Reach out for help if you are experiencing tough times (e.g. transportation, unstable housing, loss of a job, health problems) that make it difficult to get your child to school. Other parents, your child’s teacher, principal, social worker, school nurse, afterschool providers or community agencies can help you problem-solve or connect you to a needed resource.

If your child is absent, work with the teacher to make sure she or he has an opportunity to learn and make up for the academics missed.

# New Programs for Parents and Caregivers

## Drama for Mamas and Papas

We are excited to announce a new program sponsored through our lead agency, Cleveland Play House. Drama for Mamas and Papas is a free, bi-monthly program geared towards supporting your scholars and building healthier, stronger families. This program has two main components: a monthly theatre class, and a monthly parent group

On first Tuesdays from 4:00 to 5:00, we will have fun theatre sessions for you and your scholar, led by Cleveland Play House staff.

On third Tuesdays from 4:00 to 5:00, we will have the Parent Power Group, open only to caregivers. These sessions are facilitated by parent and life coach, Morris Ervin.

Parents who complete 25 hours of this program, in combination with volunteer time at school events and activities, will receive a \$75 stipend.

## Principals Chat & Chews

Every month, we will host a Principal Chat & Chew, an informal get-together between families and the principal. At these events, we will get to know each other, share information about school events, programs, and strategies, and listen to feedback and questions from parents and caregivers.

We will have our monthly Chat & Chews on Friday mornings following breakfast. Our first Chat & Chew will be on Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:15.



## FACE Committee

Are you interested in helping plan Family and Community Engagement events? If so, please consider joining our FACE Committee.

The FACE Committee, made of parents and school staff, will meet monthly to plan and implement school events, including curriculum nights, family nights, and more.

If you are interested in participating, please contact our Dean of Engagement, Mr. Conrad Steward at [Conrad.Steward@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Conrad.Steward@clevelandmetroschools.org).

## Parent University

Almira is hosting free college classes for CMSD parents and caregivers through a partnership with Cuyahoga Community College. Food and after-school programming is available for children of enrolled parents. For more information, call 216.838.3223.

# Attendance Incentives and Dress-Down Days

This year, one of our school goals is to raise our daily attendance to 92.5%. In the past few weeks, we have reached and even surpassed this goal through the combined efforts of families and staff.

This year, there are a number of incentives students can earn through high attendance:

- When students have perfect attendance and no behavior referrals for a 5-day week of school, they will receive a dress-down pass. **Student need to present this pass in order to dress down for the day.**
- Students can also “purchase” a dress down pass from the Gator Store. Students earn Gator Bucks throughout the week for showing positive behavior in class. Gator Bucks can be redeemed for small toys or dress down passes.
- Every day students attend school, they receive a raffle ticket for a chance to win a large prize at the end of each month. The raffle prize for September is a bicycle.



## October – Calendar of Events

SUN.	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.
1	2 	3 4:00 – 5:00: Drama for Mamas and Papas – Theatre Class  4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	4	5 4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	6
8	9 <b>NO CLASSES (Teacher PD Day)</b>	10 4:00 – 5:30: School Market  4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	11 <b>PICTURE DAY!</b> 	12 4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	13 9:15 - Principal Chat & Chew
15 11:00 – 1:00 Ride-2-Achieve Kick-Off Event at Louis Agassiz Elementary School	16 	17 4:00 – 5:00: Drama for Mamas and Papas: Parent Power Group  4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	18	19 4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	20
22	23	24 4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	25 <b>Parent/Teacher Conferences –NO SCHOOL</b>	26 4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	27
29	30 	31 4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	Nov. 1	Nov. 2 4:30 – 5:40: Parent University	Nov. 3

### Don't Fight about It... Talk about It!

Conflict Mediation works. The Scholars Talking About Resolving Situations or S.T.A.R.S program is available to help students handle disagreements with others, work through situations and provide a solution to problems. All you have to do is request a mediation form from the school office and turn it into Mrs. Coats.

### Ride-2-Achieve Challenge

The Ride-2-Achieve Challenge is a collaboration between CMSD's Safe Routes, Cleveland Division of Police, and Bike Cleveland. 500 students across the district will have the opportunity to earn a bicycle through attendance, academic achievement, and good citizenship. The kickoff event will be at Luis Agassiz Elementary School on Sunday, October 15 from 11:00-1:00. More information will be sent home in the coming weeks.