



# November 2016

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Dear Parents and Community Members,

I hope this letter finds you well and enjoying all that Western New York has to offer. At Alfred-Almond, this time of year is synonymous with fabulous activities and events that are thriving on campus.

Our student athletes continue to represent well our school and community, both on the sports field/courts and in the classroom. They continue to meet our high expectations of conduct and achievement. A big thank you to our coaches for their leadership and commitment. The annual “Soccer Under the Lights” was another huge success, and it was great to see so many kids having fun and learning great life lessons at such a young age. It is scary to see how fast time flies...take lots of pictures! This incredible event was made possible by the tireless work of the youth soccer league. I know that I speak for everyone when I extend my appreciation for all they do for our children. Also, thanks to our grounds crew for preparing the “pitch” and to the members of the varsity and junior varsity soccer programs who were there to cheer on our future players.

Computer Science has hit the elementary and is a huge success. Approximately 25 students have been meeting weekly to explore coding with Google’s CS First Club. This is an awesome extension activity, and we are very appreciative that Mr. Wargula has brought this opportunity to our students.

Kudos to the teachers for once again upholding A-A’s honor by winning the dodgeball competition during Spirit Week. As I write this letter, our math team is leaving for a competition at a local college. Thank you Mrs. Bensley and other members of the math department for making math “cool.” There are so many amazing things going on here and I want to thank all teachers and students for your commitment to excellence.

We continue to ask for our community’s help and support in keeping our campus safe. We require all visitors to enter school through the main entrances of the buildings. Visitors, staff and students are reminded to close any doors that they see propped open and are encouraged to report any behavior or conditions which may be observed as threatening. In the year ahead, we will practice lockdown drills. By state directive, we must conduct a minimum of four lockdown drills a year. Before the first drill, the protocol and purpose will be discussed with all students. We ask that parents and community members reinforce the purpose of these drills and encourage our children to take them seriously. If you have any thoughts on how to enhance the safety of our buildings, please contact me.

I am pleased to report that Alfred-Almond is lead-free. The results from the water test conducted at 81 locations in the school indicate that our water is pure and safe to drink.

Please note that October 24-28 is Board of Education recognition week. If you see our board members, please thank them for their service. We couldn’t do it without them and appreciate all the time they spend volunteering for the good of our communities, students and district as a whole.

Finally, thank you for your continued support of our district. Alfred-Almond is a special place, and we are so pleased to be able to share it with you.

My very best regards,

***Rich Calkins***

Superintendent of Schools

## Elementary news

The 2016-17 school year is off to a great start in the Elementary School. Our students have already participated in a wide range of activities. During Fire Prevention Week, we hosted classroom presentations and live equipment demonstrations from local fire departments and emergency responders. In addition, our transportation staff conducted emergency drills using The Safety Bus, and the annual Halloween parade was enjoyed by all. We are excited about a number of new activities being offered this year, including a Computer Science Club for fifth and sixth grade students and an inquiry-based science curriculum in grades four through six. The Elementary School Improvement Team, in partnership with elementary teachers, is launching a new program called Alfred-Almond Community Readers. The goal is to foster a lifelong love of reading and stronger community ties by inviting community members into classrooms for story read-aloud sessions. If you are interested in becoming a guest reader, please be sure to have a current volunteer form on file and email your interest to [aacselemsit@gmail.com](mailto:aacselemsit@gmail.com).

Please mark the important dates at right in your calendars to help avoid scheduling conflicts throughout the rest of the school year. On behalf of the Elementary staff, I thank you for your continued participation in the education of your children and support of Alfred-Almond Central School.

**Bob Woughter**

Elementary School Principal

## School Board Recognition Week

School Board Recognition Week was observed the week of October 24-28, 2016.

We would like to thank our school board members, President Earl Pierce, Vice President Nadine Shardlow, Gary Acker, Vicky Westacott and Brooke Harris for your many hours of service, dedication and commitment to our children. You continually strive for improvement, excellence and progress in our elementary and secondary education system.



(L-R) Earl Pierce, Nadine Shardlow, Brooke Harris, Vicky Westacott, Gary Acker.

## Elementary important dates

Grades PK-6	Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences 11:50 a.m. dismissal	Nov. 21-22
Grades PK-6	Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences 11:50 a.m. dismissal	March 16-17
Grades 3-6	NYS ELA Assessment	April 28-30
Incoming Kindergartners	Kindergarten Visitation/ Parent Meeting, 2:30 p.m.	May 1
Grades 3-6	NYS 3-6 Math Assessment	May 2-4
PreK & K	Kindergarten Registration and Screening	May 8-12
Grade 4	NYS Science Assessment - Performance	May 24-June 2 (TBA)
Grade 4	NYS Science Assessment - Written	June 5

Five-Week Reports Issued	October 7
End of 1st Quarter	November 10
Report Cards Go Home	November 18
Five-Week Reports Issued	December 16
End of 2nd Quarter	January 27
Report Cards Go Home	February 3
Five-Week Reports Issued	March 3
End of 3rd Quarter	April 7
Report Cards Go Home	April 21
4th Quarter Report Cards Go Home	Last day of school

## ALCEN yearbooks on sale

The 2017 ALCEN staff started this year working diligently on collecting senior and business ad information. They have been hard at work learning how to use the online yearbook site, design pages and take pictures.

Yearbooks can be purchased at any time in Room 207 (Mrs. Valentine's room). The cost of the book is \$50 and checks can be made payable to ALCEN. We would like as many pre-sale orders as possible by December 22 so we can have an accurate count when ordering the books. All books are available on a first come, first served basis. Anyone with questions regarding the yearbook can contact Mrs. Valentine at [kvalentine@acsapps.com](mailto:kvalentine@acsapps.com). Thank you for supporting the 2017 ALCEN Yearbook!

# From the Jr./Sr. High School Principal

Here we are at the six-week point in our school year and I am again filled with pride in seeing how beautifully our students have not only settled in, but set their sights on achieving personal goals! I thank all of you for your support and work in making this possible.

The classrooms are full of life as students set learning goals, engage in cooperative learning and build problem-solving skills. The student iPads and Chromebooks continue to be a daily tool used in the blended instructional approach in each classroom. Please ask your child to show you the e-textbooks, use of Google Drive and their work on Google Classroom. I encourage you to review the Technology Guidelines and discuss these with your child. Along with the skills in technology learned, we continue to build the digital citizenship necessary in today's society. As a learning community, we continue our focus on the growth mindset. Together we foster the belief that with practice, perseverance and effort, people have limitless potential to learn and grow. With this in mind, we encourage students to tackle challenges, use mistakes as learning opportunities, accept feedback, make plans for their goals and most importantly see themselves as valued members of our learning community.

The Secondary SIT Team and student volunteers deserve a huge thank you for hosting the chicken barbecue on Open House evening. What a resounding success. It was a welcome sight to see families enjoying a dinner together on a busy evening. Our cafeteria not only smelled yummy, but was buzzing with family conversation.

If you were unable to attend Open House, I urge you to please contact your school counselor for more information on the opportunities available for your child. This relationship is one to cultivate, as your role in your child's education will always be of great value to us all. Please do not be a stranger to our school. While e-mails and the portal are always useful, your direct communication and presence in our school community is most welcome!

I look forward to seeing you throughout the months ahead, enjoying sports, concerts, honor breakfasts, meetings and along the everyday "road" to your child's success.

**Susan Bain-Lucey**  
Jr./Sr. High School Principal

## Visitors lead plant lesson

Have you ever seen a honey locust tree? Mrs. Woughter's second graders recently had a wonderful lesson about this interesting plant. Luca Reginio's parents brought in a huge supply of them to share with these inquisitive minds. Students learned about the tree and how the seeds are spread. Western New York is definitely beautiful this time of year!



Left: Ezi Backer and Billy Wheaton examine honey locust leaves.

Mr. Reginio shares facts about the trees with second grade students.



## STEM implemented for science

Sixth grade students have begun the year studying variables in science. Using the newly-adopted BOCES STEM curriculum, students have worked collaboratively to assemble simple pendulums to explore how changing different variables affects the outcome of an experiment.

Ms. Oriend's students test their pendulums.



Right: Nolan Tormey and Hunter Smith

Below: Isabel Badeau, Alex Diaz and Lily Weaver



## Back to school

Mr. Woughter welcomes Elijah Simon-Robinson on the first day of school.



Returning fifth grade students Ryan Wojtkowiak and Tallan Holley are all smiles on their first day of school.

## Bus safety practiced

Elementary students in Pre-K through fourth grade recently participated in bus safety training. Students learned safe street crossings, proper behavior inside the bus and what to do in an emergency. All students also will have a chance to practice using side and rear emergency doors with their regular bus drivers during the school year.



Left: Alex Gagne gets a helping hand from Mr. Brian Burdick as she exits through the roof of the bus during a practice evacuation.

Right: Gabe Fioretto looks down toward the ground after making his escape through the bus roof hatch.



## Open House 2016

The September Open House was an opportunity for students to show off their classrooms and for parents to meet with their children's teachers and advisors. A chicken barbecue dinner was available for families to eat in or take home, sponsored by the High School SIT Committee.



Brooklyn Dunning shows off the Weather Bears in the Pre-K room.

## Spirit Week royalty



Congratulations to Brenndan France and Abbey Swackhamer, who were crowned King and Queen of Spirit Week.

## News from the Counselors

Juniors are working with Mrs. Decker on their junior interviews. Some juniors attended a college night in Hornell in September and are researching post-secondary schools and exploring their career options. Students are learning how to use web resources for their college/career search. They are educated on the importance of college entrance exams (PSAT, SAT and ACT), grade point average and rigor of class schedule (AP classes, Regents classes), as well as involvement in sports and/or clubs and community activities to be a well-rounded student.

Students are encouraged to use the Guidance Direct Program to facilitate their career search. Juniors are encouraged to attend college tours and open houses, meet with college representatives at school and take the appropriate entrance exams recommended by colleges.

The PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test) is a comprehensive assessment program that measures college readiness and provides students with the tools they need to plan for the future. The test is offered each year at A-A in mid-October for juniors. The PSAT measures skills in critical reading, mathematics and writing. It also prepares students for the SAT. The PSAT also is used by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a means of screening entrants in its annual competition for recognition and college scholarships. On the average, students who take the PSAT/NMSQT score 120 points higher on the SAT than those who do not.

Juniors also are encouraged to take the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) in May and/or June (test dates are offered year round). Parents of juniors were mailed a letter which stated the deadline dates for this test. The SAT helps colleges and universities identify students who could succeed at their institutions. It also assesses critical reading, mathematical reasoning and writing skills. The SAT is an internationally recognized, accurate measure of college readiness and scholarship potential.

The ACT is similar to the SAT. It also is a national college admission and placement examination. It covers the subject areas of English, math, reading, science and writing. The ACT is more curriculum-based versus aptitude-based. It is offered year-round at designated schools. Retakes for both the SAT and ACT are encouraged to improve your score. Some colleges recommend that students take the SAT subject test(s) as well.

Alfred-Almond offers review sessions for the SAT/ACT in March. If you would like more information on these tests please go to:

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

[www.guidancedirect.com](http://www.guidancedirect.com)

## College search calendar for juniors

**September:** Start your college/job search by reviewing as many college/career guides, catalogs, people and resources as possible. Put together a list of roughly ten colleges/employers you are interested in. Plan to apply to at least three to five schools. Become familiar with the school counselors' office (SCO) and its resources. Attend the college fair at Hornell High School. Register for the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) in the SCO. Prepare at [collegeboard.com/psat](http://collegeboard.com/psat). Please use Guidance Direct to access colleges/careers.

**October:** Attend college fairs. Create a list of your interests, special talents and educational and/or career goals. Take the PSAT/NMSQT. Inquire about Advanced Placement (AP) or summer college courses that may be available to you. Start learning about the colleges you're considering.

**November:** Consider the characteristics a college or job should have to meet your needs. Think about size, location, cost/earning potential, courses/job requirements, teaching staff/supervisors, facilities and social activities and opportunities.

**December:** Write or call colleges/work places you are seriously considering and request information (course guide books, application and financial aid). Investigate scholarship opportunities. Look for your PSAT/NMSQT score report. Start planning to take the SAT I and/or SAT II exams, if necessary. You may also need to take the ACT. Check with the schools you are interested in for specific testing requirements. Ask your high school counselor about registration deadlines.

**January:** Prepare for college entrance exams (SAT/ACT). The SCO usually arranges for a free SAT preparation course that is team-taught by an English and math teacher here at AACS (six evening sessions). The SCO has SAT preparation programs on computers. Attend financial aid nights if you haven't already done so. During any college visits, make sure you meet with an admissions counselor and a financial aid officer to find out what types of aid are available.

**February:** Start seriously investigating private scholarships and other student aid programs. Ask your teachers and counselor if any local organizations offer free use of a scholarship search program.

**March:** Continue to gather and evaluate information on colleges and jobs. Continue investigating financial aid resources of the colleges you are most interested in. Call or write for applications and more information. Register for the June ACT.

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## College application tips for seniors

Currently, Mr. McAneney is completing senior interviews with each senior. These meetings take place in order to assist and solidify future plans. For most seniors, this is the time of year when they will begin the important task of applying to colleges. Regardless of the number of colleges to which students apply, the following process will help avoid confusion and unnecessary delays.

### Step 1

When registering for the ACT or SAT, designate which colleges are to receive your score reports. Most colleges require that you send “official test scores” directly from the test center (at an additional cost).

### Step 2

Complete the college application forms online. The Common Application site and the SUNY online application site are good starting places (see Mr. McAneney to find out which colleges use it). It is a good idea to make a copy of the application. Students can also download and print applications from the college website. If the application requires a teacher and/or counselor recommendation, arrange for those immediately.

### Step 3

Students applying online will need a credit card number for the application fee. Students mailing their application will need to enclose a check for the appropriate amount. Do not send cash!

### Step 4

An official high school transcript will need to be sent to the college from the School Counselor’s Office either electronically or by mail. Students applying online through the Common Application can electronically invite their counselor and teachers to submit the necessary information. This information will be uploaded electronically by the teachers and/or Mr. McAneney. Students applying online to SUNY may print a transcript request form that needs to go to the SCO. If you would like Mr. McAneney to check your online applications before sending them electronically, please see him.

### Step 5

Don’t delay, act today!

*Reminder: Seniors need to start their FAFSA applications beginning Oct. 1. The January date no longer applies.*

## AP courses offer advantages

Alfred-Almond Central School currently offers seven Advanced Placement classes. Students who are planning to go to college should definitely take advantage of this opportunity. Taking AP classes while in high school can be a great benefit during both the college application process and undergraduate life. Below are four reasons why students should consider AP classes in high school:

### 1. Strengthen Your High School Transcript

Most colleges would agree that the most important part of an application is a student’s academic record (also known as a high school transcript). Admissions offices want to see that students have participated in the most challenging courses available. Success in these courses demonstrate that a student is prepared for the next level. At Alfred-Almond, the most challenging courses offered are AP/ACE classes.

### 2. Develop College-Level Skills

AP classes require critical thinking skills that are required of college students. The ability to write essays and problem solve successfully are just two of the skills necessary to succeed in college.

### 3. Save Money

Taking several AP classes may allow students to graduate from college a semester or even a year early. In the long run, this could save thousands of dollars.

*Continued on page 8*

## The Alfred-Almond Performing Arts Department will present



*Thursday, March 9, 2017 at 7 p.m.*

*Saturday, March 11, 2017 at 7 p.m.*

*Sunday, March 12, 2017 at 2 p.m.*

Auditions will be held on Tuesday, January 3 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. and Wednesday, January 4 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. in the auditorium, with call-back auditions on Thursday, January 5 from 3:30-5:30 p.m.

If you would like to help bring this classic story to life by volunteering your time and talents, please contact Lisa Karr (lkarr@aacsapps.com). Community volunteers are a vital part of the success of our shows here at Alfred-Almond!

## Mark your calendar

Fall Sports Awards .....	November 3, 7:00 p.m.
Jr./Sr Band Concert.....	November 8, 7:00 p.m.
Veterans Day–No School .....	November 11
Food Drive HS/Elem.....	November 14-18
Parent-Teacher Conferences .....	November 21-22 (Elementary dismissal at 11:50 a.m. both days)
Thanksgiving Recess – No School .....	November 23-25
Scholastic Book Fair .....	December 5-8
Elementary Story Night .....	December 8, 6:00-7:00 p.m.
National Honor Society Blood Drive.....	December 12, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Elementary Concert (Band & Chorus).....	December 20, 7:00 p.m.
Jr./Sr. High Chorus Concert .....	December 19, 7:00 p.m.
Jr./Sr. Band Concert .....	December 21, 7:00 p.m.
Holiday Recess–No School.....	December 23, 2016- January 2, 2017
Fitness Training.....	Thursday, January 5, 6:00 p.m.
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No School.....	January 16
Spelling Bee .....	January 19, 6:30 p.m.
Semi-Formal .....	January 21, 7:30 p.m.
Superintendent’s Conference Day – No School for Students .....	January 30
Winter Recess .....	February 20-24

## Important test dates

### SATI & II

Date	Reg. Deadline	Test Center
12/3/16	11/3/16	Hornell
1/21/17	12/21/16	Wellsville
5/6/17	4/7/17	Hornell or Wellsville
6/4/17	5/5/17	Hornell

### ACT

Date	Reg. Deadline	Test Center
12/10/16	11/4/16	Wellsville
6/10/17	5/5/17	Wellsville or Canistota

## Students get jump start on school

Alfred-Almond offered a summer program for incoming kindergarten students for the first time this summer. The program was designed to bridge the gap from home to school and give each child a “jump start” on kindergarten. The two-week program, led by kindergarten teachers Jessica Dwyer and Kelly Donlon, was attended by 18 students for two hours each morning. High School senior Kalista Calkins volunteered to assist each day.

The theme of the program was colors. Each day, students focused on a color, sang songs, listened to a story and had a snack related to the the color of the day. The benefits of the program were countless, but learning the routines of school and classroom, as well as sharing with their classmates, was a huge advantage for the children who attended. Mrs. Dwyer and Mrs. Donlon hope to hold the program again next summer and for years to come.



## College search calendar for juniors, continued

**April:** If you decide to retake either the SAT or ACT after receiving your scores from the first administration, plan for when you will do so. SAT retake registration may be called in over the phone (fee involved) or submitted online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). Begin scheduling visits to the top five schools of your choice. If appropriate, set up an interview and/or an overnight visit. Begin preparing essays for college admissions and scholarship applications.

**May:** Look into volunteer work/internships, career-related employment opportunities, on campus academic experiences at a college or university and travel opportunities. These kinds of experiences may give you material for major decisions, college essays and transcript building. Colleges like to see more than strict academics on a transcript. Continue researching scholarship opportunities.

**June:** Prepare for Regents and final exams. Take the SAT if you have not already. Start drafting your résumé. If you have the opportunity, visit as many colleges on your list as possible. Obtain a summer job that might be related to your career interests.

Alfred-Almond Central School  
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### *Free and reduced lunch info.*

**F**if at any time during the school year a family's income is reduced due to unemployment or reduction of hours, or if a household size increases, children may become eligible for free or reduced-price (\$.25) breakfast and lunch. Applications are available on the district website, or contact the Food Service office at 276-6550.

### *Get in shape at school*

**F**rom October 11 through May 26, the school will be available from 3:30-8:00 p.m. (when school is in session) for those who wish to use the facility for walking exercise.

Please use the Elementary School fifth- and sixth-grade wing entrance when entering and leaving the school. There will be a sign-in sheet in the lobby as you enter, along with a list of guidelines to follow.

### *AP courses offer advantages, continued*

#### **4. Choose a Major Sooner**

AP courses provide an in-depth introduction to a specific subject area and may also fulfill a general education requirement. This means you may have more room in your schedule to explore different fields earlier in your college program.

### *Seeking census data*

**E**ach year, district residents receive a census data card in the mail requesting important information concerning all children living in the household from birth through age 21. The information collected is *vital* for the district in planning staffing structures and attaining precise information of district preschool students.

If you have not returned your census card this year, please do so as soon as possible. Your help with compiling this information is greatly appreciated and critical for planning purposes. If you did not receive a census card, or need an additional copy, please contact Bryan Burdick at 276-6565 or at [bburdick@aacspss.com](mailto:bburdick@aacspss.com).

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation and helping us best plan for the educational needs of children.

### *School closing information*

**A**s a reminder to parents, it is sometimes necessary to close school because winter weather conditions make it unsafe for students to walk or ride to school. Should it be necessary to close school, you will receive an automated message notifying you of this occurrence. For additional information on school closings, please listen to one of the following radio or TV stations:

WLEA 1480 AM    WLSV 790 AM    WKPQ 105.3 FM  
WCKR 92.1 FM    WJQZ 103.5 FM    WZKZ 101.1 FM  
WKBW-TV (Buffalo)    WETM-TV (Elmira)