



# NEWSLETTER

November 2023

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## A Note from our Director

When the weather gets colder this time of year, I am always grateful that my children have opportunities at school to continue playing outside. As an educator, I know how vital consistent outdoor play is for child development. However, as a parent I admit I can be less likely this time of year to suggest outdoor activities first. Sometimes putting on all the gear that is required to play outside during a Minnesota winter is just overwhelming. How lovely for my children that they could practice the life skills of snow gear AND explore the sensory experiences of winter here at Aldrich!



Angela Hanscom, pediatric occupational therapist and author of bestseller [Balanced and Barefoot](#) calls outdoor free play “the most beneficial gift we as parents...can bestow on our children,” because “movement through active free play, especially outside, improves everything from creativity to academic success to emotional stability.” As the weather turns colder, rest assured that your children will still have the opportunity for outdoor play EVERY DAY, weather permitting.

With that, we are so excited our Board of Directors has spearheaded the **Outdoor Classroom Upgrade Giving Campaign!** I am thankful our Board recognizes the importance of continuing to upgrade these spaces to create the optimal learning environments for our children. As a non-profit we rely heavily on donations from the public to continue to grow and develop. We would deeply appreciate any contribution you are willing to make. Aldrich continues to thrive thanks for our amazing families, past and present. What an amazing community we have; I am honored and humbled to be a part of it!

Your Partner in Education,

Annie Getchell

## **Aldrich Dates to Remember**

- November 1 & 2: Library Check Out
- November 6 & 7: Picture Retakes (11:15am-12:00pm & 12:45pm-1:30pm)
- November 8 – 10: Scholastic Book Fair at Aldrich
- November 9 & 10: Parent-Teacher Conferences (No School)
- Nov. 20 – Dec. 1: RaiseRight Gift Card Fundraiser
- November 22-24: Thanksgiving Break (No School)
- November 28: Aldrich Board Meeting, 6:30pm
- Dec. 22-Jan. 2: Winter Break (No School)



## **Is There School Today?**

While we generally follow the same calendar as Rochester Public Schools, there are a few days which differ. If in doubt about our school schedule, check the calendars listed on our website at <http://aldrichschool.com/calendarnewsletters/>. We hope that this will be a quick and useful tool for you.

## **Reusable Water Bottles at Aldrich**

Unfortunately, MN Licensing guidelines don't allow children to bring in reusable water bottles from home to use during their time at Aldrich. Instead, Aldrich will provide children with disposable cups to drink water throughout their session and snack time. The ONLY exception for this rule is in the full day programming, where reusable water bottles are only allowed for children as part of a child's lunch brought from home, and can only be used at lunch time, at the lunch table. The reusable water bottles must be labeled with the child's first and last name.



## **Parking Lot Safety**

The colder Minnesota weather may tempt parents to leave cars running while dropping off or picking up Aldrich students. For safety reasons, please remember to:

***\*Turn off your car*** while you drop off and pick up your Aldrich student. Aldrich has an anti-idling policy: all vehicles must turn off their engines within the Aldrich parking lot as soon as possible to protect children from inhaling harmful car exhaust.

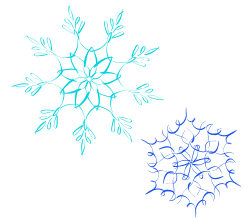
***\*Bring in ALL children to Aldrich*** while you are away from your car. Leaving a child unattended in a vehicle is a reportable offense.

***\*Hold your child's hand*** while you are entering and exiting Aldrich to prevent children from running into traffic in the parking lot.

We appreciate your cooperation for the safety of all of our Aldrich students and their families.



# Winter Reminders



We have already had a sneak peek at winter weather! Below is some helpful information and reminders as we brace for another MN winter.

## Closures:

- When the Rochester Public Schools (RPS) and/or Rochester Public Preschools are closed because of weather conditions, Aldrich is also closed.
- If RPS has a 2 hour late start or RPS morning preschool is canceled, Aldrich morning sessions will be canceled. This includes the Early Bird program. School will open at 11:35am for Lunch Bunch and for Full day students.
- If RPS closes early or RPS afternoon preschool is canceled, afternoon sessions and Kids Club at Aldrich will be canceled.
- If RPS Preschool Age Child Care (PACC) is closed, Kids Club at Aldrich will be canceled as well.
- There are many ways to find out if we will be closed due to weather. They include: local news websites and television channels (KTTC, KAAL, KIMT), the Aldrich website at [www.aldrichschool.com](http://www.aldrichschool.com) or the Aldrich Facebook Page. Always use your own judgment about driving and the weather situation. If you are not comfortable driving, feel free to stay home.

## Clothing:

- Please make sure your child has a **hat, mittens, snow pants, boots** and a **warm coat**.
- It is encouraged to have an extra set of clothes in their backpack for whatever spills or accidents could occur at school. (Now is a great time to exchange the shorts for long pants!)
- Remember to put an extra pair of shoes in your child's cubby to wear inside.
- Label all pieces of removable clothing and footwear.



## Teacher Meals During Conferences

The office staff are coordinating meals for the Aldrich teachers to enjoy during the Parent-Teacher Conference days on Monday and Tuesday, November 7 & 8. This is a great way to say thank you and show our appreciation during these busy conference days! Visit the following link to help:

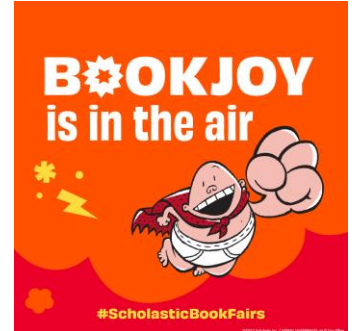
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040d48aea628a0fb6-teacher>

# News from the Board

## It's Almost Time for the Aldrich Scholastic Book Fair!

Our **Scholastic Book Fair** will run **November 8th-10th!** Aldrich School loves our book fair. We love to encourage a love of reading in all of our special friends and the book fair is a great way to get kids excited about books **WHILE** raising funds to help us bring new and updated materials to our very own library! Read on for more information about the fair and how to sign up to volunteer!

The Fair will connect your kids to notable books and inspiring characters—helping them become lifelong readers. We're thrilled to offer an **IN-SCHOOL** book fair this year as well as an **ONLINE** option. The fair will conveniently run during conferences offering you a chance to shop before or after you meet with your child's teacher.



### **In-Person Fair Dates:**

- Wednesday, November 8th: 8:30am to 4:00pm
- Thursday and Friday, November 9 and 10: 8:00am to 4:00pm

**Online Shopping Fair Dates:** Monday, November 7th - Sunday, November 20th |

**Sign-Up to Volunteer!** Parent volunteers determine the success of our fair and we need your help!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E44ABAB2CA3FBC16-44815239-book>

**Set up an e-wallet for your student!** This is a wonderful way for grandparents and other loved ones to contribute to the funds available to your child for the book fair. Easy to set up eWallet funds are immediately available at both the in-school and online book fairs. Visit our bookfair homepage to get started! >>>

<https://www.scholastic.com/bf/aldrichschool>

## RaiseRight (formerly Scrip) Gift Card Sales Coming Soon!

**Buying a gift? Stopping for gas & groceries? Out to dinner? Use RaiseRight cards and SUPPORT ALDRICH!**

**What is RaiseRight?** Families order gift cards to over 750 stores across the United States. When you order gift cards through the RaiseRight program, Aldrich earns a percentage at no cost to you. For example, if you spend \$25 for a Gap gift card, it is worth \$25 to you, but Aldrich gets 14% of the card's value. Funds raised will be directed towards our Outdoor Classroom Upgrade project!



Our RaiseRight gift card order fundraiser will run November 20- December 1, with gift card delivery December 7 & 8 (plenty of time for holiday gift giving)! **You can also choose to have gift cards ship directly to your home!**

Start making your list now of who you will be buying gift cards for this holiday season. Being able to buy all the gift cards in one place is a time saver for you and an easy way to support Aldrich without spending additional money out of your pocket. Thanks for remembering Aldrich for your holiday shopping!

Place your orders online at: [www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com), and use enrollment code: 524F6BB421771. Online orders can be paid for online using a credit card, or you can drop off a check for your order in the office to avoid the processing fee. Paper order forms will also be available. All orders must be placed by Friday, December 1.



# Outdoor Classroom Upgrade Giving Campaign

In response to parent surveys and teacher feedback, the Aldrich Board has planned an exciting addition to the outdoor classrooms, **with an emphasis on natural structures and materials. We are so close to realizing the vision!** An accounting of funds raised to date is below, along with a sample design image (a larger one is on display near the Front Desk).

With nearly three-fourths of the funds already raised, we hope to complete the improvements to coincide with Aldrich's 80th birthday in 2024. However, we need help from the Aldrich community to raise the remaining funds. In celebration of Aldrich's 80 years of learning through play in Rochester, **please consider donating \$80 to help make the outdoor classroom improvements a reality.** Scan the QR code to donate online or drop off a donation with Cheryl at the front desk.

Any donation will get us closer to our goal, so **please give the amount that works for your family.** Attending events, such as the recent afternoon at Sekapp Orchard, will also help. A Giving Tree has sprouted in the entryway- check it out if you are interested in sponsoring a particular piece of equipment!

Thank you for considering a donation that will create a wonderful space for our children, their dedicated teachers, and future Aldrich families.



**SCAN HERE TO DONATE**

**or visit: <https://www.4giving.com/donation/91A5>**

***Please donate to help us reach our goal!***

The total funds required to complete the outdoor classroom improvements is \$35,600. As their parting gifts to Aldrich, two past teachers donated a combined \$10,625 for the outdoor classrooms. The Aldrich Board of Directors has secured a generous grant from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation in the amount of \$12,000.

**With your help our goal is to raise an additional \$12,975, which accounts for roughly one-third of the total project costs. Thank you for your support!**

