



## Finn Academy Reopening FAQ's

*\*please note that the information contained in this document has the potential to change\**

### In-Person Instructional Model

#### Section 1: Getting Started

**What if we selected In-Person learning for my child and change our mind before the commitment period ends?**

We have asked families to make a commitment – the first marking period (September 8<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>, through Nov. 6, 2020) – to ensure we can provide the best learning environment possible. All scholars were eligible for and offered In-Person learning, with a capacity threshold. We cannot accommodate requests to switch instructional models at this time; the only exception to this is if school closes due to COVID-19 and, in those instances, all scholars will participate in Remote Learning for a specific time period.

**Finn's Reopening Plan mainly addresses the first marking period of school. What will happen after that?**

Our plan is intentionally called the Reopening Plan, as it was designed to address how we will reopen school. While the continuation of our plans for Remote Learning are dependent upon public health conditions in the area, we believe it is likely that platform for instruction will continue longer than just the first marking period currently planned. We will keep parents informed of any continuation or termination of this instructional platform at the appropriate time.

**Will the school be hosting a meet-and-greet, walk-through or orientation event before the first day of school?**

Kindergarten orientation sessions are scheduled for the week of August 17<sup>th</sup> and will be limited in group size and length of event. We are working on plans for "meet-and-greets" for other grade levels, either virtually, or in staggered small groups in-person.

**I am choosing to withdraw my children to home school. If I later want to enroll them back in Finn Academy, is this possible?**

We welcome families to re-enroll at any time, but placement will be based on available spaces in the specific grade level and capacity threshold.

#### Section II: Use of Face Masks/Shields

**Will my child be required to wear a mask? Will masks be provided?**

In alignment with health and safety guidelines, we are requiring that scholars wear masks throughout the school day, with the exception of lunch and mask breaks. The school will provide each scholar with two (2) reusable masks at no charge; disposable masks will always be available in case a scholar does not have a mask that day.

**Will teachers and staff be required to wear masks?**

We will require that our teachers and staff wear masks throughout the day, as well.

**Will efforts be made to prevent scholars from bullying or mask-shaming?**

Yes – our code of conduct does not permit bullying of any kind. We take all allegations of bullying seriously, and scholars found to be bullying others will face disciplinary consequences.

**Are there any restrictions on what kind of mask my child may wear at school?**

Yes – masks and face coverings must be cloth and not violate our dress code.

**May my children use a lanyard from home to wear around their neck and connect to their mask to reduce the likelihood it will be lost?**

Yes - you will need to make this purchase yourself, as Finn Academy will not provide lanyards to scholars at this time.

**May my child wear a plastic face shield to school?**

Yes – you will need to make this purchase yourself, as Finn Academy will not provide plastic face shields to scholars. Plastic face shields can be utilized, but must be in addition to a cloth face covering.

**Section III: Temperature Checks and Hygiene Requirements**

**Will you take temperatures upon arrival of scholars and staff? Or before they get on the bus?**

While we recommend that families and staff members engage in a temperature check prior to coming to school, we will also take temperatures before entering the building. Scholars must not come to school if they have a fever of 100.0°F or higher.

**What other symptoms should we be checking before we send our children to school?**

Scholars must not come to school if they have a fever of 100.0°F or higher. If a scholar has a positive or pending test for COVID-19, they must not come to school. If a scholar is living with and/or in regular close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, they must not come to school until that person is well and the quarantine period ends. If a scholar has traveled to a COVID-19 advisory area (as designated by the State of New York) within the past 14 days, they must not come to school until that quarantine period ends. If a scholar has a cough, shortness of breath or recent changes in taste and/or smell, we recommend you contact your doctor's office for guidance before sending your child to school.

**How will you help/encourage my child to practice good hygiene?**

All classrooms will be provided with a sanitizer that is safe for use on hands to ensure a reliable, safe supply. We will distribute information to all staff to assist them in ensuring scholars follow best practices to avoid the spread of COVID-19. This includes allowing scholars time to wash their hands frequently, especially before and after eating. This includes encouraging children to use provided

hand sanitizer and maintain use of their face covering/mask; staff and scholars will also be trained on proper respiratory hygiene.

**Will you be ensuring all sinks have hot water for hand washing?**

No – hot water is not needed, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for effective hand washing. Water at any temperature is effective. What is required in order to effectively wash your hands is water at any temperature, soap, and spending at least 20 seconds thoroughly lathering your hands before rinsing them.

**May my child wear plastic gloves to school?**

Yes – you will need to make this purchase yourself, as Finn Academy will not provide plastic gloves to scholars.

**Section IV: School Cleaning Provisions**

**What extra steps will you take to keep school clean?**

The CDC provides Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection with specific guidance for schools along with the Cleaning and Disinfection Decision Tool to aid in determining what level of cleaning and/or disinfection is necessary. School wide cleaning must include classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, libraries, playgrounds, and busses transporting Finn Academy scholars. Throughout the day, special attention will be given to high touch areas; disinfection will take place in all spaces, each night, with new equipment purchased by the school.

**Will outside groups or events be permitted to use the school building?**

No. Our building is currently unavailable for outside usage.

**Section V: Classroom Provisions and Social Distancing**

**Will scholars share supplies or keep their own?**

Scholars will be encouraged to use their own supplies as much as possible. Some supplies, such as a classroom set of tools or equipment like laptops, will continue to be shared, and will be sanitized as is possible and appropriate.

**When will school supply lists be posted?**

We will provide grade level school supply lists within the next week or so, via email and website.

**What social-distancing measures will you have in place in classrooms?**

When possible, we will move desks apart and use other common-sense practices; we will work to consistently maintain six feet of distance between scholars or six feet of distance between scholars and staff.

### **Will scholars still change classes?**

We will be significantly limiting classroom changes and movement throughout the school building.

### **How many scholars will be in my child's in-person class?**

We are still readjusting class lists based on final instructional model selections. Based on parent responses, we anticipate over 25% reduction of scholars in the building for in-person instruction. That does not equate to a 25% reduction in scholars in each classroom, as these scholars are spread across grades, but all classes are reduced in size.

## **Section VI: Scholar Transportation and Social Distancing**

### **What extra steps will you take to keep buses clean?**

All buses which are used every day must be cleaned/ disinfected once a day. High contact spots must be wiped down after the am and pm run depending upon the disinfection schedule. (For example, some buses might be cleaned between the am and pm runs while other buses may be cleaned/disinfected after the pm run).

### **What social-distancing measures will be used on school buses?**

Bus capacity will be reduced to allow for proper social distancing on the buses. We will also use assigned seating, as needed, to improve safety, as well as loading and unloading efficiencies.

## **Section VII: School Meals and Social Distancing**

### **Where will my child eat lunch?**

All scholars will eat breakfast, lunch, and snack (as necessary) in their classrooms. Breakfast will be picked up on the way into the building in the morning, and lunches will be delivered to classrooms; no scholars will need to travel through the Food Service line until further notice.

### **Will water fountains be in use?**

No. All water fountains will not be accessible. We are exploring installing water bottle filling stations. Water bottles will also be provided in the individual classrooms. Scholars are encouraged to bring their own water bottle for use during the day.

## **VIII. Classroom Provisions, School Events and Social Distancing**

### **Will my child still participate in specials (i.e., art, music, fitness)?**

We will continue to offer all of these classes, but are still discussing the schedule and location, in order to limit cross-contamination and movement throughout the building.

**Will my child still have outdoor recess?**

Yes; we are working within our schedule to reduce the number of classes at recess at the same time. Recess activities will be more structured to limit exposure and close contact.

**Will there still be special events like Community Circle?**

We will not hold any large indoor events during the first marking period. This will be revisited prior to the start of the second marking period. The school will continue to creatively think how we can incorporate Community Circles and recognition ceremonies in smaller groups and settings, or through virtual/remote settings.

**Where will my child go after he or she arrives at school?**

Upon arrival, scholars will go straight to their classroom. We will not be able to permit scholars to gather in groups in hallways or other common areas before school begins.

**Will my school offer after-school clubs, extra-curricular activities and athletics?**

Unfortunately, we will not be offering any after school clubs or activities during the first marking period.

**Will field work be possible?**

We will not sponsor any field work during the first marking period. This will be revisited prior to the start of the second marking period. We will continue to welcome experts to engage with our scholars virtually.

**Will I be permitted to walk my child inside the building to their classroom?**

No. This will not be permitted -- not even on the first day. We know this is a favorite tradition for many families, but it cannot be permitted this year. We will have meet-and-greet or walk-through opportunities with staggered schedules, so scholars who are starting school for the first time and/or starting at a school that is new to them will have the opportunity to see their classroom and main areas **before** the first day of school. As always, during the first days of school, we will have school staff stationed at each entrance, and throughout the building, to help scholars walk to their classrooms.

**Will I be permitted in the front office to bring my child in late, sign my child out, drop something off for my child, attend a meeting, etc.?**

Yes, but before being permitted to enter a building, all visitors must answer a series of health screening questions; upon entering the foyer, visitors must submit to a temperature check. Anyone whose questions indicate potential exposure to COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the building; anyone whose temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will not be permitted to enter the building. If you do not pass these requirements and need to pick up your child because he or she is sick, a staff member will come outside to bring you your child. If you know you will not pass these requirements, we ask that you do not come to the school.

**Will volunteers be allowed at school?**

Volunteers will be allowed, but opportunities will be adjusted and/or limited using common sense to ensure social distancing as much as possible. We appreciate all of our volunteers and want them to stay as safe as our scholars and employees. Before being permitted to enter the building, volunteers must answer a series of health screening questions; upon entering the foyer, volunteers must submit to a temperature check. Anyone whose answers indicate potential exposure to COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the building; anyone whose temperature is 100 degrees or higher will not be permitted to enter the building.

**Will you still use substitute (guest) teachers?**

Yes – we have an outstanding pool of per diem guest teachers. All guest teachers, upon arrival at the school, will be asked to answer a series of health screening questions and must submit to a temperature check. Anyone whose answers indicate potential exposure to COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the building; anyone whose temperature is 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will not be permitted to stay in the building.

**What will the attendance policy be for this school year?**

The attendance policy will remain unchanged. Scholars who are out due to illness will continue to have the opportunity to make up work without academic penalty. Scholars who are confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 and must quarantine and scholars who have been exposed to COVID-19 and must quarantine will be granted "Excused Absences". If you think your child is showing signs of possible COVID-19 infection (please see the Centers for Disease Controls and Prevention's information posted online at <https://bit.ly/CDCcovidinfo20>), you should keep your child home from school and contact your child's pediatrician or physician. An absence for this reason also will be considered an "Excused Absence" with the opportunity to make up work without academic penalty.

**Will there be attendance incentives or awards this school year?**

No attendance incentives or awards will be permitted at Finn Academy for the 2020-21 School Year.

**Will any non-parent visitors be allowed at school?**

Non-parent essential visitors, including but not limited to Department of Family and Children Services and Department of Juvenile Justice caseworkers, will be restricted to front offices. Before being permitted to enter a building, all visitors must answer a series of health screening questions; upon entering the foyer, all visitors must submit to a temperature check. Anyone whose answers indicate potential exposure to COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the building; anyone whose temperature is 100.4 or higher will not be permitted to stay in the building.

**IX. Potential COVID-19 Exposures at School****If my child starts running a fever at school, what will happen? And what about my child's siblings?**

Your child will be sent to a staffed isolation room; you will be contacted so you can immediately pick your child up from school. Siblings will also be evaluated for symptoms. If the siblings are not running a fever or demonstrating any symptoms, they will be allowed to stay at school.

**What happens if a scholar or employee at my child's school tests positive for COVID-19? Will I be notified if/when this happens?**

Any Finn Academy scholar or employee who tests positive for COVID-19 must stay home from school under quarantine. The Department of Public Health (DPH) will instruct the scholar's parents and the employee on proper next steps. Finn Academy will be notified by DPH as to when the scholar or employee may return to school. DPH, in coordination with Finn Academy, will conduct contact tracing and notify anyone whose contact with the scholar or employee requires them to stay home and quarantine. If a scholar or employee tests positive, as soon as Finn Academy is notified by DPH, Finn Academy will send a notification by email to all employees and the parents of all scholars at that school; this notification will not include information that would specifically identify the scholar or employee, per federal privacy laws.

**If there is a case in my child's classroom, will we all have to quarantine for two weeks? for each case?**

The Department of Public Health (DPH) determines when quarantine is necessary on a case-by-case basis. Instructions from DPH on whether quarantine is needed and for how long will be included in the Finn Academy notification by email to all employees at that school and the parents of all scholars at that school.

**How many cases will be the "tipping point" for school closure?**

Finn Academy will follow the Department of Public Health's guidance on when to close a school. When considering quarantines and possible closures, we will look at closing individual classrooms before we consider closing the entire school.

The Leadership Team will work closely with the Health Department to determine the appropriate time for closure of in-person activities under the following circumstances:

1. Infection rate within the school, or within the local community.
  2. Absentee rate trend for scholars.
  3. Absenteeism of essential personnel to the extent that it creates a health and safety concern or prevents the school from complying with mandates.
- At closure, the School will engage in its remote learning program.

**If I hear of a family or employee who has COVID-19 or has been in contact with someone who has, whom should I notify?**

Please contact the Chemung County Department of Health.

**Will families who travel during school breaks be allowed to come back in person without a quarantine period?**

If a scholar has traveled to a COVID-19 advisory area within the past 14 days, they must not come to school until that quarantine period ends.

## Remote Instructional Model

### 1. Getting Started

**What if we selected Remote learning for my child and change our mind before the commitment period ends?**

We have asked families to make a commitment – the first marking period (September 8<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>, through Nov. 9, 2020) – to ensure we can provide the best learning environment possible. We cannot accommodate requests to switch instructional models at this time; the only exception to this is if school closes due to COVID-19 and, in those instances, all scholars will participate in Remote Learning for a specific time period.

**If school closes due to quarantine and switches to Remote learning, will my child stay in the same class?**

Unless absolutely necessary, we will not change the arrangements for your child during the initial commitment period of Remote learning.

**When will I know my child's schedule for Remote Learning and who my child's teacher(s) will be?**

We are in the process of building and refining class lists and schedules and will notify families as soon as possible. Due to the considerable work required to reallocate resources, we have had to extend our timeline for this.

**Will there be a different school supply list for those who choose Remote Learning?**

Yes – this will be individualized by teacher and by class. You will receive more information from your child's teacher in as timely a manner as possible.

## Section II: Expectations for Teaching and Learning

**How much work will my child be expected to do each day? How does it compare to what we did in the spring?**

Scholars will have more structured schedules and experiences for remote learning than they did in the spring. There will be a blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning expectations for scholars. These time expectations may be dependent on specific grade levels and teachers. Specific deliverables and assessments will align with the in person instructional model as much as possible.

**How much time will my child's teacher(s) spend online with the class?**

All Remote Learning instruction will use a combination of independent online work by the scholar and real-time instruction with the teacher. The amount of real-time instruction will vary based upon the content being taught, as well as the grade level, age and need of the individual scholar.

**When will my child's teacher(s) be available if we have questions?**

Remote Learning teachers will establish communication systems and opportunities for additional support. These will include office hours and online platforms for you to be able to connect with the



teachers as needed. We also ask families to have reasonable expectations for how quickly teachers will be able to respond to your emails requesting assistance.

**When we did Remote Learning in the spring, the teachers extended deadlines and allowed my child to redo work. Will that still happen?**

Assignments will be due in the same timely fashion for remote learning scholars as they are for in-person scholars. Grading expectations for remote learning scholars will align with in-person scholars as much as possible. All scholars, remote or in-person, will have consistent expectations for completion of expected assignments communicated by the teacher. . As always, teachers will take into account individual scholar situations for any flexibility with deadlines and assignment completion.

**What lessons plans will teachers be using for Remote Learning?**

Remote Learning teachers will be modifying the same lessons they would otherwise be teaching in person and teaching scholars through Google Classroom and Google Meet video-conferencing. Scholars will participate in core academic lessons – i.e.: reading, writing, math; special area work and activities (art, fitness, etc.) also will be offered. Scholars will be expected to attend scheduled Google Meet classes, complete assigned work, and be an active participant in the virtual learning environment.

Specialized services such as Special Education, ELL, and 504's will be delivered in the virtual learning environment for Remote Learning scholars, with the expectation all scholars attend virtual sessions and complete all assignments as communicated by the assigned teacher.

**Will my child continue to receive Special Education services?**

Yes. Your child's special education teacher/case manager will be notified of your Remote Learning selection and contact you to discuss how services will be provided.

**How much interaction will my child have with Remote Learning teachers?**

Scholars will have daily interaction with teachers through Google Meet video-conferencing; the minutes will vary by grade and by class. Some of this video-conferencing will be with the class as a whole, while some will be one-on-one for individual instruction and remediation.

**What time will my child's Remote Learning classes begin and end?**

Scholars' daily interaction with teachers through Google Meets video-conferencing will be scheduled by the individual teacher and only will take place during the regular school day. They will have independent work to do that can be done at their own pace as long as it is completed by the deadline set by the teacher.

**What will the attendance policy be for Remote Learning?**

It will be the same as for In-Person Learning. Scholars who cannot participate in their learning for the day due to illness will continue to have the opportunity to make up work without academic penalty. Appropriate notification of illness/absence must still be provided to the grade level teacher and our Registrar.

### Section III: Participation in School Activities and Accessing Services

#### **Can my child participate in special events at the school?**

We will not hold any large indoor events during the first marking period of school. This will be revisited prior to the start of the second marking period, as will the opportunity for Remote Learning scholars to participate.

#### **Can my child go on field work if any are scheduled?**

We will not sponsor any class field work during the first marking period. This will be revisited prior to the start of the second marking period, as will the opportunity for Remote Learning scholars to participate. Remote Learning scholars will continue to have the opportunity to participate in virtual sessions with experts, as scheduled by their teacher.

#### **Can my child use the counseling services?**

Yes. If you or your child need the school counselor's assistance, you will be able to email or call the counselor for support, and also may, by call or email, request a Google Meet appointment or an in-person appointment; if you make an in-person appointment, it will be during school hours, and there likely will be other scholars and staff in the immediate area.

#### **What about school picture days or being included in the yearbook? How will we be included?**

Yes. A scholar can participate in school picture day. No special protocols will be put in place for Remote Learning scholars; there will be other scholars and staff in the picture area at the same time.

### Section IV: Technology Support and School Nutrition

#### **We don't have a computer and/or access to internet connectivity. Will Finn Academy assist us?**

Yes – Finn Academy will provide a device to any Remote Learning scholar in need. Families are expected to abide by the loan agreement at all times. The school will also work with families to assist with securing a hotspot or broadband internet connectivity. Remote Learning families must complete the "Remote Instruction Needs" form so that the school can set up support.

#### **Will my child still be able to have school meals?**

Yes, all families participating in remote instruction will still have access to school meals. More information will be forthcoming re: pick up times and schedules.