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Our Mission:

At Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School, we will engage students deeply in the arts, music, and in daily fitness. We will emphasize the importance of college attendance. We will nurture the character traits of leadership, scholarship, reflection, kindness, perseverance, and aspiration. We will strategically partner with community resources to be a model of best practice in education and to make a measurable difference in student learning. We seek to increase the number of college and career ready students our community launches into a life and a future—by better preparing them for demands and rigor of high school.

Board of Trustees:

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Leadership Team:

Maggie Thurber  Head of School
Aimee Ciarlo  Director of Culture & Academics, Primary (K-1)
Katelin Woods  Director of Culture & Academics, Elementary (2-3)
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Note: The table above represents the calendar for the years 2015 and 2016.
Our History:

Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School is a tuition-free public charter school authorized with the State University of New York’s Charter Schools Institute. Approved for charter in 2014, Finn Academy will open in August 2015 for scholars in grades K-3, growing each year until fully K-8. Dedicated to a class size of 18 scholars per class, Finn will also feature an integrated, project-based curriculum through a partnership with Expeditionary Learning. The Board, Leadership Team, and Staff are committed to a vision of educational excellence for all scholars. Finn Academy is committed to closing achievement gaps for the most at-risk scholars, and dedicated to a program that is differentiated for both advanced and struggling learners.

Core Values:

Leadership – I believe in being a model scholar.
Scholarship – I believe in achievement and higher learning.
Reflection – I believe in the importance of reviewing my learning and behavior.
Kindness – I believe in showing compassion and empathy towards others.
Perseverance – I believe in never giving up.
Aspiration – I believe in setting goals and high expectations for myself.

Expeditionary Learning:

Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School is an Expeditionary Learning school. EL is a comprehensive school design in place in approximately 160 elementary, middle, and high schools around the country. The model emphasizes intellectual growth, high quality student work, and character development through active pedagogy. With its roots in Outward Bound, the EL approach pushes students to develop skills and knowledge that allow them to succeed at ambitious, collaborative real-world projects.

As an Expeditionary Learning school, our students spend most of each day embarking on purposeful, rigorous learning expeditions. Learning expeditions are in-depth studies of a single theme or topic, generally lasting twelve weeks, and are the core of the curriculum. Each expedition revolves around curriculum-related projects and performances, which often take students outside school to conduct fieldwork.

Our emphasis on educational achievement, community building, teamwork and service, combined with our curriculum framework and content, create a context for students to acquire the knowledge and character traits they need to succeed in middle and high school. They become connected, caring and contributing members of their community.
River Friends:

Finn Academy established an official partnership with The Friends of the Chemung River Watershed, “River Friends”, in September 2013. The River Friends are a not-for-profit corporation formed in December 2009 to preserve and promote the 45-mile-long Chemung River, as well as its tributaries – The Canisteo, Cohocton, Cowanesque, and Tioga rivers. River Friends partners with municipalities to protect these waterways, using them to improve the quality of life, the economy and the natural environment that we reside in. They work to make their rivers easier, safer, and more fun to use and enjoy.

River Friends will work with Finn staff to provide a curriculum that is focused around our local community, its history, resources, and ecosystem. Learning will extend beyond the classroom on a regular basis, providing opportunities for scholars to actively engage in their own learning process, conducting research, collecting data, and participating in discussions and presentations. The River Friends will be essential in providing this instruction throughout the school year, as well as during the Extended Year Summer Experience.

Family Involvement:

Families of Scholars are encouraged to volunteer time and talent to assist in enhancing the school culture and climate at Finn Academy. Volunteer opportunities may include:

- Attending Field Studies
- Assisting in Classrooms
- Demonstrations or Presentations for or Scholars and/or Staff
- School Cleaning Days
- School Events

Specific information is available through the Finn Academy Parent Crew. Families will be contacted when opportunities are available on a cyclical schedule.

Classroom Visits

Family members are encouraged to participate in their scholar’s classroom and learning at Finn. We welcome families to work with our scholars individually or in small groups, assist with lunches and field studies, and read or make presentations to classes. Regular volunteers are required, by terms of our charter, to have a New York State Background Check and Fingerprinting. Please contact the Coordinator of Parent & Community Partnerships to find out more information. We encourage you to reach out to your scholar’s classroom teacher to facilitate a special visit.

School Celebrations and Exhibitions:
Celebrations and exhibitions will be hosted throughout the school year at Finn to share the accomplishments that our scholars experience in their learning. Scholars will perform, recite, present, demonstrate, and exhibit their work to an authentic audience of families, partners, and community members. Dates and locations for these events will be shared by the classroom teacher and also available on our website.

**Volunteer Background Checks**

For the safety of all scholars, chaperones and regular classroom volunteers (those who volunteer more than five (more?? less??) days per year) are required to undergo background checks and adhere to Finn’s volunteer guidelines.

**Communication:**

Multiple modes of communication will be utilized by Finn Academy Staff Members to reach out to families. If a form of communication is preferred, families should relay that information to the scholar’s classroom teacher.

*Wednesday Folder*

Scholars will bring home a weekly communication folder on Wednesdays, with a newsletter and information about upcoming events and important announcements.

*Email*

Staff members at Finn are available through email. All staff members will work diligently to reply in a timely manner to all emails. This can often be the best method to communicate with teachers during the school day.

*School Website*

Finn Academy’s Website will be updated regularly with important information for families, community members, and scholars to utilize and refer to.

*Phone*

*Teacher Availability*
Teachers are available to meet with families outside of school hours, unless specific arrangements have been made.

**School Policies & Procedures:**

**School Hours:**
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM

**Arrival & Dismissal:**
School opens for breakfast at 7:30 AM.
Class starts at 8:00 AM
Dismissal is at 3:15

**Attendance:**
Attendance is essential for school success. Families must provide a written excuse for an absence or tardiness. Excused absences/tardies are illness, medical appointments, religious holidays. Unexcused absences/tardies are vacations, travel, sleeping late.

**Transportation:**
The school district you reside in is required to provide transportation up to 15 miles. To request transportation, The Transportation Request Form needs to be submitted by April 1st for the upcoming school year. This form can be accessed online as well as in the main office.

Finn scholars are representatives of our school and should demonstrate respectful behavior at all times, just as they would at school. Our behavior expectations extend to the bus and misconduct on the bus will result in disciplinary action.

*Bus Disciplinary Action:*

Scholars will receive three warnings for their behavior on the bus. The first warning will result in suspension from school transportation for a day, the second will result in a week suspension from school transportation, and the third will result in being banned from school provided transportation. Special permission situations are decided upon by the school administration.

**Admissions:**

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As a public school, Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School (“Finn Academy”) is open to children who are eligible under the laws of New York State for admission to a public school. The school follows all applicable state and federal laws in admitting students. Finn Academy does not discriminate on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, national origin, religion, or any other rounds that would be unlawful. The school’s application for admission includes the following language: “Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex in admission or the educational program it operates, and is required by federal Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 not to discriminate in such a manner.”

The Application:

Families interested in enrolling their child(ren) at Finn Academy are required to submit a completed application form. The applications are made available at the school’s information sessions, or at the school, and will be mailed home upon a family’s request. The application is fairly simple, requesting basic biographical, contact information, pertinent school records, and proof of residence to determine host district. There are no fees associated with the filing of an application, nor are there any tuition charges for attending the school.

Families that have difficulty filling out the application due to language barriers will be assisted by the staff of the school. To the extent required by law, the application will be translated into other languages as needed.

The First Year:

For the first year of operation, Finn Academy will open admission to children eligible to enroll in grades K-3.

Admissions Timeline:

Each year, Finn Academy will advertise open registration. Interested families will submit applications until a deadline after April 1st established by the school, and which point students will be accepted. If the school receives more applications that allotted spaces by the end of the first round of information sessions, then the school holds a public lottery before April 15th to allocate available slots. In the situation of a lottery, first preference will be given to Elmira City School District Residents and second preference will be given siblings. If fewer applications than spaces available are received during this first round, those students who applied by the first round deadline are admitted to the school. In this case, a second round of information sessions is held in April and early May to allocate any remaining spaces and to establish a waiting list. Information sessions may be held and students may be added to the waiting list on a continuing basis.
Core Values/Positive Acknowledgment:

- Exemplifying character and integrity;
- Volunteering to help the school;
- Taking action to benefit the group;
- Showing courtesy;
- Performing an act of kindness;
- Reinforcing peer-to-peer standards of excellence
- Outstanding effort, achievement, or improvement;

Crew:

As an Expeditionary Learning School, Finn Academy will create Crew structures to build community and caring. Morning crew and closing circles will begin and end each day. A specific crew curriculum, designed to teach, model, practice, and build core character skills - kindness, respect, team building, appreciation, perseverance - will be developed and implemented.

At Finn Academy, “we are crew, not passengers.”

Super Special Subjects

_Art_

Our scholars will learn art through the lens of their expeditions. Art will be an essential piece of Finn’s culture. Scholar work will be displayed gallery style and the idea, “We are all artists” will be essential in helping our scholars expand on their artistic abilities.

_Music_

Music at Finn will be essential in building school culture, demonstrating learning, and celebrating success. Instrumental and vocal music will be utilized to learn new content, but to also share information with an authentic audience.

_Fitness/Dance_
Each day scholars will participate in either Fitness or Dance. We believe that all scholars can benefit from the opportunity to be active each day and have made it a priority to ensure that our schedule fits this specific design element.

Our Fitness/Dance program will incorporate the classroom curriculum and skills that scholars are focusing on. We encourage our scholars to wear or bring appropriate shoes to participate in these activities daily.

Emergency Situations:
It is imperative that parents/guardians provide the school with updated information, including emergency contacts and all contact phone numbers, to ensure that someone can be reached in the event of an emergency. Please notify the school as soon as possible if any changes occur during the school year. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide transportation in the event of an illness or other emergency.

Emergency Closings:
In the event that weather, or other circumstances, require the cancellation of school, the Head of School will notify the major radio stations and TV Stations, post to our Facebook Page, and place a notification on our school website when the school is closed or has a delay. The Head of School will make a decision that is best for the safety of all scholars, Finn will not necessarily close when the Elmira City School District is closed.

Dress Code:
All Finn Academy scholars will wear a uniform and conform to further elements of a Dress Code in order to create a sense of community and to ensure that the scholars are focused on learning at all times. Clothing and accessories that could create disruption or disorder or that do not conform to standards of health, safety, and cleanliness are not allowed and the Administration will maintain the discretion to add to or amend the uniform dress code beyond what is listed below should it prove necessary or prudent. Violations of the dress code may result in disciplinary action pursuant of the Code of Conduct. Scholars who arrive at school out of uniform may also be given substitute items to wear during the school day or will be sent home to acquire the missing items of their attire. Finn Academy will have a supply of supplemental uniform items available for scholars when infractions of the Dress Code occur.

- Head wear may only be worn for religious purposes.
- Writing on exposed skin is not allowed.
- Clothing should be neat, clean, and in good repair. Clothing should not be too tight, loose, short, or too revealing.
Dress code infractions will lead to: parent phone call and parent will have to bring appropriate clothing.

Repeated infractions could lead to consequences from our discipline policy.

Scholars will not be permitted to wear hats/caps or makeup to school or during school (except as part of specific religious observance or on specified special occasions), large or distracting items of jewelry or needlessly oversized clothing (in judgment of the Head of School and/or Administration). Clothing should not be too tight, too loose, too short, or too revealing in any way. Open-toed shoes will not be permitted for safety purposes. Cell phones, hand-held wireless devices, pagers and beepers used or displayed in the school building will be confiscated.

Given the pervasiveness of dress codes and increased availability of appropriate clothing, Finn Academy believes that adhering to the school’s dress code policy generally does not present an undue financial burden on families. All efforts will be made to ensure that affordable options will be suggested abide by the dress code. In the event that a family informs the school that it does impose a financial burden, or the school learns that such is the case for a family, Finn Academy will arrange to provide the scholars with suitable clothing in a manner that alleviates the financial burden.

The scholar dress code at Finn Academy is an important aspect of the school’s culture and climate. Scholars will be shown acceptable and unacceptable situations according to their uniforms, for example un-tucked shirts, pants with holes, and chunky distracting jewelry, so that they are well informed on what is prohibited.

Specific questions regarding the Dress Code can be directed to the Leadership Team.

Homework:

It is our belief at Finn that homework is purposeful and directly connected to the instruction that occurs in the classroom. Homework may be essential in helping scholars improve their skills in specific areas, enhance their understanding of content, or prepare them for upcoming lessons. The classroom teacher will assign homework when they deem it necessary.

Birthdays & Holidays:

We understand and appreciate that our scholars and their families observe a variety of holidays and celebrations.

Families wishing to celebrate their scholar’s birthday are welcome to do so. Arrangements for birthdays should be made with the classroom teacher, keeping in mind that celebrations should not impede on the academic instruction that occurs.

Please utilize the mail to deliver invitations to birthday parties.
Conferences/Promotion and Retentions Information:

Student-Led Conferences

Throughout the school year, scholars will conduct Student-Led Conferences to demonstrate their understanding of their learning targets, their goals, and the academic and character progress they’ve made. Student-Led Conferences will be held twice (???) a year with families and the classroom teacher in attendance. Communication regarding Student-Led conferences will be sent home via the classroom teacher.

Additional Conferences

The Leadership Team is always available to parents. If you wish to schedule a conference with a teacher or a member of the Leadership Team, please call the school or contact the office to schedule an appointment.

Promotion and Retention

Finn Academy will conduct a review of scholars’ progress to determine the readiness of a scholar to be promoted to the next grade. In the event a retention is considered, families will be involved to discuss potential benefits and implications of such a decision. Scholar success and esteem will be the chief determining factors.

Extended Day:

An important aspect to Finn’s daily schedule is the Extended Day Program. Scholars will be required to participate in Extended Day Learning Tuesday – Friday. Scholars will select one choice from each area (Art & Music, Fitness, Service, and Learning) and will be enrolled in an individualized weekly schedule for extended day learning. Instructors will provide instruction in the school building, except for those programs taking place off campus, like skating or swimming. Each group will consist of 8-9 scholars, but scholars will follow their own schedule, not that of their group. The choice menu will be determined on an annual basis.

A sample scholar’s individual schedule will look like:

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<td>Guitar</td>
<td>Obstacle Course</td>
<td>Edible SchoolYard</td>
<td>Language (Spanish)</td>
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Scholars will follow their schedule for one term, and will sign up for menu choices in the next term.
Discipline:

Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School has devised an extensive Discipline Plan that will ensure that scholars and staff are implementing our core values and beliefs at all times while representing Finn Academy. Positive reinforcements and celebrations will promote the core values and beliefs that are instilled in the culture and climate of the Finn Academy community.

Many structures will be in place to reinforce and support the core values and beliefs at Finn Academy. While there are high levels of expectations, there will also be helping hands on deck to support all who learn and work in the school building.

To support teachers and scholars, professional development will be provided to teachers to help them manage distractions and disturbances within the classroom. It is our goal at Finn Academy to ensure that scholars are in the classroom as much as possible to ensure that they are receiving regular, continuous instruction. In the event that a child is removed from the classroom to manage behaviors, they will be sent to the office to reflect on their behavior and establish a plan for returning to class.

The purpose of an office visit is to remove the scholar from an upsetting/difficult situation, help them to acknowledge their behavior, connect their behavior to Finn Academy’s core values, and help them correct the situation and return to the classroom. The planning room also ensures that the rest of the class can receive an undisturbed learning environment. Discipline will also be managed with Class Dojo to document behavior patterns, to diagnose possible triggers for scholars, and to create behavior plans to support scholars.

A disciplinary offence is a violation of the Code of Conduct while the scholar is; at school and/or on school grounds; participating in a school sponsored activity; walking to or from school or a school sponsored event; walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on school provided transportation; or walking to or from, waiting for, or riding on public transportation to or from school or a school sponsored activity. School related disciplinary offences would also include conduct that endangers the health or safety of other students, disrupts school operations or otherwise adversely affects the educational process. In instances when a scholar has been charged with a felony, or has broken city, state, or federal law, the Head of School may determine that the scholars’ continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the school, if the conduct which caused the student to be charged endangers the health or safety of other students, disrupts school operations or otherwise adversely affects the educational process.

Disciplinary offenses result in consequences subject to the discretion of the Head of School or his/her designee(s) and may include demerits, detention, school service/cleaning, loss of school privileges, denial of school-provided transportation, removal from activities, Friday extended detention, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and/or expulsion (certain expulsion may be subject to the discretion of the Board of Trustees as outlined below in “Procedures for Disciplinary Action”). The list of punishable offences is not exhaustive, but provides examples of prohibited conduct. These rules and regulations may be supplemented by teachers’ rules for classes and other school events. Suspended scholars are not entitled to participate in
school activities. In addition, any breaches of state or federal law may be handled in cooperation with the Elmira Police Department or other authorities.

In the event that a consequence is required, a consequence will be selected that corresponds to the severity of the disciplinary offense. Such consequences may include:

- Loss of Classroom or School Privileges
- Call home to Parents
- Parent/Teacher or Scholar/Teacher Conference
- Parent Requirement to Attend Class with Scholar
- Lunch Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Expulsion

*Please request our complete Discipline Policy in the Main Office.

Toys

It is encouraged that you help your child remember that toys, including electronic games and other similar devices, should be left at home. Special circumstances may arise throughout the year that permit such items. The classroom teacher will provide information to families regarding such circumstances.

Health:

School Nurse

When to Keep Your Child Home from School

While we encourage our scholars to attend school every day, if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep them home for the health of the rest of the school:

- A fever of 100°F or higher
- Pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Loose bowel movements
- Vomiting
- Open or draining sores
- Severe coughing
- Rash or hives
• Lice, ringworm, pink eye or any other contagious conditions
A child may return to his/her class with written permission from a medical practitioner after being treated for any contagious illnesses (i.e. measles, whooping cough, strep throat, etc.).

Early Dismissal due to Illness:
In the event that a scholar is send home by the school nurse, or in their absence, the Leadership Team, parents/guardians will be notified by telephone of the illness. We ask that you pick up the child as soon as possible, preferably within the hour. Updated emergency contact information for your scholar is requested in the event that the primary contact is unavailable. It is pertinent that you or your designee can be reached at all times.

If your child becomes injured at school, you will be contacted in the same manner and informed of the injury and any emergency first aid that has been administered. In the event of a serious injury, 911 will be called. The Leadership Team or other staff person will accompany the child to the hospital in the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached. It is again encouraged that emergency contact information be updated regularly to ensure that an authorized designee is notified of such events.

Vision/Hearing Testing:
All new students will be tested by Finn Academy’s school nurse. A review of student immunization requirements and the proper supporting documents shall be completed for all new students. School staff will work with local school districts, and other appropriate authorities to provide these services.

Medication:
Finn Academy will establish a secure, easy to understand, and safe medication delivery system. The Nurse, with support from Administration will communicate to parents, students, and staff the requirements for the administration of medications in the school. Finn Academy will avoid misunderstandings by widely circulating the requirements of appropriate languages. These requirements for the administration of medication in school will be communicated in the student-parent handbook; school publications, inserts with report cards; mailings to physicians and/or local medical societies; and individual parent/student counseling.

• Pharmacies: (1) Only those medications necessary to maintain the student in school and which must be given during school hours will be administered in school. Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day or while participating in school-sponsored activities (field trips, athletics) should comply with all procedures; (2) Any prescribed medication that requires administration through a subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous, or rectal route; or prescribed medications being administered through pumps, tubes, or nebulizers; or oral, topical or inhalant medication needed by non-self-directed students will be given by the nurse. Administration of such prescribed medications will not be performed by the other members of Finn Academy Staff; and (3)
designated staff in the school setting, following assignment and in conjunction with approval by the nurse, may assist self-directed students with the taking of their own oral, topical and inhalant medication. The nurse as well as the school administration will assure that the staff person receives the training and supervision needed to perform these tasks in a safe and effective manner.

- **Physician Orders**: Finn Academy requires written orders from a duly licensed prescriber and written parental permission to administer the medication. All medications, including nonprescription over the counter drugs, shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the student’s health status.

- **Written orders for prescription and nonprescription over the counter medications should minimally include**: (1) Student’s name and date of birth; (2) Name of medication; (3) Dosage and route of administration; (4) Frequency and time of administration; (5) For prn (as necessary) medications, conditions under which medication should be administered; (6) Date written; (7) Prescriber’s name, title, and signature; and (8) Prescriber’s phone number. The school nurse may request additional information, such as self-administration orders, diagnosis, and/or potential adverse reactions, however, medication delivery should not be delayed pending this information, unless such information is essential to the safe administration of the medication.

- **Special Considerations**: Medication orders must be renewed annually or when there is a change in medication or dosage: (1) The pharmacy label does not constitute a written order and cannot be used in lieu of a written order from a licensed prescriber; (2) When a properly labeled medication comes to the health office accompanied by a written order from a licensed prescriber, the following procedure will be followed: (a) Contact parent regarding need for written order from a licensed prescriber; (b) Contact licensed prescriber to obtain verbal permission to administer medication; (c) Request fax or written orders to be received within 48 hours; (d) Contact parent and discontinue medication if written orders are not received in 48 hours; and (e) Document above steps.

- **Parental Responsibility**: (1) A written statement from the parent/guardian requesting administration of the medication in school as ordered by the licensed prescriber is required; and (2) It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to have the medication delivered directly to the health office in a properly labeled original container.

- **Prescription medications**: The pharmacy label must display: (1) Student name; (2) Name and phone number of pharmacy; (3) Licensed prescriber’s name; (4) Date and number of refills; (5) Name of medication/dosage; (6) Frequency of administration; and (7) Route of administration and/or other directions.
OTC Medications: (1) Must be in the original manufacturer’s container/package with the student’s name affixed to the container. The same applies to drug samples; (2) For certain medications, especially controlled substances, standards of best practice include counting the medication upon receipt and periodically thereafter. This is not a legal requirement but constitutes a sound practice when handling controlled substances. Discrepancies should be reported to the parent immediately. The school administration should be informed of any discrepancies when such discoveries occur. Best practice includes close supervision of medication taking; (3) Medications will not be transported daily to and from school. Parents will be advised to ask the pharmacist for two containers, one to remain at home and one to remain at school; (4) Instructions will be left for substitute nurses that are very clear and concise on the handling of all aspects of medication acceptance, handling, delivery and storage; and (5) Education for families regarding Finn Academy’s medication protocols is an ongoing responsibility of Finn Academy.

Medication Administration: (1) All medications will be administered as close to the prescribed time as possible. Given student schedules and compliance with coming to the nurse in a timely fashion, medications accepted for school administration generally may be given up to one hour before and no later than one hour after the prescribed time. However, parents and licensed prescribers will be advised, so that they can advise Finn Academy if there is a time-specific concern regarding administration of the medication. Parents, students, and the nurse will work together to ensure the student receives his/her medication at the appropriate time; (2) If a student fails to come for a dose, the administration will provide support to the nurse, such as an administrator or clerical staff to locate the student. If the medication has not been given for any reason within the prescribed time frame, Finn Academy will make all reasonable efforts to notify the family that day, as the family may need to adjust a home dose accordingly; (3) If students chronically fail to come for medications, the school nurse will contact the parent to address the problem. The licensed prescriber will be informed of the poor compliance, so that the medication protocol can be reviewed and possible adjustments made, i.e., home administration, extended release medication, (4) Ongoing communication and collaboration between Finn Academy and parents will occur to assist students in assuming personal responsibility for their health behaviors; (5) A medication may be changed or discontinued by a written order of the licensed prescriber at any time. If a parent requests discontinuation of a prescribed medication without the prescriber’s order to do the same, Finn Academy will send confirmation to the parent with a copy to the prescriber of Finn Academy’s intention to discontinue the medication on the parent’s request; and (6) When the dose of a medication is changed by a licensed prescriber’s written order and a present request, and the old pharmacy bottle label has not been corrected, the nurse may label the bottle with the correct dose until the new pharmacy labeled prescription bottle is received. The importance of parent compliance with sending a new bottle quickly will be conveyed.

Storage of Medication: (1) No medication will be brought into Finn Academy without the knowledge of the nurse. Procedures that facilitate this practice so that parents and students do not feel the need to hide medication or to circumvent cumbersome procedures will be publicized; and (2) All medications, except as otherwise arranged, will be properly stored and secured within a health office.
cabinet, drawer of refrigerator, as well as a lock to the outside health office door. Controlled substances will always be secured and will never be left open or accessible to the public at any time. Even self-directed students will not be given unsupervised access to controlled substances under the care of Finn Academy. Whenever possible, medication storage units will be secured to the wall or floor, and will not have breakable glass doors. If possible, all medications will be stored in the health office. However, there may be instances when either requests are made by a parent or physician for a student to carry and self-administer medications because of the emerging nature of the health problem or the severity of the health condition.

- Carry and Self-Administer Medication: If the Finn Academy nurse receives a request from a parent and licensed prescriber to permit a student to carry and self-administer her/his own prescribed medication, such decisions will be made on an individual basis and in accordance with the following criteria: (1) Severity of health care problems, particularly asthmatic or allergic conditions; (2) Licensed prescriber’s order directing that the student be allowed to carry her/his medication and self-administer; (3) Parent statement requesting compliance with licensed prescriber’s order; (4) Student has been instructed in the procedure of self-administration and can assume responsibility for carrying properly labeled medication in the original container on her or his person or keeping in school; (5) School nursing assessment that student is self-directed to carry and self-administer her/his medication properly; and (6) Parent contact made to clarify parental responsibility regarding the monitoring of the student on an ongoing/daily basis to insure that the student is carrying and taking the medication as ordered. This contact will be documented.

Any student self-administering medication without proper authorization will be counseled by the school nurse. In addition, the parents will be notified. In all instances, school administration will also be informed. Periodic reevaluation of the effectiveness of the procedure will be instituted.

Emergency Medication: The requirements allowing registered professional nurses to administer agents used in the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis include: (1) following non-patient specific standing orders and protocols authorized by a physician or a nurse practitioner and (2) maintaining or insuring the maintenance of a copy of the standing order(s) and protocol(s) that authorizes them to administer anaphylactic treatment agents.

Non-FDA Sanctioned Requests/Herbal Remedies, Dietary Supplements and Natural Products: Finn Academy will not honor requests for use of herbal remedies, dietary supplements, and natural products as they are not sanctioned by the FDA. Such matters will be explained to the parent whose cooperation will be sought to have such medications administered outside of school. An appropriate notation should be made on the student’s health record. (Sample Charter School Applications)

Allergies:

Please notify the school of any allergies your child may have and provide medication (if any) to prevent any serious allergic reactions. This includes allergies to plants, animals, foods, medicines, and other substances.
For scholars with food allergies, specific plans or instructions should be provided directly to the nurse and classroom teacher to ensure the safety and health of the scholar.

New York State Immunization Records:

Review of Immunization Certificates:

A review of the immunization certificates and/or other proof of immunity are needed at the time of registration of all scholars, inclusive of both new entrants and transfers. The New York State Department of Health (DOH) encourages schools to obtain original documents when possible. If obtained – original documents should be copies, with a copy returned to parents/guardians and the original retained in the scholar’s cumulative health record. If the scholar transfers to a new school, the original documentation will be forwarded to the new school.

Acceptable Documents and Proof of Immunity:

- A certificate of immunization specifying the vaccines administered and the dates of administration, signed by a health practitioner.
- An immunization record issued by NYSIIS or CIR (no signature required) which may be provided by the parent/guardian or can be assessed by designated school personnel
- A copy of an electronic immunization record from another state registry if signed by a health practitioner
- A copy of immunization records from a previous school which includes who administered the immunization agents, the products administered and dates of administration
- A statement verifying history of varicella, diagnosed by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant
- Original laboratory report of positive serological test as defined in 10NYCRR 66-1.1(h) for measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, hepatitis B, and all three serological subtypes of poliomyelitis [poliovirus type 1 (PV1), type 2 (PV2), and type 3 (PV3)] contained in the polio vaccines. A signed note from a health care provider that indicates antibody concentrations are positive will also meet the requirement for serological evidence of immunity for school entrance/attendance.

School Attendance for Partially Immunized/In-Process Scholars:

Scholars who do not have all of the required immunizations for their age, but qualify as a student in process, must be allowed to attend school [10NYCRR 66-1.3(b)]. A student is in process when:

- they have received at least the first dose in each immunization series required by PHL §2164 and have age appropriate appointments to complete the immunization series, according to the catch up schedule of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices required in 10NYCRR 66-1.1(f)(2); or
they are obtaining serological test(s) within 30 days of notification to the parent/guardian of the need for such tests. If a child is obtaining serologic tests, he/she has a total of 30 days to provide test results and if necessary (based on negative test results), appointment dates to begin or complete the vaccine series. Parents/guardians are required to present proof of future appointments such as an appointment card, receipt, or other statement from the provider’s office that includes the date(s) of appointments for completion of the required immunizations or serological test(s). Finn Academy will follow and track such scholar’s immunizations status and follow through on appointments. When determining whether or not a student in process is not meeting the requirements, Finn Academy will consult with the family and make decisions on a case by case basis. Scholars who are not in process, and do not have all of the immunizations required for their age will be excluded.

School Attendance for Non-Immunized Scholars:

Finn Academy allows a grace period of no more than 14 calendar days for students presenting without documentation of receiving any, or an insufficient number of, immunizations or proof of immunity. This grace period may be extended to no more than 30 days for an individual scholar who is transferring from out of state or from another country and can show a good faith effort to get the necessary evidence of immunization (10NYCRR 66-4).

Parents/guardians of scholars who do not meet the immunization requirements and cannot be admitted to school, or permitted to continued attendance, will be provided with:

- A verbal explanation and a written copy of the school immunization policy;
- Written documentation specifying the immunization(s) their child is missing;
- Information on where to obtain the missing immunization(s);

The Chemung County Health Department provides some children with free immunizations. Parents may call the Chemung County Health Department (737-2028) to find out if their child is eligible to receive immunizations there, or if they will need to see their own healthcare provider for these. Parents should bring previous vaccination records when having their child immunized, if available. For more information about health services available through the Chemung County Health Department, call 737-2028.

Health Department Notification:

Finn Academy is required to notify the Chemung County Health Department of any child who is refused admittance or continued attendance due to the lack of immunizations. We must provide them with the name and address of the child and the immunizations that he/she lacks. We also must provide, with the cooperation of our local health department, for a time and place at which the required immunizations may be administered [10NYCRR 66-1.8 (b)(c)].

The Chemung County Health Department is responsible for cooperating with Finn Academy authorities to provide a time and place, within two weeks of exclusion, at which the appropriate immunization(s) may be administered by a health practitioner; or notify the Commissioner of Health
that the required immunizations will not be administered by the Chemung County Health Department or school, and that the cost of doing so by the agents of the Commissioner may be recovered from the amount of State aid the local health authority would otherwise be entitled to [10NYCRR 66-1.9 (a)(b)].

Department of Children and Family Services Notification:

Finn Academy has the right to notify the Department of Children and Family Services after the 14 day grace period of exclusion if the parent refuses to allow the Chemung County Health Department or another appropriate health practitioner to immunize their child, and if no action steps are reported by the parent/guardian for pursuing another education option such as homeschooling.

Special Circumstances:

Homeless scholars are not required to present proof of immunity or immunization in order to be admitted to school, under the Federal Law, the McKinney-Vento Act. A scholar may continue to attend school without the required immunizations if they have an approved medical or religious exemption form on file with the school.

Defibrillator:

Finn Academy, in accordance with §917 of the Education Law, will maintain on-site AED equipment to ensure ready and appropriate access for use during emergencies.

Lice Policy:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) “Head Lice Information for Schools”, “Students diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun.”

With this in mind, Finn Academy will abide by our host district, The Elmira City School District, and adopt their policy regarding lice.

When a student is suspected of having an infestation of head lice, he/she should be referred to the principal or school nurse. The student will be checked privately by the school nurse in order to determine whether or not he/she has head lice. If only nits are found, but no live lice, the child may return to class, and the school nurse will simply notify the parent by phone, and offer information about prevention/treatment of lice, as needed.

If a student is found to be infested with live lice, parents will be contacted by phone and asked to pick up the student. If parents cannot be reached, the student will be given instructions to prevent the spread of lice to others and will return to class. Information on proper treatment of head lice will be sent home with the
child indicating the steps taken at home in order to treat the student and other household items to prevent reinfection. The school nurse may examine the student's siblings, and perhaps a few of their classmates who are close friends/playmates, or others suspected of being infested. Routine head checks of entire classrooms/schools are not done - research has shown that this is not an effective or efficient way to find new cases.

After treatment, students with no live lice may return to school, even if nits are present. However, removal of nits, especially if found within one centimeter of the scalp, is strongly encouraged. This can be helpful later on, if trying to differentiate between reinestation, recurrence, or simply old (dead) nits.

Students may be rechecked by the nurse in a week or two, or if they are scratching/picking at their scalp. If live lice are present, parents will be contacted for pick-up again.

**Special Education:**

**Response to Intervention (RtI):**

The Head of School, Academic Directors, the Counselor, the Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, Reading Intervention Teacher, Classroom Teacher, School Psychologist, any personnel with whom the scholar is experiencing any particular academic and/or behavioral strength or risk, and parents and their invitees, will comprise the RtI Team, which will meet regularly. The RtI Team will support instruction, model strategies, design interventions, practice intervention with scholars, and provide behavior management support and/or instructional resources/strategies that may be necessary to improve learning for the scholar. This assistance will also extend to the scholar’s family.

Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School will comply with the federal Child Find Requirements (34 CFR s.300.125), which require schools to have in place a process for identifying, locating, and evaluating students with disabilities. At the start of the school year, all students enrolled in Finn Academy will take the NWEA MAP assessment and be screened, as required by law, in early literacy skills.

All new students enrolling in Finn Academy after the start of the school will meet with the Leadership Team, which will determine any potential needs, and/or review any existing IEP, for services. Assessments and existing school records will provide information to assist Finn Academy in determining which students have IEP’s, may be English Language Learners, may be below grade level, above grade level, or at grade level. Students who do not have records and who are suspected to be students with disabilities in need of special education will be referred to the Committee on Special Education of the district of residence for formal evaluation, in accordance will all due process guidelines.

Teachers at Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School are expected to differentiate instruction to the meet the needs of all learners. According to the New York State guidance document, appropriate instruction begins with a core of effective research based instruction aligned to state standards, containing formative assessments, and anchored in a philosophy of differentiation to provide access to a high quality education for all students. All students are required to receive an appropriate instruction which includes explicit, systematic instruction in reading fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, and comprehension.
Students also are required to receive mathematics instruction that includes problem solving, arithmetic skill and fluency, conceptual understanding/number sense and reasoning ability. When screening measures identify that a student is in need of interventions and supports, academic or behavioral, Finn Academy will respond according to its RtI plan at the Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 level.

**Identification of Students with Disabilities and other At-Risk Students**

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All new students enrolling in Finn Academy after the start of the school will meet with the Leadership Team, which will determine any potential needs, and/or review any existing IEP, for services. Assessments and existing school records will provide information to assist Finn Academy in determining which students have IEPs, may be English Language Learners, may be below grade level, above grade level, or at grade level. Students who do not have records and who are suspected to be students with disabilities in need of special education will be referred to the Committee on Special Education of the district of residence for formal evaluation, in accordance will all due process guidelines.

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**Field Studies:**

As an Expeditionary Learning School, Field Studies are an integral piece to the learning that takes place at Finn Academy. Field Studies provide our scholars with an opportunity to interact in the community and actively engage in their learning. In the field our scholars will conduct interviews, make observations, collect data, and problem solve in ways that deepens their understanding and fosters their skills as life-long learners. Field Studies have a specific purpose and quality work is the expectation of scholars, just as it is during in-school activities.
Most Field Studies take place at local museums, businesses, and various community resources. On occasion, Field Studies will require our scholars to venture outside of Elmira and will sometimes include overnight stays when resources are not available within our local community. Information regarding these specific Field Studies will be communicated by the classroom teacher. Safety is always a priority of our scholars, if any concerns arise regarding a scholar’s safety or disruptive behavior, a one-to-one chaperone may be required or that scholar may be placed in another classroom while his/her class attends the field study.

A permission slip for field studies will be signed by parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and will apply to all field studies that take place within that school year. Families are responsible for ensuring that pertinent emergency information is updated with the classroom teacher to ensure the safety of their scholar in the event of an emergency.

**FERPA Policies:**

*Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*


FERPA applies to an “educational agency or institution” that receives funds under a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. While an SEA may receive funds from the Department, as a practical matter, FERPA generally would not apply to the records of an SEA. This is because FERPA defines “education records” as information directly related to a “student,” which itself is defined as excluding a person who has not been in attendance at the educational agency or institution. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(4) and (a)(6). Since students generally are not in attendance at an SEA, it follows that FERPA does not generally apply to the SEA. However, FERPA does provide parents with the right to inspect and review education records maintained by the SEA within 45 days of receipt of a request. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(1)(B); 34 CFR § 99.10(a)(2). This includes, for example, State assessments administered by LEAs and maintained by the SEA. The SEA may make the education records available to the parent either directly, by sending them to the LEA for inspection and review, or making other appropriate arrangements. For more information on this provision, see 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(1)(A); 34 CFR § 99.10.

FERPA permits educational agencies and institutions, such as LEAs and their constituent schools, to disclose education records to SEAs and other State educational authorities without a parent’s prior consent under certain conditions. For a review of the exceptions to the general prior consent rule in FERPA, see 34 CFR § 99.31. The most common exception that relates to disclosure to a State educational authority is found in 34 CFR § 99.31(a)(3) and § 99.35.

- The disclosure must be in connection with:
  - Audit or evaluation of Federal or State supported education programs; or
  - Enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements relating to such programs.

- Information collected under this provision must be:
Protected so that information is not disclosed to anyone other than the authorized representatives of the State educational authority (34 CFR § 99.35(b)(1)); and
Destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes listed above (34 CFR § 99.35(b)(2)).

New NCLB Requirement for SEAs

Section 4155 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), 20 U.S.C. § 7165, as amended by the NCLB, requires a State that receives funds under the ESEA to assure the Secretary that no later than January 8, 2004, it “has a procedure in place to facilitate the transfer of disciplinary records, with respect to a suspension or expulsion, by local educational agencies to any private or public elementary school or secondary school for any student who is enrolled or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll, on a full- or part-time basis, in the school.” FERPA provides specifically that an educational agency or institution may disclose education records, without parental consent, to a school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, subject to conditions set forth in 34 CFR § 99.34. FERPA also allows disclosure of appropriate information regarding specific disciplinary actions to teachers and school officials, including those in other schools, who have legitimate educational interests in the behavior of the student. See 34 CFR § 99.36(b).

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)


PPRA applies to the programs and activities of an SEA, LEA, or other recipient of funds under any program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It governs the administration to students of a survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight protected areas:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
3. sex behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent; or
8. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

PPRA also concerns marketing surveys and other areas of student privacy, parental access to information, and the administration of certain physical examinations to minors.

The rights under PPRA transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

LEAs must provide parents and eligible students effective notice of their rights under PPRA. The notice must explain that an LEA is required to obtain prior written consent from parents before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the eight protected areas listed above, if the survey is funded
in whole or in part by Department funds. For surveys that contain questions from one or more of the eight protected areas that are not funded in whole or in part with Department funds, LEAs must notify a parent at least annually, at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate date(s) of the survey and an opportunity to opt his or her child out of participating. LEAs must also notify parents that they have the right to review, upon request, any instructional materials used in connection with any survey that concerns one or more of the eight protected areas and those used as part of the educational curriculum.

PPRA requires LEAs to work with parents to develop and adopt policies on the following items unless the LEA or SEA had established comparable policies on or before the date of enactment of NCLB on January 8, 2002:

- The right of parents to inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to students and the procedure for granting a request by a parent for such access.
- Arrangements to protect student privacy that are provided by the LEA in the event of the administration of a survey to students containing one or more of the eight protected items of information noted above (including the right of parents to inspect, upon request, a survey that concerns one or more of the eight protected items of information).
- The right of parents to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for students, and the procedure for granting a request by a parent for such access.
- Administration of physical exams or screenings of students;
- The collection, disclosure, or use of personal information (including items such as a student’s or parent’s first and last name, address, telephone number or social security number) collected from students for marketing purposes, or to sell or otherwise provide the information to others for marketing purposes, including the LEA’s arrangements for protecting student privacy in the event of collection, disclosure, or use of information for these purposes.
- The right of parents to inspect, upon request, any instrument used in the collection of personal information for marketing or sales purposes before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student and the LEA’s procedure for granting a parent’s request for such access.

LEAs must notify parents of their rights under PPRA and of these policies at least annually and at the beginning of the school year. LEAs must also notify parents within a reasonable period of time if any substantive change is made to the policies.

In addition, an LEA must “directly” notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys listed below and provide an opportunity for parents to opt their child out of participation in the specific survey or activity. An LEA may make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the LEA has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. Thereafter, parents should be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. A model specific notification for use by LEAs is attached and may also be obtained on the Web site noted at the end of this guidance. LEAs must offer an opportunity for parents to opt their child out of participating in the following activities:
● The administration of any survey concerning one or more of the eight protected areas listed above if it is not funded in whole or in part with Department funds. (LEAs must obtain active consent, and may not use an opt-out procedure, if the survey is funded in whole or in part with Department funds.)

● Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing purposes, or to sell or otherwise provide the information to others for marketing purposes.

● Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is 1) required as a condition of attendance; 2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and 3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students. This law does not apply to any physical examination or screening that is permitted or required by State law, including physical examinations or screenings permitted without parental notification.

NCLB does not preempt applicable provisions of State law that require parental notification. Also, requirements concerning activities involving the collection and disclosure of personal information from students for marketing purposes do not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for or to students or educational institutions, such as the following:

1) College or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment.

2) Book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products.

3) Curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools.

4) Tests and assessments used by elementary schools and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students.

5) The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities.

6) Student recognition programs.

An SEA or LEA may use funds provided under part A of title V of the ESEA to enhance parental involvement in areas affecting the in-school privacy of students, such as reimbursement for costs associated with this direct notification.

The Department will issue regulations to reflect the changes in FERPA and PPRA. The Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) in the Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. The address and telephone number are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920
(202) 260-3887