



Elm Community

Charter School

Family Handbook

2018 - 2019

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Dear Elm Community Families,

We are thrilled to welcome you into the Elm Community for the 2018-19 school year! As we embark on the school year together, this handbook serves to inform you of the policies that ensure our classrooms are safe, joyful, productive centers of learning. As partners in your child's educational journey, we are committed to creating an environment that allows your child to thrive.

Our goal is to support each one of our students in forming their own identity, seizing **any** opportunity, and shaping the world around them. To accomplish this goal is no small feat and will require the cooperation and dedication of everyone: students need to arrive to school on time everyday with their homework completed, ready to learn and participate, and parents need to support their children, as well as collaborate with teachers, to best support the learner.

Please read the handbook and use it as a reference throughout the year. If you have any questions about its contents, feel free to contact the Main Office.

Welcome again to the Elm Community! Let's dream big and create together!

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Priscilla Walton", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Priscilla Walton
Founder & Principal

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Parent Responsibilities

Parent Contract

The Elm Staff is dedicated to providing excellent and tailored instruction to each of our students. We have all signed and agreed to pool our expertise, skills, and time in ensuring that all students at Elm are met each day with positive energy, well-planned teaching, and social emotional support. But we know that providing an excellent education cannot happen without the families. Thus, Elm asks the parents to also sign a contract, dedicating their best to the following:

- I will teach and model a posture of learning and a positive attitude toward challenges for my child.
- I will ensure that my child attends school everyday, adhering to the school calendar.
- I will bring my child to school on time each and every day, understanding that each minute of instructional time is sacred and important.
- I will notify the school of an excused absence (e.g. doctor’s visit) no later than the arrival time on the day of absence and send my child with a note when s/he returns to school.
- I will ensure that my child is picked up everyday from school on time, respecting the staff’s own personal schedules.
- I will regularly and carefully read all information provided by Elm Community Charter School.
- I will provide all necessary documents for Elm Community Charter School to provide a safe environment for my child, including medical documents, contact information, and any necessary updates.
- I will communicate with Elm Staff in a timely manner, returning calls or documents within 48 hours.
- I will ensure that all homework, especially reading logs, are completed each night and turned in on time.
- I will treat all members of the Elm Staff with respect and dignity, expecting the likewise.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Required Forms

Most of the information we need to ensure the health and safety of your student is now collected electronically through your School Mint account. Please make sure to keep all this information current and up to date at all times. Blank copies of these forms are available upon request.

Enrollment Checklist:

- Two Proofs of Residence (dated within the last 60 days)
 - Utility Bill
 - Paystub
 - Lease agreement
 - Property tax bill
 - Any federal or state document with name/address
- Birth Certificate
- Copy of Immunizations
- Copy of Testing/Data results (only applicable to students entering first grade)
- Copy of most recent IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) Only applicable to students receiving services

Communication

As an Elm Parent or guardian we ask that you:

- Keep your contact information up-to-date;
- Return any of our calls or teacher communication within 48 hours;
- Read any notices to stay up to date on field trips, homework, and teacher concerns;
- Call or email the Main Office, your child's teachers, or the school leadership team whenever you have any questions or thoughts! We are glad to help!

We are committed to building strong relationships with our families. If we do not pick up the phone, please leave a message and we will return your call within 24 hours or, if over the weekend, by Monday afternoon.

Main Office Number: 347-474-3288

Main Fax: 347-474-3298

Main Email: info@elmcharterschool.org

Who Can Answer my Questions?

Instructional Team		Operations Team	
Priscilla Walton <i>priscilla.walton@elmcharterschool.org</i>	Kayla Cobb <i>kayla.cobb@elmcharterschool.org</i>	Marie Lucas <i>marie.lucas@elmcharterschool.org</i>	Yoel Jorge <i>info@elmcharterschool.org</i>
What do I need to do to ensure my child gets the related services he or she needs?	How is my child performing academically? Can I see a progress report?	How do I apply or register for the school?	Where can I update my contact information?
I am concerned about one of the friendships my child has in the classroom. I do not think it is healthy.	I am concerned about my child's academic progress. Can I sit down with the leaders and teacher?	Does my child qualify for bussing?	I would like to schedule an appointment with the school leaders.
What types of academic intervention is my child receiving?	What assessments will my child take? How often will my child be assessed?	Does Elm provide related services such as Speech or OT?	Where can I sign up for the After School Program? Can my child join right away?
How is my child being challenged in the classroom?		General Concerns: After School School Food Program Attendance	

Homework

At Elm, we believe homework is an essential routine and habit that allows students to practice the discipline of learning. Starting in Kindergarten, students will receive homework that reinforces content learned in class. One of the most essential components of our homework is the reading log. We believe that even at this young of an age, students can take ownership over their reading and develop a love for it through consistent and sacred reading times at home.

You can help your child with this habit by reading with them, creating a space in the house where they can read undisturbed, or encouraging them to read to you!

In general, you will find that homework at Elm includes:

- Parents reading aloud to students: 6 books a week
- Students independently reading: 15 minutes a day
- Written Activities: 10 minutes a day

Attendance

We expect students to come to school every day for the entire day. At Elm, we believe every minute of instruction counts, and our teaching staff takes this seriously. Elm students' have a jam packed day of reading, art, math, science lab, and music (just to name a few!), and our teachers plan each minute. We expect parents to do their utmost to bring their child to school on time.

In the event that absences, latenesses, or early pickups do occur, we ask that you kindly call or email the Main Office by arrival time. Absences can be either excused or unexcused, as set forth in the chart below:

Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences
Illness verified by a doctor's note.	Routine doctor's appointments. Please schedule this outside of school hours.
Death of a close family member, verified by a program or newspaper clipping.	Family Vacation
Court appearance that requires the child's attendance, verified by court document.	Parent/Guardian Illness
Observance of a religious holiday	Problem with transportation or bad weather

Ultimately, we know that a child who is regularly absent from school falls behind. In the event of repeated absences, tardies, or early pickups, the School will contact parents/guardians to meet and discuss strategies that will help their child come to school on time for the entire day.

Uniforms

At Elm, we believe that our core values of community, identity, and creativity, are not truly expressed through a strict uniform dress code. Elm students will not be required to attend school in a uniform, and families will instead be provided with the below expectations and parameters on appropriate school attire through our **mandatory school dress code**. Parents will be called to bring a change of clothes if students are not in compliance with the dress code.

Clothing

- Students must arrive to school with clothing that is clean.
- Any skirts or dresses worn must be knee length or longer.
- Tank tops are not permitted.
- Clothing may not contain any inappropriate words or phrases.
- Visible undergarments, midriffs, and low necklines are not permitted.
- In cold weather (<35 degrees Fahrenheit), students are expected to come to school with a warm coat.

Footwear

- Students will be expected to wear appropriate footwear daily. Shoes that are not appropriate for school include: rain boots, flip flops, or slip on shoes.
- Students will be allowed to change footwear upon arrival, should they need to.

Jewelry and Accessories

- Students will be asked to remove any disruptive jewelry or accessories

Head Coverings

- ❑ Students will not wear hats or head coverings of any kind, with an exception for those worn for religious or cultural purposes.

Make Up

- ❑ Students are not permitted to wear makeup

Core Features

Mission

As a school seeking to invest in Queens long-term, **our vision is to see every child in Elmhurst discover their passions, talents, and power to enrich their community.** We believe that in order to truly invest in this community's growth and development, we must aim high, committing to reaching every child that walks through our doors.

Thus, **our mission is to cultivate student leaders with the character and capacity to form their own identity, seize any opportunity, and shape the world around them through integrated studies and collaborative learning.**

Our goal is to provide a rigorous and holistic academic program that will enable our students to choose a middle-school program of their choice.

Educational Program

Elm's academic program is oriented around our students. We are dedicated to cultivating lifelong learners in all our students. That is why we thoughtfully refer to them as learners - whether they are learning how to read, or learning how to solve a problem with a friend - we want to teach our children to constantly take on the posture of learning in life!

Elm's Educational Philosophy & Curriculum Choice

Elm Community Charter School ascribes to an inquiry-based model of teaching and learning, where students' genuine inquiries are the heart of every unit and lesson. Learners will wrestle with real-world concepts through discussions, debates, and project-based tasks. Inquiry-based learning will largely take place during Humanities and STEM, where students are introduced to an interdisciplinary theme or topic (e.g. Friendship and Fairness) and explore it through project-based tasks and field studies. During these blocks, students are taught how to apply foundational literacy, math, and science skills to their explorations. Teachers will also strategically and thoughtfully create groups that are diverse in learner types, levels, and perspectives. With thoughtful and strategic teacher facilitation, learners will work in collaborative learning environments, challenging one another in ideas and divergent solutions. Students will also be taught how to apply social emotional learning skills to conversations and group work.

In order for our inquiry-based curriculum to be successful, Elm's academic program must also include mastery learning blocks: times in the day where explicit instruction occurs in order to teach foundational reading, writing, and math strategy and skills. Our mastery learning blocks will follow skills-based curriculum, direct instruction, and use quantitative standards-based assessments. A typical lesson structure will follow the "I do, We do, You do" progression. During independent work, teachers will be trained to provide differentiated instruction based on student data. Teachers will have the flexibility to provide a variety of instructional methods including small group pull-out, parallel teaching, co-teaching, or stations and centers.

Our academic program can be distilled into two types of curriculum and instruction: inquiry-based learning and mastery learning. Below is a breakdown of when these two types of curriculum and instruction are implemented:

	Inquiry-based Learning		Mastery Learning	
Literacy	Integrated Studies Course: Humanities	45 min. 2x week	SFA/Guided Reading	45 min. 4x week
	Interactive Reading	45 min. 1x week	Reading Workshop	45 min. 2x week
			Writing Workshop	45 min. 2x week
			Language Routines	1x week
Math	Cognitively Guided Instruction	45 min. 4x week	TERC Investigations	45 min. 3x week
			Math Routines	45 min. 1x week
Science	Integrated Studies Course: STEM (EiE)	45 min. 2x week	Science (FOSS)	45 min. 3x week

At Elm, we believe that excellent education encompasses a strong arts curriculum. Thus, integral to Elm’s academic program is our Creative Courses: Doing and Making to Think Differently. Our arts curriculum seeks to create well-rounded students through an excellent and diverse arts program, led by teachers with expertise in the related fields. The goals of these courses are two-fold:

- Provide students with a well-rounded education that includes the arts, physical education, and Spanish, with teachers certified in their respected fields
- Provide opportunities for students to explore and exhibit mastery of content and skills through other modalities

At Elm, we will offer a set of extracurricular courses to provide Elm students with a holistic education that includes non-academic courses, as well as opportunities to learn and express content through traditionally non-academic methods. For example, a student will learn about the relationship between the Mespat Indians and Dutch through historical paintings (during fine arts course). They can show their understanding through an essay as well as a song (during vocal music). Offering a variety of courses will ultimately cultivated well-rounded learners, while also providing student with various access points to rigorous content.

Key Elements

Elm is founded upon 5 key design elements that drive our academic program and school culture:

Collaborative Learning: Elm believes that students learn best when they are challenged to discuss, debate, and form conclusions and opinions with others similar and different from themselves. Collaborative learning ultimately develops students' ability to think critically and creatively, while also building their social skills, confidence, and capability to articulate their ideas clearly. At Elm, our academic program highlights collaborative group work, with rubrics that hold teachers and students accountable to focusing on a group's collaborative learning process rather than solely the product.

Student-Led Integrated Studies: At Elm, we believe that students learn best when they are engaged in interdisciplinary studies and pushed to use higher order thinking skills, adapting their knowledge and understanding to conflicting perspectives and real-world scenarios. Our essential learning periods are our Integrated Studies blocks: Humanities and STEM. During these blocks, students design and conduct their own experiments and projects, explore divergent solutions and conclusions, and show their understanding of content through the development of their own evidence-based conclusions. When students take ownership over their education, it can yield a greater love for learning and academic success.

Data-Driven Small Group Learning: At Elm, we believe students learn best when instruction is tailored to their specific needs. Teachers will receive weekly training on data collection and analysis using standard-based grading and reading leveled assessments. Our schedule also creatively and strategically creates space for smaller class sizes including, splitting classes in half up to 2 hours a day and providing small group instruction up to 3 hours a day. Our staffing plan allows for a lead and associate teachers in every classroom, giving teachers the flexibility to implement a myriad of teaching options including parallel teaching, and co-teaching.

A Focus on Self-Exploration and Self-Awareness: We believe students learn best when they are self-aware, knowing what frustrates and motivates them in order to do their best throughout the day. At the foundation of successful collaborative learning must be social and emotional intelligence. Our schedule devotes considerable time guiding students through their emotions around failure, disagreements, and conflicts. The goal is to cultivate students' self-awareness so that they are able to articulate their feelings,

preferences, and ideas with one another. The development of students' emotional intelligence will be nurtured through Yale's RULER program on Emotional Intelligence.

Creative Courses (Doing and Making to Think Differently): At Elm, we believe students learn best when they can make things with their hands and voices, experiencing topics through the arts. We aim to provide students with a well-rounded education through our Creative Courses, which consist of fine arts, chorus/vocal and music theory, woodwork/shop class, blocks, physical education and organized sports, and Spanish. Our schedule ensures that specials teachers are able to join collaborative planning meetings, as well as facilitate small groups of students who choose to present their knowledge through an arts project rather than an academic performance task.

Academic Calendar and School Day

Academic Calendar: 2018-19

Elm's Academic Calendar marks key events taking place during the school year including:

- No-school days: holidays and professional development days for staff
- Early-dismissal days
- The first and last days of school
- Reading Assessments: Though we have many assessments (projects and quizzes) that take place throughout the year, we think it is important that our families know when your child's reading level will be assessed. Reading levels are an essential indicator that affects their understanding across all projects and classes.
- Please stay up to date with our most recent calendar [here](#).

2018-2019 School Calendar

KEY	
	FIRST/LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
	INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS
	HOLIDAYS (NO SCHOOL)
	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (NO SCHOOL)
	SCHOOL-HOME REFLECTION MEETINGS
	F&P TESTING WINDOWS
	EARLY DISMISSAL (12:30PM Dismissal, every Wednesday)

Jul-18					Aug-18					Sep-18					Oct-18				
M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3						1	2	3	4	5
9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
30	31				27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		

Nov-18					Dec-18					Jan-19					Feb-19				
M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2							1	2	3	4					1
5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	24 31	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31		25	26	27	28	

Mar-19					Apr-19					May-19					Jun-19				
M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F
				1	1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3					
4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10	3	4	5	6	7
11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17	10	11	12	13	14
18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24	17	18	19	20	21
25	26	27	28	29	29	30				27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28

Important Dates	
August 27, 2018	First Day of School
September 3, 2018	No School Labor Day
October 8, 2018	No School Columbus Day
November 22- November 23, 2018	No School Thanksgiving Break
December 24, 2018 - January 2, 2019	Winter Break
January 21, 2019	No School Martin Luther King Jr.
February 18-February 22, 2019	No School Mid Winter Recess
April 19- April 26, 2019	No School Spring Break
May 27, 2019	No School Memorial Day
June 18, 2019	Last Day of School

School Closures/Delayed Openings

Since the majority of our families depend on public bussing, Elm will follow the Department of Education's (DOE) school closing decisions. When inclement weather occurs, please refer to the DOE's decision. Elm will also send out an email and/or text to confirm whether the School will be opened or closed.

Arrival and Dismissal

For safety reasons, all Elm students must always be dropped off and picked up by a parent/guardian, an authorized adult, or an authorized older sibling indicated on the school's pick-up list. Authorized adults and siblings must be come prepared with a photo ID to enter the school building. If parents/guardians wish to update the pick-up list, they must do so in-person at the Main Office at least 24 hours in advance of pick up.

Under no circumstance may students may not travel in a cab, in a van with a driver, or on the bus, subway, or foot without a parent/guardian.

- **Doors Open:** 7:15AM
- **Arrival:** 7:45 AM (*Breakfast begins at 7:15AM*)
- **Dismissal:** 3:30PM

Arrival

Elm will open the school doors each morning at 7:15AM. A school leader or Operations Team member will be present at the front door, where parents/guardians may drop off students at the door. If parents/guardians arrive late, students **MUST** be escorted into the Main Office to sign in. Please refrain from leaving your child at the front entrance or at the corner of the building to walk into the building alone.

Dismissal

With safety in mind, our dismissal will always be conducted in an orderly manner by teachers. Teachers must dismiss each Elm student individually and check the ID of the adult who is picking up the student. Please line up near your child's class and wait patiently to shake the teacher's hand before you pick up your child.

During the first two weeks of the school year, please be patient and allow the necessary extra time for staff to properly and safely dismiss all students. We promise that as we get to know each student and family, dismissal will only become more timely and efficient!

Late Pick Up

It is imperative that you pick up your child from school on time. Our staff work incredibly hard through the day. Picking up your child on time also means that the Elm staff can go home to their families as well. If you are late picking up your child, please come into the Main Office to sign them out. If late pick ups become a pattern, the school leadership will contact you to schedule a meeting to discuss reasons for late pick up and strategies for arriving on time. We greatly appreciate your consideration and diligence in this matter.

School Supplies and Lunch

During the First Day of School, we expect all families to send their students with the mandatory supplies listed in the Student Supplies List (below). If possible, we encourage all families to bring as many of the “optional supplies” listed as well.

Mandatory Supplies: Each student must have their own!

- 4 Wide Ruled Marble notebooks
- 2 Two pocket folders
- 1 pack of sharpened pencils
- 1 pack of dry erase markers
- 1 pack of 24 Crayola crayons or markers
- 1 pack of glues sticks
- 1 change of clothes (in case of an accident)

Optional Supplies: This will greatly help out the classrooms!

- 1 ream of Copy Paper
- 1 pack of sandwich sized Ziploc bags
- 1 pack of gallon sized Ziploc bags
- 1 pack of baby wipes
- 1 bottle of hand sanitizer
- 1 box of tissues
- 1 roll of paper towels

You can also find the complete Supply List [here](#).

At Elm, free lunch is provided through School Foods. For students with dietary restrictions or allergies, parents must provide lunch and snacks as appropriate.

Creative Courses (Specials and Electives)

Similar to many schools, Elm also offers specials and electives we call: Creative Courses, including Fine Arts, Vocal Music, Physical Education and Movement. Different from many schools, we require the same rigor and richness in our Creative Courses program as our Academic Courses. Elm Learners will engage in creative courses five days a week in 45-minute blocks. Just as we will expect students to fully engage and master literacy and math skills, we will also challenge our students to think critically in our creative courses.

After School

Though we are only in our first operating year, we strongly believe in supporting our families with their needs. Thus, Elm will be hosting our own in-school After School Program which will include Homework Help and an elective. The After School Program is:

- **First come, first serve** for fully registered families;
- Runs **Mondays** and **Thursdays** from 3:30PM - 5:30PM; **Wednesdays** from 12:30PM - 2:30PM;
- The After School Program **Schedule**:

Mondays and Thursdays	Wednesdays
3:30 - 4:30 PM Homework Help 4:30 - 5:15 PM Enrichment Class 5:15 - 5:30 PM Student Pick Up	12:30 - 1:30 PM Homework Help 1:30 - 2:15 PM Enrichment Class 2:15 - 2:30 PM Student Pick Up

- **Enrichment Options:** There will be two enrichment options for your child to participate in during the After School Program. We will do our best to match your child to the enrichment option that your child prefers.
- **Lateness Policy:** At Elm, we want to ensure all our staff have sustainable schedules. It is important that families pick up students on time between 5:20PM - 5:30PM and 2:20PM - 2:30PM. Families who pick up their students late (after 2:30PM or 5:30PM) more than 3 times will forfeit their seats. We believe this upholds our core value of Community. We thank you for collaborating with us.
- **Transportation:** There will not be any afternoon bussing for students participating in the After School Program. You must arrange for your child to be picked up at the school when after school ends.

School Day Policies

Open Door Policy

At Elm, we believe in transparency. We invite any parent or guardian to visit the school after the first 6 weeks of school without making an appointment- to come and observe any classroom. The visits are limited to a 30 minute time frame. We ask that you do not disrupt the classroom while it is in session.

Nut Policy

Elm is a nut-free environment. Nut allergies are a medical condition that may cause severe and life threatening reactions. For the safety of all Elm Learners we ask that you adhere to the nut policy and only send nut free snack and lunch.

Junk Food Policy

Elm Community Charter School takes nutritional standards very highly. Elm has a strict policy against any sugary drink or junk food. The school will offer learners a well balanced nutritious breakfast and lunch provided by NYC School Foods Program. We ask that you send learners with nutritional snacks or lunch. Any soda, candy or junk food that a learner brings will be discarded.

Health Policy

At Elm, We ask that if your learner has a contagious illness or any of the symptoms below, please keep your child at home and seek medical care.

Flu

Fever of 99.4% or higher. Please keep your learner home and seek medical attention.

Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)

Redness or swelling of the eyelid. Pink eye (Conjunctivitis) is contagious and commonly clears within 7-10 days. We ask that you speak to your learner about frequent hand washing. Poor hand washing is the main cause of the spread of pink eye.

Body Lice

Tiny insects that live in clothing and bedding that travel to skin several times a day to feed on blood. They are different from head lice and are contacted by skin to skin contact. To prevent body lice routinely check your learner's head and body for rashes/bumps or bites. Treat all household members who have had skin to skin contact with the infected individual.

Head Lice

If your learner has head lice they must be seen and treated by a doctor. If your learner comes to school with head lice they will be sent home. Any learner with head lice must have medical clearance to return to school.

Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are tiny insects that live in furniture, mattresses, sofas and couches. Bites may consist of raised bumps and intense itching. If you suspect your home may have bed bugs please notify the school immediately and arrange to have your home inspected and or treated by an exterminator. The learner may return to school once the family shows proof of inspection and extermination.

Scarlet Fever

A bacterial illness that develops in some people that have had strep throat. If your learner has a fever of 102 F or higher and swollen or tender glands on the neck please seek medical attention.

Ringworm

Ringworm is a fungal infection on the skin that is highly contagious. If you suspect that your learner has ringworm please speak with your doctor and get treatment.

Seasonal Allergies

Many Elm learners suffer from seasonal allergies. We want our learners to be happy, healthy and able to focus during school hours. If your learner suffers from seasonal allergies please make sure that he is receiving proper care and being administered all necessary medication. If your child needs to take an allergy medication (prescribed or over the counter) during the school day please make sure to have your doctor complete a [MAF Form](#) (Medical Administration Form).

Academics

Learner Progress Reports

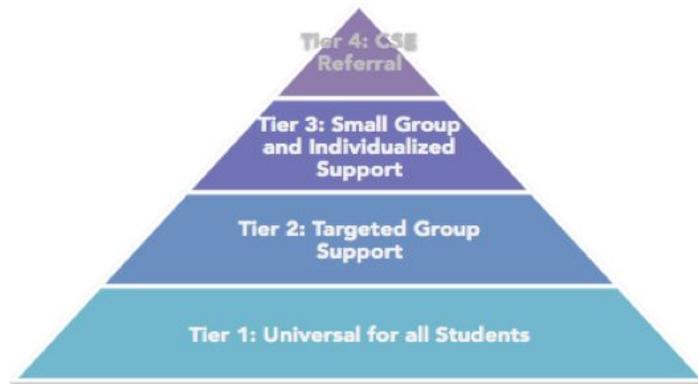
At Elm, the purpose of progress reports is to inform families and students of their current level of proficiency in all courses. Proficiency levels are based on both mastery and inquiry-based assessments, and not on student effort. You will receive progress reports four times a year to inform you of your child's academic and demonstrated social-emotional progress.

Upon receiving your child's progress report, you will have the opportunity to discuss progress made with your student and his or her teacher during our School-Home Reflection Meetings. As Elm students grow, they will be taught how to honestly analyze their scores to create realistic goals and strategically work to reach those goals.

You can request a copy of your child's most updated progress report at any time by contacting the Main Office.

Special Education & Services

The Elm staff is dedicated to ensuring your child receives all the services she or he needs to excel in both academic and creative courses. Teachers collect student data daily and weekly to tailor whole-group lessons and small group instruction to each student's needs. If your student continues to struggle despite our comprehensive general education program and supports, the Elm staff will follow our Response to Intervention (RtI).



Rtl at Elm
Tier 1: Universal for all Students

<p>Indicators</p> <p>Pattern of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incomplete work • wrong answers • Lack of reading comprehension • Lack of math number sense • Lack of progress 	<p>Supports: Within classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided Reading • CGI • Small Group pull-out • Peer support
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Rtl at Elm
Tier 2: Targeted Group Support

<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently scoring low on a particular standard • Demonstrating 0-1 levels of growth in 2 consecutive F&P assessments (with students who are already identified as below grade level readers) • Consistently struggling with the comprehension component of CGI (math) • Achieving low scores (1-2) on inquiry-based performance task rubrics 	<p>Supports: Within Grade Team</p> <p>Creating strategic groups across grade levels during the following times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Workshop • Writing Workshop • Math Workshop • Math Routines • Language Routines
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Rtl at Elm
Tier 3: Small Group + Individualized Support

<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently scoring low on multiple standards, student is unable to keep up with the class • Three or more reading levels below on-grade-level reading targets (in accordance with F&P Reading Assessment) • Consistently struggling with the comprehension component of CGI (math) • Achieving low scores on several (1-2) on inquiry-based performance task rubrics 	<p>Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Success Team becomes involved and may conduct observations and testing • Specific curriculum interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilson Language Training • Foundations • Just Words • Select teacher from each grade to run intervention group during any of the following times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, Writing, or Math Workshop • Math and Language Routines
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Rtl at Elm
Tier 4: Committee of Special Education (CSE) Referral

<p>Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 3 interventions are not supporting student growth 	<p>Supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Support Team works with CSE for additional supports outside the school's resources and capacity
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If you are a new incoming family with a child who has an Individualized Education Program, please notify the school as soon as possible. This will allow us ample time to ensure your child receives the services he or she needs. If you have any questions about the Committee on Special Education, or about special education in general, please feel free to contact the Principal.

State Exams

During our first two years as a school, our grades Kindergarten through Second grade will not need to take the New York State exams. Starting our third year (2020-2021), Elm students will take the State Exams. Though we do not believe the state exams show our students' abilities accurately, we are committed to ensuring we equip our students with test taking skills and strategies necessary to truly seize any opportunity in the future. We are well aware that our students will need to operate in a test-driven society, where tests will (too often) dictate their opportunities and success. We are confident we can do this through our balance of both inquiry and mastery-based curriculum and assessments, which will also prepare our students with life skills such as preparation, persistence, and studying.

School Culture

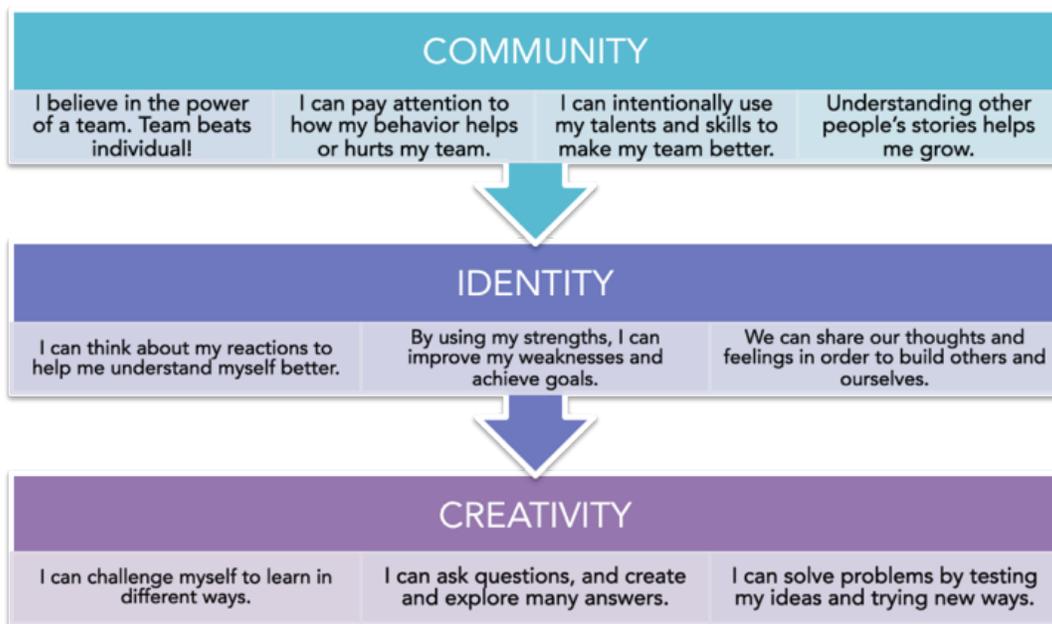
Overview

At Elm Community Charter School, we believe it is equally important to create a culture that fosters our students' growth and willingness to take risks than holding fast to high academic standards. This is why one of our key design elements is A Focus on Self-Awareness and Self-Exploration. Students' self-awareness, involving the development and understanding of their identities and emotional intelligence, is key to academic and social success. In order to engage successfully and collaboratively, students need to be equipped with social emotional skills.

Collaborative learning is an essential component throughout each lesson. For students to successfully enter daily collaborative work, largely in the form of academic and social discussions, they will need to be equipped with social emotional skills. In Kindergarten through Second Grade, our curriculum will be heavily focused on emotional intelligence, giving students multiple opportunities to discover their emotions, create healthy coping skills to express their feelings, and finally advocate for themselves during conflicts and challenges.

Core Values & Curriculum

Three core values form the foundation of Elm’s culture: Community, Identity, and Creativity. We have created actionable “I can” statements that help us embody these core values as staff while also enabling teachers to teach students how to concretely bring these values to life at our school.



Elm staff will instill the school’s core values through three main curriculum: the *Responsive Classroom* approach to teaching, Yale’s Emotional Intelligence Program: RULER, and Restorative Justice Practices. Each one of these programs contributes to the building and maintaining of our three core values. Responsive Classroom builds largely on our core value: Community. It is a preventative program that focuses a great deal on the daily incorporation of positive reinforcement, reflection, and relationship building. Coupled with this preventative method, will be the Restorative Justice approach, which a responsive method of addressing behavioral concerns and conflicts. Implementing preventative and responsive programs will support both staff and students in quickly addressing everyday small conflicts and larger tensions between individual students and groups. RULER will empower our students in the forming of their Identity and their ability to show Creativity, our second and third core value. This program focuses on teaching students self-awareness and the identification and expression of their feelings. The three

programs are complementary and will be used to establish all three of Elm’s core values.

	Responsive Classroom	RULER	Restorative Justice
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Normed language + Positive reinforcement ✓ Emphasizes the adult community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Builds <u>self awareness</u> and coping skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Logical consequences for behavioral concerns ✓ Restores members who violated core values
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Emphasizes assertiveness + self-control for cooperative learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teaches students how to identify, understand and articulate their feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Restorative circles encourage victims and wrong doers to reflect and speak up
Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teaches assertiveness + cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Builds resilience and goal-setting through reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Approaches to responses and consequences are creative

Core Value Progress Reports

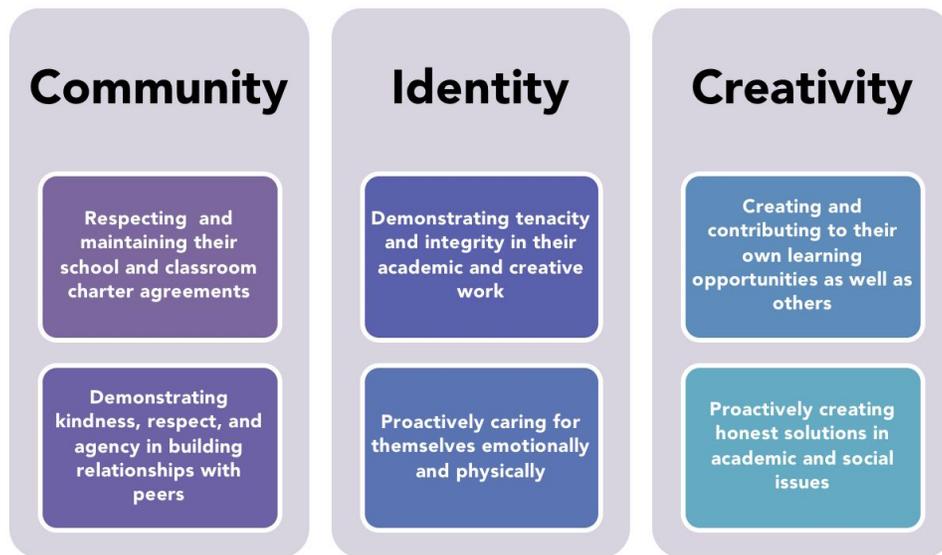
Parents can expect to have daily communication with teachers regarding their social emotional growth and development. Students will be led through daily reflections on their emotions, how it affected their actions and decisions, and strategies they can use to help make each day enjoyable and productive. Teachers will track specific ways that students exhibit the Core Values and regularly communicate their observations with parents through reflection sheets signed daily by parents, brief conversations at dismissal, or scheduled appointments.

Code of Conduct

Elm is committed to creating an environment where all students have the right to form their own identity, seize any opportunities, and shape their school community in meaningful ways.

Elm students have the responsibility of respecting and supporting one another in each one’s academic and creative purpose. Elm students have the right to be respected as individuals and to have their own academic and creative goals respected and supported by members of the community.

Elm Students will honor and embody the core values by:



This code of conduct, which upholds integrity, kindness, resilience, respect and care for self and others, and creativity, also applies to Elm staff, who are expected to model and mirror the core values, both personally and professionally, in their adult learning communities. Holding all members of Elm Community Charter School to these shared values will ultimately create strong accountability and school culture.

In cases where Elm’s code of conduct is violated, Elm’s Student Discipline Policy, for general education and special education, will be followed and executed (see Appendix A and B).

School-wide, Grade-level, and Classroom Procedures and Systems

In order to foster community, creativity, and identity, Elm staff will dedicate the first 6 weeks of school to teaching students school-wide, grade-level, and classroom procedures and systems. Each grade team will decide on a behavior monitoring system that clearly communicates with students how their day and actions are progressing throughout the day. The purpose of behavior monitoring systems is to help communicate clear expectations and cultivate self-awareness within our students. Teachers will proactively communicate each day through verbal or written form how a student’s actions and decisions affected their participation and learning. We encourages parents to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

School Discipline Policy

In-School Disciplinary Measures

At Elm, we believe that prevention is the foundation of creating a strong discipline system. We have elected to train teachers in the Responsive Classroom and RULER programs because we believe both of these approaches will help students develop better social-emotional and behavior-regulating skills, minimizing disciplinary infractions.

Our in-school disciplinary procedures will largely follow the Restorative Justice framework and follow three phases: prevention, intervention and reentry in response to conflict/harm.

Phase One: Prevention

Prior to giving consequences for misbehavior, teachers must teach students what the expectations will be, and provide them with an opportunity to practice and receive feedback. In the Responsive Classroom Approach, this is done through Interactive Modeling, where the teacher models expected behaviors, coaches the class or specific students through it, and leads the class in practicing it frequently. Often, this will require teachers to interrupt class activities to restart and redo transitions or behaviors until expectations are met. At Elm, teachers will prioritize setting these expectations and procedures from the very beginning. The first 2 weeks of school will be set aside for culture building, where procedures and routines are integrated into lessons, and time is allotted for frequent practice. Our ultimate goal is that as the year progresses, students become more aware of when they are not aligned to their peers, and how their actions affect others positively or negatively. Procedures that were once explicitly taught will be gradually released to students.

Phase Two: Intervention & Phase Three: Re-entry

The levels of intervention and re-entry will vary based on the severity of the infraction. We have categorized infractions at Elm into tiers:

1. Minor Disruptions
2. Progressive Interventions
3. Serious Behavior Infractions

Logical Consequences Philosophy

As a part of our commitment to helping students develop pro-social, problem-solving skills, we believe that logical consequences should be applied as often as possible. Logical consequences are interventions that help students form associations between their misbehavior and the negative outcomes it produced.

Student Health & Safety

Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

Emergency and Evacuation procedures are taken very seriously at Elm Community Charter School. Whether it is a safety drill or real emergency, the actions that learners and staff should take are the same. Emergency drills are conducted throughout the year. The drills are planned in a way to ensure the safety of all learners and staff in the shortest and most orderly fashion. The Principal and Director of Operations will ensure that the school complies with all the requirements related to necessary emergency and evacuation procedures.

Health Staff

Elm has a part-time, on-site registered school nurse as mandated by SUNY. Learners may visit the nurse in the school's health office if they become ill during the school day, have a health related question or injure themselves. Learners requiring basic care when the nurse is not available may receive assistance from other Elm staff.

Vaccine Review/Medical Exam

Except in cases of approved religious exemptions, all Elm learners must be immunized in accordance with New York State law. Religious exemptions must be conveyed in writing to the Principal prior to the first day of school. The principal reserves the right to require all learners to be immunized in order to enroll in Elm. To submit a religious exemption to Elm's immunization requirements, please contact Elm's Director of Operations. In all cases, learners who do not have the proper immunizations and have not provided a religious exemption will be denied access to Elm until the immunizations are administered and proof of immunization is provided to Elm. Parents/guardians are asked to provide the school with any information regarding allergies or illness from which the child may suffer. Parents/guardians are also asked to inform the school if they give permission for their learner to be taken to a hospital in the event of a serious emergency during school hours. Elm's nurse is authorized to administer prescribed medication only if there is a completed Medical Authorization Form on file. Elm also recommends annual flu vaccination. These vaccines protect students and staff from disease that may be present in our community and life threatening. All Elm learners must have an updated physical exam completed before entering school. The completed Child Health and Medical form must be signed by a physician before submitting. Learners will not be permitted to start beforehand.

Incident/Accident

Any accident involving a learner will be documented. The nurse or Elm staff will contact the parent/guardian. In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the nurse will send a report home with the student. In emergencies, Elm staff will notify the people indicated on a child's Emergency Contact form, as well as law enforcement office or emergency medical personnel, as necessary or in the best judgment of the school nurse and/or Elm staff. In any emergency, Elm's absolute priority will be to first attend to the emergency and ensure the safety and health of the learner or learner's involved in the incident, then secure the surrounding area to address the unsafe conditions, and then contact parents, guardians, and/or emergency contacts.

Mandated Reporting of Abuse

All members of Elm staff are known as mandated reporters, in compliance with state law. If a Elm staff member suspects that a learner is being abused or neglected, he/she is obligated to report the suspicion to the Administration For Children's Services (ACS). Signs of abuse or neglect may include but are not limited to:

- Patterns of lateness and absence to school
- Patterns of late pick up from school or school bus
- Learners appearing consistently unkempt or dirty
- Signs of physical abuse, such as bruises cuts or apparent fear

Elm Social Worker will be available to provide supportive services to the family and student and will remain the liaison throughout the process in the event that a report has been made by an Elm Staff member.

Student Privacy & Records

Access to Student Records

Except for the Elm Leadership, Health Personnel and local and state health department personnel, no third party shall have access to information in or from a student record without informed written consent from the parent of the eligible student. Any individual, except for ELm staff and specific local or state health department personnel, who request access to student records must follow Elm's FERPA policy and records request protocol. Please see Appendix C for Elm's FERPA Policy.

Freedom of Information Law (FOIL)

Elm complies with the New York State Freedom of Information law (Article 6 of the New York Public Officers Law) This means that certain school records can be made available to the public upon request because Elm is a publicly funded school. Please see the Director of Operation if you would like a copy of the Freedom of Information Law.

Parent's Right to Know

Parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their learners classroom teachers, including at minimum the following:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level and subjects in which teacher provides instruction
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing has been waived
- The degree major of the teacher and any other certification or degree held by the teacher, including the field of discipline
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and if so, their qualifications

Appendix A: School Discipline Policy - General Education

Chronic Misbehavior within the Restorative Justice framework:

At Elm, we recognize that students come to us with different levels of experience and different natural tendencies to emotionally regulate and manage their behaviors. We take a long view of student behavioral growth, and recognize that within a single school year, there will be students who consistently struggle to meet expectations in a rigorous classroom environment. For this reason, and because we want to emphasize inclusion and minimize isolation and suspension, we will dedicate deliberate team planning time to the development of individualized behavior plans for students who chronically struggle. When teachers notice a pattern of misbehavior in students, they will bring up their concerns with other teachers and leaders during Kid Talks. The team will then discuss the child’s behavior patterns, and assess what next steps should be. Depending on the situation, next steps might include a Behavior Contract or Behavior Intervention Plan.

Behavior Contract	A behavior contract is crafted and signed by the teacher and student. It describes the chronic misbehavior, the expected behavior, a consequence for continued misbehavior, a reward for exhibiting expected behavior, and a timeline. Parents will be expected to also partner with teachers in holding students accountable and will be required to sign behavior contracts as well.
Behavior Intervention Plan	“A behavioral intervention plan is a plan that is based on the results of a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and, at a minimum, includes a description of the problem behavior, global and specific hypotheses as to why the problem behavior occurs and intervention

	strategies that include positive behavioral supports and services to address the behavior.”[1]
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Tiers 2: Progressive Interventions

In keeping with a Restorative Justice framework, staff at Elm will be trained in responding to misbehavior on a case-by-case basis rather than applying a one-size-fits-all, model. While we expect that staff will follow the previously outlined protocol for general disruptions, we have designed the following chart to serve as a toolkit from which we teachers might draw alternative logical consequences, or from which a leader might craft an appropriate behavior intervention for a more severe case. Specific responses to misbehavior will be determined according to a number of variables including the seriousness and frequency of the misbehavior, and the outcomes of restorative conversations or meetings that might occur. We have included the following points to clarify the intentions of the toolkit:

- In the table below, we have frequently used the term “restorative conversation” or “restorative consequence.” We believe that when wrong has been done, deliberate actions must be taken to rebuild trust between the affected parties. As a part of our commitment to Reentry, or reintegration of the wrongdoer into the class or school community, we will often require students to participate in Restorative conversations. These are opportunities for students on the receiving end of wrongdoing to explain the impact that the harmful behavior has had on them, and they are also opportunities to find a fair and logical consequence that will not only deter future misbehavior, but also repair damaged relationships between the involved parties. A staff member will always facilitate a restorative conversation between students. In the case where a restorative conversation must occur between a staff member and a student, the conversation will be facilitated by a grade team leader (less serious cases) or an administrator (more serious cases). A Restorative consequence is the deliberate action that a student or

stakeholder takes to repair a damaged relationship. It is often decided during a restorative conversation.

- At Elm, we believe in empowering teachers to manage their classrooms with fair and logical consequences. Teachers have the liberty to call parents on an as-needed basis, and implement interventions such as Makeup Time if students need to return to the classroom for a restorative consequence. The following limitations apply.
- As stated previously, we believe that behavior infractions are a normal part of social-emotional development, and that they offer the opportunity to create teachable moments for students. When a behavior infraction occurs that impacts the class community, it may be appropriate for a teacher to schedule a Restorative Class Circle about the behavior, its consequences, and alternatives for the future. In such cases, unless the class directly observed the incident in question and the Restorative Class Circle is part of a Restorative consequence, staff members leading the Restorative Class Circle will preserve the anonymity of students who committed and/or were victims of the misbehavior.

Tier 3: Serious Behavior infractions

At Elm, we are committed to keeping students in the classroom, and integrated with the community, to every reasonable extent. Still, we recognize that there are some instances that call for student removal from the community. The following student disciplinary actions may occur in tier 3 incidences:

- **Short-term Suspension:** removal of student from School for a period of 10 or less school days
- **Long-term Suspension:** removal of student from School for a period of more than 10 school days
- **Expulsion:** permanent removal of a student from School for disciplinary reasons

In-School Suspensions

In-School suspensions may only be imposed by the Principal and requires students receive instruction and learning materials in a separate location different from their normal classroom.

While any Elm staff witnessing an infraction may execute in-school disciplinary measures, only the Principal and Board of Trustees may impose in-school suspensions. The following protocol must be adhered when an Elm staff member recognizes the potential for suspension[2]:

1. Staff member addressing the conduct hears all parties involved and assigns appropriate and logical consequences
2. If necessary, student is removed from the class
3. The school will schedule a meeting with a parent or guardian to discuss the infraction and consequences

In-school disciplinary actions are detailed in the above section “In-school disciplinary measures,” and may include any of the following interventions:

- Behavioral contract
- Behavioral plan
- Loss of privileges
- Logical consequences
- Impromptu meeting with parent

Short-term Suspensions

Short-term suspensions (10 days or fewer) may only be imposed by the Principal and follow the below protocol:

1. If necessary, student is immediately removed from the class
2. Misbehavior and charges are clearly explained to the student by a member of the leadership team or Social Worker
3. The parent/guardian is notified of the short-term suspension via phone call and written statement

4. Student must be picked up by an adult to receive the suspension letter and discuss the details of the infraction.
5. During this meeting, the student may deny or explain his or her version of the event. The parent or guardian will be shown evidence against the student.
6. When requested, parents will be given information on the appeals process to the Board of Trustees or authorizer, including contact information for the Board or Authorizer.
7. A meeting is scheduled upon the student's return to discuss the infraction, goals and expectations, and supports to put in place

Long-term Suspensions & Expulsion

Long-term suspensions (more than 10 days) or expulsion may only be imposed by the Principal or Board of Trustees and follows the below protocol:

1. If necessary, student is immediately removed from the class.
2. Charges are clearly explained to the student by a member of the leadership team or Social Worker.
3. The parent/guardian is notified of the long-term suspension via phone call and written statement.
4. Student must be picked up by an adult to receive the suspension letter and discuss the details of the infraction. If the adult is not the student's parent or guardian, a written notice of the suspension will be sent to the student's last known address.
5. During this meeting, the student may deny or explain his or her version of the event. The parent or guardian will be shown evidence against the student.
6. The school will set a hearing date and send the following information to the student's parent or guardian in written form:
 - a. Charges and statement of the evidence
 - b. Date, time, and location of hearing
 - c. The right for parent or guardian to bring legal counsel
 - d. The right for parent or guardian to cross-examine witnesses
7. After the Principal, the Board of Trustees, or hearing officer (determined by either of the aforementioned) hears the case, a written decision will be sent

to the parent or guardian, the school's Board of Trustees, and kept on file in the student's permanent record.

8. When requested, parents will be given information on the appeals process to the Board of Trustees or authorizer, including contact information for the Board or Authorizer.
9. A meeting is scheduled upon the student's return to discuss the infraction, goals and expectations, and supports to put in place.

Appeals Process

The School shall follow due process procedures consistent with *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975). The Principal's decision to impose a short-term, long-term suspension, or expulsion may be challenged by the parent(s) or guardian in accordance with the charter school's complaint process, pursuant to Education Law § 2855(4). Parents or guardians pursuing the appeals process shall be scheduled within ten (10) school days of the implementation of the long-term suspension or expulsion.

Alternative Instruction during Removal

Alternative instruction will be provided for students who are removed from class for in-school, short-term, or long-term suspensions, and will begin on the first day of the student's suspension. At minimum, students who are removed will receive 1 hour of instruction and learning materials daily, which they will receive at a separate location. When feasible, staff members will be asked to provide alternative instruction to students before and after materials and assignments are completed in order to provide clarification, concise lessons, or feedback. Our aim is to provide sufficient supports so that students are able to keep up with the class. During this time, the Social Worker will coordinate teacher schedules, student materials, student location, and provide emotional supports in order to create necessary interventions and a sound re-entry plan.

Gun-Free Schools Act

In accordance to the Gun-Free Schools Act, Elm will execute a suspension period of no less than a year for students who are determined to have brought firearm to school, or possessed a firearm at school. The Board of Trustees and Principal may modify such suspension requirements on a case-by-case basis. The suspension will begin following a due process hearing. "Weapon," as used in this law means a "firearm," as defined by 18 USC§8921, and includes firearms and explosives. (New York Education Law §3214(3)(d) effectuates this federal law).

Harassment, Bullying, and Discrimination

In compliance with New York State's Dignity for All Students Act (DASA), Elm's discipline policy prohibits harassment, bullying, and discrimination against any student by any fellow student or employee. Students identified as creating a hostile environment through threats, intimidation, or abuse (including cyber bullying) will undergo the following protocol:

1. If necessary, the student will be removed from the class.
2. Infraction will be explained and discussed with student by a member of the leadership team or Social Worker.
3. The Principal or members of the leadership team will investigate all parties involved.
4. The witnessing staff member and member of the leadership team will determine whether the consequence is categorized as tier 1, 2, or 3, and implement a logical, restorative, or punitive consequence
5. Parent/guardians of all involved parties will be notified of the infraction and consequence via phone call and written statement
6. Student must be picked up by an adult to receive the written statement and discuss next steps, including but not limited to:
 - a. In-school counseling sessions for the bully
 - b. Restorative counseling sessions between bully and victim
 - c. Switching of classes
 - d. The prohibiting of retaliation against any individual who, in good faith reports or assists in the investigation of the case
7. Follow up meeting will be scheduled to ensure improvement

The School shall follow due process procedures consistent with *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975). The Principal's decision to impose a short-term suspension may be challenged by the parent(s) or guardian in accordance with the charter school's complaint process, pursuant to Education Law § 2855(4).

Crisis Intervention Protocol

In the case of a crisis, instructional staff and/or school leadership would immediately contact the school social worker for onsite intervention. After the social worker intervenes with the child and his or her family, the social worker will determine the necessary steps (e.g. off-site therapeutic services, counseling). If a child is in crisis (which is an outward manifestation of emotional disturbance), we will rely on additional supports beyond the professional training and expertise of the school's instructional staff and leadership.

Appendix B: School Discipline Policy - Special Education

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

At Elm Community Charter School, we are committed to creating a strong unified community, where all members feel included, safe, and equally carry the responsibility of the school's core values and culture. Thus, students with identified or suspected disabilities will generally be subject to the same disciplinary actions as their non-disabled peers. The following exceptions may occur and will be led by the Principal and Social Worker according to the student, incident and matter:

- In the case of a special education student with an IEP detailing a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), Elm teachers will be trained in the parameters and implementation of the BIP. If a student's BIP is deemed ineffective or may prevent serious threat or bodily harm to a student, leadership and the social worker will contact the CSE immediately so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- In the case of students whose behaviors are a manifestation of their disability, in which the procedural safeguard provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and regulations (34 CFR 300.530-300.536), and Section 50f of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 will apply. In such

cases, the Principal or Social Worker will contact the CSE of D24 and request a Functional Behavior Assessment. If necessary, a modification to the student's BIP will be made in alignment to the student's IEP.

- In the case of a student not identified as having a disability, but that Elm's leadership team has pre-existing knowledge or suspicions of a disability, Elm Community Charter School will comply with 34 CFR 300.534 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and the following procedures, except in the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern.
- In the case of suspensions involving more than 10 days, a pattern of short-term suspensions, or contemplation of expulsion, the Principal or Social Worker will be responsible for contacting the CSE of D24 to request a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) to assess a possible change in placement. The school acknowledges that under 34 CFR 300.536, the CSE has sole authority to approve an interim or alternative educational setting.
- In the case of weapon or drug removal or offenses, the school shall contact the CSE of D24 immediately for a MDR and possible change in placement pursuant to 34 CFR 300.530(g).

Elm Community Charter School will work in partnership with the Committees on Special Education (CSE) in District 24 to ensure that implementation of all disciplinary procedures for special education students are aligned to CSE guidelines, state law, and students' individualized education plans (IEP). Elm will work in conjunction with the CSE, following all its normal guidelines, policies, and procedures for all Elm students, including communication with parents and their involvement in the process.

Provision of Services During Removal

Elm students removed for a period of ten days or less will receive all classroom assignments, homework, and projects to complete independently during suspension. If necessary, teachers will be available for phone-call sessions and email communication to ensure that students receive appropriate instructions and assistance in completing assignments and understanding curriculum. Extensions will be made for suspended students in regard to assessments and performance tasks.

Students removed for a total of ten or more non-consecutive school days that do not constitute for alternative school setting by the CSE or a manifestation of the disability, will be provided services necessary for the child to progress through the

general curriculum and achieve their IEP goals. The Principal, in consultation with the lead teacher and special education teacher, will determine the appropriate services.

Students removed for the possession of drugs or weapons pursuant to 34 CFR §530(g)(1) and (g)(2), services will be provided to the extent necessary for the student to progress through the curriculum and meet IEP goals. The CSE of D24 will make these service determinations and/or interim alternative education settings.

Due Process

If disciplinary actions include a possible change in placement, the Principal or Social Worker will execute the following steps:

- Notification will be made to the parents of the students with a disability no later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504.
- The CSE and other qualified personnel will meet to review the relationship between the disability and the behavior/incident subject to discipline
- If the student's behavior is determined not to be a manifestation of his or her disability, the student will be subject to the same disciplinary measures and procedures of a child without a disability.
- Students removed from the classroom will receive alternative arrangements for classwork, instruction, and assistance for appropriate progression through the curriculum. However, if the parent or guardian of said student waives the provision of such alternative instruction, the student would be marked absent from school.

If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination results, the child will remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decisions of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and School agree otherwise. In the case of parents requesting a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination, the student will remain in his or her educational placement until the determination of the hearing.

Appendix C: Elm Community Charter FERPA Policy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and

- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.