



**A Revolutionary Education
Through Music**

**Student and Family Handbook
2020-2021**

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Board of Trustees Welcome Letter

Dear WHIN Families,

On behalf of the WHIN Board of Trustees, we wanted to wish you a warm, heartfelt welcome to the 2020-2021 school year at WHIN Music Community Charter School.

We are thrilled that you have chosen WHIN and deeply appreciate the trust that you have placed in our school leaders, faculty and staff to educate and care for your child. We are appreciative of your willingness to partner with WHIN leadership, faculty and staff during this uniquely challenging school year, as we begin with remote learning.

You should know that as Board members of WHIN, we have been actively and deeply committed to this school since its inception and through its successful first three years of enrolling students. We are all deeply passionate about WHIN and its mission to provide “rigorous academic instruction, intensive music education and a positive learning environment so that every student can thrive academically and personally.”

We hope that you find the WHIN school community welcoming, vibrant and joyful. We encourage you to participate in the many different opportunities for family engagement that will arise throughout this school year.

Sincerely,

WHIN Music Community Charter School Board of Trustees

Arnold Adlin
Gregory David
Robert Green
Kenneth Grover
Cynthia Ivanick
Ivonne Norman
Josh Bederman

Executive Leadership Welcome Letter

Dear Esteemed WHIN Students, Parents, and Families,

We are humbled and excited to welcome you to the 2020-2021 school year at WHIN Music Community Charter School. This year proves to be a unique year with various opportunities to experiment with distance learning methods, staying connected while physically distanced, and showing just how resilient and successful our community is. As we do every year, we will continue to work with every child, family, and staff member to bring our ambitious mission to life and as such, we will...

provide our diverse student population with a rigorous academic instruction, intensive music education and a positive learning environment so that every student can thrive academically and personally.

Our progressive model and use of El Sistema as a way to build life-long and life-wide learners who are empathetic and compassionate individuals committed to being agents of social change is more important today than ever before. As we navigate this unique time we will all serve as role models for the children that look to us to help them be the best they can be. Seeing the vitality and perseverance each of those in our community had over the last six months is proof that we are up for the challenge and ready to show our young musicians how proud they should be as WHINners.

In 2020, WHIN received another Letter of Good Standing from the New York State Education Department for the 2018-2019 school year, which is now two years in a row. This will also be our second state testing year which provides us additional opportunity to showcase the successes we work so hard to create. Thank you all for being a part of this school and for all that you will do to make WHIN the special place it is.

As the first charter school in the world founded on the principles of El Sistema, we are all charged with creating citizen-artists who use their skills and knowledge in music, literacy, math, athletics, and science to make the world around them a better place. As a growing school, it is important for us to hold that goal with the highest regard and demonstrate what it means to be an ensemble by coming together *‘with the fundamental objective of agreeing with itself’*, as José António Abreu said.

It is in the spirit of togetherness and building community that we look ahead to our future knowing that our foundation is solid, our values are clear, and we will forever continue to WHIN.

Sincerely,

Charlie Ortiz
Executive Director

Annie Huynh
Principal

Contact Information:

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New York, NY 10032

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School Overview:

What is a Charter School?

Charter Schools are public schools that operate independently and are overseen by a governing board of directors who report to an authoring agency. Charter schools were established to provide students and families more opportunities for academic success. Charter schools are non-profit and non-sectarian organizations that are authorized by the Board of Regents and the State of New York. Like all public schools, charter schools are free.

Charter schools are publicly funded and open to all students in New York State through a non-discriminatory admissions lottery. Charters have freedom to establish their own policies, design their own educational program, and manage their human and financial resources. Charter schools are accountable, through the terms of a five-year Charter Agreement, for high student achievement.

WHIN Music Community Charter School Mission Statement:

The Washington Heights and Inwood Music Community Charter School (“WHIN Music Charter School” or “WHIN”) will provide our diverse student population with rigorous academic instruction, intensive music education and a positive learning environment so that every student can thrive academically and personally.

Governance:

WHIN Music Community Charter School Authorizer:

On June 14th 2016 the WHIN Music Community Charter school was granted a Charter by the New York State Education Department (SED) and Board of Regents to operate a K-5 Elementary School based in Community School District (CSD) 6- Washington Heights and Inwood. SED supports, guides, and ultimately holds the WHIN board of directors accountable to the mission, student outcomes, and program design detailed in their approved charter.

Board of Trustees:

The WHIN Music Community Charter School Board of Directors is comprised of educators, CSD6 community members, and leaders who volunteer their time to support the school’s executive leadership and ensure they fulfill the mission of WHIN Music Community Charter School. Membership on the board is solely voluntary and may end upon formal resignation of the board.

New members can be voted to join only once per year before the commencement of a new academic year.

WHIN Organization Chart:

School Hours:

WHIN has staggered arrival times of 7:45am and 7:55am for dropoff/breakfast based on the class. On Mondays to Thursdays, the school day ends at 3:55pm or 4:05pm depending on the class. On Fridays, the school day concludes at 2:00pm.

School Calendar: 2019 – 2020: See Appendix

Arrival:

Students will utilize two WHIN entrances, greeted by a leadership member and a small team of health monitors. Students will line up using markers placed 6 feet apart to maintain social distance. Parents may drop off students once the health check has been “passed” which includes a temperature less than 100 degrees and no signs or symptoms of COVID-19. There will be a staggered arrival per the following schedule:

WHIN Main Entrance at 164th Street:

7:45am arrival for First Grade

7:55am arrival for Third Grade

WHIN Courtyard Entrance at 164th Street

7:45am arrival for Kindergarten and Second Grade

7:55am arrival for Fourth Grade

Dismissal:

Once the school day is over, families may pick up their child in the courtyard to maintain social distancing. There will be staggered dismissal at the following times:

- Kindergarten - 2nd Grade: 3:55pm
- 3rd - 4th Grade: 4:05pm

Early dismissal is discouraged, as our instructional day is designed to maximize student learning. Unless a parent or guardian has contacted the school in advance and provided a written note to the school explaining the situation, and the school has granted permission, no student will be dismissed early from school. In order to minimize disruptions to class, we ask that notification regarding early dismissals be made as far in advance as possible. We also ask that doctor and dentist appointments be limited to non-school hours to avoid students missing class time.

Students who repeatedly miss the same classes as a result of early dismissals may be required to make up missed class time and may incur full-day absences as a result. Additional mandatory family meetings with the Executive Director will also be scheduled.

Attendance & Tardy Policy:

All students are expected to attend school when it is in session for the entirety of the school day. Our goal is for 100% student attendance. WHIN is committed to supporting families in ensuring students arrive at school on time each day, and we encourage families to reach out for support before excessive tardies or absences are acquired. Students who are chronically absent tend to have lower reading and math scores, are more likely to drop-out of high school, and not go to college. We prioritize attendance because we want WHIN students to have every opportunity for success.

Students can only be successful if they are present and prepared in school every day. At the School, excessive absences will not be tolerated. If a student is absent with or without excuse for more than 10 days of the school year, it may affect your child's promotion to the next grade. When a student accumulates three (3) unexcused absences a notice will be sent home to inform the family. When a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences a family phone call and/or a meeting with the Attendance Team will be scheduled. After 10 absences, a student may lose their ability to participate in the School's activities and trips. After 20 absences, the School may call the New York City Administration for Children's Services to report the student's excessive absenteeism.

Parents and guardians are expected to call the school as early as possible if their child will not be attending school for any reason. Earlier, written notice of an expected absence is both welcome and appreciated. Calls should be made as far in advance as possible and can be left on the school's main voicemail if necessary. If a student is not in homeroom and the school has not been notified that he or she will be absent, his or her parent or guardian will be called at home and/or work. In phone calls, voice mails, and notes, please leave or list your child's name, your relationship to the child, and the reason for and date(s) of the child's absence.

A student is considered absent with excuse when the student's family has contacted the school regarding student illness, family emergency, or religious observance. All other absences will be considered unexcused, including but not limited to, family vacation, participation at sports tournaments, attendance at entertainment events, or when the family has not contacted the school with a satisfactory reason.

Class work will not be provided in advance of unexcused absences, and may not be provided in advance of excused absences. It is the responsibility of the student to make up any class work, homework, projects, quizzes, or exams – including midterms and finals – missed during any unexcused or excused absences.

If prior notification had not already been provided, upon the student's return to school from an absence, whether it is the next day or on some day after, the student is required to bring a signed note from his or her parent or guardian explaining in detail the reason for the absence. If a student had a medical visit while absent from school, a note from his or her doctor is required in lieu of the parent/guardian note.

Students who are absent from school cannot attend school sporting events, dances, or any other school-sponsored activities occurring on the day of the absence, unless the school has given advance permission.

Tardiness:

If a student arrives after 8:10am, he/she is considered tardy and parent/guardian(s) **must** call the 3rd floor main office for a staff member to come down and pick up the student. The student will receive a late pass and proceed to class. Excessive tardiness (>5 tardies) will result in a family meeting with Executive Leadership. Five (5) unexcused tardies equals one absence.

Early Pick-Up

Students are not permitted to leave the school at any time during school hours without permission. If you wish to have your child picked up early, the office should be notified as early as possible (preferably with 24 hours' notice). Students are to be picked up from the main entrance on the first floor and signed out. Students are not permitted to be signed out within 30 minutes of dismissal. If early pick up is requested within 30 minutes prior to dismissal, parents/guardians will be asked to follow the regular dismissal procedures. Families may not go to a child's classroom to pick a child up. A staff member will walk a child from the classroom to the main office for pick-up. Students will be released only to parents, legal guardians, and other authorized persons who are listed on the school form, all of whom must be 18 or older and present current and valid identification. All students must be picked up by 4:00 pm unless they are in afterschool. All students attending afterschool must be picked up by 6:00pm. Consistent failure to pick up students by 6:00pm could result in the removal from the afterschool program.

School Closings Information:

WHIN will follow the NYC DOE regarding school closing due to weather or other emergencies; families will also be notified via email, all-call, and social media of any updates regarding school closure.

Uniform Policy:

WHIN believes that a student's attire should represent his/her self-respect, respect for WHIN, and respect for his/her community. WHIN also believes students are able to perform at their best and be joyful when they are wearing comfortable clothing. As such, WHIN students are required to wear a uniform that is respectful and conducive to an active and engaging learning environment.

The WHIN Music Community Charter School student uniform is:

- Bottom: Dark Blue Pants or Dark Blue Romper (with WHIN Logo)
- Top: Light Grey Polo-Shirt with WHIN Logo, Light Grey T-Shirt with WHIN Logo, or white blouse (for under Romper)
- Optional- Dark Blue or Dark Grey Sweater with WHIN logo and belts (Black) are optional
- Footwear- Black Sneaker or Shoes
 - Socks and tights worn with romper must be grey with no patterns or designs
- Jewelry- Students may choose to wear jewelry that stays close to the body (i.e. studded earrings, tight bracelets, etc.). Jewelry should be safe to wear during high-activity situations and not disrupt the learning environment. WHIN is not liable for the loss of jewelry and recommends that students do not wear jewelry to school.
 - The following types of jewelry are not permitted:
 - No hoop, hanging, or dangling earrings are permitted
 - No jewelry with spikes, points, or sharp edges are permitted
 - Students may wear one (1) ring per hand
- Students may not wear hats or head coverings, with the exception of coverings for religious purposes.
- Students are discouraged from wearing accessories that may distract them and/or classmates from learning. WHIN retains the right to confiscate any accessories that interfere with the learning environment.

Parent Involvement and Communication:

Nucleo

Drawing from El Sistema's structures and ideals, we strive to create a "nucleo" environment. El Sistema nucleos are the centralized locations where music instruction takes place, though they are much more than just physical spaces - a nucleo represents a haven of safety, learning, and community. At WHIN, that means creating an open-door policy and safe space for families to thrive alongside their young learners. WHIN will offer monthly parent/guardian family involvement opportunities, including family nights, workshops, and community outreach projects. Parents and caretakers can also participate in our school-wide Home School Association. Families are encouraged to take an active role in their student's learning and development.

Communication

Family Communication Folders: Each week a Family Communication Folder will be sent home with students that has important information, forms to complete, student work, and other relevant information for families. Families are expected to keep the contents at home and send back any completed forms or paperwork with the student within two days.

Class Dojo: Class Dojo accounts allow for family members to see pictures and learn about what students are learning throughout the school day. We encourage all families to create an account to stay up-to-date on all school information.

Guidelines:

- If family members wish to contact their child's teacher or school staff, they may do so through email. A response will typically take between 24-48 hours depending on the content of the email. Moreover, family members may contact the main office to leave a message.
- Communication between family and staff should be limited to email, scheduled calls, and Class Dojo. For privacy reasons, family members may not ask for a teacher's or staff member's personal phone number.
- The WHIN office is opened from 7:30-4:30pm should you need to contact the school. If you call outside those hours, you may leave a message or call back when the office is open.
- Family members who wish to meet with teachers or staff outside of normal family teacher conferences should contact them individually to set up an appointment. Due to the busy nature of schools, teachers and staff may be unavailable to meet without notice.

- All communication should be respectful and solutions-oriented.

Home and School Association:

The WHIN Home and School Association's mission is to mobilize families, staff, and community members to accomplish the following two objectives:

1. Support WHIN's mission to provide our diverse student population with rigorous academic instruction, intensive El Sistema-based music education, and a positive learning environment so every student can thrive academically, socially, emotionally, and personally.
2. Establish the school as a "nucleo" for our neighborhood where all can come together to support each other, make connections, share resources, and build community.

Our Home and School Association (HSA) is open to any parent, guardian, or staff who would like to volunteer to help support the school by joining any of the below committees:

- School Support- a committee that helps facilitate parent volunteers during the school day and at special events
- Community Outreach- a committee that helps spread the high-quality work of WHIN throughout the community
- Special Events- a committee that organizes and implements special events throughout the school year

Each committee of the HSA is led by a WHIN Music Community Charter School staff member and meet as needed. Parents, guardians, and staff are encouraged to participate in a committee at times when it is convenient for them to do so and/or they are excited about a committee project. To serve on a committee one must agree to the following working norms:

- HSA members serve as ambassadors for WHIN while speaking to the broader public.
- Only WHIN staff can speak to the broader public about WHIN in an official capacity.
- All communication in regards to HSA activities will take place during standard weekday hours of 7:30am to 4:30pm.
- All communication will use kind and respectful language

- It is important to maintain confidentiality and student privacy.
 - Never discuss children, parents, or staff concerns openly. Any such concerns should be communicated to the school leadership team and/or the Executive Director.
- HSA members are discouraged from acting in a way that creates separation between the HSA and WHIN Music Community Charter School including, but not limited to,
 - Speaking poorly about WHIN, school staff, parents, children, or any friend of the school
 - Acting in a way contrary to the values, goals, and image of WHIN Music Community Charter School
- Should a parent/guardian communicate a concern about anything related to WHIN, the HSA member should inform the parent/guardian to speak to their child's teacher and/or the WHIN Executive Director.

HSA Fundraisers and Collection of Money:

All monies collected during an HSA event will be handled exclusively by a predetermined HSA representative, to be kept in a safe box. Counting and handling of any cash, checks, or money orders received must be completed by at least two HSA representatives who may not be related. At the conclusion of the event, the HSA representative will submit all collected funds to WHIN.

Family Teacher Conferences

WHIN has three (3) formal Family-Teacher Conferences scheduled at the conclusion of the first, second, and third quarters. Because these are crucial for understanding student performance and growth, WHIN strives to have 100% of families engaged in these conferences. Translation services will be provided as needed to ensure ease of communication, and parents/guardians will pre-select preferred appointment slots to flexibly accommodate different schedules. Parents/guardians and teachers are welcome to schedule additional conferences throughout the school year as needed.

Visitor Policy

All visitors (not students or employees of WHIN) must possess a Valid ID and sign in with the school safety agents at the security desk on the ground floor, then again in the main office to access WHIN Music Community Charter School during the school day. All visitors must be wearing a WHIN visitor pass that clearly states the visitors name at all times and must be accompanied by a WHIN employee at all times unless they are at WHIN for pre-approved business (water delivery, IT

support, etc.). Visitors must respect the school's rules and learning environment. Any visitor who fails to do so may have their access to the school limited.

Curriculum and Instruction:

Overview: We believe students learn best when content is connected to real-world issues and needs, and thus espouse a student-centered,^[1] interdisciplinary teaching philosophy based on Inquiry and Project-Based Learning Models. Our curricular choices reflect these philosophies in all content areas.

Curriculum Framework: The backbone of the WHIN curriculum framework is the belief that students learn best when presented with a cross curricular, rigorous, inquiry-driven, and data-driven learning experience directly connected to Common Core State Standards and differentiated for *each* learner's unique needs while developing his/her social-emotional and character skills. As such, we will use a school wide, sequential, and cross-curricular Understanding By Design (UbD) framework. This framework will be overseen by the Directors of Curriculum and Instruction and developed in partnership with the Director of Special Programs and Director of Music as well as the schools' teachers.

ELA Program:

At WHIN, students engage in hands-on project-based learning and are committed to the philosophies of expeditionary learning. Therefore, WHIN's core literacy program will be EL (formerly Expeditionary Learning) Education's K-5 English Language Arts curriculum (EL ELA), which is a comprehensive, standards-based core literacy program that engages teachers and students through compelling real-world content. It rests on the following academic pillars: Mastery of knowledge and skills, Character, and High-quality work. Using this program, teachers are able to teach and formally assesses all standards and strands of the new English Language Arts standards. Students engage in these lessons for sixty minutes each day. To address the Reading Foundational Skills Standards, WHIN will use Wilson Foundations, which is a multisensory, research-based structured language program that provides students with explicit instruction in the following: phonemic awareness, phonics/word study, high frequency word study, reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension strategies, handwriting, and spelling. This systematic cycle of instruction ensures that students master the phonological, awareness, phonics, decoding, and spelling necessary to be highly proficient readers.

Additionally, writing instruction will take place several times a week for students to gain additional practice in opinion, information, and narrative writing with regular opportunities for students to share their work with peers and the community. Other components of the literacy program include Close Reading, interactive read aloud, independent reading, and small group guided reading.

ELA Assessment:

To ensure all our students are reaching English Language Arts benchmarks, track progress, and differentiate for student needs, students will be tested in their reading skills four times a year using the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress (STEP) assessment. STEP is a research-based formative assessment, data management, and professional development system developed from the University of Chicago. STEP assesses children's literacy skills, provides key data to teachers to develop students' reading development through a 12-level system toward reading proficiency. STEP is used in conjunction with the unit assessments and performance tasks included in each EL ELA module.

Additionally, in grades third and above, students take the iReady diagnostic computer-adaptive assessment in English Language Arts three times a year to determine their mastery in grade-level standards. This program also informs their online path for learning as well.

Math Program:

At WHIN, students experience math through a lens of fun, exciting discovery. Math units are not taught in isolation, but rather multiple skills and standards are interwoven to create rich tasks and scenarios for learners, and standards are revisited throughout the year to ensure student mastery. We are using Bridges, an elementary math curriculum, as our cornerstone program. Bridges includes a daily math workout/calendar routine during Number Corner, followed by math lessons focused on problems and investigations, and small group instruction and practice through hands-on workplaces. Math instruction is also enhanced with weekly Number Talks and Number Stories, inspired by Cognitively Guided Instruction practices. These are opportunities to build listening and speaking skills as well as develop fluency in demonstrating the Standards for Mathematical Practice in WHIN's young learners.

Math Assessment:

WHIN students are regularly assessed to ensure learning is progressing and developing and to target students for early intervention when needed. Benchmark assessments are administered four times per year (approximately once per quarter) to determine student numeracy skills; WHIN uses Assessing Math Concepts (AMC) as the tool to support this work in the lower elementary grades. AMC is a performance-based assessment where students demonstrate understanding by modeling and explaining their thinking in response to different prompts. This is used in conjunction with the summative assessments included in each Bridges unit and with teacher observations and student work samples to analyze how students' mathematical understandings are developing. Students who are struggling to meet grade level standards receive additional support in the form of small group instruction and possibly Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention as well. In addition, we will use Star 360 to help us gain information about student progress, growth, and mastery toward standards.

In second grade and above, students take the iReady diagnostic computer-adaptive assessment in Mathematics three times a year to determine their mastery toward grade level standards.

Music Program:

El Sistema is a model for social action through music, founded in Venezuela in 1975 by Maestro José Antonio Abreu, who believes that “music has to be recognized as an...agent of social development in the highest sense, because it transmits the highest values - solidarity, harmony, mutual compassion. And it has the ability to unite an entire community and to express sublime feelings.” WHIN musicians participate in two ensemble, or group, rehearsals a day that approach music literacy through best practices in music education pedagogy. Vocal ensemble focuses on the development of the singing voice as a primary instrument, while instrumental ensemble applies musicianship skills to the study of a musical instrument. Students begin study of violin, viola, cello, and percussion in 1st grade. Repertoire will be varied including arrangements of great orchestral works, folk songs, musicals, R&B, and film scores. Participation in singing and instrumental instruction nurtures a natural love of music while developing critical musicianship and non-cognitive skills.

Ensemble Assessment:

WHIN offers frequent informal and formal assessments that measure musical growth across a variety of musical elements including rhythm, melody, harmony, and instrumental technique. Musical assessments take a variety of forms, from simple pitch-matching exercises to written dictations or rhythmic patterns to solo performance on an instrument.

Instrument Policy

Starting in 1st grade, all WHINners participate in daily instrumental rehearsals on violin, viola, cello, and percussion. WHIN assigns each child an instrument based on a variety of factors, including Kindergarten music data, instrumentation needs of the ensemble, and child preference. Please note that while WHIN strives to match every child with his/her preferred instrument, the school retains the right to make final assignments.

We are pleased to partner with New York Quality Strings and assorted percussion vendors to provide affordable, high-quality instruments. Families can rent an instrument directly through WHIN at a flat rate. Payments can be made up front, monthly or quarterly. Families in need of additional assistance are encouraged to speak with the Director of Music to discuss how WHIN can assist. While we encourage families to rent through New York Quality Strings, parents/guardians are also welcome to purchase an instrument for their child if they choose.

To play and thrive musically, children must have regular access to a functioning instrument. Therefore, we ask all members of the WHIN community to adhere to the following guidelines regarding instrument care and safety:

At home

- When determined appropriate by the Director of Music, students are welcome to take instruments home to practice. WHIN does *not* require regular at-home practice.
- Designate a safe, consistent place for your child to store his/her instrument case. This place should be accessible for your child but out of the way of younger children or pets.
- Keep the instrument away from a window, radiator, or area with temperate conditions.
- Supervise any handling by curious younger siblings or family members
- Ensure your child to treat the instrument with care and love.
- Whenever the instrument is not in your child's hands, it should be in the case!

At school:

- Children will need their instruments in school *every day* to fully participate in instrumental ensemble. To build a sense of responsibility and ownership, we ask that children (not parents!) carry the instrument to school.
- Instruments are to remain inside their cases during on the bus, during breakfast, afterschool, and any other non-instructional time.

Instrument care and maintenance

- All instrument cases must be clearly labeled with the child's name.
- Do not write, color, or put stickers on an instrument.
- Do not turn any pegs, touch the hair on the bow, or attempt to repair an instrument.
- If an instrument appears broken or in need of repair, contact the Director of Music via ClassDojo or email as soon as possible.
- Families who choose to provide their own instruments are responsible for any repairs beyond the capability of WHIN staff. WHIN is happy to recommend repair shops.

Performances

All WHIN students participate in five school-day concerts throughout the school year. A concert is our way of sharing our music with the WHIN community and a celebration of our hard work. Students proudly perform in full WHIN uniform. To prepare for a concert, we have multiple rehearsals, with an emphasis on growth and feedback.

We have the following principles in place to guide us during rehearsals and to ensure a positive performing experience for all students and families. In order to perform in a WHIN concert, students must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. I treat my ensemble, my instrument, and myself with care and respect
2. I help my ensemble sound, look, and feel professional
3. I fully participate in all rehearsals
4. I am in school all day on the day of the performance

We encourage parents/guardians, extended family, and friends to attend all performances. Audience members are expected to remain for the duration of the performance and follow WHIN dismissal procedures at the conclusion of the performance.

Throughout the year, WHIN students are invited to perform at various community events at times that are beyond typical school hours, both on and off campus. These events will be announced throughout the school year. We encourage students to participate and share their artistry with our greater community. All students who participate in community performances serve as ambassadors of WHIN, and, as such, adhere to WHIN rules and policies. During off-campus performances, all students must be accompanied by a guardian.

Community Participation

WHIN serves a vibrant artistic community and is open to connecting with like-minded musicians. We welcome family and community members who are willing to share their time, talents, and musical resources to further the mission of the school. Any inquiries may be directed to the Director of Music.

Physical Education, Health, and Wellness Program

Physical Education (P.E) at WHIN will be part of a holistic, balanced education. Teaching children how to respect, develop, and take care of their physical health is just as important as teaching academic content. With this philosophy in mind, students will have:

1. Physical Education, Health, and Wellness class (based on *Physical Best*, a comprehensive health-related fitness education program that focuses on each child's individual preferences and capabilities),^[2]
2. Organized playtime with games and activities during recess

Please alert the school if your child has any medical conditions that affect his or her ability to participate in physical activity.

Science/Social Studies Program:

Our Social Studies curriculum will be aligned with the New York State Learning Standards, including the standards of the New York State Testing Program for Science and Social Studies, and the Common Core literacy standards for K-6 Science and Social studies strands. WHIN will use the project-based instructional philosophy of Expeditionary Learning as the main mechanism and model for Social Studies and include:

- **Project-based Learning**
- **Cooperative Learning Structures**
- **Discovery-Based Lessons:** A five-step process that allows students to improve their critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as to develop their depth of understanding.
 1. *Engage:* teachers engage students (e.g., with a demonstration, brainstorm, problem) to raise questions and elicit responses that uncover what students know or think about the topic.
 2. *Explore:* students then explore the topic together, without direct instruction from the teacher. The teacher asks probing questions of students and listens as they make meaning.
 3. *Explain:* teachers ask students to explain their thinking based on their explorations and provide students with clarifications, definitions, and direct instruction.
 4. *Extend:* students extend their knowledge of the topic by applying concepts and skills to new problems and tasks.
 5. *Evaluate:* the teacher assesses students' knowledge or skills and asks them to assess their own learning.

WHIN uses the FOSS Next Generation science curriculum, which puts the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) into practice by integrating all three dimensions: the Disciplinary Core Ideas, the Science and Engineering Practices, and the Crosscutting Concepts, to engage students and teachers in enduring experiences that lead to deeper understanding of the natural and designed world. Each grade level learns a module on physical science, earth science, and life science.

Special Education Services:

WHIN is committed to instructing students with differing abilities and Individual Education Programs (IEPs) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) through the promotion of inclusion in all areas of academics including a rigorous music program. Given the correct support of instructional differentiation and accommodations, students have the opportunity to learn alongside their peers. To create a successful inclusion model, WHIN's special education programs offer the following:

- **ICT:** Integrated Co-Teaching/Collaborative Team Teaching (ICT/CTT) classrooms with one special education teacher and one general education teacher *or* one ELL ENL teacher and one general education teacher in the classroom to service all students.
- **SETSS:** Special Education Teacher Support Services service provided by a special education teacher to a student or the student's general education teacher. The student receives the service in a general education setting, small group pull out, or push in delivery.
- **Related Services** such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, and other related services are offered through related service providers with the NYC Department of Education. Related Service Agreements (RSA) may be provided by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) for students who need to secure providers for specific support service that cannot be provided at WHIN during the school day.

The programs implemented by the teams play a significant role in the expected steady academic, social, and emotional progress made by all students participating at WHIN. These efforts are monitored to demonstrate an increase in student achievement as well as a decrease in the number of referrals to the CSE. Utilizing the strengths of all of WHIN's educators will bring success for all of our students.

Response to Intervention

WHIN Music Community Charter School uses a Response to Intervention (RtI) program consistent with the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) regulations^[3] that is in compliance with the United States Department of Education's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Child Find mandate. WHIN's Response to Intervention program is a general education initiative that includes a multi-tiered instructional framework. It is a school wide approach used to address the needs of all students, including at-risk students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs) and students that excel with grade level curriculum.

WHIN's Response to Intervention program ensures that all students including students with disabilities and ELL students are receiving high-quality, research based instruction to help close academic, social emotional, and behavior gaps. The RTI program consists of three tiers of intervention.

- In Tier 1, supplements will be provided in the classrooms to support students in accessing and mastering core curriculum.
- In Tier 2, support will be provided in small groups to provide students additional practice and opportunity to master previously taught curriculum.
- In Tier 3, intensive intervention will be provided to target specific skills and remediate in small groups.

WHIN engages parents/guardians and members of the Child Study Team (CST) to review current levels of functioning, identify areas of challenge, and structure meaningful interventions to address concerns. The CST will regularly use data to drive instructional decisions, problem-solve, and review progress regularly to determine what level of intervention is needed for individual students. The Child Study Team (CST) may consider referral for further evaluation if adequate progress is not being made.

Child Study Team (CST)

Within the RtI program, the CST operates as a Problem-Solving model and meets to analyze and evaluate data. The CST consists of teachers, the Principal, Director of Music (DOM), Director of Special Programs, Executive Director, parent/guardians, the Director of School Culture, and other related service providers as needed. Parents/guardians are engaged with the CST and are part of the problem-solving and instructional/intervention process. The CST's purpose is to review and analyze data, define strengths and areas of need for the student, and plan for specific interventions and monitor student progress to ensure students meet with success. The RtI interventions are based on the individual student's needs. Students are instructed and supported in small homogenous groups dependent on their needs. Students complete frequent probes to monitor progress and ensure each student is responding to the interventions. The information gained from probes and other assessments is used by teachers and members of the CST to make supportive and informative decisions for students and to ensure academic/social-emotional/behavioral progress is made to close gaps.

English Language Learners (ELL)

WHIN anticipates having an ELL population that accurately reflects CSD 6's language learning needs and as such is structured to meet that need by using a full inclusion model. Upon registration,

parents/guardians are asked to fill out a Home Language Identification Survey. Students who speak a language other than English take an exam called the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL.) The score on the NYSITELL determines whether or not a student is entitled to receive ELL services. At WHIN ELL services are offered through push-in and/or a pull-out model. WHIN's ELL teachers include strategies throughout the academic day including daily reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. Each spring, all emergent bilingual students are required to take the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). This exam evaluates English proficiency. The student continues to take the NYSESLAT until he/she is considered proficient. Once a student reaches proficiency determined by the NYSESLAT, he/ she is still eligible to receive ELL supports for 2 additional years. Through a full inclusion model WHIN implements the following strategies to support ELL students:

- Create an environment where learners feel secure and are comfortable taking risks
- Include the learners language and culture in the curriculum (including bilingual books)
- Teach the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an integrated way
- Use visual cues, graphic organizers, and manipulatives to represent, organize, and clarify concepts
- Use cooperative learning structures and information-gap activities where learners work together to complete tasks and meet the learning targets
- Link new information to prior knowledge

Referral Process

If a student is not accessing the curriculum and has been referred to the CST and participated in RtI targeted intervention cycles, a referral for further testing can be made to the NYC DOE Committee on Special Education (CSE). Student evaluations can be completed by CSE (or approved outside evaluation sites) and are comprehensive, addressing the range of functional areas (academic, social, physical, management) that impact a student's ability to succeed in an inclusive classroom.

Diagnostic testing information is completed and interpreted by the CSE along with WHIN's Director of Special Programs, Special Education Teacher, ELL Teachers, General Education Teachers, and Related Service Providers. WHIN leaders and teachers will document student progress and assist in the interpretation of the information so that parents/guardians understand the implications of the disability on learning. If it is determined by the CSE that a student has a disability impacting his education an IEP will be created and services will be initiated.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Compliance:

WHIN complies with all the regulations and requirements of IDEA. We are aware that eligibility is determined by whether there is an identified disability that adversely affects a student's educational performance enough to require special education services to support the student's access to the curriculum. WHIN adheres to all the requirements to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). At WHIN we provide for the needs of identified students according to their IEPs, and English Language status, and we actively seek to identify students who present with challenges and who may qualify for special education supports.^[4]

504 Plans

It is WHIN's intent to periodically review and update student health records and bring to CST meetings students that may need the supports offered through a 504 plan.^[5] The CST will identify and evaluate students qualified under Section 504 who are in need of accommodations to participate in school programs on an equal basis with their non-disabled peers. Students who may be in need of such accommodations are evaluated by the WHIN Music Community Charter School CST team and, when appropriately approved by the parent/guardian, are provided accommodations pursuant to a written 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan)^[6] that outlines the accommodations the student will receive.

School staff and parents/guardians can request an evaluation by the CST for any student who is reasonably believed to be disabled and in need of accommodations, within the meaning of Section 504, in order to attend and participate in school activities on an equal basis with his or her non-disabled peers. When staff members initiate a referral through the CST, the Executive Director or the Director of Special Programs must notify the parent/guardian within five school days (aligns with IEP timeline) that they have received an evaluation request and document in a student information system such as Power School. The Executive Director or Director of Special Programs will ensure that parents/guardians are well informed of the Section 504 processes through delivery of the Notice of Non-discrimination and the Parental Rights Notice. Parent/guardian consent is required before an evaluation can be done. All initiated 504 plans are renewed yearly by the CST.

Student Promotion and Retention Policy:

All WHIN students must demonstrate mastery of grade level skills and knowledge in core academic areas. Common Core State Standards and our Understanding by Design curriculum framework provide the necessary targets students must master to be promoted. Summative assessments will be used to assess each student's progress towards unit mastery within each academic area. Daily formative assessments, our Response to Intervention (RtI) program, and school wide benchmark assessments will be used to identify struggling students early so we can implement the necessary interventions to support each learner's needs.

Report Card: A student must score an average of level 3 or higher in all core subjects combined by the fourth quarter to be promoted.

If this criterion is not met, the following data will be taken into consideration regarding promotion decisions:

- All students: Three (3) steps of growth on the STEP ELA and four (4) benchmarks of growth on AMC Math assessment throughout the year will be considered in determining promotion criteria.
- Students with Special Needs: Students must meet the promotion criteria described in their IEP. If the promotion criteria is absent from the IEP the school will consider other academic and social/emotional factors to determine promotion.
- English Language Learners: Students' English language proficiency level and progress will be considered. The student will be promoted if he/she is deemed ready to succeed in the next grade with ELL support services.

Additionally, having 10 or more absences negatively contributes to promotion decisions. Five unexcused tardies and/or early pickups equals one absence.

If a student is in danger of being retained the following steps will happen:

1. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately if a student is failing to make adequate grade level progress.
2. If a student is considered promotion in doubt by the end of the second quarter a letter will be sent to parents/guardians explaining why.
3. The school will request a meeting with the student's parents/guardians and teachers to discuss the student's progress, potential solutions, and to create a timeline to assess progress.
4. If the school determines a student needs to be retained another meeting will be scheduled between the school and family to discuss next steps.
5. The Executive Leadership of WHIN will make the final decision on student retentions.

School Culture and Student Code of Conduct:

The Washington Heights and Inwood Music Community Charter School's mission is to provide our diverse student population with rigorous academic instruction, intensive music education and a positive learning environment so that every student can thrive academically and personally. To that purpose, we envision a learning environment that promotes personal development, advances social inclusion, and develops community building for all students and families. Our learning environment

is founded upon three philosophies/practices: El Sistema, Restorative Justice, and Responsive Classroom.

Building upon El Sistema culture, WHIN will strive to create a safe, inclusive learning environment where all students feel welcome and enjoy the learning process. The Restorative Justice philosophy will help students reflect on their choices, understand the consequences of their choices, and make amends when necessary. Responsive Classroom will help instill positive, preventive discipline and a warm school culture through various classroom management strategies.

Preventative discipline is an integral component of our school culture that will help to ensure all students can take advantage of the unique learning opportunities at WHIN. We believe using respectful and responsible language with an emotionally neutral tone allows staff and students the opportunity to be reflective, active participants in creating a school culture that benefits and supports all. It is WHIN's belief that students should not be removed from the learning environment unless it is absolutely necessary. Furthermore, WHIN's effective discipline policy requires the understanding, belief in, and support of all students, staff, and families.

At WHIN, the discipline policy will be the same for off-of-campus activities that impact the educational environment as it is on campus, including on the school bus or any other means of student transportation, and is applicable to all off-site trips as well as to stores that students may visit on the way to or from school. In that way, the school will maintain a "door-to-door" discipline policy, which begins when students leave their home to come to school, and ends when they reach home or their final destination after school. These policies also extend to acceptable use while virtual learning is taking place and when using social media sites, including, but not limited to Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. Consequences for cyberbullying, for example, will be similar to those for bullying on campus.

To instill positive discipline and develop WHIN's school culture, we will use the following Responsive Classroom structures that will help us promote personal development, advance social inclusion, and develop community building:

- **Morning Meeting**—gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead. Songs and music will be an essential part of these periods.
- **Interactive Modeling**—teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors through modeling appropriate behaviors and attitudes.
- **Positive Teacher Language**—using words and tone as a tool to promote children's active learning, sense of community, and self-discipline.

- **Guided Discovery**—introducing classroom materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity, and responsibility.
- **Academic Choice**—increasing student learning by allowing students teacher structured choices in their work.
- **Working with Families**—creating avenues for hearing parents'/guardians' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches. El Sistema program has been proven very effective to build community and WHIN will use many performances, workshops and conferences to build a tight community of students, parents/guardians and teachers. School culture will be one of collaboration.
- **Collaborative Problem Solving**—using conferencing, role-playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students.
- **Logical Consequences**—responding to misbehavior in a way that allows children to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity.

WHIN will work with students, families, teachers and all staff to ensure the school culture is based on the values of respect, worthiness, inclusion, and the understanding of the uniqueness of each student and situation. At the same time, our school culture will ensure that there is a clear system to deal with specific situations that may go against the school's core values.

Restorative Justice will serve as the foundation to tackle behavior infractions through non-punitive consequences, so the focus of the interventions will be to ensure that the student is able to reflect on his/her actions, restore/make amends to the situation, and prevent any similar conflict in the future in alignment with the shared values of the entire school community.

WHIN anticipates that all students will strive for academic, social, and personal excellence and meet the school's expectations for personal responsibility, self-discipline, cooperation, and social responsibility. WHIN also knows that all students and situations are different and the same interventions will not work for all students and situations. As such, we have developed three tiers of general infractions and potential supports to guide staff as they help students work through challenges. Regardless of the challenges and possible solutions, WHIN will always ground our response to student infractions in the ideology of El Sistema, Responsive Classroom, and Restorative Justice by being reflective, emotionally neutral, and kind.

The supports utilized to correct misbehavior will depend on the severity and the frequency of the behavior. Misbehavior is categorized into three (3) tiers of severity, where Tier 1 is the least severe and Tier 3 is the most severe. The chart below is a partial list of potential infractions as well as the potential range of consequences.

Examples of Infractions and Potential Consequences	
Potential Infractions	Potential Consequences
Tier One	
Calling out in class Not following teacher instructions Dress code violation Inappropriate Language Passive defiance	Verbal Reminder/Warning Loss of Privilege Logical Consequence Self-reflective Timeout Parent Call/Letter
Tier Two	
Repeated Level 1 Offenses Physical and Verbal Aggression Bullying/Threats/Abuse Disrespecting students and teachers	Self-reflective Time-out Parent Call/Letter/Meeting/Observation Removal from the Class/Situation In school suspension Short Term Out of School Suspension
Tier Three	
Repeated Level 2 Offenses Possessing a weapon Possessing an illegal substance Abusing/ destroying school property Assaulting a teacher or student Discriminatory, Abusive, Obscene, or Derogatory speech Conduct which disrupts school/classroom activities and endangers/threatens to endanger the health, safety or welfare of others	Guided Self Reflection by authorized staff In School Suspension Short Term Out of School Suspension Long Term Out of School Suspension Expulsion Restraint

Respecting the Rights of Students:

Inspired by El Sistema, WHIN uses ensemble music “to enable every child to experience being an asset within her or his community.” This experience starts with a reciprocal respect between students, families, teachers and staff in order to develop a trusting community where everybody’s voice is appreciated and respected. Just as WHIN expects a reciprocal respect between students and

teachers, WHIN also recognizes the rights of students as protected by State and Federal laws, including

- Equal Opportunity to take part in school activities
- Confidentiality of Records
- Freedom of Expression
- Freedom from Unwarranted Search and Seizure
- Due Process

Description of Expectations:

In the same way that WHIN holds the highest possible expectations for the school leadership, staff, and teachers, WHIN also holds the highest expectations for students in order to help them achieve their best. Specifically, students are expected to behave in the following ways (partial list):

- **Classroom Behaviors:** Students are expected to follow teacher instructions, be kind to their classmates, and respect the learning environment.
- **Behavior in Halls:** Students are expected to walk quietly in the halls in order to maintain the learning environment.
- **Bathroom Behavior:** Students are expected to use the bathroom facilities respectfully and not deface or abuse them. Students are expected to have bathroom passes from their classrooms when going to the bathroom with permission.
- **Behavior in lunchroom:** The lunchroom should be an orderly, calm, clean, and pleasant zone. Students should sit in their seats and converse using quiet “inside voices.”
- **Behavior on Buses:** Students should remain seated and obey the driver or any caretaker on the bus. Students should refrain from any disorderly behaviors.
- **Behavior during School Field Work/Activities:** Students are expected to behave on field trips in the same way as when they are in school.
- **Excessive Tardiness, Absenteeism, leaving school without permission:** Students are to report to class on time and come to school except when they are sick. Students are never to leave school grounds without permission from a school staff member.
- **Dress Code:** Students are required to wear the WHIN student uniform at all times in school, on field trips, and all other school related activities.
- **Fighting/Physical Aggression:** WHIN students should resolve conflicts verbally through the conflict resolution strategies taught in their Responsive Classroom instruction.
- **Cheating/Plagiarism:** WHIN students are expected to act with honor and be principled in their academic pursuits. Teachers will help and support students whenever they struggle with understanding a concept; therefore, there is no need to showcase another person’s work for one’s own.

Cyber Bullying	<p>Bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples of cyberbullying include:</p> <p>Mean text messages or emails Rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites Embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles</p>
<p>*All definitions of bullying are from www.stopbullying.gov and can be found at this link: https://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/index.html</p>	

The **Dignity for All Students Act** states that “No student shall be subjected to harassment or bullying by employees or students on school property or at a school function; nor shall any student be subjected to discrimination based on a person’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex by school employees or students on school property or at a school function.”

For severe misbehavior (Tier 2 and 3 infractions), WHIN may use the following strategies, making sure to follow due process:

- Oral or written warning
- Letter and/or phone call to parent/guardian
- Parent/Guardian meeting
- Admonishment by school personnel
- Loss of school privileges
- Confiscation of property
- Intervention by counseling staff, including individual/group counseling
- Restorative approaches
- Peer mediation
- Development of individual behavior contract - Short-term behavioral progress reports
- Community service (with parent/guardian consent)
- Removal from the situation (class or school function)
- After-school detention
- In-school suspension
- Short-term suspension (ten days or less) from school

- Long-term suspension (more than ten days) from school
- Expulsion from school

Referrals:

If a student's behavior has proven too disruptive to the learning environment or if repeated attempts to restore the situation have not produced an adequate outcome a teacher or other staff member may refer a student to the Executive Leadership. Referrals are considered serious and will only be used in response to severe and/or recurring student behavior infractions.

When staff make a referral, they will complete a formal referral form detailing the misbehavior, steps taken to restore the situation, and the impact of the situation. The Executive Leadership will review these forms to determine next steps. A student's parents/family will be notified immediately whenever a referral is made. A parent/guardian meeting may be requested to help determine the best strategies and appropriate disciplinary actions to help the student correct their behavior and make amends.

Illegal Activity:

If a student is engaged in illegal activities, the Executive Leadership will notify the student's parents/family immediately to discuss the situation and determine next steps. Upon review of the situation, the Executive Leadership will contact the appropriate law enforcement agency if needed. Examples of illegal activities can include:

- Assaults or Threats of Assault
- Possession of Weapons
- Theft
- Sexual Abuse
- Property Damage
- Possession and/or use of Drug or Alcohol

Student Searches

WHIN retains the right to search students and their property to ensure the safety of students and staff. Student searches will only be conducted by school leadership with at least one additional staff member present to ensure the safety of the student being searched.

All school-related property always remains under the control of the school and is subject to search at any time. School-related property includes but is not limited to computers, lockers, cabinets, desks, bookcases, and items controlled or directed by school officials in the

support of educational-related programs or activities. The school is not responsible for books, clothing, or valuables left in lockers or desks. A student shall not place nor keep in a locker, desk or other school-related property any article or material which is of a non-school nature and may cause or contribute to the disruption of the mission of the school. The following rules will apply to the search of school property assigned to a specific student and the seizure of illegal items found therein:

- a) Executive Leadership will make an individual search of a student's locker, desk, or other school-related property only when there is reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of an item which is prohibited on school property or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- b) Searches shall be conducted under the authorization of the Executive Director or his/her designee.
- c) Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed by school authorities.
- d) Searches of an individual will be made upon reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing. To the extent practicable, searches of an individual will be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex and with another witness present.
- e) Searches of students and school property may be conducted on school grounds or whenever the student is involved with or attending a school sponsored or related function, whether it is on school grounds or not.

Short Term In-School Suspension or Short Term Suspension from School (10 days or less)

When Executive Leadership determines that a student charged with misconduct should be assigned in-school suspension or should be suspended on a short-term basis for ten days or less, Executive Leadership will provide notice (by telephone or in writing) of such suspension decision to, in the first instance, the student in terms of the charges against the student and allow the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story, and then to the student's parent or guardian, and afford the parent or guardian an opportunity for an informal conference.

The student also may be removed from class and/or School immediately if, in the sole discretion of the suspending authority, it is determined that the student's presence in class or school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or risks disruption of the academic process. In the event that your child is suspended from school, you or a trusted designee, are expected to pick up your child within the timeframe stated by Executive Leadership. Students not picked up will serve

in-school suspension. Proper authorities will be notified if students who are suspended out of School return to school during a period of suspension.

The purpose of the informal conference, if the parent or guardian chooses one, is to discuss with the parent or guardian the circumstances that led to the suspension decision and to explore proactive steps to ensure the student's misconduct that led to the suspension does not reoccur. The informal conference may be held in person or by telephone. Any written notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parent(s) or guardian(s). The opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon as possible after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

During the suspension the student is expected to complete all of their schoolwork. The suspended student, along with his/her parent or legal guardian must meet with the Executive Leadership and any staff member who was involved in the incident before they are able to return to school.

Long-Term Suspension (more than 10 days) and Expulsion

When School staff or leadership determines that a suspension for more than ten (10) days or expulsion may be warranted, the student may be removed from class and/or school immediately if the student's presence in school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or is an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process. Executive leadership or their designee shall give reasonable written notice to the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the charges against the student, the proposed penalty and the right to a fair hearing within ten (10) days unless the parent(s) or guardian(s) consent to an adjournment. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s). The student or parent(s) or guardian(s) shall also have an opportunity to tell the student's side of the story.

A short-term suspension will be imposed until the hearing on the long term suspension or expulsion. Every effort will be made to ensure that the hearing is held as soon as practicable in order to limit the amount of time the student spends outside the classroom, but not so soon as prevent the parent/guardian from seeking counsel and making arrangements to attend the hearing.

At the hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel or advocate (at the student's/parent's expense), the right to question witnesses against him/her, confront evidence against him/her and the right to present witnesses and other evidence on his/her behalf. The Executive Director shall personally serve as hearing officer or may, in his/her discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer

oaths and make determinations on evidentiary issues. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required. An audio recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The hearing officer shall make written findings of fact and recommendations as to the appropriate measure of discipline. The report of the hearing officer will be final, and the Executive Director may accept all or any part within three days. A written statement will be provided to the student and parent(s) and guardian(s) stating the decision. This statement will also be placed in the student's permanent record.

If the parent(s)/guardian(s) fail to attend the hearing and fail to notify a school official of the need to reschedule the hearing prior to its start, or if the student withdraws from the School prior to occurrence of the hearing, the School may conduct the hearing in the parent(s)/guardian(s)' absence. In such an event, the School shall notify the parent(s) /guardian(s) in writing of the School's determination, the student's placement (if applicable) and their appeal rights, if any.

If the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Director, they may file a written appeal to the Board of Trustees within five business days of the date of the decision of the Executive Director. The Board may adopt in whole or in part the Executive Director and will make its decision based solely upon the record before it, in addition to a written statement by each party. Final decisions of the Board alleging a violation of the school's charter or of applicable law may be appealed to the school's authorizer, the State Education Department, acting on behalf of the New York State Board of Regents, which shall investigate and respond.

Alternative Instruction

For any suspension (in-school or out of school) of one (1) day or more, or any suspension of less than one (1) day when the student has not yet received 60 minutes of instruction in grades K-6, such student has a right to live alternative instruction by qualified staff of at least 60 minutes (grades K-6). The character of the instruction shall be such that the student receives all homework, takes all tests and quizzes and is able to keep pace with the student's class toward promotion in grade or graduation. The instruction shall be provided as soon as feasible after the suspension. The School may provide alternative instruction in-school or out-of-school at the School's discretion. If the student does not attend alternative instruction, the student shall be marked absent. If the School does not offer alternative instruction the student may not be recorded as absent.

In the case of an expulsion, alternative instruction will be provided for a reasonable period of time or until the student is enrolled at another accredited school, or otherwise participating in an accredited program to the extent the provision of such services is required by law. If the expulsion

is in close proximity with the end of the school year, then the School will provide alternative instruction until the end of the school year.

Physical Restraints

In an emergency, a school administrator, teacher, school staff member, or volunteer may use a physical restraint or time-out room as necessary to prevent a student from harming him/herself, other students, school staff or property or other persons or to maintain order if the student has refused to comply with a request to refrain from further disruptive acts. Parents/guardians will receive notification if your child is physically restrained or accesses the time out room.

Gun Free Schools Act

Federal law (20 USC §7961) requires suspension from school for a period of not less than one year for a student who the School determines to have brought a firearm to school, or to have possessed a firearm at school, except that the School's Chief Operating Officer from Uncommon Schools may modify in writing such suspension requirement for a student on a case-by-case basis with the consent of the Board of Trustees. "Firearm" as used in this law means a "firearm," or "destructive device" as defined by 18 USC § 921(a), and includes firearms and explosives (New York Education Law § 3214 effectuates this federal law).

The School may also permanently expel a student for bringing a firearm to school.

It is the policy of the School that in the event a student brings a firearm to school or possesses one at school, the Executive Director will refer the student to local law enforcement or to the NYS Office of Children and Family Services or NYC Administration for Children's Services or other presentment agency as a juvenile delinquent. In addition, the NYPD should be contacted to take possession of any firearm.

The provisions of the Gun Free Schools Act shall be construed in a manner consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Therefore, the CSE will be consulted, even after a manifestation determination that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, regarding placement and services for such student.

Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Special Needs

In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, the following procedures are applicable to students with disabilities. A student not specifically identified as having a disability but whose school district of residence or charter school, prior to the behavior which is the subject of the

disciplinary action, has a basis of knowledge—in accordance with 34 CFR 300.534—that a disability exists may request to be disciplined in accordance with these provisions. The school will comply with sections 300.530-300.536 of the Code of Federal Regulations and the following procedures, except that in the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern.

The school will maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with a disability including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of eight days, such student will immediately be referred to the CSE of the student's district of residence for reconsideration of the student's educational placement. Such a student shall not be suspended for a total of more than ten (10) days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE of the student's district of residence prior to the eleventh (11th) day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement.

In considering the placement of students referred because of disciplinary problems, the CSE of the student's district of residence is expected to follow its ordinary policies with respect to parental notification and involvement.

Those students removed for a period of fewer than ten days will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of their suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up assignments or tests missed as a result of such suspension. The School also shall provide additional alternative instruction within the ten days and by appropriate means to assist the student, so that the student is given full opportunity to complete assignments and master curriculum, including additional instructions, phone assistance, computer instruction and/or home visits and one-on-one tutoring.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals equals ten or more school days during the school year, but does not constitute a change in placement, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the child's special education teacher, will make the service determination.

During any removal for drug or weapon offenses pursuant to 34 CFR §300.530(g) services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. These service determinations will be made

by the CSE of the student's district of residence. The school will, in consultation with the CSE, place students in interim alternative educational settings as appropriate per 34 CFR §300.520(g).

During any subsequent removal that does constitute a change in placement, but where the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the services must be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. The CSE of the student's district of residence will make the service determination.

If discipline which would constitute a change in placement is contemplated for any student with an IEP, the following steps shall be taken: (1) not later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the parents/guardians of the student with a disability shall be notified by the school of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504; and (2) the CSE of the student's district of residence and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action (subject to CSE's availability).

If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability, except as provided in 34 CFR §300.530(d), which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal.

Parents/guardians may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

If a parent/guardian requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to weapons or drugs, the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent/guardian and school agree otherwise.

Partnership with Parents and Families to Resolve Discipline Issues and Promote Learning:

WHIN firmly believes that our preventive discipline model and strong discipline policies must include the support and enforcement of parents/guardians and families. Therefore, teachers and/or administrators will be in communication via email, phone or face to face meetings whenever there is a situation or potential situation that might distract a student from learning.

Annual Review of the WHIN Student Discipline Policies:

Every year a team of WHIN stakeholders including school leadership, teachers, staff, students and their families will review these policies and make recommendations for change. It is solely the WHIN Board of Directors discretion to accept- in part or in whole- any recommendations presented.

WHIN Ways of Being

WHIN is committed to developing students holistically and authentically; instead of setting aside a specified time to perform character development, WHIN integrates elements of character strengthening within all content areas.

Specifically, we aim to create students who are:

<p>Lifelong and Life-wide Effective Learners <i>How we learn together</i></p>	<p>Empathetic, Compassionate Community Members <i>How we treat each other</i></p>	<p>Agents of Social Change <i>How we impact our community</i></p>
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Within each of these larger categories, we include a rich variety of well-researched factors that contribute to long-term success, academically as well as personally. These include (but are not limited to) fostering a sense of responsibility, perseverance, self-control, zest and curiosity, as well as developing empathy for others, being service-oriented, taking initiative, expressing gratitude, and using art for social change. El Sistema has long-incorporated more than just musicianship into its teaching and practice, and we draw from the successes and work accomplished around the world in the El Sistema movement to ensure WHIN students are given not just the highest quality instruction and academic development but also the tools necessary to experience a rich, fulfilling life. Staff members at WHIN also embody these qualities and serve as models for one another and our young learners.

School Food

Cafeteria:

A monthly calendar of meals will be shared with families. Meals are provided by the NYC DOE for WHIN students. The NYC DOE cannot provide a nut, milk, or allergen-free school environment because the risk of accidental exposure is always present whether in food other students bring to school or due to trace elements of allergens in foods prepared. Please alert the WHIN office if your child has any known allergies or dietary restrictions and share a doctor’s note specify those restrictions. If you choose to send your child to school with a lunch from home, please provide nutritious foods that do not require heating, refrigeration, or special preparation.

Lunch Forms:

WHIN participates in the DOE School Foods lunch program. NYC schools that choose to take part in the DOE lunch program must submit a lunch form for each household. To obtain the various benefits for students from Title 1 funding, lunch forms must be completed each year.

WHIN offers universal free lunch. In order to provide free and reduced-price meals to students all parents/guardians must submit lunch forms to WHIN each year to ensure eligibility for Title 1 funds. School food authorities can also be reimbursed for snacks served to children through age 18 in after-school, educational, or enrichment programs.

Snack Policy

WHIN provides a healthy snack to students every day. If you choose to send your child to school with a snack, please send in a nutritional snack (i.e. fruit, vegetables). If a child in the class has life-threatening food allergies that have been communicated to the School, we will ask families to refrain from sending their children to school with foods that might pose a danger.

Food Sharing Policy

Due to student's different dietary needs, we request that students refrain from sharing breakfast, lunch, or snack food brought in from home with other students. If you choose to send your child to school with food, please send an amount that will be an appropriate single serving for your child.

Celebration Policy

WHIN recognizes that healthy eating results in better learning. However, we also recognize that at times, moments of celebrations can call for special treats that are not what we typically eat. If you choose to celebrate a child's birthday at school, please contact your child's classroom teachers at least one week in advance to discuss the most appropriate time for a short celebration. Celebrations must be scheduled in advance and shall not take the place of instructional time. When selecting treats to share with the class, please be mindful of potential food allergies.

Cupcakes, cookies, fruit cups, or other individual treats are appropriate foods to contribute to a classroom celebration. Please refrain from bringing in sheet cakes, food that requires on-site preparation, food that requires refrigeration, or food that requires extensive set-up or clean-up. We ask families to provide paper plates, utensils, and cups for celebrations. Any "goody bags," toys, balloons, or prizes that are being distributed during birthday celebrations can only be done by the teachers at the conclusion of the school day.

Field Experiences

Experiences outside of the classroom offer WHIN students hands-on opportunities to apply classroom instruction to real world situations. WHIN students participate and share an active role in the community. Teachers organize and arrange trips to coincide with the curriculum they are

teaching. All students are expected to attend all out of school functions. These opportunities range from walks in the neighborhood to visits to local cultural institutions, such as museums and theatres. Classes will travel on foot, by school bus, city bus, subway or chartered bus. Teachers will notify parents/guardians of upcoming trips and give specific information regarding lunch, transportation, admissions fees, etc. Please notify your child's classroom teachers if assistance is needed to cover any trip costs or fees.

Teachers will also request parent/guardians chaperones to accompany the class and to assist in supervision. Family chaperones will be needed on many trips and play a vital role in maintaining the safety and educational value of the trip. WHIN is a community-based school and we welcome and appreciate all of our families that support and participate in school activities. In order to chaperone, please fill out a parent/guardian chaperone form at least 7 days in advance of the trip. We require one adult over 19 years of age for every ten students as a minimum. All Chaperones will be required to sign WHIN's Chaperone Guidelines form prior to attending the field experience.

Guidelines for Chaperones:

- Chaperones should not bring any children that are not students at WHIN. The students assigned to your group will need your full attention during the entire field trip.
- Familiarize yourself with the general instructions given to the students prior to the field trip and enforce these instructions throughout the trip.
- Teachers reserve the right to assign and/or re-assign students to groups. Please be mindful of how many students are in the group and learn their names and faces. Be sure that all are present before moving from one place to another.
- Always be safety conscious. You are responsible for the continuous monitoring of your group's activities. Never allow individuals to leave the group. Except in emergencies and then only with a partner.
 - Be on time for designated meeting places and departure. Stay with your designated group for the duration of the trip.
 - Students must travel with their class to and from the field experience. No students will be signed out for an early dismissal from the field experience.

Student Admission, Re-enrollment, and Transfers

Admission:

As a tuition free public charter school, WHIN Music Community Charter School ("WHIN") shall not discriminate against or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, sex, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, race, creed, national origin, religion or ancestry. A school

may not require any action by a student or family (such as an admissions test, interview, essay, attendance at an information session, etc.) in order for an applicant to either receive or submit an application for admission to that school. WHIN welcomes applications from all elementary students who are eligible under the laws of New York State to attend public school in New York City. In compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Section 2854(2) of the New York Education Law, governing admission to a charter school, WHIN admitted 54 kindergarten students and 54 first graders in its first year of operations. In each subsequent academic year, we will admit students based on our state approved growth plan.

Enrollment: Applicants to WHIN must be residents of New York State at the time of application. Enrollment will be done through an application process; if there are more applicants than the allotted spaces, a public lottery will be held. Prospective Kindergarten students must be 5 years of age by December 31; prospective First Graders must be 6 years of age by December 31st. WHIN does not use additional criteria (including admissions tests, interviews, essays, attendance at information sessions, etc.) as a condition of enrollment.

Parents/guardians will be required to produce an original birth certificate, proof of address, social security card and immunization records to prove eligibility. Enrolled students are guaranteed spots in future years in all K-5 grades offered. Every spring, we will gather information about our students' plans to re-enroll in order to allow for proper recruitment for any empty seats.

Lottery:

In the event that there are more applications than spots, an annual public lottery will be held using the NYSED Weighted Lottery Generator to applications for students who are in the economically disadvantaged subgroup as evidenced by Free and Reduced Lunch criteria. Our rationale to implement a Weighted Lottery Generator targeting the economically disadvantaged subgroup is based on two principles:

1. According to the New York State Education Department's Student Information Repository System data for 2014-2015, 85% of students in CSD 6 are Economically Disadvantaged. This represents a larger need than ELL students (31%) and students with disabilities (19%).
2. El Sistema was created and serves to help students born into- or living in poverty develop the necessary academic, social-emotional, interpersonal, and self-regulatory skills for academic success and upward mobility. Including a Weighted Lottery Generator in our school design allows us to always serve CSD 6 students who are economically disadvantaged.

The lottery will be conducted in a manner that will ensure fairness and be in compliance with all state and local law. No more than seven days after the lottery, WHIN will inform applicants of the lottery results via email and mailed letters that will indicate required next steps for accepted families to enroll their students. In alignment with the Open Meeting Law, notice for the admissions lottery will also be provided to the public on the school's website as well as via newspaper advertisement.

Wait List: Students who do not get a seat after the lottery will be placed on a waiting list in the order that they were drawn. If there is a vacancy, the family of students first on the waiting list will be informed via phone of an admission offer and given 24 hours to make a decision about attending WHIN. Students who wish to apply to WHIN after the lottery will be placed on the waiting list based on their application date. WHIN will keep accurate records of their waitlist containing, the names, home addresses, telephone numbers, and grade levels of students who entered the lottery but did not gain admission.

Process of Removing a Student from Enrollment: Students may be removed from enrollment during or after the enrollment period if they have shared false and/or incorrect information or fail to submit all necessary forms by the required date. If a parent/guardian is unable to submit the required forms by the required date the child's place can be secured by contacting WHIN and indicating their intent to enroll. If the documents are not received by the requested date and parent/guardian notification of intent has not been made, WHIN will make at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian prior to moving a child to the waitlist. Parents/guardians who elect to remove an enrolled student from WHIN during a school year due to an anticipated family relocation or other reason(s) will be allowed a 30 day grace period after advising WHIN of their decision to enroll elsewhere. For 30 days after initiating a removal, families may reconsider that decision and, if they choose, resume continued enrollment at the school. No backfilling of that seat will commence until after that period has expired.

Transfers: In the case of any empty seats due to attrition, transfer or location moves, WHIN will backfill vacant seats until December 31st. Students who come into the school once the semester has started will be welcomed into the community through an orientation program aimed at easing the transition.

General Policies

Money and Other Valuable Property

WHIN students should not bring money or other valuable property to school. In the event that parent/guardian wishes to send their child with money or valuable property, all items must remain in the student's backpack for the duration of the school day. WHIN takes no responsibility for the loss or destruction of money or personal property on or off school grounds.

Cell Phones and Other Electronics

WHIN students are not allowed to use cell phones or other electronic devices during the school day. Such devices should be left home during the school day. If seen, phones and other electronic devices will be confiscated and a family member must retrieve them from the main office. In an emergency, parents/guardians may contact children by calling the main office. In cases where there is no emergency, families should wait to speak to their children after the end of the school day. WHIN takes no responsibility for the loss or destruction of cell phones or electronic devices on or off school grounds.

Toy Policy

To maximize learning time and focus in the classroom, all personal toys should be kept at home. That includes: Pokemon cards, cars, Legos, Shopkins, fidget spinners, etc.

Please make sure children do not have these items in their pockets prior to leaving the house. If a child takes out a toy in school, a staff member will take the toy, and a family member must retrieve it from the main office at the end of the week.

Gum/Food Policy

To maximize learning time and ensure a clean learning environment students are not permitted to have gum, snacks, or other food during class time. All snacks and food must be eaten during scheduled times and not interfere with the learning community.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

In accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of students' records, WHIN Music Community Charter School has adopted the following regulations to protect the privacy rights of its students.

These rights are explained below:

- As a parent/guardian or eligible student you may have access to all of the student's education records maintained by the school, including report cards, transcripts, disciplinary records, contact and family information, and class schedules. When these records include information on more than one student, parents/guardians are limited only to information pertaining to his/her child. Unless it is impossible for parents/guardians or eligible students to inspect the records for reasons such as great distance, WHIN is not required to provide copies of materials in education records and if provided, the school may charge a fee for copies (see below under "Accessing Student's Records" section).

- Schools are required to ask for written consent before disclosing your child’s personally, identifiable information to individuals other than you. However, there are a few exceptions allowed by the law to disclose records and “directory” type information (see below under “Accessing Student’s Records” and “Directory Information”).
- As a parent/guardian or eligible student, you have the right to review your child’s or your education records and to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading (see below under “Amending or Appealing Student’s Records”).
- Student records or other identifiable information are maintained in a secure location to ensure confidentiality. Records that are no longer required or need to be disposed are done so in a manner that ensures confidentiality and security.

Accessing Student Records

Schools must honor your request to review your child’s education records within 45 days of receiving the request. While you can inspect and review your child’s education records, schools are not required to provide copies of materials, except in limited circumstances (for example, for reasons such as great distance), in which case, there may be a fee for copies. For those parents whose children receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the school district, local special education director, or state special education director can answer questions about any additional rights and remedies with regard to their children’s education records.

The process to access students’ records is as follows:

1. All requests to inspect and review a child’s record must be in writing and submitted to the main office.
2. Upon receipt, the school has 45 days to honor a parent’s/guardian’s request. If the requester is not a parent/guardian, the school will send a Consent for Release Student Information letter to the parent/guardian asking for permission to release their child’s record.
3. Once permission is granted to inspect and review a student’s education record, the requester must sign the Record of Access form. If a student has an IEP, the requester must Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) also sign the Confidential File Access Log form in the student folder. Schools are prohibited from disclosing personally identifiable information about your child without written consent with exception of the following disclosures:

- To school officials with legitimate educational interests;
- To another school at which the student intends to enroll;

- To state or local education authorities for auditing or evaluating federal or state supported
- education programs, or enforcing federal laws that relate to those programs, and state and
- local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law;
- To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- To accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; or appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- Including information the school has designated as “directory information.”

Directory Information

FERPA defines “directory information” as information contained in a student’s education record that generally would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory information could include:

- Name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, date and place of birth, dates of
- attendance, and grade level;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- Degrees, honors, and awards received; and
- The most recent school attended.

A school may disclose directory information to anyone, without consent, if it has given parents/guardians: general notice of the information it has designated “directory information;” the right to opt out of these disclosures; and the period of time they have to notify the school of their desire to opt out.

Amending or Appealing Student Records

1. If a parent/guardian believes their child’s education records contain inaccuracies, are

misleading or in violation of their child's right to privacy, he/she may ask that the record be amended. This appeal must be in writing to the School's Executive Leadership and must include the following:

- a. Information that is claimed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights
 - b. Specific records in which the parent/guardian believes the information is contained
 - c. Basis for the claim (i.e., reasons why he/she believes the information is inaccurate, etc.)
 - d. The parent's/guardian's proposed change(s)
2. The Executive Leadership will review the request, make a determination, and send a letter to the requester within fifteen school days of receiving the letter. This letter will lay out the reason(s) for the school's decision in response to the parent's/guardian's request. If the request is warranted, the school may decide to remove, modify, or expunge the information in the record, without this being an acknowledgement that the entry was improper or that any person acted improperly by including the entry on the record.

Contact the School's office for more information: office@whinmusic.org
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Email: info@whinmusic.org Website: www.whinmusic.org

3. If the request is denied or no ruling is made in the allotted time, the parent/guardian has the right to a formal hearing with a hearing officer appointed by the Board of Trustees. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent/guardian has the right to place a statement with the record commenting on the contested information in the record. While Schools must notify parents/guardians and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA, the actual means of notification is left to the discretion of each school and could be in the form of a special letter, student handbook, newspaper article, among others. This document constitutes the means of notification at WHIN. For additional information or technical assistance, you may contact our School's office at office@whinmusic.org.

More Information For more information about FERPA, contact the

Department's Family Policy
Compliance Officer
Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-5920
202-260-3887
FERPA.Customer@ED.Gov

Freedom of Information Law (FOIL)

WHIN Music Community Charter School's policies and procedures comply with the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) (Article 6 of the New York Public Officers Law), pursuant to Education Law §2854(1)(e) and include the required FOIL "regulations" and notice. It is the policy of WHIN Music Community Charter School ("WHIN") to furnish to the public the information and records required by the Freedom of Information Law ("FOIL"), constituting Article 6 of the Public Officers Law ("POL").

Complaint Policy

In our effort to address the specific concerns of parents/legal guardians WHIN distinguishes between informal and formal complaints, the main difference being that an informal complaint does not necessarily involve an alleged violation of law and/or charter while a formal complaint does involve an alleged violation of law and/or charter. While issues involving a violation of law and/or charter may be resolved informally, the complainant can at any time during the process initiate the formal complaint process. In compliance with Education Law Section 2855(4), the complainant can direct their formal complaint directly to the Board of Trustees. Below is a detailed account of WHIN Complaint Policy Procedures.

Informal Complaints

The types of complaints that address issues that are problematic for a student or group of students (such as behavioral, academic, etc.) but not necessarily involving violations of law and/or charter, are considered informal complaints. Since the education and well-being of every single student in our school is of paramount importance WHIN will work closely with parents/legal guardians and students to resolve these issues in a manner that is respectful, thoughtful, and beneficial for both parties. Additionally, and in furtherance of our goal to implement a strong school culture based on trust and respect between the school leadership and parents, it is our hope that these 'informal complaints' will be resolved quickly at the school level.

If you have an informal complaint, you are encouraged to contact the appropriate staff member at the School by email or telephone. All staff members are committed to responding promptly to informal complaints, either in person, by telephone or in writing.

If an informal complaint is not responded to and resolved promptly or satisfactorily, you may contact the executive leadership team to discuss the matter; a member of the leadership team shall respond in person, by telephone or in writing.

Formal Complaints

If you are not satisfied with the outcome or decision pertaining to the informal complaint, and if your complaint alleges a violation of WHIN's charter or law, you may file a formal complaint in

writing to the Chair of the School's Board of Trustees. The contact information for the School's Board of Trustees designee can be obtained in person at the School's main office.

All formal complaints must be submitted in writing. You can submit your complaint to the Office Manager in the school's main office, where they will date stamp it and place it in the mailbox of the Executive Leadership to provide to the Board of Trustees. You may also submit your written complaint via email to board@whinmusic.org.

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Board of Trustees shall appoint one or more designees to review the complaint. After reviewing the complaint, and completing any investigations necessary, the designee(s) will respond in writing to the complainant within a reasonable amount of time (within forty-five (45) days from the date of receipt of the complaint by the Board of Trustees).

Upon resolution of a complaint, WHIN will provide you with:

- A written determination and any remedial action to be taken and the reasons for such determinations.
- A written notice informing you of your right to appeal the determination to the NYSED Charter School Office if the complaint involves a violation of law or the school's charter.

If you elect to follow the informal complaint procedures to resolve a formal complaint, you shall be permitted at any time to stop the informal complaint procedures and initiate formal complaint procedures.

If an individual or group voices a complaint at a public meeting of the School's Board of Trustees or to individual trustees, trustees shall not respond to the substance of the complaint, but instead shall thank the individual or group for their time and direct them to the relevant complaint procedures.

Staff Gifts

No students or parents/guardians are required or expected to contribute towards any gift to a school employee. *As such, WHIN employees may only accept gifts that are sentimental in nature (i.e. homemade cards).*

Health, Safety and Security

Providing a safe learning environment for all students and staff is essential. To ensure emergency readiness, WHIN conducts eight evacuation drills and four soft lockdown drills per year in accordance to New York State Law. In the event of an evacuation you will be contacted.

Student Health Concerns and Immunizations

If a child requires medication of any kind:

- An Authorization to Dispense Medication form must be submitted
- The medication must be given to the nurse or to the Office Manager by a parent/ guardian in its original container.

Any student that carries an asthma inhaler with him/ her must provide:

- An Authorization to Dispense Medication form stating that the student needs to carry the inhaler with him/ her and
- The second inhaler that is to be kept in the nurse's office or with the Office Manager.

WHIN follows all health, safety, and immunization regulation and laws of New York State

AED/ CPR Training:

In compliance with all New York State regulations WHIN provides staff certified in adult, child, and infant Automated External Defibrillator (AED)/(CPR) training.

Incident Reporting

Whenever a student receives medical attention at school the School Nurse and/or WHIN will use its best efforts to notify you. WHIN will attempt to immediately notify you if your child becomes sick or has an accident that requires medical attention. If your child is sent to the school nurse and it is determined that he/she has a fever, is contagious, or otherwise cannot remain in school for the remainder of the day, you will be contacted to pick up your child as soon as possible. If you are not available, the emergency contact will be notified.

If your child is injured during the school day, a supervising staff member will complete a Student Incident/Injury Report that will be kept on file at school and a copy will be sent home. The nurse or attending adult will make every effort to contact you by phone and ensure all attempts are recorded in the students file. In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the nurse or attending adult will attempt to notify the emergency contact and will send a report home with the student.

Safety Drills and Evacuation Procedures

WHIN administers routine fire drills as mandated by NYS law. The school has established evacuation plans and procedures as well as designated safety areas. Copies of the Evacuation Plan and Procedures for the school building have been posted in each classroom, office, and common area. WHIN also conducts lockdown drills throughout the year. These drills are practiced to prepare for medical emergencies within the school or from threats posed outside the building. The procedures for this drill are detailed within our School Safety Plan.

Mandated Reporting

The WHIN community cares deeply about the health, safety, and well-being of our students, families, and community. Under New York law all school employees are required to report

suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect when they have a reasonable belief that such abuse is occurring or has occurred.

Transportation

Student transportation will be provided by the New York City Department of Education Office of Pupil (OPT). Transportation eligibility for children who are not mandated for specialized transportation because of their IEP (Individualized Education Program), is determined on the basis of the student's grade level and the distance between the student's residence and school.

Pupils in grades K - 2 are eligible for free transportation if they reside ½ mile or more from their school. Pupils in grades K - 2 are eligible for half fare transportation if they reside less than 1/2 mile from their school.

Students in grade 3 who live ½ mile –to 1 mile from school as determined by OPT are eligible for half-fare metrocards. Students in grade 3 who live 1 mile or more from school may be eligible for yellow busing or full- fare metrocards. Buses will pick up and drop off students directly in front of the school building. As a result, we ask that parents/guardians who are dropping off and/or picking up students be mindful of the tight traffic situation and plan accordingly.

Should transportation services be needed, parents/guardians are required to request transportation at the time of enrollment. During enrollment parents/guardians are required to provide WHIN with any/all necessary information needed to secure transportation.

After-school:

LEAP (leapnyc.org) is offering an after-school program to WHIN students for the 2019-2020 school year. In the after-school space, LEAP offers sustained participation in numerous art genres, ranging from drama, to visual arts, to dance, with a focus on leadership and literacy or STEAM. We celebrate diverse communities and connect daytime learning to out of school time through artistic expression, having each activity culminate in collaborative group performances, creative projects, and community events. Parents can contact the program administration at the following information:

Site Coordinator: Wendy Luker-McWade

Class Dojo Name: Luker-McWade

Email Address: wendy@leapnyc.org

Hours: Mon-Thur 4:00pm-5:45pm

Friday 2:00pm- 5:45pm

Dismissal: 5:45-5:55pm daily

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- [1] A learner-centered instructional approach in which “learners (students) are treated as co-creators in the learning process, as individuals with ideas and issues that deserve attention and consideration.” See B. McCombs & J.S. Whistler, *The Learner-Centered Classroom and School: Strategies for Increasing Student Motivation and Achievement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, (1997).
- [2] <http://www.shapeamerica.org/prodev/workshops/physicalbest/physicalbestfaq.cfm>
- [3] p12.nysed.gov/specialed/RTI/guidance/application.
- [4] IDEA 20 U.S. Code § 1412
- [5] 504 Plans provide services to qualified students under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- [6] USDOE Office of special education and rehabilitative services Memorandum January 2011.

WHIN - Distance Learning Addendum

The Board of Trustees of WHIN decided to begin the school year in a distance model. This means that all students will be learning from home. If conditions and guidance from the New York City and New York State Departments of Health and WHIN’s authorizer, the New York State Education Department, support a shift to a hybrid or all-in person plan, WHIN will provide you with notice of the same.

The first day of school for students will be September 10th. Teachers will be sending their homeroom classes information about when and how to log in to distance learning to parents/guardians.

We will have supply pickup starting on September 8th. Every student will have something to pick up whether it be workbooks, school supplies, assignment notebooks, etc. so it is important that parents and students come in on these days to pick up materials. We ask that you follow the schedule below so that we can have their materials ready when they arrive.

Students and parents will need to wear masks and ensure they are symptom-free before picking up materials. We expect that students will still need the same supplies this school year regardless of the mode of learning.

The first week of school will be focused on getting to know students and going over what the routines and expectations are. This is the same thing we would be doing if we were in person, but adapted for the distance learning environment. We will spend time on the various technology skills needed, engagement expectations, and resources for help when kids are stuck. Just as important, we will spend time building community and learning about each other.

The student day will begin at 8:10am. Students will break for various reasons including lunch depending on their class schedule. Each child's learning day will end at 4:00pm. Our teachers are designing a full day of experiences for each child balancing online and offline learning. Online learning will include live instructional sessions and recorded sessions.

Any student with an IEP is supported by the Director of Special Programs who will coordinate the implementation of that student's supports and services. All Special Education and related services will continue to be provided as indicated in their IEP. Students with a 504 Plan will continue to receive their accommodations and be supported by their classroom teachers.

WHIN will provide fully working Chromebooks, musical instruments, Wifi Hotspots and any other resources necessary for students to access the remote learning environment.

While we recognize the many challenges distance learning creates, it is important that our children are actively engaged in learning every day. (Please see the section on attendance below.) It is important that children still follow a regular schedule, including bedtimes and waking for school each day. Children need a regular space to work that becomes their "classroom at home" which should be free from distractions (TV, video games etc.) and where help is accessible but still encourages as much independence as possible. We know that some students may need help logging on initially and learning how to access their online resources. Teachers will be sharing more specific structures, schedules, and processes. It is also important that students do their own work as much as they are able. Our teachers are very aware of the kinds of activities that are appropriate for students

at their grade level. If your child is struggling significantly with completing a task independently, particularly if that struggle is unusual for your child, please reach out to your child's teacher.

If something isn't working for your student, we want to know and we want to know as soon as possible. The first contact for most concerns is the classroom teacher. If there is a technical difficulty that is beyond the teacher's ability to resolve you may contact help@whinmusic.org for assistance. A phone extension will be communicated at a later date for families to call in the event that they cannot access email. Please contact your child's teacher through email if your child is unable to fully participate in their distance learning classroom. Problem-solving conversations involving the child, parent, and teacher allow parents and teachers to share common expectations, build student confidence, and encourage deeper participation in learning.

When a teacher becomes aware that a child is not engaging regularly in class, they will email the student's parents/guardians to inquire about the challenge. If there is no reply, the teacher will make a phone call to parents/guardians to check-in and inquire. Should engagement rise to a persistent challenge, the teacher may contact our school's leadership team for further intervention and planning support.

Remote classes will be held synchronously as well as asynchronously depending on the class and grade level. In addition to live classes students will be responsible for completing assignments and logging into various digital platforms to conduct their school work.

In response to parent, staff, and student feedback, we want to provide a consistent platform that is user friendly and dynamic in its capacity and capability. This year, we will utilize Classdojo which will facilitate paperless communication between teachers and students, and streamline educational workflow for students and teachers. Google Classroom also allows teachers to create a class(es), post assignments, organize folders, share resources, view work in real-time, and provide feedback.

Our elementary school spends time teaching students that we expect them to be safe, responsible, and respectful at all times. Our teachers will establish norms for meetings early in the distance learning process using these terms. Information that will be shared includes:

- Student cameras should be on (teachers may teach students how to alter their background if there are concerns regarding privacy);
- Microphones should be off (muted) unless speaking or working in a small group where it is reasonable for all microphones to be on;
- Names displayed on Google Classroom should be the student's school name;
- Chat is a useful tool and should be utilized for classroom purposes only;
- The ability to have make-up, recorded sessions is available for students who need an accomodation to synchronous learning classes. Potential benefits include allowing teachers to post lessons and activities for students that were absent or having technical difficulties, encouraging appropriate classroom participation, and following norms.

Distance learning presents unique challenges with respect to academic integrity. Educating young students about clear expectations and district policy is the responsibility of each staff member. Potential topics each teacher should cover within the first few days of school include doing your own work to the best of your ability and sharing your work with others

In order to continue to provide a structured learning environment, it is important for all scholars to abide to continue to follow the Code of Conduct, even while WHIN is providing instruction in a remote setting. All scholars are expected to abide by the following standards. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary consequences in accordance with our Code of Conduct.

- Be respectful of your teacher and classmates: Be courteous to the teacher and to your classmates. Sign in on time for your class and do not leave early.
- Arrive to class prepared and focused: Come to the class prepared with paper, a pencil and any other writing tool required for instruction. Close all other applications, webpages before instruction begins.

- Reduce distractions: If possible, please set your computer up in a place that doesn't have background distractions for others.
- Don't bring your device into the bathroom: Just as with regular school, go to the bathroom before class. If there's an emergency, make sure you know how to temporarily disable the video and mute yourself and then turn everything back on again.
- Conduct yourself well on camera: Look at the screen, and when you are talking look straight into the camera, keep the microphone on mute when you're not speaking; unmute your device when you're ready to talk; turn off the camera when you need to be offline, or you do something not related to the class, etc.
- Dress code: Wear appropriate dress attire while participating in your online class.
- Refrain from Distracting Behavior: Refrain from using other mobile devices or eating during class unless your teacher instructs you to, or introducing pets or other family members that may interrupt the class.
- Be an active participant in the class: Ask questions in the chat box, raise your hand and wait for the teacher to call on you. When utilizing the chat box, please be considerate, polite, and do not use slang or inappropriate language. The school has a strict policy against cyber-bullying and electronic harassment. Wait for your turn to speak, only one scholar should contribute to the class or talk at the same time.
- Be focused and remain attentive: Pay attention to your teacher and your classmates when they are speaking during class. Stay engaged- no eye rolling, laying down, or distracting other classmates on screen.

- Missed instruction: If instruction is missed, it is student's responsibility to contact their teacher and find out what they missed.
- Avoid Plagiarism & Cheating: Ensure that the work you are turning in is your own and is not plagiarized. If you are unsure, contact your teacher prior to submitting in the work. Students are expected to take exams without assistance from other family members or other students.
- No Recording: The privacy and confidentiality of all participants is important. Taking photos, screenshots and/or video recording of any type is prohibited during remote instructions, as well as posting any portions of the class to social media.