We are excited that you have chosen Fenimore Art Museum as your field trip destination! Our thematic tours are a wonderful way to incorporate standards-based, hands-on learning into your established classroom curriculum.

We ask that each visiting group leader review this document, even if you have visited in the past. We frequently update our policies and procedures, and include that information in this document. Please consult the Educator’s Guides for additional information about each individual tour, which can be found on our website.

WHAT IS THE FENIMORE ART MUSEUM?
The Fenimore Art Museum, located on the shore of Otsego Lake -- James Fenimore Cooper’s “Glimmerglass Lake” -- in historic Cooperstown, New York, features a wide-ranging collection of American art including: folk art; important American 18th- and 19th-century landscape, genre, and portrait paintings; an extensive collection of domestic artifacts; more than 125,000 historical photographs representing the technical developments made in photography and providing extensive visual documentation of the region’s unique history; and the renowned Eugene and Clare Thaw Collection of American Indian Art comprising more than 800 art objects representative of a broad geographic range of North American Indian cultures, from the Northwest Coast, Eastern Woodlands, Plains, Southwest, Great Lakes, and Prairie regions. Founded in 1945, the Fenimore Art Museum is NYSHA’s showcase museum.

FIELD TRIPS TO FENIMORE ART MUSEUM
The Fenimore Art Museum offers a variety of engaging school programs throughout the academic year. Each program is rooted in New York State and Common Core Learning Standards, yet offers students learning opportunities that aren’t possible in the classroom. By exploring our unique exhibitions and interacting with our staff, students make real-life and classroom connections that stay with them long after their visit ends.

TOURS
A variety of thematic tours are available at Fenimore Art Museum. Generally, tours are guided by our Museum Teachers and last approximately two hours. A stop at the Museum Gift Shop or a lunch break are not included in this time frame. If you would like to take advantage of this unique shopping opportunity or our lunch space, please let Education Staff know.

Check our website for more details about the thematic tours that are currently available! Our most popular tour is our Six Nations Iroquois Life Tour, and Educator’s Guides for this tour can be found on our website. These Guides detail the tour experience, and also provide valuable pre- and post-visit lesson plan ideas and worksheets to help tie your visit even more closely into your classroom curriculum.

If you would prefer a more general tour of the galleries rather than one of our theme-based tours, Highlight Tours are available. These tours generally last one to two hours. Please contact Education Staff to discuss planning your visit!

WORKSHOPS
Many of our tours can be expanded to include a workshop component. These workshops allow students to roll up their sleeves, and get their hands on art and history!

For example, the Six Nations Iroquois Life Tour can be supplemented with a workshop where students can make
their own baskets or corn husk dolls. Typically, workshops take an additional 60 to 90 minutes. Please contact the Education Staff for more information about available workshops.

Groups
Typically, we ask that you divide your students into roughly equal groups of 10-15 prior to arrival, unless otherwise directed by Education Staff ahead of time. Each group must have at least one adult chaperone with them at all times. You will tour around the Museum in these groups with a Museum Teacher, but will rejoin your school as a whole for your scheduled lunch time.

Planning Your Visit
When planning your visit, be sure to consult our website to see the many programs we have to offer! Our school programs are available cyclically throughout the academic year; while many classes like to take their field trips in the spring, don’t forget that the Fenimore Art Museum is open through December 31st and a field trip in the fall allows your students to remember their visit all year!

We suggest thinking about the following questions when planning your visit:

• What program best fits my curriculum needs?
• How much time can I spend on-site at the Museum?
• How can the Education Staff help me plan a smooth and engaging trip?

Reservations are required for all school programs. It is best to contact the Education Department well in advance of your field trip. We suggest contacting us a few months ahead of time to ensure schedule and program flexibility. You may do so via our website, or by telephone at (607) 547-1461.

After speaking with Education Staff, you will receive a confirmation worksheet. Please review this document to be sure all your reservation details are correct. If anything is incorrect or you need to make changes, please contact Education Staff as soon as possible. At the bottom of the worksheet is a chart detailing the pricing structure for your students, 1:10 ratio chaperones, one-on-one aides, and additional adult chaperones. These are the specific numbers our Admissions team will ask for when you arrive. We suggest taking a final count the morning of your visit, filling out the confirmation sheet with your numbers, and having that handy when you check in.

Chaperones
Chaperones provide critical supervision and support during your field trip. We may ask your chaperones to assist us with dividing your students into their groups or overseeing an activity if the need arises.

It is important to consider the number of chaperones you will be bringing with you prior to your visit. Please note that we do not differentiate between teachers and other adult chaperones for the purposes of admissions. That is, any non-student adult who is not a one-on-one aide or required nurse who visits with the school group is considered an “adult chaperone.”

For our purposes, we define a one-on-one aide as any required aide assigned specifically to a student or group of students.

When considering how many chaperones to bring, please bear in mind that many of our galleries and our

“My favorite part of the visit was when we were in the American Art section. I learned mostly about the paintings, their artists, and when they were made. I will remember the many different, beautiful paintings.”
—7th Grade Student
Native American buildings are somewhat small. Bringing a large number of additional chaperones can sometimes detract from your students' experience.

**Tours**
If you are visiting for one of our tours, we ask that you bring enough chaperones for a 1:10 adult-to-student ratio. That is, one adult chaperone should be supervising each group of ten students. To help facilitate this, we extend complimentary admission to teachers/adults at this ratio. One-on-one aides assigned to a specific student and required medical staff are not included in this ratio count, and are always complimentary. Any other teachers/adults above this ratio who attend the field trip will be extended discounted admission, as long as they check in with the group. Please refer to the “When You Arrive” section for more details about this.

**Visiting Fenimore Art Museum**
Each visit presents a unique learning opportunity for your students! We suggest reading through the Educator’s Guides, available on our website, for a detailed description of what to expect when visiting the Fenimore Art Museum. If you have any questions about your visit, don’t hesitate to contact Museum staff!

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**
School Programs at Fenimore Art Museum explore our special exhibitions and outdoor Native American interpretive site, Otsego: A Meeting Place. This means that you will spend time inside our historic buildings as well as walking outside to get to and from these buildings. None of our outdoor buildings are heated. Our walkways are made out of a variety of materials including packed dirt, gravel, wood, and stone. We suggest dressing in layers, and wearing appropriate weather gear, including boots.

**ACCESSIBILITY**
We have made every effort to make our facilities easily accessible! The Fenimore Art Museum is equipped with a public elevator. All galleries have flat entrances with the exception of the Folk Art Gallery, which has a wheelchair accessible door that can be accessed from the outside. The paths down to the Native American buildings are dirt and gravel, which may make travel difficult for some visitors. And the slope down to the Mohawk Bark House can be too steep for wheelchairs. Please let Education Staff know in advance if you have any students with accessibility needs, so that we can best accommodate you.

**AMENITIES**
Restrooms are located on the Upper and Lower Levels of the Museum. The restrooms on the Lower Level are wheelchair accessible, and have baby changers. Drinking fountains are available for your use outside the Lower Level restrooms at Fenimore Art Museum.

Fenimore Café offers a limited menu of light fare during our main season. This Café has a changing schedule, and can serve a limited number of patrons.

**MUSEUM MANNERS**
Please discuss the below manners with your students prior to arrival.

- Stay with your group at all times.
- Touch only when a museum guide invites you to do so. No matter how clean they are, our hands have oils and dirt on them that can damage art and artifacts.
- Use an indoor voice in the Native American buildings and inside the art museum.
- Leave food, drinks, gum, and candy in your bag, or in the Louis C. Jones Center. Absolutely no food is allowed at the art museum.
- Please remain at least 12” away from all artwork and artifacts.
- Flash photography is not permitted. Non-flash photography is permitted of our permanent collections, but no photography is permitted of our visiting collections. If in doubt, please ask museum staff.

**CHAPERONE EXPECTATIONS**
Please share the below expectations with your chaperones

Thank you for chaperoning your student’s field trip to the Fenimore Art Museum! Chaperones are critical to the success of any museum visit. Today’s visit features a guided tour at the Fenimore Art Museum.
As always, our museum will be open during your visit. There may be students from other schools as well as the general public visiting. In order to ensure the safety of your students and the success of your visit, we ask the following of all chaperones:

- Remain with your group of students at all times.
- Be an example for your students: exhibit good museum manners, willingness to learn, patience, and flexibility.
- Manage student behavior. Our thematic tours have limited time, and we want to fit it in as much as possible. You can help us by keeping your students focused on the activities.
- Help us keep our facilities clean and in good repair by supervising students at lunch and in the restrooms. Please make sure all garbage is disposed of properly.
- Keep cell phones, iPods or mp3 players, and other electronic devices turned off or set on silent. Excuse yourself if you absolutely must take or place a call. Make sure another chaperone from your group is supervising your students if you need to excuse yourself.

Questions?
Don’t hesitate to contact us if you have questions about your visit! We try our best to make every visit the best it can be, and encourage teachers to contact us with questions, concerns, or special needs prior to their visit. You can reach Education Staff at (607) 547-1461 or at schoolprograms@nysha.org.

When You Arrive
Because our lunch room is located at The Farmers’ Museum, please have your bus should pull into the main parking lot of The Farmers’ Museum when you arrive. This is the large stone barn by our main parking area. Your bus should pull into the parking lot and come around the outside perimeter; museum staff will be there to greet your bus.

If you are not planning on using the lunch or storage space at The Farmers’ Museum, you may get dropped off in front of the Fenimore Art Museum. Please discuss this with Education Staff to ensure that everyone will be at the right location to greet your group.

After everyone is off the bus, it will park in the Yellow Trolley Lot, just up the road from our museums. If you turn left out of The Farmers’ Museum, the Yellow Trolley Lot will be on the right hand side of the road, with a large sign.

Don’t forget to confirm your departure time with your bus driver, who will need to return to The Farmers’ Museum’s parking lot to pick up your group.

Occasionally we may need your bus to park in a different area, but museum staff will discuss that with you when you arrive.

Since your bus will be parking off-site, it is important to bring all necessary items with you when you disembark. You should plan to bring your lunches, coats, umbrellas, or any other items you may need during your visit.

Checking In at Admissions
While your group is being oriented, the lead teacher should plan to check in at the admissions kiosk located inside the Main Barn. When you check in, our Admissions team will ask you for your final numbers. They will need to know the tally of students, one-on-one aides, and adult chaperones who are visiting with you on the day of your trip. We suggest using the confirmation sheet that was sent to you prior to your visit to collect all this information on the morning of your trip.

**HOW TO PAY FOR YOUR VISIT**

We are able to accept cash, check, credit card, and purchase orders as payment for your field trip, and do ask for payment when you arrive. We cannot accept payment ahead of time, but you are welcome to forward purchase orders to us to have on hand for when you arrive. If you bring payment for more students than attend on the day of your trip, we are able to issue refunds up to $25 in cash that day, or above $25 in check form to be mailed to your school. You will need to fill out a short form for refunds to be issued at any amount.

Please be sure to have payment for your entire group ready to be processed in one transaction. To help with this, please try to consolidate payments down into as few forms as possible. We suggest having one sum of cash, one check, one credit card, one purchase order, or any combination of these to transact total admission for all of your students and adults.

**Paying for Adult Admission**

Any teacher, administrator, parent, or other non-student is considered an adult chaperone for your visit. We offer complimentary admission to chaperones at either a 1:10 ratio (for tours) or one per workshop (for workshops). One-on-one aides assigned to a specific student or any necessary nurse are always complimentary, and are not included in the count of complimentary chaperones. We also extend complimentary admission to any necessary nurse you need to bring with you, and to your bus driver(s). Additional adults beyond the ratio receive a discounted Education rate, which for a tour or workshop at one Museum is $9.00 per adult.

It is very important that you collect admission from each adult prior to your visit in order to ensure they receive the discounted Education rate. When you check in your group, you should plan to have a tally of all adults who are with you and should include them when you give Admissions your final numbers. All adults should be included in your group payment, either as one sum of cash, one check one credit card transaction, or on one purchase order.

Any adults who are not included with group payment will not be considered part of your group, and will not be eligible for the Education discount. They will need to purchase admission at the full adult price.

**ORIENTATION**

When you arrive, Museum Staff will greet your group. Please bring all backpacks and lunches into the Louis C. Jones Center, which is just inside the Main Barn of The Farmers’ Museum. There will be a table near the front of the LCJC where we ask that you leave all lunches, backpacks, coolers, etc., and return them here after you eat lunch.

At this point, a Museum staff member will orient your group. They will give important details about your visit (including your schedule), and share our most important
safety rules for your trip. Afterwards, they will ask for your assistance breaking your students into their smaller tour or workshop groups. If you have a question or concern, ask Museum Staff who are identifiable by their red polo shirts and name tags.

**Unexpected Circumstances**

**In Case of Bad Weather**
School programs at The Farmers’ Museum and Fenimore Art Museum continue, rain or shine! We always suggest dressing appropriately for the weather, and encourage rain or snow gear if necessary. Some of our tours do require walking outside to get to our Native American buildings. Due to our weather policy and demand for our programs, we do not currently take reservations for rain dates.

If your school is closed due to severe weather, please contact Education Staff as soon as possible at (607) 547-1484.

In the case of severe weather or natural disaster where the Museums must close, we will need to cancel your program and will notify you as soon as possible at the contact information you provided when scheduling your visit. We will try our best to reschedule your visit. Please know that if there is severe weather during your visit (including thunder and lightning), the Native American buildings and the Empire State Carousel may need to close.

If bad weather is predicted for the date of your visit, please feel free to contact Education Staff ahead of time to problem solve and make a communication plan.

**If Your Group Is Late**
We understand that many unexpected factors can influence your arrival time at our Museums. Because we specially bring in staff for school programs and reserve on-site spaces, we ask that you contact us if you know you are delayed. You may reach Education Staff at (607) 547-1484. We will make every effort to continue your programming as scheduled, but may have to make changes to your visit if you arrive late. If you arrive more than half an hour late, we may not be able to accommodate your scheduled program, or may need to make modifications.

**In Case of Injury or Emergency**
Please notify Museum Staff as soon as possible if there is an emergency during your visit. First aid kits and AED devices are available throughout the Museums, and trained Security staff is on call at all times.

**We Want to Hear from You!**
We hope that you had a wonderful experience at our Museums! Feedback from you and your students is very important to us as we strive to ensure our programs are of the highest quality.

Typically, we send a post-visit survey to teachers at the end of each season. Please take a few moments to let us know about your visit on this survey. We are always happy to hear feedback from teachers and students, so don’t hesitate to send us a note or an email!

You can reach us at schoolprograms@nysha.org, or:
School Programs
Fenimore Art Museum
PO Box 30
Cooperstown, NY 13326

**Canceling Your Trip**
If you need to cancel your trip, please contact us at least 48 hours in advance. You may cancel your visit by calling Education staff at (607) 547-1461. Please note that if 48 hours’ notice is not given, your school may be billed for the cost of the program.

If there is an emergency on the morning of your visit and you are unable to attend, please call the Education Department as soon as you are aware. We can be reached for last-minute cancelations at (607) 547-1484.

In the event that you need to cancel your visit due to funding restrictions or budgetary cutbacks, please contact Education Staff. We frequently offer institutional grants that may help make your visit possible!