

# Finley Flyer

J. J. Finley Elementary

Est. 1939

August 2017 Newsletter

## From Mrs. Valdes, the Principal

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year at J.J. Finley! We are very excited about the new year with our new school wide theme, "Learning is my Super Power". Our goal is to help each student achieve academic success and do our part to ensure each one is college or career ready. Elementary school is where it all begins and we look forward to doing our part for all of our students.

In an effort to improve efficiency and effectiveness with student data and parent communication our district has migrated to a new student information system called Skyward. This system replaces our previous system, Infinite Campus with the Parent Portal. Skyward's parent communication feature is called Family Access. You should have received an email in mid-July regarding accessing this new system. If you have a problem doing so, please contact Martha Horter in our front office.

In order to provide the highest quality instruction possible for all students, we will be taking attendance promptly at 7:45 a.m. each day to maximize the instructional time each student receives in a school day. Students will need to report to the office for late slip if they arrive after 7:45 a.m. Also, if you need to pick up your child early you will need to notify the office by 1:30 p.m.

Please plan on attending our Open House on Thursday, August 31st from 4:30-7:15 p.m. which will include the Title 1 Annual Meeting, dinner, PTA meeting and classroom visits. We look forward to seeing you then.

Again, thanks for all you do to make Finley the outstanding school it is!

*Mrs. Valdes, Principal*

### **OPEN HOUSE** **Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup>**

This Open House is for all grades- Kindergarten through 5th. A general schedule of events is listed below:

- 4:30-5:00 Title 1 Annual Meeting
- 5:00-6:00 PTA Dinner (cafeteria)
- 5:30-6:00 ESOL Open House (ESOL class)
- 6:00-6:20 PTA General Meeting (auditorium)
- 6:25-6:45 Classroom Visits
- 6:50-7:10 Classroom Visits (second opportunity for parents with multiple children or visit resource teachers)
- 7:10-8:15 Safety Patrol Meeting (auditorium)

*PTA Memberships and J.J. Finley T-Shirts will be for sale.*

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# School Policies

## Procedures for Student Drop-Off

To ensure the safety of our students, we implemented the following drop-off procedure. Our Safety Patrols and several faculty members will be available to assist students and parents. If you wish to walk your child into the building, please park your car along 7th Avenue or 19th Street and walk your child to the building. Thank you for following these procedures:

- Please do not park in the drop-off area (which is in the 7th Avenue parking lot)
- When driving through the drop-off area, drive slowly and carefully
- Students should exit the car from the passenger/curb side
- Students arriving between 7:15-7:30 should follow their grade level procedure and go to their designated waiting area:

**K-Kindergarten building Centrum**

**1 - Designated classroom**

**2 - Designated classroom**

**3 - Designated classroom**

**4 - Designated classroom**

**5 - Designated classroom**

Students may go to the cafeteria at 7:15 a.m., if they wish to eat breakfast.

## Pupil Progression Plan

The Florida School Code requires that promotion of students be based on proficiency in reading, writing, math, and science. Students who do not meet specific levels of performance may be retained.

The Florida School Code also requires mandatory retention of third grade students who are deficient in reading (Level I on FSA reading). Students who are at risk of scoring Level I on the new Florida Standards Assessment will receive additional diagnostic assessment and intensive instruction in reading.

Third grade parents will receive a district letter regarding the mandatory retention policy for third grade students who are deficient in reading.

The **Back to School Luncheon** was a “super” good time. Thanks to families that volunteered their time and desserts to make it special for faculty and staff. On Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, Mi Apa helped us feed everyone to get them geared up and ready to go for the upcoming school year. The PTA Hospitality would like to thank those who helped.

## Grading for Report Cards

Elementary report cards will be issued every nine weeks, including kindergarten. Grades K-2 will receive letter grades of E, S, N or U while grades 3-5 will receive letter grades of A, B, C, D or F as summarized in these tables.

### GRADING SCALE FOR GRADES K-2

Achievement	Progress Level
E	Excellent
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

### GRADING SCALE FOR GRADES 3-5

Achievement	Percent	Grade Point	Progress Level
A	90-100	4.0	Outstanding
B+	87-89	3.0	
B	80-86	3.0	Above Average
C+	77-79	2.0	
C	70-76	2.0	Average
D+	67-69	1.0	
D	60-66	1.0	Lowest Acceptable
F	0-59	0.0	Failure

## School Mission Statement

THE J.J. FINLEY FACULTY, STAFF, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY ARE COMMITTED TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE FOR EVERY FINLEY STUDENT. WE BELIEVE IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT A POSITIVE, SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WHERE EVERY CHILD REACHES HIS OR HER MAXIMUM POTENTIAL.

TO REACH EACH STUDENT'S ACADEMIC POTENTIAL, THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM NEEDS TO FOCUS ON INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES WHICH EMPHASIZE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS. INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY INTO ALL CURRICULUM AREAS IS ALSO AN INTEGRAL AND VITAL COMPONENT OF THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS.

THE J.J. FINLEY FACULTY, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY BELIEVE THAT EVERY CHILD BRINGS UNIQUE TALENTS TO THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL STAFF, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY TO FACILITATE AND FOSTER A DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL CLIMATE WHERE ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY APPRECIATE AND VALUE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY.

## School Hours

7:40	1st Bell
7:45	School Begins
1:45	Dismissal – M, T, Th, Fri
12:30	Early Dismissal – Wednesday



# J. J. Finley's Faculty

## Faculty

Kathy Valdes-PRINCIPAL  
Tami Delaney- ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
Brian LePlant- BRT  
Kathy Grantham- SCHOOL COUNSELOR

### KINDERGARTEN

Liz Kelso  
Katherine Allen  
Jennifer Berglund  
Janidsa Padilla  
Erica Rudawski

### FIRST GRADE

Michelle Francis  
Allison Crowson  
Shayna Gearhart  
Lindsey Kotynski  
Abby Nelson  
Sherri Rupe

### SECOND GRADE

Lauren Hopkins  
Jessica Berger  
Kelly McGraw  
Allison Moore  
Meagan Vaughn  
Jennifer Stephenson

### THIRD GRADE

Janice Schultz  
Nicole Buss  
Taylor Hodge  
Lynda Harris  
Farrah Khan  
Jennifer Kelly  
Christine Pereyo

### FOURTH GRADE

Julie Ariet  
Erica Brantley  
Stephanie Fairrow  
Emily Monda Poe  
Jeannie Sabback

### FIFTH GRADE

Daniela Contreras  
Mike Bair  
Colin Conroy  
Kari Watkins  
Kristen Zeedyk

### SPECIALS

Marie Gilmartin- ART  
Monica Coker- ART  
Eleanor Meeker- MEDIA  
Jenny Eckenrode- MUSIC  
Joanna Barousse- MUSIC  
Johnny Cromwell- PE  
Julien Toussaint- PE  
Gayle Schramek- SPEECH  
Eileen Stephens- TITLE 1  
Kim Gregg- ESE  
Mollie Grote- ESE  
Erin Rife- FCMS  
Sasha Abreu- ESOL  
Tricia Bagby- ESOL  
Jan Merritt- GIFTED  
Pam Teague- GIFTED

### NURSE

Christine Hake

### EDEP

Mitchell Londrie

## Meet the New Teachers

**Janidsa Padilla- Kindergarten** *My name is Janidsa Padilla. I was born and raised in Gainesville, Florida. "Home of the Gators." I have been working within the primary grade levels for 5 years and am looking forward to completing my 6<sup>th</sup> year at J.J. Finley.*

**Sherri Rupe- First Grade** *Hi, my name is Mrs. Rupe and I am very excited to be joining J.J. Finley. My family is relocating from Ohio where I taught for 13 years grades K-3. I believe every child is capable of learning with the right tools and attitude. I have high expectations of all my students and a passion for teaching.*

**Courtney Beatty- First Grade** *Hi, I'm Courtney Beatty. I am so excited to be returning as a Finley Flyer. I spent my first four years teaching here as a second-grade teacher. Last year, I spent my year in Tallahassee where I got married and had our first son! I can't wait to begin this exciting year as a first-grade teacher!!*

**Abby Nelson- First Grade** *My name is Abby Nelson. I grew up in Southeast Asia but came to Florida to attend the university, and I stayed in Gainesville after graduating with my masters in 2012. I am returning to Finley after two years of teaching in North Africa, and I am very happy to be on the 1st grade team!*

**Taylor Hodge- Third Grade** *I am from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I have received my Bachelors and Masters degrees in Elementary Education from the University of Florida. I love all things music, outdoors, and animals. I am so excited to be a Finley Flyer this year!*

**Erin Rife- Instructional Coach** *My name is Erin Rife and I am so excited to be joining the Finley family! I have a beautiful daughter in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, a wonderful husband and two crazy dogs. I was raised in Gainesville and am a big time Gator fan. My family and I love spending time relaxing and playing at the beach. This will be my 15th year working as an educator, and I am excited to be supporting Finley as a Title 1 teacher and an Instructional Coach.*

**Jennifer Kelly- Third Grade** *This is my 15<sup>th</sup> year of teaching in Alachua County. I have taught Kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and now 3<sup>rd</sup>. I have a daughter named Clara who just started Kindergarten at Finley! I am excited for a great year!*

**Joanna Barousse- Music** *Hi, my name is Joanna Barousse. I moved to Gainesville in 2008 from Pompano Beach to study Music Education at the University of Florida. My husband and I loved Gainesville so much that we decided to stay after we graduated. I love to sing, dance, and play all kinds of instruments, and am very excited to share my love for music with the students of JJ Finley!*

## Finley Family Night Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup>

Come to this fun PTA-sponsored event and enjoy Book Fair, local food trucks, and the exciting Class Basket Fundraiser. Expect flyers in your student's folder in the weeks ahead.





# Notes from our teachers

## Kindergarten

**Mrs. Kelsoe • Mrs. Allen •  
Ms. Berglund • Ms. Padilla  
• Mrs. Rudawski**

The Kindergarten team is excited for the new year and to welcome all the newest Finley Flyers.

The following are some of the events that will be happening in kindergarten and subjects we will be learning about during the first semester of school.

- School and community helpers.
- The basic needs of plants and animals.
- Taking our annual walking field trip to Ben Hill Griffin Stadium.
- Celebrating fall with a festival.
- Having a Thanksgiving feast.
- Holidays around the world

### **BOX TOPS for Education**

Check your kitchen cabinets, pantries, freezers and start clipping your Box Tops. Put them in a baggie or envelope and send them in to your child's teacher. Last year we collected thousands of Box Tops. Please visit [btfe.com](http://btfe.com) and see other ways you can help your child's school!

## First Grade

**Mrs. Francis • Ms. Beatty •  
Ms. Crowson • Ms. Gearhart •  
Ms. Kotynski • Ms. Nelson • Ms. Rupe**

Welcome to first grade! The first-grade team is excited to get to know you and your families this year.

First, we would like to welcome Courtney Beatty, Abby Nelson, and Sherri Rupe who have joined our wonderful team. We are thrilled to have them and we know that we are going to have a fantastic year!

First grade is an exciting year in your child's educational journey. It's going to be a year filled with a lot of learning, new experiences, and many fun adventures. Your children will develop fundamental work habits, gain academic skills, learn appropriate social behavior, how to problem solve, become more independent, and make decisions. We are excited for all of the educational opportunities your children will receive and the growth that will be made during this crucial time in your child's education.

We encourage you to volunteer with our PTA and in the classrooms. You may help with a classroom event, football parking, chaperone a field trip, read with a child, or work on Thursdays with the PTA in the production lab.

Communication, commitment, and cooperation are essential in the educational process. So, please do not hesitate to call or request a conference if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Yearbook Photos Needed**

The J.J. Finley yearbook is a 72-page, hard-bound book full of photos of students and school events- you will receive a form to pre-order the yearbooks soon, and books will be delivered in May. Parents and students, please take photos at school events, field trips and class activities, for inclusion in the yearbook. We would like to include candid photos of all students, but we cannot do this without your submissions. Digital photos may be emailed to [yearbook@jjfinleypta.org](mailto:yearbook@jjfinleypta.org). Please include a brief note with the photos giving names, grade, event or any other information you wish to include. The PTA is looking for volunteers to take candid yearbook photos at school wide events like Open House, Fall Festival, and Family Night. If you love photography and have interest in helping, please contact Josie Sperring at [president@jjfinleypta.org](mailto:president@jjfinleypta.org)



# Second Grade

**Mrs. Berger • Mrs. Hopkins •  
Ms. McGraw • Ms. Moore •  
Ms. Stephenson • Mrs. Vaughn**

Welcome to second grade! We are looking forward to a fantastic year.

Our second-grade field trips this year are exciting and educational. In December, we will attend a production of The Nutcracker ballet. In February, we will explore Florida's ecosystems at Camp Crystal Lake. We have other field trips in the planning stages. More details to come! These adventures relate to many of our science units.

The second-grade team will be participating in many fun educational activities throughout the school year. We will take a "trip" around the world studying different geographies, cultures, and traditions, engineer solar cars, construct roller coasters, and build solar ovens. These are just a few of the amazing activities we will be participating in this year to enhance your child's education.

Remember to check your child's Class Dojo account and go over homework assignments nightly. Please make sure your child is reading every night and getting plenty of sleep. Once again, thank you for all of your support. We know this is going to be an amazing year!

## Cafeteria News

Finley is fortunate to continue to be a CEP (Community Eligibility Provision) school, which means all students are eligible for free breakfast and lunch. For lunch, we will have daily choice of hot main dish, sandwich of the day, our specialty Bistro Boxes, and fresh salads. We are looking forward to a great year!

# Third Grade

**Mrs. Buss • Mrs. Shultz • Mrs. Kelly •  
Ms. Harris • Ms. Khan • Ms. Hodge •  
Mrs. Pereyo**

Welcome back and welcome to third grade! This year our superhero power is learning!

The third-grade team extends a superpower welcome to our newest team members, Ms. Hodge and Mrs. Kelly. Mrs. Stevens will also be joining 3<sup>rd</sup> grade as our title I reading teacher. We are excited to have such an experienced group of teachers on the third-grade team!

There are many new learning opportunities ahead for this year. In third grade students earn letter grades on every report card. Another important milestone in third grade is the transition from learning to read, to reading to learn.

There are two projects all third graders get the opportunity to complete. One is the shoebox adventure book project. Students each read a book and create a shoebox "float." The floats are strolled around campus, parade style, with lots of cheers and encouragement from other grade levels. Families are invited. This year is our 21st annual Shoebox Float Parade. Wow!

The second project is called the Wax Museum. Students each read a biography book. During the Wax Museum, students dress in character and recite a memorized speech like a statue coming alive.

Third grade field trips offer lots of fun and learning. Throughout the year third graders will journey to the UF Fisheries, The Thomas Center, and the Santa Fe Zoo and Planetarium.

Academically, Social Studies will be integrated with our reading curriculum this year and we will continue to encourage our students to be lifelong readers. In math students, will practice addition and subtraction facts to gain fluency and by the end of the year third graders will be well on their way to being fluent in multiplication facts up to twelve. In science, we have three units of study- physical science, earth science and life science. Don't forget to talk about the solar eclipse with you child – August 21☺.



# Fourth Grade

**Ms. Aries • Mrs. Brantley • Mrs. Bagboy • Mrs. Merritt • Mrs. Monad Poe • Mrs. Gregg • Mrs. Sab back • Mrs. Walker**

We are so excited to welcome back all of our Fabulous Fourth Graders! We can't wait to get our Superhero groove on this year!

This year, with learning as our "Super Power" we will have fun, work together, accomplish much, grow and succeed. Fourth Grade is such a new and creative experience. We all love 4<sup>th</sup> grade and have such a passion for teaching. Now all we need are our dedicated and enthusiastic students and families and we will make a great team!

In the classroom, we work on developing a love and skill for writing and reading, increasing math skills using our basic facts to problem solve and think beyond just answering math problems. We take our science knowledge to a new level and gain a more in depth understanding of the physical, earth and life sciences. This year we will use our new Social Studies curriculum during our Language Arts block so as we are learning about Florida and its history, we will be using our Language skills for developing reading and writing, as well. We continue to be an AR school – and reading 30 minutes nightly is a building block to success in 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

A big focus this year will be on learning about a "**Growth Mindset.**" This will help us to all understand and develop a positive self-esteem while building our classroom communities, working cooperatively and developing even greater independence in learning.

Join us on August 31<sup>st</sup> for our Open House. We will share information about how to help your child be successful this school year. Fourth graders can look forward to our trip to the Florida Museum of Natural History in December and the traditional field trip to St. Augustine in March. Our spring musical will be "Lewis and Clark" ... I mean "Clark and Lewis" and you can look forward to enjoying that after spring break.



# Fifth Grade

**Ms. Contreras • Mr. Bair • Mr. Conroy • Mrs. Watkins • Ms. Zeedyk**

Welcome to 5th grade at J.J. Finley! The fifth-grade year is a very special year for students. It will be a year filled with experiences and opportunities that will create lasting memories for your child.

Fifth graders will be traveling to Camp Crystal Lake for three days and two nights from February 14th-16th. This special trip allows our fifth graders to experience life at camp. They will eat family style meals and sleep in cabins. At camp, we will study important science curriculum in an outdoor setting. Students will roast marshmallows, hike, and participate in team building activities. We will need many parent chaperones for this trip. We hope you will consider coming to camp for all, or part, of the trip with your fifth grader.

In addition to attending great field trips, such as Camp Crystal, fifth graders also have the opportunity to be a part of the Safety Patrol program. This special privilege is exclusively for students who demonstrate citizenship and set a positive example for other students by maintaining good grades and behavior. More information on the application process will go home throughout the year.

Building responsibility is an important aspect of the fifth-grade year. Please help us by checking and signing the student planner daily. Setting aside time for homework each night and making sure your child has a quiet place to read for thirty minutes every day will help promote your child's academic success.

Multiplication facts are the foundation for the math that we will learn this year. Please practice facts at home to help your student commit them to memory. We will spend a considerable amount of time on division and fraction concepts in math. Multiplication fluency is essential for mastery of these math concepts.

There are three units of study in the science curriculum. We will study Physical Science, Earth Science, and Life Science. In fifth grade, all students learn about the engineering design process through a robotics program. Students will work in teams to build and then modify a robot for the competition.

Our Social Studies curriculum is based on the McGraw Hill Florida Social Studies program. This year, social studies will be taught by the language arts teacher and integrated within the reading curriculum.

Our reading curriculum is wonderful! The main reading selections are based on social studies or science topics. Students will learn new vocabulary, reading skills, spelling, and grammar for each week. There will be four quarterly tests to assess student progress throughout the year. Students will be expected to read passages and use the information they learned to construct a response that answers multiple questions presented in the prompt. Students will learn how to support their answers with evidence from the text.

The fifth-grade team encourages you to communicate often with your child's teacher. We will send a monthly newsletter for fifth grade called the Fifth-Grade Flyer.

# Notes from Our Specials Teachers

## Media Center News Mrs. Meeker

If you would like to volunteer to help in the library, please let me know. We'd love to have you. You may contact me at meekerea@gm.sbac.edu or just stop by. We always have books that need repairs.

We encourage parents to set up a library account for checkout, too. It is free and only takes a few minutes to set up an account. Parents may check out up to 5 books for their children.

## Overdue Library Books

Your child will check out books every week. Please remember that books are overdue after 7 days. If your child's book is late an overdue notice will be placed in their student folder every two weeks. Please look for these notes in your child's folder and help them return their book to us. Our goal is to keep kids reading books!

Keep up with media related events and messages on instagram. Search for jjfinleymedia and join today.

Need a few book suggestions? We have recommended reading lists for all ages in the library.

## Needed Media Materials

- Flashlights
- Blank envelopes
- Colored Comics from the newspaper

## School Counselor- Mrs. Grantham

It is great to be back at Finley! I hope you all had a relaxing summer. For families who are new to our school, the School Counseling Office at J.J. Finley is located in the front office. My name is Kathy Grantham and I am the School Counselor at Finley; Ms. Kim Miller is our guidance/ESE secretary. The School Counseling office coordinates paperwork & testing for special programs, & schedules EPT (Educational Planning Team) meetings and staffings for teachers and parents.

This year at Finley, we will be using "superpowers" to be awesome learners! Look for info on the following upcoming events during this school year:

- Character Traits
- Good attendance
- Healthy habits
- Learning and study strategies
- Good decision-making skills
- Problem solving skills
- Career interests
- Hope for The Holidays program

As the school counselor, I work with all students in classroom guidance lessons, but also with students individually and in small groups. Classroom guidance lessons will begin during the first month of school. I complete 1-3 units in each grade level per year. The units build upon one another from year to year. Guidance units are usually 4-6 lessons in each class. The lessons are approximately 30 minutes each. My lessons use research based strategies that have produced strong results in student performance and improvement in skills. The activities may include literature, discussion, role play, puppets, music, problem solving, art and games. Ultimately our goal is to teach the students to "think it through" – no matter what the situation may be:

- Studying for a test
- Being a friend
- Responding to a negative comment
- Saying no to harmful habits
- Managing time.

The topics of goals & careers will be infused into much of our classroom guidance lessons. Statistics show that children who have a vision for themselves and their future, and know more about their personal strengths (and weaknesses) are more adept at setting realistic goals for themselves. Kids who have goals are more likely to stay in school, and be successful. Prior to classroom guidance lessons, parents will receive a letter giving more information and details about the unit of study and our lesson activities.

## MUSIC- Ms. Eckenrode & Ms. Barousse

Welcome back Finley Flyer Musicians!! I & Joanna Barousse, our new itinerant music teacher, are excited to begin a new school year with everyone in music classes. We successfully began our new digital music curriculum last year called "In the Spotlight" and will continue to teach from this dynamic curriculum this school year. The Finley Flyers 4th & 5th grade Chorus and Instrument groups will continue again as after school groups for the coming year. There will be a sign-up letter sent home to all 4th & 5th grade students in the upcoming week. Students in 4th & 5th grades may join the chorus if they have a ride home at 1 PM on Wednesdays or are enrolled in EDEP. More information will be in the letter home. Students in all grades will be in performances throughout the school year so stay tuned for more music news as the year progresses!! Sincerely, Jenny Eckenrode, Music Teacher

## **From the Art Room**

### **Mrs. Gilmartin and Mrs. Coker**

This year in Art class our learning will center around the Elements of Art, artists of the past and present, and art history. Students will have the opportunity to learn and explore mediums such as drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, and ceramics. Your children will also become better art critics and learn how to verbally and non-verbally express themselves through critical thinking and creating.

Art and creativity are essential components of your child's development. As your child brings home artwork throughout the school year, we encourage you to take the time to talk to your student artist about his or her artwork – there is so much thought, creativity, and love put into each masterpiece!

Our wonderful Art community here in Alachua County offers several Elementary Art Shows throughout the school year at various venues throughout Gainesville. Students will be selected to represent JJ Finley with their artwork, so please stay tuned for these dates. We will also have our annual "Clay Exhibit" on display along with other pieces of art that we have worked hard on at our Fine Arts and Food Festival on May 10, 2018 – mark your calendars now! 😊

A few years ago, we transitioned into a "Wet-Wipe Art Studio", as opposed to using the sink to wash our hands and clean up. This drastically cuts down on clean-up time and allows more time for working on art. Using Wet-Wipes also helps keep the classroom extra tidy, as we recycle the hand wipes and use them to clean tables and materials as well. We are always in need of Wet-Wipe donations, and would graciously accept any Wet-Wipe gifts you would like to donate to the Art Studio.

Finally, Mrs. Gilmartin is very happy to share that she and her husband are welcoming their first child into the world in November. They are very excited and are looking forward to this new adventure. Mrs. Gilmartin plans to take maternity leave from the end of November until April. During her absence, there will be two retired veteran Art Educators who will be sharing the full-time Art position. Christine Brundige and Bonnie Bernau have been active members of the Art community both inside and outside of Alachua County, and have many talents, skills, and expertise that they will bring to the JJ Finley Art Studio. Although Mrs. Gilmartin is sad to be away from her students so long, she knows they will be in very good (and artistically talented) hands!

Thank you so much for being supportive and helping to encourage creativity in our young artists. We look forward to another year of creativity, learning, and fun in the Art Studio!

## **ESOL 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>**

### **Mrs. Abreu and Ms. Larson**

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year!

In our ESOL (English for Speakers of other languages) class, we will work on reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English.

My name is Sasha Abreu. I am originally from Costa Rica, but call myself a Floridian at heart. I have a Masters Degree in Education with a concentration in ESOL from the University of Florida. This will be my thirteenth-year teaching at J.J. Finley. I would like to welcome our intern, Ms. Danielle Larson, to our class this year. She is working on her Master's degree at UF.

Please mark your calendar for our Open House. It will be Thursday August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Make time to visit us from 5:30-6:00 pm. During this time, we will go over homework, planners and learning goals for this year.

I hope to see you all at Open House!

### **Title 1**

JJ Finley is a Title 1 school. Title 1 is a program funded by the federal government to improve students' academic achievement. Our Title 1 program is implemented school wide. We are committed to the success of all students.

Every JJ Finley student benefits from the program. Some of the funds allocated in previous years have been used to purchase Smart Board systems, document cameras and classroom computers. Title 1 funds are also used for academic support in instructional strategies based on scientifically based research. The district has chosen to implement a different model at all the Title 1 schools this year. This year we will be reducing reading classes in 2nd and 3rd grade. Additionally, our teachers will benefit from additional support through the use of an instructional coach.

Many resources are provided throughout the school year for students and their families. There is a parent resource section of the media center with books, articles and videos available for checkout.

We encourage all parents to be involved in school activities. A School-Parent Compact goes home at the beginning of the year to all families. Please take time to read and discuss the compact with your student. During the school year, teachers will be referring to the compact as it is an agreement between the school, parents, and students about academic responsibilities and expectations. There will also be parent workshops offered during the school year -- please look for those flyers as they come home.

If you have any questions about the Title 1 program, please contact Mrs. Stephens, our Title 1 Lead Teacher. We are very excited to be working with all our families this school year. Our Annual Title 1 Meeting will be August 31st 4:30-5:00

## Safety Patrols

Many Finley Flyers anxiously await the opportunity to become a Safety Patrol in fifth grade. Patrols are a crucial part of our community here at J.J. Finley. Safety Patrols have a wide variety of responsibilities from greeting students at morning drop off to putting up our flag each morning. At the end of the year, students even have the opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. and tour our nation's capital. To cut down on the cost of the trip, we will be having a few different fundraisers throughout the year. On October 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm we will be having our annual Finley Fall Festival that is a fun night for the whole family. If you are interested in learning more about the Safety Patrols or to volunteer for any of our events, please contact Mrs. Watkins at [watkinkl@gm.sbac.edu](mailto:watkinkl@gm.sbac.edu).

## Fun Languages

Registration for French and Spanish Clubs on Mondays with Fun Languages is currently underway. First semester clubs begin the week of September 18<sup>th</sup> and continue through January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018. If you would like to enhance your child's ability to speak a foreign language like a native using a fun, interactive curriculum, please either consult our website at [www.funlanguages.org](http://www.funlanguages.org), pick up a registration at the front desk, or call Kaydie Vistelle at 352-372-6885. Foreign language acquisition has never been so easy and enjoyable!

## Thursday Morning Volunteers Needed!

Are you available to volunteer for 30 mins, an hour or longer on Thursday mornings? If so, PTA Production Lab needs you!

PTA Production Lab is a special tradition unique to J.J. Finley. Every Thursday morning a group of parent, grandparent and community volunteers work together in the Finley Production Lab (next to the Library) to complete projects and make copies for our teachers. Finley is the only school in the district whose PTA provides this much-appreciated service, but we need new volunteers to keep the tradition going.

If you're available to help, stop by the Production Lab between 7:45am and 10:30am any Thursday morning to meet the current volunteers and see what it's all about. You do not have to be a PTA member to volunteer. If you have questions, please email our Volunteer Coordinator Erin Scarborough at [volunteer@jjfinleypta.org](mailto:volunteer@jjfinleypta.org).



# We need YOU to volunteer for Football Parking!

Football parking is J.J. Finley's largest fundraiser and your easiest opportunity to get involved.

Every home UF Football game our PTA parks over 400 cars on Finley property. Each game is organized into 2 shifts ranging from 2 to 2 1/2 hours. We finish 15 minutes before kick-off time. Every volunteer receives free parking for their volunteer shift and may continue to occupy that space during the game.

Grade levels are assigned to each game to help with volunteer recruitment and encourage families with students in the same grade to work together, but please feel free to sign up for whatever games work best for you.

### Football Schedule & Grade Assignments

Sept. 9 <sup>th</sup>	N. Colorado	Fifth Grade
Sept. 16 <sup>th</sup>	Tennessee	Fourth Grade
Sept. 30 <sup>th</sup>	Vanderbilt	Third Grade
Oct. 7 <sup>th</sup>	LSU	Second Grade
Oct. 14 <sup>th</sup>	Texas A&M	First Grade
Nov. 18 <sup>th</sup>	UAB	Kindergarten
Nov. 25 <sup>th</sup> -	FSU	All Grades

Visit the PTA website to find the link to the Signup Genius online signup sheet.

For additional information contact our VP of Football Parking, Don Fitzpatrick at [football@jjfinleypta.org](mailto:football@jjfinleypta.org)



# From the Finley PTA

## PTA President's Message

Welcome Back Finley Families, I'm excited to serve as your new 2017-2018 PTA President! J.J. Finley is an amazing Elementary School thanks to our students, parents, teachers and staff. We look forward to what the 2017-2018 school year brings and remain proud to continue our advocacy work on behalf of our children and families as well as providing support to our wonderful teachers and staff. Please take the time to support our JJ Finley PTA by visiting the PTA Website signing up to volunteer using our new online system, and finally, joining the PTA!

When you walk around Finley, be sure to keep an eye out for PTA provided improvements such as our covered walkways, front marquee sign and recycled asphalt track. However, we ask to you to remember that our PTA primarily provides assistance to help our students and teachers by funding classroom supplies, field trips, clubs at school, and outreach tutoring. Please feel free to email me if you have any questions about the Finley PTA. If you'd like to become involved in the PTA, we'd love to have you! It takes a large, amazing team to run our JJ Finley PTA we're always looking for help.

As always, feel free to email me at [president@jjfinleypta.org](mailto:president@jjfinleypta.org) if you have any PTA related questions or concerns.

Josie Sperring  
*President,  
J.J. Finley  
Elementary  
PTA*

### PTA Leadership Committee

President	Josie Sperring	<a href="mailto:president@jjfinleypta.org">president@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Vice President	Amanda Birrenkott	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@jjfinleypta.org">vicepresident@jjfinleypta.org</a>
VP, Advocacy	Florida Bridgewater-Alford	<a href="mailto:advocacy@jjfinleypta.org">advocacy@jjfinleypta.org</a>
VP, Football Parking	Don Fitzpatrick	<a href="mailto:football@jjfinleypta.org">football@jjfinleypta.org</a>
VP, Membership	Allison Davis	<a href="mailto:membership@jjfinleypta.org">membership@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Secretary	Iris Meeker	<a href="mailto:secretary@jjfinleypta.org">secretary@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Treasurer	Trish Riskowitz	<a href="mailto:treasurer@jjfinleypta.org">treasurer@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Communications Coordinator	Amy Davenport	<a href="mailto:communications@jjfinleypta.org">communications@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Silent Auction & Donations	Sandra Sullivan & Pam Clevenger	<a href="mailto:silentauction@jjfinleypta.org">silentauction@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Finley Fitness	Karen Mentz	<a href="mailto:finleyfitness@jjfinleypta.org">finleyfitness@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Green Team Coordinators	Carrie Adams & Pete Adams	<a href="mailto:green@jjfinleypta.org">green@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Hospitality Coordinators	Holli Best & Betsy Gardner	<a href="mailto:hospitality@jjfinleypta.org">hospitality@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Parliamentarian	Pegeen Hanrahan	<a href="mailto:parliamentarian@jjfinleypta.org">parliamentarian@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Volunteer Coordinators	Erin Scarborough, Sarah Nassoioy	<a href="mailto:volunteer@jjfinleypta.org">volunteer@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Assistant Treasurer	Nancy Bibbo	<a href="mailto:treasurer2@jjfinleypta.org">treasurer2@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Box Top Coordinator	Dana Kamp & Pam Teague	<a href="mailto:boxtops@jjfinleypta.org">boxtops@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Chess Club	Steve Blay	<a href="mailto:chessclub@jjfinleypta.org">chessclub@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Family Night Coordinator	Sarah Sterling	<a href="mailto:familynight@jjfinleypta.org">familynight@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Newsletter Coordinator	Jill Kanji	<a href="mailto:finleyflyer@jjfinleypta.org">finleyflyer@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Football Parking Field Coordinator	Tony Malone	<a href="mailto:field@jjfinleypta.org">field@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Football Renewals Coordinator	Hal Knowles	<a href="mailto:renewals@jjfinleypta.org">renewals@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Movie Night Coordinator	Karen Poirier & Eric Poirier	<a href="mailto:movienight@jjfinleypta.org">movienight@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Playground Project Coordinator	Erin Scarborough	<a href="mailto:playground@jjfinleypta.org">playground@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Production Lab Coordinator	Erin Scarborough	<a href="mailto:productionlab@jjfinleypta.org">productionlab@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Saturday Social Coordinator	Christine Richmond & Sarah Sterling	<a href="mailto:saturdaysocial@jjfinleypta.org">saturdaysocial@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Yearbook Coordinator	Martha Horter	<a href="mailto:yearbook@jjfinleypta.org">yearbook@jjfinleypta.org</a>
Yearbook Orders	Nancy Bibbo	<a href="mailto:yearbookorders@jjfinleypta.org">yearbookorders@jjfinleypta.org</a>



## Join the PTA Today!

All parents, teachers, and friends of Finley are encouraged to join the PTA. Your membership will support Finley's teachers, students, and staff.

Membership forms are available on the J.J. Finley PTA website and in the front office.

For more information, email Allison Davis [membership@jjfinleypta.org](mailto:membership@jjfinleypta.org)

## Playground Renovation Project

In conjunction with J.J. Finley's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, our PTA kicked off a Playground Renovation Project to begin the much-needed revitalization of our existing playgrounds. Since then 2 major things have occurred:

- **Wild Spaces & Public Places passed-** The City of Gainesville is partnering with J.J. Finley to create a community playground/park that will focus on our back playground. Meetings for this part are underway.
- We raised \$75,000 through generous donations and our football parking fundraiser, we've met our goal for the side playground. PTA Leadership is currently reviewing option for the timing of this part of the project.

## Advocacy Corner

The Alachua County Council PTA (ACCPTA) kicked off this school year with a General Meeting on Thursday, August 17, 2017.

ACCEPTA is an advocacy group made up of members and representatives from almost all of our Alachua County school's PTA/PTO's. They hold a monthly meeting that explains and informs our PTAs' about what is going on in Tallahassee and any legislative ideas or issues that come up. It is also a time for our PTA leaders to discuss strategies like fundraising, advocacy, and leadership. Check out their webpage [www.accepta.org](http://www.accepta.org) and like their Facebook page for updates. Thank you, Florida Bridgewater-Alford, VP Advocacy [advocacy@jjfinleypta.org](mailto:advocacy@jjfinleypta.org)



## DO YOU WANT TO

- Eat **lunch** at school with your child?
- Go on **field trips** with your child?
  - Help in your child's **classroom**?
- Volunteer at **school wide events** like Finley Fall Fest, Family Night, Book Fair and Football Parking?

*This year the district is using an online application through Raptor Technology and will no longer accept paper applications.*

Apply on-line at [Bit.ly/ACPSapp](http://Bit.ly/ACPSapp)  
If you need assistance contact the Finley Front Office or Volunteer Office at (352)955- 7250

## Chess Team

The J.J. Finley chess team meets weekly on Wednesday afternoons from 12:45 to 2pm. All 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are welcome, regardless of chess playing experience, but parental involvement is a must. We are always in need of additional volunteer coaches. Please contact Steve Blay at [chessclub@finleypta.org](mailto:chessclub@finleypta.org) or 335-0655 for more information.

## Finley Fitness Club

Come join us on the track every morning before school beginning September 5<sup>th</sup>.

From 7:15-7:30, all students and parents are welcome to join us on the field for a lap or two, or even more. Every five miles, you will get another charm for your necklace.

New to Finley? No problem. PTA volunteers will get you your own card right away so you can run the same day. Just get your card scanned after every lap, and the computer will count laps for you.

Unless it's raining or freezing, we will be out there every school day. See you on the field! Thank you! Karen Metz, Finley Fitness Coordinator

# J.J. Finley & PTA Calendar

## August

- 22 PTA Board Meeting- 12pm
- 31 Open House and General PTA Meeting- 5:30pm

## September

- 4 No School (Labor Day)
- 9 Football Parking (PTA Fundraiser) – UF vs. Northern Colorado
- 12 PTA Board Meeting- 12pm
- 16 Football Parking (PTA Fundraiser) – UF vs. Tennessee
- 27 Dad Take Your Child to School Day
- 30 Football Parking (PTA Fundraiser) – UF vs. Vanderbilt

## October

- 6 No School (UF Homecoming)
- 7 Football Parking (PTA Fundraiser) – UF vs. LSU
- 10 PTA Board Meeting – 12pm
- 12 Student Picture Day
- 14 Football Parking (PTA Fundraiser) – UF vs. Texas A&M
- 19 Finley Fall Festival (Safety Patrol Fundraiser) – 5:00pm
- 20 No School (Teacher Workday)
- 27 Report Cards and Finley Flyer Newsletter

## November

- 3-9 Fall Book Fair
- 9 Finley Family Night & Basket Raffle (PTA Fundraiser) -5:00pm
- 10 No School (Veterans Day)
- 14 PTA Board Meeting – 12pm
- 16 Family Turkey Feast
- 18 Football Parking (PTA Fundraiser) – UF vs. UAB
- 20-24 No School (Thanksgiving Holiday)
- 25 Football Parking (PTA Fundraiser) – UF vs. FSU
- 28 Picture Retake Day

## December

- 5 PTA Board Meeting & Family Social – 5:30pm
- 14 Teacher & Staff Holiday Soup Luncheon
- 18-29 No School (Winter Holidays)

## January

- 9 PTA Board Meeting- 12pm
- 26 Family Movie Night & PTA General Meeting- 6:00pm

## February

- 10 School Clean Up- 9:00am
- 10 Saturday Social Fundraiser- 11:30am
- 12-16 Volunteer Appreciation Week
- 13 Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast- 7:30am
- 20 PTA Board Meeting- 12pm

## March

- 13 Class Picture Day
- 20 PTA Board Meeting
- 26-30 No School (Spring Holidays)

## April

- 2 No School (Teacher Workday)
- 10 PTA Board Meeting- 12pm
- 23-27 Teacher & Staff Appreciation
- 25 Appreciation Luncheon

## May

- 7-11 Spring Book Fair
- 10 Finley Art & Food Festival, Dads Cookout & PTA Mtg- 5pm
- 15 PTA Board Meeting
- 28 No School (Memorial Day)

## June

- 1 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation & Reception-8:30am

**PTA Parent Production Lab** - Thursday mornings at 7:45 am.

*All dates subject to change.*



**September 27- Dad take your child to school day. Details coming soon.**

**J.J. Finley PTA**



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twitter.com/jjfinleypta



http://finley.sbac.edu (go to "Community" and "J.J. Finley")



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The Finley Flyer is published by the Finley PTA in conjunction with J.J. Finley Elementary. Send submissions to the PTA box in the school office or by email to Jill Kanji at [finleyflyer@jjfinleypta.org](mailto:finleyflyer@jjfinleypta.org).