



## UNIVERSAL FAMILY OF SCHOOLS PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy governs the conduct and order of business for all Universal Charter Schools – Board of Trustees (“Board”) meetings. The Board reaffirms the right of the public to be present at all public regularly scheduled and special meetings of the Board. The Board also reaffirms the right of the public to have a reasonable opportunity to comment on matters of concern, matters being considered for official action of the BOARD, and matters that are or may come before the BOARD.

The BOARD encourages the public to attend BOARD meetings and to participate in public comment opportunities and believes the public’s involvement in education issues is critical to academic success of the Universal Charter Schools’ students.

### Definitions

**Chairperson or Chair** – Refers to the individual who presides over the work of the entire BOARD, including presiding over all BOARD meetings. The Chairperson shall preside over all BOARD meetings. In the absence, disability or disqualification of the Chairperson, the remaining Member(s) with the longest continuous service on the BOARD shall preside over the meeting. The act of any person so designated shall be legal and binding.

**Member** - A member of the BOARD elected per the by-laws.

**Emergency Meeting** – A meeting of the BOARD called for the purpose of dealing with a real or potential emergency involving a clear and present danger to life or property.

**Executive Session** – A meeting of the BOARD that is not open to the public because certain briefings, matters permitted by the Sunshine Act, and/or certain privileged or legally confidential information are being discussed.

**Planning Meeting** - A non-public meeting of the BOARD where no formal action is taken but where individual Members review and deliberate for formal action at a later date.

**Public Participation** – The reasonable opportunity for individuals to address the BOARD at regular and special meetings to comment on matters of concern, matters being considered for official action of the BOARD, and matters that are or may come before the BOARD prior to taking official action.

**Regular Meeting** – The routine public action meetings of the BOARD that are scheduled annually, pursuant to a schedule that is adopted before the end of each school year, attended or participated in by a quorum of the members held for the purpose of deliberating BOARD business or taking official action.

**Resolution** - A formal written expression of a decision, policy, intention, or opinion of the BOARD.

**Special Meeting** - A meeting scheduled after the schedule of regular meetings has been established.

**Quorum** - The minimum number of Members that must be present at a voting meeting in order for the BOARD to take formal action on school business. No business shall be transacted at a meeting without a quorum of the BOARD present, but the Members present at such a meeting may adjourn to another time.

**Voting Meeting** - A meeting of the BOARD where formal action is taken regarding school business by Members voting on resolutions.

All BOARD meetings shall be conducted in an orderly and business-like manner. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the BOARD in its deliberations in all cases where it is not inconsistent with law, state regulations or BOARD policy.

### **Notice of Meeting**

Notice of all regular and special meetings shall be given to Members prior to the time of the meeting.

### **Regular Meetings**

Regular public BOARD meetings shall be open to the public and shall be held at a specified location in accordance with the schedule established by the BOARD for the fiscal year, which shall include at least one (1) BOARD meeting every two (2) months of the school year. The Chairperson shall have the discretion to alter the meeting schedule with appropriate public notice.

The order of business for all regular meetings shall be set out in an agenda that is made available to the public at the time a regular meeting is convened.

The agenda shall generally include:

- a. A call to order by the Chairperson.
- b. A roll call by the Secretary.
- c. A report to the BOARD from the Principal.
- d. Review and deliberation by Members of resolutions.
- e. Other reports as deemed appropriate by the Chairperson.
- f. Public comment.
- g. At voting meetings, a hand count vote on submitted resolutions.
- h. Other items deemed appropriate by the Chairperson.
- j. Adjournment.

At the beginning of each meeting, the BOARD shall notify the public of resolutions.

To the extent possible and reasonable, those who wish speak will be allowed to speak up to three minutes.

### **Special Meetings**

Special meetings may be called after the BOARD's regular schedule of meetings has been established to address either general or specific issues and shall be open to the public.

The Chairperson may call for special meetings at his/her discretion and as necessary to conduct school business. The Chairperson shall call for a special meeting upon receiving written requests for a special meeting from a combined majority of Members.

The Chair shall determine the agenda for all special meetings. The agenda for a special meeting shall be made available when the special meeting is convened.

### **Emergency Meetings**

The Chairperson may call for an emergency meeting when there is a real or potential emergency involving a clear and present danger to life or property. Although public notice of emergency meetings is not required by law, reasonable efforts shall be made to inform the public in a timely fashion when an emergency meeting is called.

### **Public Participation**

The BOARD reaffirms the right of the public to deliver comments to the BOARD on matters of general concern, on formal actions of the BOARD, or on deliberations regarding matters that are or may be before the BOARD. Individuals present at a BOARD meeting may address the BOARD in accordance with law and BOARD policy.

**Individuals can register to speak when signing in at the Board meeting. Individuals that speak at the board meeting must provide their name and topic at the time of speaking. Speakers may present a single page document to the board in support of their topic. Individuals will be limited to 3 minutes on any one subject. No more than six (6) individuals will be allowed to speak on the same topic on the board agenda. Individuals will be ruled out of order if they attempt to: (1) comment or complain about the conduct or performance of a school employee, (2) make any remarks of a personal nature regarding any other individual, (3) ruled out of order and asked to leave if they use any vulgar or profane language.**

If a motion from the floor is made to amend, revise or edit a resolution on the list of proposed resolutions, or to propose a substitute for it, and the public has had a reasonable opportunity to comment on the original resolution, then the BOARD may proceed to vote on the amended or substituted resolution without further public comment, if the amendment, revision, edit, or substitute resolution pertains to the same subject which is addressed in the original resolution.

### **Voting**

All motions shall require for adoption a majority vote of the BOARD, except as provided by statute or BOARD policy.

The BOARD shall cause to be made, and shall retain as a permanent record of the school's minutes of all open BOARD meetings. Said minutes shall be comprehensible and complete and shall show:

- a. Date, place, and time of the meeting.
- b. Names of Members present.
- c. Presiding officer.

- d. Substance of all official actions taken.
- e. Records of votes
- f. Names of all residents who appeared officially and the subject of their testimony.

Member will be provided with a copy of the minutes of the last meeting prior to the next regular meeting.

The minutes of BOARD meetings shall be approved at the next succeeding meeting as submitted by the Secretary or their designee.

Notations and any audio or video recordings shall not be the official record of a public BOARD meeting but may be available for public access, upon request, in accordance with BOARD policy. Any notations and/or audiovisual recordings of a BOARD meeting shall be retained and disposed of in accordance with the district's records retention schedule.

### **Adjournment**

The BOARD may at any time recess or adjourn to an adjourned meeting at a specified date and place, upon the majority vote of those members present. The adjourned meeting shall take up its business at the point in the agenda where the motion to adjourn was acted upon. Notice of the rescheduled meeting shall be given in accordance with law.

### **Executive Session**

The BOARD may hold an executive session, **which is not** an open meeting, before; during; at the conclusion of a public meeting; or at some other time. The presiding officer shall announce the reason for holding the executive session; the announcement can be made at the public meeting prior to or after the executive session.

The BOARD may discuss the following matters in executive session:

- a. Employment issues.
- b. Labor relations.
- c. Purchase or lease of real estate.
- d. Consultation with an attorney or other professional advisor regarding potential litigation or identifiable complaints that may lead to litigation.
- e. Matters that must be conducted in private to protect students, staff, lawful privilege or confidentiality.

The Secretary shall announce the reason for holding the executive session; the announcement can be made at the public meeting prior to or subsequent to the executive session.

Official actions based on discussions held in executive session shall be taken at a public meeting.

### **Committee Meetings**

Committee meetings may be called at any time by a committee co-chairperson, without public notice. A majority of the total membership of a committee shall constitute a quorum.

## **Delegation Of Responsibility**

The BOARD directs Universal Education Companies and Universal Community Homes to develop procedures necessary to implement, distribute and publish this policy.