

Code of Conduct 2021-2022



The Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide clear expectations for all school community members including students, parents/guardians, and staff. The Code also outlines student and parent/guardian rights and equips staff with guidelines for modifying and teaching appropriate behavior.

Superintendent
Dr. Penny Nixon

Central
Education
Office:
Educational
Student Support
and Services

[Student Enrollment & Placement](#)

[Student Rights & Responsibility](#)

[Prevention & Intervention](#)

[Student Health Services](#)

[Climate & Safety](#)

[Family & Community Engagement](#)

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For copies of the Code of Conduct in languages other than English, please see the Universal Family of Schools Website at <https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/>

请注意：请注意，您可以登录网网站

<https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/> 查看《学生生守则须知》的中文文版本。您可以向校长长办公室索取

《学生生守则须知》的印刷件， 或者拨打电话 或登陆

<https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/> 索取该文文件。

NOTA: El código de conducta del estudiante completo está disponible en el sitio Web del Distrito - <https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/> La copia impresa del código está disponible en la oficina del director de su escuela o en la Oficina del Compromiso Familiar y de la Comunidad, teléfono número 215-400-8489 o en el sitio Web – <https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/>

Xin Chú Ý: Nội dung của Nội Quy Điều Lệ Nhà Trường có trên trang web

<https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/> Code_of_Student_Conduct_Vietnamese Hiệu trưởng hoặc Văn Phòng Gia Đình Và Cộng Đồng đều có bản in của quyển nội quy này, xin vui lòng gọi số 215-400-8486 hoặc đọc trên trang web https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies

Universal Central Office Directory

The Central Education Office is located at:

1427 Catharine St, 5th Floor

Philadelphia PA 19146



The following resources are located at the same address and can be reached at the listed phone numbers:

Attendance and Truancy	215-391-4161
Culture, Climate and Safety	215-391-4161
Educating Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness	215-391-4161
Family and Community Engagement	215-391-4161
Specialized Services	215-391-4161
Student Enrollment	215-391-4161
Student Rights and Responsibilities	215-391-4161
Transportation	215-391-4161
ELL Services	215-391-4161

Other important phone numbers:

Bullying Hotline	215-391-4161
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-932-0313
Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Pennsylvania Safe Schools Advocate	215-656-5381

Introduction to the Code of Conduct

Universal Family of Schools is committed to providing well-resourced, clean, and safe school environments conducive to teaching and learning. We strive to develop meaningful partnerships with parents and families, so we can work together to encourage academic, social, and emotional growth in all our students. Our goal is to ensure that all of our students have the needed resources to graduate and will be ready to succeed as fully engaged citizens of the world.

Each school community member plays an important role in creating safe and supportive learning environments for our students. Some of the expectations and responsibilities of school community members include:

School Staff

- Implement the code of conduct in a fair and consistent manner.
- Review and investigate code of conduct violations.
- Report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect.
- Address code of conduct violations with multiple strategies and interventions to keep students in school.
- Maintain confidentiality of student records.

Students

- Comply with the school attendance, dress code, unlawful harassment, and bullying policies.
- Behave in a manner that focuses on academic success.
- Be responsible and accountable for following rules.
- Report any conflicts or concerns to a school staff member.

Parents/Guardians

- Support school rules and regulations.
- Support the policies of Universal Family of Schools
- Understand that school personnel must enforce school rules.
- Teach children to respect the rights of others and follow school rules.
- Emphasize the importance of being prepared for school and adhering to school rules.

All school community members will adhere to the health and safety guidelines as a result of COVID 19, which includes, but is not limited to, wearing a face mask.

When does the Code Apply?

The Code of Conduct applies to school community members while they are in school and/or at any school sponsored activities such as a class trip or a sporting event. The Code of Conduct also applies to all students while they are traveling to and from school, using any mode of transportation (walking, school bus, SEPTA, etc.). Additionally, the Code of Conduct applies to off-grounds (virtual learning) and after-hours (including weekends) behavior if the incident impacts the school community.

Community Member Expectations and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Everyone

- Respect all members of the school community.
- Maintain a positive school climate by being responsible, respectful, and cooperative.
- Communicate code of conduct expectations for students and staff.
- Motivate students to live up to the expectations through positive reinforcement.
- Use good judgment to prevent minor incidents from becoming major problems.
- Adhere to all social distancing guidelines as directed, which includes but is not limited to, wearing a face mask

Responsibilities of School Administrators and Staff

- Respect all members of the school community.
- Provide students and parents all disciplinary policies, notices, and materials in their preferred language free of charge.
- Inform all school personnel, parents, and students of discipline policies.
- Teach and maintain a learning environment that leads to academic success.
- Hold students accountable for disruptive behavior in school and on school grounds.
- Address code of conduct violations with multiple strategies and interventions to keep students in school.
- Provide training for teachers and staff in creating and maintaining a respectful school climate, discipline issues, de-escalation, trauma in youth, restorative practices and other training requested by teachers and staff for the purpose of improving school climate, safety, and/or student outcomes.

Responsibilities of Students

- Respect all members of the school community.
- Understand and comply with school rules and climate expectations, including the Code of Conduct and the school handbook.
- Behave in a manner that focuses on academic success.
- Be responsible and accountable for following rules.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians and Advocates

- Respect all members of the school community.
- Recognize and understand that school personnel must enforce school rules.
- Teach children to respect the rights of others and follow school rules.
- Comply with school rules when entering the school building and will govern them accordingly. Any parent or guardians who pose a threat or danger to the school community will be reported to the Philadelphia Police Department.

Student and Parent/Guardian Rights

Parent/Guardian Appeals

The Board of Trustees is responsible for reviewing decisions made by the school and/or central office staff to determine if the decision was made in accordance with policies, procedures, and protocols. The following decisions can be appealed:

1. Disciplinary transfers- transfers made pursuant to a disciplinary hearing
2. Neighborhood school transfers- transfers back to a neighborhood school at the end of a school year for reporting inaccurate residency information to the school, moving out of the neighborhood catchment, or gaining admission to a school without an approved transfer through a school approved process or procedure

3. Homelessness designation- transfer to a new school based on student's new address (dispute about whether a student is homeless)
4. Parental exclusion letters- parent is banned from a school building as a result of inappropriate behavior
5. Bullying/harassment findings- after the school administrator investigates an allegation of bullying or harassment, the parent disputes the findings of that investigation.
6. Interim assignment - temporary safety assignments

For instructions on submitting an appeal, parents should contact the Central Education office at 215-391-4161 or lfinney@universalcompanies.org.

Request for Special Education Evaluation

A school professional may recommend that a child be evaluated to determine if the student has a disability. Parents/Guardians may also contact the child's teacher or another school professional to request an evaluation. This request may be verbal, but it's best to put it in writing. Once the request is made, the school will either issue a "permission to evaluate" (PTE) or a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) to explain, in writing, why the evaluation request is denied. For questions, please contact the special education compliance monitor (formerly called the "special education liaison") for your school.

Request for 504 Service Plan

A Parent/Guardian can request for their student to have a 504 service plan. The request should be made in writing and the parent/guardian should include any relevant medical records along with specific services or accommodations the parent/guardian believes the student needs and/or the modifications the parent would like the school to make if the parent/guardian is requesting a modification. These requests can be provided to the student's teacher, the counselor, or another school professional.

Victim Services

If a student is the victim of a school related incident, victim services can be sought by contacting the [Pennsylvania Office of Safe Schools Advocate](#) at phone number 215-656-5381, e-mail Ra-OSSAPhiladelphia@pa.gov or website – <http://www.phillyossa.com>.

If a student is a victim, they can request that a safety plan be put in place by the school.

Students Experiencing Homelessness

Universal Family of Schools considers students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, as experiencing homelessness. This includes children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason, living in motels, parks or campgrounds; or children or youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a sleeping accommodation by human beings; or children or youth living in cars, abandoned buildings or substandard housing or similar situations; refugee or migratory children because they are living in circumstances like those described above.

Unaccompanied youth also fall under this category and can be described as a youth not in the physical custody of a legal parent or guardian and youth living on their own in any of the homeless situations described above. Children and youth who meet the criteria of being homeless, even if

unaccompanied by a guardian, must be given full and equal access to an appropriate public education and success in the educational program. The permanency and adequacy of the housing conditions will be considered when determining if a student qualifies.

These children and youth may enroll in:

- The school the student attended when permanently housed (school of origin).
- The school in which the student was last enrolled (school of origin).
- Any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth experiencing homelessness is actually living are eligible to attend (new neighborhood school).

An unaccompanied homeless youth with a disability may also need to have a surrogate parent appointed by the school if the youth have no one to serve in this role.

For more information, contact the Central Education Office, Phone: 215-391-4161 option 4 Email: lfinney@universalcompanies.org

Student Discipline

Students receiving disciplinary action can expect that school officials will:

1. Give the student an opportunity to respond to allegation(s) explaining their version of events and to present relevant additional information.
2. Permit the student to choose not to provide a statement.
3. Discuss student's problem behavior and ways to correct it.
4. Inform the student of the corrective action and/or next steps to be taken.
5. Document the problem behavior and intervention and document agreements reached in the conference.

Students in Foster Care

A child in foster care will remain in their school of origin (the school where the child was enrolled at the time of placement), unless a determination is made that it is not in their best interest to attend that school. If a student in foster care has experienced a change in placement, a Best Interest Determination meeting will be held to determine if the student should remain in the school of origin or if they should transition to a new school. Foster parents and/or foster care workers should not make any changes to enrollment for students who are in foster care without a Best Interest Determination meeting being held first. Please contact the Central Education Office for additional Information.

Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students

Transgender and gender non-conforming students are afforded certain rights under The Transgender Students Policy, which are:

1. The right to privacy, and this includes the right to keep one's transgender identity private at school.
2. School personnel should not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender identity or gender nonconformity to others, including parents and other school personnel, unless the student has authorized such disclosure.
3. The right to be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity.
4. The right to have access to the restroom or locker room that corresponds to their gender identity.

School Safety Officer Complaint Process

This procedure is intended to ensure that all students and parents/guardians have a process to submit complaints pertaining to the conduct of School Safety Officers (Climate Staff and Deans of Students) and that the complaint process is accessible to all, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability status.

The complaint process shall be used by any student or parent/guardian of Universal Family of Schools to report an incident that pertains to the conduct of a School Safety Officers. It may be used to document information regarding School Safety Officers misconduct. In order for timely review of the facts, including interviewing witnesses, the complaint should be filed as soon as possible. Students may file a School Safety Officers complaint via the Central Education Office located at 1427 Catharine Street, Philadelphia Pa 19146 or by email at ufos@universalcompanies.org.

Expunging Records for Expelled Students

A student who has been permanently or temporarily expelled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the School Board, may apply to The Central Education Office to have the records of expulsion expunged.

Expunging records occurs at the discretion of the superintendent or the student's designee and is not subject to review or appeal to the school board or the courts.

The complete Policy including the criteria and process for readmission and/or expungement of records, may be found at the Central Education Office or on the Universal Family of Schools website: <https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/>.

The Family Student Resource Centers

The Family Student Resource Centers (FSRC) offers a wide array of programs and services for families, students and community members. FSRC answers inquiries both over the phone and in person. They have staff ready to help in a variety of locations and in a variety of languages.

FSRC Liaisons generally help facilitate the resolution of family concerns by supporting families in connecting them to the appropriate people and resources to address their needs. If you are looking to speak to one of their team members, Family Engagement Liaisons are available to speak with you at your child's school.

Please contact the Central Education Office for additional information at 215-391-4161.

Digital Learning Expectations

While engaging in digital learning, Universal Family of Schools will continue to strive to provide a healthy, safe, and positive learning environment for all of our students. To promote these conditions, school community members will still be held to the expectations and responsibilities that are outlined in this document.

Guidance for Parents

As always, support from parents/guardians is essential for our students to succeed. Parents can use ClassDojo and email to communicate with teachers about student academic progress.

The safety of our students is of highest priority to Universal Family of Schools. We encourage parents and guardians to review responsible and safe usage of technology with their children. For example, remind your child(ren) not to share their passwords, their location, or any personal information on the internet. Additionally, some internet sites have content that is inappropriate for children so we encourage parents/guardians to regularly monitor the websites their children are visiting.

If you identify a security and/or safety problem with the school's computers and/or educational platform, please notify a school administrator (i.e. principal, assistant principal) immediately.

Parents should ensure that students can participate in digital learning in a space that is conducive for learning and success.

Guidance for Students

Students can help to make digital learning a success by abiding by these core responsibilities:

- Respect all members of the school community
- Understand and comply with school rules and expectations
- Behave in a manner that focuses on academic success
- Protect your passwords - passwords should be kept secret from everyone except your parents
- Fully and appropriately dressed for class

The following behaviors are considered violations of the Code of Conduct:

- Inappropriate use of an electronic device - this includes sexting (sending sexual images or videos), videotaping fights, videotaping someone in a place where they have an expectation of privacy, or posting content that impacts the school community in a negative manner.
- Destruction of property- this includes the damaging or defacing of school property or the personal property of another school community member.
- Photographing/recording others during class sessions - this includes sharing or posting photographs and/or recordings on any online forum.
- Cheating/Plagiarism -this includes copying or plagiarizing content from the internet or from a classmate.
- Bullying and cyberbullying - this includes repeated intentional conduct that is directed at another student or students and has one of the following effects: (1) substantially interfere with a student's education, (2) creates a hostile learning environment, and (3) substantially disrupts school operation.

- Harassment - this includes verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status and/or political beliefs. **Students should be mindful that their clothing, artwork, posters or other items visible to the online classroom may be considered offensive or could violate the harassment policy.*
- Sexual harassment - this includes any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature such as unwelcome sexual advances, spreading sexually charged rumors, requests for sexual favors, sending or requesting explicit or obscene images/videos.
- Profane or obscene language or gestures - this includes cursing or using disrespectful, insulting or explicit language/gestures.

Students who engage in behaviors that endanger school safety or disrupt the educational experience of others may be subject to consequences in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Guidance for Schools on Discipline

During the time of distant learning, it is important that schools strive to use school-based interventions to modify disruptive behavior. Disciplinary Referrals should still be documented. If a student exhibits egregious behavior that potentially puts others at risk the Principal should to reach out to the Superintendent to discuss possible behavioral interventions.

Visitors to Schools

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit schools and meet with teachers and administrators about their child's progress. To ensure that all of our buildings are safe and orderly learning environments, visitors must first report to the main office to sign in, state the reason for their visit and receive authorization from a school administrator to proceed with the visit. All visitors must adhere to the schools health and safety guidelines as a result of COVID-19, which includes but is not limited to, wearing a mask. Please note that all school buildings are closed to visitors when schools are engaged in 100% virtual learning. Visits to your child's school should be scheduled in advance whenever possible.

Dress Code Expectations

Students are expected to follow their school's dress code so that their appearance does not constitute a health or safety hazard. School principals must determine and communicate the final decision regarding what is considered proper or improper attire. For information regarding a school's dress code, please consult your student's school handbook.

A dress code violation should not result in exclusion from the classroom environment.

Principals may declare spirit or club days and allow students to wear school spirit shirts, or schedule dress-up days (e.g., when school pictures are scheduled) or allow students to wear other attire for extracurricular activities (eg. athletics, band, or chorus). Nothing in this Code of Conduct restricts or bans students from wearing religious garb. Parents with concerns regarding religious dress are encouraged to discuss them with the school principal.

Students have the right to dress in accordance with their stated gender identity and/or expression within the constraints of the school's dress code.

Attendance Expectations

Under Pennsylvania law, all students between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school every day. Once a student is enrolled in school, this includes students in kindergarten, they are subject to compulsory school laws until the student reaches age 18. The student can only be withdrawn if he/she transfers out of the school. The student will remain on the schools roll and the student/family is subject to truancy court if they do not attend school.

A student shall be considered in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the Board; if receiving approved tutorial instruction or health or therapeutic services; if engaged in an approved and properly supervised independent study, work-study, or career education program; if receiving approved homebound instruction; or if the student's placement is instruction in the home.

Pennsylvania Department of Education regulations state that students have a legal right to attend school until the age of 21. For further guidance, please contact the Central Education Office at 215-391-4161.

During the time that a student is of school age, they are entitled to attend Universal Family of Schools. Students who turn 21 during the school term are entitled to finish out the school year. Parents/guardians are expected to:

- Ensure that their student(s) between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) are enrolled in school and attend school regularly, on time, and for the entire school day.
- Emphasize the importance of on-time attendance in school, class, and supervised activities-and celebrate good attendance and success.
- Send their student(s) to school every day prepared to participate and learn.
- Establish reasonable, age-appropriate curfews and bedtimes.
- Make personal appointments for their students outside of the school day or during school breaks as often as possible.
- Ensure that their student receives the periodic student health examinations that are required by law.
- Schedule family vacations to coincide with school recesses.
- Call the school to report when their student is or will be absent.
- Provide a written excuse for every absence when their student returns to school, per attendance guidelines.
- Provide a written excuse for every late arrival and early departure, per attendance guidelines
- Provide the school with correct current addresses, emergency contacts, home, cell, and work telephone numbers, e-mail addresses at the beginning of each school year and update information whenever there are changes.
- Participate in school attendance improvement plans for their student, to improve daily student attendance when necessary.

When Can a Student be Absent?

Sometimes students have to miss school. Absences which meet the conditions or situations indicated below under Excused/Lawful Absence shall be considered an excused absence.

Written excuse notes must be given to the school within **three (3) days** upon the student's return to school. If the note is not submitted to the school within the required time frame, the day(s) may not be excused. For absences that do not total three (3) consecutive days, parents may submit a written excuse note stating the reason for the absence. All absences resulting in a total of three (3) or more consecutive days will require a written excuse note by a licensed healthcare provider. When a student has been absent, excused with a parent note, totaling eight (8) days (cumulative), all subsequent absences may require a written excuse note from a licensed healthcare provider.

Written excuse notes must include a valid telephone number or other means of contact for verification purposes.

Excused/Lawful Absence

The following conditions or situations constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

- Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.
 - Upon written request by a person in parental relation, a student may be excused during school hours for the purpose of obtaining professional health care or therapy service only if the following requirements are met:
 - The health or therapeutic services are to be rendered by licensed practitioners;
 - It is not practical or possible for the student to receive the services outside of school hours; and
 - The time of necessary absence from school involves a minimum of interference with the student's regular program of studies.
- Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated school staff during school hours for health-related reasons.
- Quarantined
- Recovery from accident
- Required court appearance
- Death in family
- Educational trip/tour if the following conditions are met:
 - The person in parental relation submits the documentation required for excusal prior to the absence, within the appropriate time frame.
 - The student's participation has been approved by the Superintendent or principal.
 - The adult directing and supervising the tour or trip is acceptable to the person in parental relation.
- College tours, trade school tours, career and technical training program tours, community college tours, or tours of other schools, with prior approval.
 - The school may limit the number and duration of non-school-sponsored educational tours or trips for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school year.
- Observance of a religious holiday observed by a bona fide religious group, upon prior written request from the person in parental relation.
- Out-of-school suspension
- Family Emergency (An unexpected, serious event that is outside of the control of the student's family)

- Requires parental note explaining the emergency received within 3 school days of the student's return. School staff will evaluate if the situation constitutes a family emergency.
- Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, Future Farmers of America (FFA), or combined 4-H and FFA group, upon prior written request.
- Participation in a musical performance in conjunction with a national veterans' organization or incorporated unit, as defined in law, for an event or funeral. The national veterans' organization or incorporated unit must provide the student with a signed excuse, which shall include the date, location, and time of the event or funeral. The student shall furnish the signed excuse to the school prior to being excused from school.
- Other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause a student's absence, as well as circumstances related to homelessness and foster care.

Temporary Excusals

The following students may be temporarily excused from the requirements of attendance at school:

1. For the purpose of receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the school's curricula, with certain requirements. *
2. Students participating in a religious instruction program, with certain conditions. *
3. School-age students unable to attend school upon recommendation of the school physician and a psychiatrist or school psychologist, or both, and with approval of the Secretary of Education of the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

**As outlined in the Attendance Policy at <https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/>*

Unexcused/Unlawful Absences

Absences which do not meet the above conditions or situations shall be considered an unexcused/unlawful absence.

An "unexcused" or "illegal" absence occurs when a student is absent without a valid excuse in writing. That means that either no written note was submitted to the school upon the student's return or that the reason provided in the note was deemed invalid. Examples of invalid excuses include (but not limited to): babysitting, waking up late, illness of a family member, and vacation.

Absences shall be treated as unexcused until the school receives a written excuse explaining the absence, to be submitted within three (3) days of the absence.

An out-of-school suspension may not be considered an unexcused absence.

Responses to Non-Attendance (Truancy)

If the student continues to accumulate additional unexcused absences, the parent/guardian and student will be invited to attend a conference where a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) will be created in order to support the family in identifying and alleviating attendance barriers. A SAIP must be developed for any student who has between three (3) and six (6) unexcused absences. The parent/guardian and student must be invited to this conference in advance and are not required to attend, but it is highly recommended.

If the student's attendance does not improve after the school has created a SAIP, and has ten (10) or more illegal absences, the student may be referred to Truancy Court. At that time a truancy provider will contact the parent/guardian in order to assist further with alleviating barriers to attendance.

When a child is in Kindergarten through 3rd grade, a truancy case manager will be assigned to assist the family. When a child is in 4th grade or above, the child is referred to truancy court, and a truancy case manager will be assigned to help remove any barriers to attendance. The child and parent/guardian will be required to attend truancy court and the parent/guardian must comply with the truancy court order. The court order may include a referral for services. If the child's attendance does not improve, the truancy court may refer the case to family court. In family court, a judge may adjudicate the child dependent, and possibly order the child removed from his or her home and placed into foster care or a group home setting.

Suspension from school or transfer to an alternative education setting is not a permissible response to truancy.

SAFE 2 SAY

Safe2Say Something is a youth violence prevention program run by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and to "say something" BEFORE it is too late. With Safe2Say Something, it's easy and confidential to report safety concerns to help prevent violence and tragedies. If it makes you uncomfortable, submit a tip. It will be up to your school to determine what the next steps are. Tips can be submitted online at www.safe2saypa.org or by phone at 1-844-SAF2SAY (723-2729).

Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

Bullying

Universal Family of Schools recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, and safety and on the learning environment at school. We also recognize that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, and detracts from a safe environment.

Universal Family of Schools defines bullying as an intentional electronic, written, verbal, nonverbal, psychological or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education;
2. Creating a threatening school environment; or
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying is further characterized by the following three (3) criteria:

1. It is aggressive behavior or intentional harm doing.
2. It is carried out repeatedly over time.
3. It occurs between people where there is an imbalance of power (e.g. physical strength, mental capacity, popularity, or social skills).

Harassment

It is the Universal Family of Schools policy to maintain an educational environment in which harassment and sex discrimination (including sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual violence) in any form is not tolerated.

Universal Family of Schools defines harassment as verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's sex, age, race, color, sexual orientation (known or perceived), gender identity expression (known or perceived), national origin/ethnicity, religion, disability, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status and/or political beliefs. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Universal Family of Schools defines sexual harassment as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Some incidents involving these behaviors may rise to the level of a Title IX violation. (For additional information see section entitled "Title IX" below)

Discrimination

Universal Family of Schools does not discriminate in employment, education programs, or activities based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation (known or perceived), gender identity, expression (known or perceived), sex, handicap, disability, nationality, citizenship, union membership, or limited English proficiency. Universal Family of Schools policy of non-discrimination extends to all other legally protected classifications as listed below:

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA), is a federal law prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities and, together with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), ensures to deaf and hard-of-hearing students, parents, staff, and community members the right of equal access to services and accommodations provided by Universal Family of Schools through enhanced communications.

Parents/Guardians and Authorized Visitors

The Attendance at School Events Policy states that a disabled parent/guardian or authorized visitor to a school event that requires a reasonable accommodation to assist in his/her attendance/participation in the event should contact the event administrative organizer at least three (3) business days in advance of the scheduled event or three (3) days following receipt of notice of the event, whichever accomplishes the earliest notice to Universal Family of Schools. Requests should be made as early as possible because some accommodations require additional time to prepare/arrange

Title IX

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex and gender based discrimination, including sexual harassment. This federal law defines sexual harassment as any instance of quid pro quo harassment by a school's employee; any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal educational

access; any instance of sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VA WA).

Examples of potential Title IX violations:

1. Harassment or discrimination based on sex or gender identity or expression
2. Harassment or discrimination based on Pregnant or Parenting status
3. Bullying or harassment in the form of:
 - Comments, threats, gestures, or rumors of a sexual nature
 - Sharing/showing images/videos of a sexual nature
 - Non-consensual sex acts and sexual violence
 - Sex-based inequity in athletics

If you have concerns or questions related to Title IX please contact:

Inquiries related to students:
Your School Principal and/or-
The Central Education Office
1427 Catharine St, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215-391-4161

Inquiries related to employees:
Human Resources Department
1427 Catharine St, 4th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215-732-6518

Reporting

Any school community member can report bullying, harassment and/or discrimination and all reports will be investigated. There are numerous ways to make a report:

- Incidents related to student victims- Email ufos@universalcompanies.org or call 215-391-4161
- Incidents related to employee victims- Email ufos@universalcompanies.org or call 215-391-4161
- Call the Safe 2 Say hotline: 215-400-SAFE (7233)
- Tell an administrator (i.e. Principal, Assistant Principal) or any school staff (i.e. teacher)

Modifying Behavior

Universal Family of Schools has high expectations for all students. Our goal is to maximize academic engagement and minimize rule violations and disruptive behavior. Research shows this is best accomplished through prevention and intervention rather than suspension.

Suspensions should only be utilized as a last resort when other interventions are not successful, or for serious violations of the code of conduct.

The following interventions are strategies that have proven effective in modifying behavior. For additional information on any of these strategies or to request assistance with implementing them, please contact the Office of Climate and Safety.

[Parents Resources for Modifying Behavior](#)

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a highly effective way of building children's social- emotional and behavioral skills to reduce challenging behaviors. PBIS can also be effectively used at home and is especially helpful when events disrupt normal routines. If you would like additional resources, please see the Supporting Families with PBIS at Home document for some recommendations for families and caregivers on how to use PBIS to support your children's social and emotional growth at home.

[Supporting Families with PBIS at Home](#)

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice (RJ) is a set of principles and practices inspired by indigenous values used to build community, respond to harm/conflict and provide individual circles of support for students. By building, maintaining and restoring relationships between members of the entire school community, we help to create an environment where all students can thrive.

Restorative Processes

Schools also use circles to mediate conflicts as well as a restorative alternative to suspension and punitive discipline.

You can practice these circles at home when harm has been done or when there is conflict. You'll need:

- Sit in circle
- Talking piece
- Guidelines
- Equal opportunity to hold the talking piece
- Both parties prepped for circle individually before circling up
- Questions asked in a harm & healing circle
 - What's important to you today?
 - What happened?
 - What do you need to move forward?
 - Based on the needs in circle, what are you willing to agree to so that we can move forward?
 - How are you feeling now that we've circled up and reached agreements? Is there anything else you want to say before we close out?

Tier I Prevention Strategies

Schools create safe and supportive environments that promote healthy and successful students. The foundation of this work is Tier I of the MTSS pyramid and necessary to support strategies across the entire pyramid.

Classroom Strategies

- Change classroom organization/ set-up
- Intentional seating
- Structured academic tasks
- Clear and explicit directions
- Strategy instruction
- Mnemonic strategies
- Classroom system of positive reinforcement
- Full-class redirection
- Increasing opportunities to respond
- Hook (i.e. start the lesson with an engaging task/activity)
- Chunk lessons
- Differentiation/modification
- Less lecture, more facilitation
- "Gamify" lesson
- Display student work
- Assign class jobs
- Art integration
- Explicit help protocol
- Preview schedule
- Gradual release method
- Teacher or student conferences
- Modeling, Rehearsal, and Feedback
- Make a video of words, steps, procedures and/or instruction
- Mindfulness exercises (i.e.: Go noodle, brain breaks, etc.)
- Create and review daily agenda

School-Wide Strategies

- Student choice
- Morning meeting
- Token Economy
- Clear, taught expectations/ procedures
- Use of voice levels
- Active supervision
- Establish buddy teacher system
- Intentionally taught skills
- Transition procedure
- Increasing student interaction
- Restorative justice community-building circles
- Town hall
- Firm and kind mindset
- Opportunities for movement
- Community building activities
- Clear, consistent, predictable consequences
- Modeling desired behavior
- Reward/incentive system
- De-escalation strategies
- Restorative practice methods
- Verbalizing problems
- Previewing
- Sequential prompting
- Incorporating student interest and preferred activities and assignments
- Choice - making opportunities
- Group contingency
- Use of free time
- Refocus desk/space
- Implementing School-Wide PBIS

Tier 2 Early Intervention/Group Strategies

Schools identify and respond to students who are at-risk or have been exposed to trauma and/or loss in ways that meet their unique exposures, experiences, developmental, and personal needs.

Classroom Strategies

- Class wide peer tutoring
- Refocus desk/structured break for group
- Cooperative learning
- Peer-assisted learning strategies
- Peer assessment
- Peer modeling
- Academic or social contracting
- Written reflection or apology
- Loss of privileges
- Goal Setting
- Self-Monitoring
- Self-Evaluation
- Self-Instruction

School-Wide Strategies

- Conflict resolution
- Peer mediation
- Restorative justice harm & conflict circles
- Student support team interventions and responses
- Group discussion with appropriate administrator
- Intentionally taught replacement behavior (group)
- Check-In, Check-Out (CICO)
- Referrals for evaluation for students suspected of having a disability or revisions to an existing IEP or 504 plan.

Classroom or School-Wide Strategies

- Pre-taught use of refocus location/ structured break
- Monetary or service-based restitution
- Detention
- Referral to student support team
- Group assignment of work projects
- Group mentoring
- Referral to substance abuse counseling group
- Restorative conversation with peers and/or adults
- Use of proximity and active supervision
- Teacher look
- Redirect and reteach with love and concern
- Classroom assigned seats or seat change
- High levels of praise vs. corrections
- Group Reward/incentive or contingencies
- Peer Reinforcement
- Group goal setting
- Differential reinforcement
- Behavior modification
- Academic or social contracting
- Intentionally taught skills
- Verbal correction and feedback
- Group reminders and redirection

Tier 3 Intervention

Schools provide support to those students whose behaviors necessitate intensive interventions and aim to meet their individualized needs.

School-Wide Interventions

- Change in schedule or class
- Development of or revision to student support team plan
- Referral for evaluation for students suspected of having a disability
- Development of Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP)
- Community conferencing by trained adult
- RJ circle of support and accountability
- RJ welcome circle
- Referral to IEP team or 504 team for manifestation determination for students with disabilities
- Referral to substance abuse counseling
- Referral to appropriate community organization (e.g., mentoring programs)
- Referral for reevaluation for students with disabilities
- Revision to IEP or 504 plan as needed for students with disabilities
- In-school suspension
- Detention (lunch, make-up period, etc.)
- Suspension

Classroom Interventions

- Teacher provides input in planning process of Behavior Intervention Plans
- Teacher supports implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans

Discipline

Students who engage in behaviors that endanger school safety or disrupt the educational experience of others may be subject to discipline in accord with the Code of Conduct.

Universal Family of Schools is committed to achieving educational equity and reducing disproportionality in discipline.

Parents/Guardians who have any questions or concerns related to discipline are encouraged to contact the school principal and/or the Superintendent.

*Not permitting a child to attend recess or gym is not an appropriate form of discipline and should not be used.

Suspension Procedures

According to Pennsylvania law, suspension is defined as the denial to a student of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for any period of up to ten (10) days. Suspensions must be preceded by notification to the student and parent/guardian in writing. For the purposes of The Universal Family of School's Code of Student Conduct, suspensions comprise three categories: in-school, short-term, and long-term.

In-School Suspensions

In-school Suspension is an exclusion from a classroom for disciplinary purposes that allow a student to remain under the direct supervision of school personnel. Direct supervision means school personnel are physically in the same location as students under their supervision.

Out-of-School Suspensions

Kindergarten, first, and second grade students may NOT be suspended unless their actions result in serious bodily injury. Serious bodily injury is defined as bodily injury that involves (1) a substantial risk of death; (2) extreme physical pain; (3) protracted and obvious disfigurement; or (4) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a body part, organ, or mental faculty. In order to prove serious bodily injury, the school must provide medical documentation to the Superintendent to determine if it constitutes serious bodily injury. Please consult with the Superintendent before issuing any suspension for a student in grades kindergarten, first and second. In lieu of suspension, the student must be referred to the counselor for a meeting to discuss appropriate behavioral or behavioral health interventions and supports.

Short-term Suspension is an exclusion from school and/or any school activity or function for a period of three or fewer school days. Students who are suspended must meet with the principal or designee prior to the suspension. During the conference, the student has the right to the procedures described under Student Conference Procedures outlined in this code of student conduct.

Long-term Suspension is an exclusion from school and/or any school activity or function for a period of four to ten school days. Students who are given a long-term suspension are to participate in a student conference and a parent/guardian conference. Prior approval by the

superintendent or the superintendent's designee is required for all suspensions exceeding four school days.

Parent Conference Procedures

At parent conferences, parents/ guardians can expect that school administrators will adhere to the following protocol:

1. Notice of a conference must be provided to the parent/guardian in their preferred language in writing and either hand-delivered to the home, sent by certified mail, faxed, emailed, or communicated by other reasonable means.
2. When a student is suspended, a parent/guardian conference must be held no later than day three of the suspension.
3. **At the conference, the parent/guardian or caregiver may request to review and have a copy of the student's records and any witness statements, with other student names and information redacted. (Photographs and video recordings of incidents may be shown to parents/guardians but copies will not be provided.)**
4. School administrators will discuss the student's problem behavior and ways to correct it.
5. School administrators will inform the parent/guardian of any further disciplinary action and provide an overview of the parent/guardian's due process rights regarding the disciplinary action, including the right to view evidence.
6. **Schoolwork for students with more than a four (4) day suspension must be provided to the parent/guardian at the conference, which is due upon reinstatement.**
7. **Schools must make every attempt to engage a guardian or parent when the student returns after a suspension. Students may not be kept out of school as a result of the parent or guardian's inability to meet with school staff.**

Interim Placements

Schools may request an interim placement (temporary school assignment) for the limited situations where the school has documentation that a regular education student's **continued presence** poses a threat to the school community. If an interim assignment is granted by the Superintendent, a hearing must be held as soon as possible after that assignment. For a special education student, interim assignments will only be granted if the incident involves weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury.

Disciplinary Hearings/Transfers

Referrals will not be made for disciplinary transfers or expulsion for students in kindergarten through grade 5.

Students in kindergarten through grade 5 who are exhibiting a pattern or disruptive behavior(s) and/ or committing serious violation(s) of the Code of Conduct are referred to the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process.

Students in grades 6 through 12 who are exhibiting a pattern of disruptive behavior(s) and/or committing serious violation(s) of the code of conduct may be referred to the Superintendent for a student disciplinary hearing if school administrators determine that level of discipline is warranted.

Students who are referred for a disciplinary hearing receive full due process to determine whether the student will be transferred to a disciplinary school. Disciplinary schools provide high-quality alternative education programs and supports to help students achieve their intellectual and social potential.

English Learners (“ELs”) cannot be placed at disciplinary schools that cannot meet their language instruction needs. ELs must be taught by qualified teachers with ESL Teaching Credentials using materials that are appropriate for their ages and levels of proficiency. Students transitioning from a mental health or residential placement may not be placed at an alternative education program unless the student meets the definition of a disruptive student.

Students referred for a hearing will be suspended and provided the procedures indicated in the suspension procedures section of the code of student conduct. The parent will receive written notice in their preferred language of the suspension and referral for disciplinary transfer prior to the hearing. The school must complete a Behavior Performance Review (BPR) for regular education students or a Manifestation Determination for special education students or students with a 504 plan and share the results of the review at the parent/guardian conference. **When a hearing is not scheduled during the period of a student’s suspension, the student has the right to return to school pending the outcome of the hearing, unless the behavior of the student continues to create such a risk of harm to the school community. In this case, then the school may request an interim placement. (See below for details of that process).**

Disciplinary hearings will be conducted by an impartial hearing officer. During the hearing process, parents/guardians may oppose the request for their student’s removal from the school. Students and parents/guardians going through the disciplinary hearing process have the following rights:

- At the parent conference, you may request a copy of your child’s records and any evidence the school plans to present which will be provided to you within 48 hours.
- An interpreter will be provided if requested for the student or parent/guardian.
- You may bring your own witnesses and/or character statements to the hearing.
- You may bring a representative and/or advocate.
- You may ask questions of the school witnesses and present evidence of your own if it relates to the incident.
- The hearing officer will issue a decision letter within 5 school days from the date of the hearing.
- You may submit an appeal if you are not in agreement with the hearing decision. Appeals must be submitted within **15 calendar days** from the date on the hearing decision letter, either in person at the Central Education Office or via email at lfinney@universalcompanies.org
- All hearings are audio-recorded. After the hearing, you may request a copy of the recording which will be provided to you within 48 hours.

Expulsion Procedures

According to Pennsylvania law, expulsion is defined as an exclusion from school and any school activities for more than ten (10) school days. Students who have committed an offense subject to expulsion will also be suspended and afforded the procedures found in the suspension section of the code of student conduct.

The formal expulsion hearing process includes the following due process requirement:

1. Notification of the violation(s) in writing by certified mail to the student's parent/guardian in their preferred language.
2. At least three days' notice of the time and place of the hearing, which shall include a copy of this policy, hearing procedures, and notice of the right to representation by a legal counsel. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when he/she demonstrates good cause for an extension.
3. The hearing shall be private unless the student or parent/guardian requests a public hearing.
4. Representation by counsel at the parent/guardian expense and parent/guardian may attend the hearing.
5. Disclosure of the names of witnesses against the student and copies of their written statements or affidavits.
6. The right to request that witnesses against the student appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
7. The right to testify, make arguments and present witnesses on the student's behalf.
8. A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing and a copy made available to the student at the student's expense, or at no charge if the student is indigent.
9. The hearing shall be held within 15 school days of the notice of charges, unless a delay is mutually agreed to by both parties or is delayed by:
 - a. The need for laboratory reports from law enforcement agencies.
 - b. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student's invoking his/her rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
 - c. Delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim in cases of juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury.
10. Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student and the parent/guardian with the expulsion decision in their preferred language.

If a student is expelled by the school board, the parent/guardian of the student has 30 days to provide written documentation that the student is in another educational program. If they are unable to find an alternative educational program, Universal Family of Schools will provide for the student's education.

A student who has been permanently expelled from Universal Family of Schools by the affirmative vote of a majority of the school board may apply for readmission.

The school board delegate's complete authority for all readmission decisions to the Chief Executive Officer/Superintendent or his/her designee. Temporarily expelled students need not apply for readmission because they are automatically readmitted to Universal Family of Schools at the end of the expulsion period. Readmission decisions are final and not subject to review by appeal to the school board or the courts.

For information on expunging expulsion records see the Student and Parent/Guardian Rights section of the Code of Conduct.

Discipline for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities, even if expelled, must be provided with a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Students Identified as Intellectually Disabled

Students who are identified as intellectually disabled can only be removed (suspension, interim disciplinary placement, or expulsion) from the school building if there is written agreement from the parent/guardian or written approval from the Bureau of Special Education of the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE can be contacted by calling 717-783-6913 or by visiting their website – <http://www.pde.state.pa.us>.

All Other Students Receiving Special Education Services (includes students with a 504 Plan)

The school may suspend students who are receiving special education services and cease educational services for up to ten (10) consecutive school days or fifteen (15) cumulative school days in one school year without providing special education services as outlined in their IEP.

If schools are considering any of the following disciplinary actions for students receiving special education services or students with a 504 service plan, the action steps listed below must be completed:

1. Suspension for a behavior for which the student has received 10 cumulative days of suspension during this school year.
2. Request for a disciplinary hearing and transfer.
3. Referral for expulsion.

Action Steps:

1. Provide written notice to the parent/guardian of the recommended disciplinary action and provide an invitation to participate in the Manifestation Determination Meeting with the student's IEP team.
 - The purpose of the Manifestation Determination meeting is to answer two questions:
 - Was the conduct caused by, or did it have a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability?
 - Was the conduct a direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP?
 - This meeting should take place within 24 hours of the incident (or within 24 hours of the school becoming aware of the incident).
2. During the Manifestation Determination Meeting, the student's most recent evaluation, IEP and placement will be reviewed as well as the details of the incident which led to the need for discipline.
3. If the behavior IS a manifestation of the student's disability, the proposed disciplinary action may not be implemented. When necessary, the team should review and revise the existing behavior intervention plan or complete a functional behavior assessment and intervention plan to address the specific behavior and include in the IEP those services and modifications that will enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and help prevent the problem behavior from recurring.
4. If the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, school officials may proceed with the recommended disciplinary action in accord with the Code of Conduct.

5. A Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) must be issued with the results of this determination and a copy of the Procedural Safeguard Notice (PSN) must be given to the parent/guardian.

*If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision that is made at the Manifestation

Determination Meeting, they can request an expedited Special Education Hearing and the Commonwealth- appointed hearing officer will review the manifestation determination. Directions on requesting a hearing can be found in the NOREP and must be completed within ten (10) days.

6. If the incident involves one of the following special circumstances, an interim placement (a 45 day school assignment to an alternative educational setting) can be requested from the Superintendent. NOTE: An interim placement can be requested regardless of whether or not the behavior is considered a manifestation of the student's disability.

Special Circumstances:

1. The student carried a dangerous weapon* to school or a school function.
2. The student knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or sold or solicited the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function.
3. The student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

If the behavior is not one of these three special circumstances, is a manifestation of the student's disability and the student is likely to cause injury to themselves or others, a school administrator can request an expedited hearing conducted by a special education hearing officer to obtain a 45-day interim placement. This request should be made by a school administrator to the Office of General Counsel.

*NOTE: A "dangerous weapon" is a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury.

Behavior Matrix

This behavior matrix provides definitions for behaviors that are considered dangerous and/or disruptive to the learning environment. While some definitions contain an example, the definitions are not limited to the example provided. The behavior matrix also provides guidance as to the levels of consequence that school administrators might implement for specific rule violations.

Reminders:

- For all violations of the code of conduct before any suspension is issued, in-school interventions should be implemented to modify student behavior.
- Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in-school interventions have proven unsuccessful or of the violation is of a serious nature.
- **Disciplinary hearings should be sought for students who have exhibited a pattern of disruptive behavior(s) or who have engaged in a serious violation(s) of the code of conduct.**
- For the purpose of this code of conduct, the term possession refers to having physical control over the item. This will include items found in a students' locker, bag, or clothing.
- The Principal may decide not to proceed with a suspension and/ or disciplinary hearing for a student who possess a weapon. Principals should consider using the weapons waiver when the weapon is found at the metal detector or school entrance, when there is a legitimate and justifiable reason for possessing the weapon, or it was accidentally brought into the school building without knowledge or intent to harm.

Legend for Behavior Matrix

"X" - symbol on the grid below means that the consequence does not apply to that behavior.

Interventions Defined:

Harm & healing circle (HHC): a restorative form of mediation that uses the circle process to reach agreements in order to resolve conflicts and repair harm. Can be used as an alternative to suspension and youth can be trained in HHCs as peer mediators.

Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment: these are projects that aim to (1) provide a restorative rather than punitive consequence, that (2) can act as a learning opportunity, and/or (3) an opportunity to improve the school community/campus while (4) holding community members (adults and students) accountable to their actions and how those actions impact the community.

COSA with student support plan: a restorative method used to create a student support plan that generates higher buy-in than traditional methods because all stakeholders, including the student, share their input through circle and are all held accountable to action steps/goals (both adults and students)

Youth Court: a student run restorative justice program that gives students that make a poor choice an opportunity to improve their behavior without being suspended or punished in the traditional way.

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In- school Interventions (Including In- school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.						
1.	Profane or obscene language or gestures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who curse or use disrespectful, insulting or sexually explicit language/ gestures. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan 6. Youth Court	X	X	X	X
2.	Inappropriate use an electronic device <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who engage in acts including ,but not limited to, sexting (sending sexual images or videos), videotaping fights, videotaping someone in a place where they have an expectation of privacy, or posting content that impacts the school community in a negative manner. This includes the inappropriate use of Chromebooks or other school devices. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Parent meeting 3. Youth Court	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In- school Interventions (Including In- school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.						
3.	Forgery/Alteration of grades, excuse notes, or school documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who reproduce the signature of another with the intent to deceive or who alter official school records such as grades, attendance or reports. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Parent meeting 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Youth Court	Grades 3-12 Should warrant a short-term suspension of 3 or less days.	X	X	X
4.	Cheating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who submit or intend to submit work that is not their own. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. F on assignment and mandatory redo assignment 3. Parent meeting 4. COSA with student support plan 5. Youth Court	X	X	X	X
5.	Unauthorized Entry Into School Property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who gain entry to a school building or who allow others into a school building via an unauthorized door or at an unauthorized time. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Parent meeting 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Youth Court	Grades 3-12 Could warrant long term suspension of 4 or more days	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12	X
6.	Destruction of Property (Totaling less than \$100) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who damage or deface school property or the personal property of another school community member. If the destruction of property was accidental, this should be taken into consideration when determining a consequence. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment. 4. Parent meeting 5. Youth Court	Grades 3-12 Should warrant a short-term suspension of 3 or less days.	X	X	X
7.	Destruction of property (Totaling \$100 or more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who damage or deface school property or the personal property of another school community member. If the destruction of property was accidental, this should be taken into consideration when determining a consequence. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent 5. COSA with student support plan 6. Youth Court	Grades 3 – 12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12	X

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In- school Interventions (Including In- school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.						
8.	Theft (Less than \$100) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who take school property or the personal property of another school community member. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. Youth Court	Grades 3 – 12 Should warrant a short-term suspension of 3 or less days.	X	X	X
9.	Theft (More than \$100) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who take school property or the personal property of another school community member. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan	Grades 3 – 12 Should warrant a short-term suspension of 3 or less days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	X
10.	Extortion (Must be by use of threatened force) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who obtain money, property, or services from another school community member by expressed or implied threat of force. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan	Grades 3 - 12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
11.	Robbery (Must be by use of force) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who take or attempt to take the property of another student or school community member by force, threat of force, or by putting the victim in fear. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan	Grades 3 - 12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
12.	Mutual fighting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who willingly engage in a one on one physical altercation. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan 6. Tier II targeted group on conflict 7. Youth Court	Grades 3 - 12 Should warrant a short-term suspension of 3 or less days.	X	X	X

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In- school Interventions (Including In- school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.						
13.	Mutual group fight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who willingly engage in a physical altercation with multiple willing participants. This is a physical altercation in which none of the participants are identified as aggressors or victims. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan 6. Tier II targeted group on conflict	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	X
14.	Instigation and/or participation in a group assault <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who instigate or participate in an assault by multiple students on one or more other students. This is a physical confrontation in which participants can clearly be identified as aggressors and victims. Including but not limited to Gang Violence. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Parent meeting 3. COSA with student support plan 4. Potential harm & healing circle 5. Completion of mandatory service requirements	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
15.	Simple assault <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who intentionally and without provocation, hit, punch, or kick a school community member. This does not include accidental physical contact such as a teacher being struck while breaking up a fight. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Parent meeting 3. COSA with student support plan 4. Potential harm & healing circle 5. Completion of mandatory service requirements 6. Youth Court	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	X
16.	Causing serious bodily injury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who intentionally engage in an act that causes serious bodily injury to another school community member. Serious bodily injury must be supported with documentation from a medical professional. Including but not limited to Gang Violence. Please note, causing serious bodily injury goes all the way to expulsion. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Parent meeting 3. COSA with student support plan 4. Potential harm & healing circle 5. Completion of mandatory service requirements	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6-12

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In-school Interventions (Including In-school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.						
17.	Inappropriate touch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who engage in unwanted touching of another school community member either with their own body or with an object. Examples can include hugging or other touching that may not be sexual in nature. 	Grades K – 12	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
18.	Bullying/Cyberbullying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullying is repeated intentional conduct (physical, psychological, verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic) that is directed at another student or students. It could happen in or outside of a school setting, is severe, persistent or pervasive, and has one of the following effects: (1) substantially interfere with a student's education, (2) creates a hostile learning environment, or (3) substantially disrupts school operation. Bullying occurs within an interpersonal relationship where there is an imbalance of power (e.g., one person is physically larger, stronger, mentally quicker, or socially more powerful). Cyberbullying occurs through electronic communication devices including but not limited to social networking, e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, tweets, blogs, photo and video sharing, chat rooms, dash boards, or web sites. 	Grades K – 12 1. Youth Court	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In- school Interventions (Including In- school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.						
19.	Harassment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who engage in unwelcome verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status and/or political beliefs. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. 	Grades K – 12	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 – 12
20.	Sexual Harassment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who engage in unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. This can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The harassment does not have to involve repeated incidents. 	Grades K – 12	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 – 12
21.	Hazing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who for the purpose of initiating or enhancing a student's membership in an organization causes or forces that student to violate any criminal law, consume a substance that subjects the student to harm, endure physical, mental or sexual brutality or perform any activity that endangers another person. Including but not limited to Gang Violence. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Parent meeting 3. COSA with student support plan 4. Potential harm & healing Circle 5. Completion of mandatory service requirements 6. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 7. Youth Court	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 – 12
22.	Sexual Act (Consensual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who willingly engage in sexual conduct. This includes sexual intercourse, oral sex, or simulated sex, exposing or touching their own sexual parts or touching the sexual parts of another person. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Parent meeting	Grades 3 -12 Should warrant a short-term suspension of 3 or less days	Grades 6 - 12	X	X

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In- school Interventions (Including In- school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
		Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.				
23.	Sexual act (Non-consensual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who engage in sexual conduct without the consent of the other involved person/s. This includes sexual intercourse, oral sex, or simulated sex, exposing or touching their own parts or sexual part(s) of another person. 	COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING STEPS: 1) Call Philadelphia Police 2) Call Serious Incident desk. 3) Complete investigation and issue a suspension, if appropriate 4) Contact Student Rights and Responsibilities at 215-400-4830 5) Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.				
24.	Threats/Intimidation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who introduce fear or a sense of inferiority in another school community member. This includes threatening to engage in an act that causes harm. Threats can be made verbally, in writing, or with gestures. Including but not limited to Gang Violence. 	Grades K – 12 4. Restorative conversation 5. Harm & healing circle 6. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 7. Parent meeting 8. COSA with student support plan	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
25.	Threatening Mass Violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who threaten to engage in an act that causes serious physical harm or creates a substantial risk of serious physical harm to members of a school community. For example, threatening to engage in a school shooting or bombing. 	COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING STEPS: 1) Call Philadelphia Police 2) Call Serious Incident desk. 3) Complete investigation and issue a suspension, if appropriate 4) Contact Student Rights and Responsibilities at 215-400-4830 5) Could Warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days				
26.	Possession and/or use of tobacco or electronic smoking devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who use or possess tobacco or any electronic smoking device on school property or at school sponsored events. This includes but is not limited to products containing tobacco, electronic cigarettes, cigars, vaping kits, and hookah 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan 6. Youth Court	X	X	X	X
27.	Possession and/or use of alcohol and/or drugs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who are found to be in possession or who use alcohol or other drugs on school property or at a school sponsored event. This includes drugs in edible form. All students in violation of this rule MUST be referred to the counselor. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan	Grades 3 -12 Should warrant a short-term suspension of 3 or less days	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	X

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In- school Interventions (Including In- school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.						
28.	Distribution of alcohol and/or drugs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who are found to be sharing or selling alcohol or drugs. This includes drugs in edible form. 	Grades K -12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan	Grades 3 – 12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
29.	Possession of incendiary devices and/or explosives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who are found to be in possession of incendiary devices such as matches, lighters, fireworks, bombs, firecrackers, bombshells, and/or other explosives. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan 6. Youth Court	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days.	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
30.	Use of incendiary devices and/or explosives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who use or activate incendiary devices such as matches, lighters, fireworks, bombs, firecrackers, bombshells and/or other explosives. This may include accidental or intentional fire starting. 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
31.	Possession of a weapon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who possess any object, device, or instrument, which, in its inherent and functional purpose is intended to be a weapon. This includes firearms, whether loaded or not, cap guns, pellet guns, BB guns, knives, box cutters, cutting instruments, nunchaku, electronic shock devices or mace. This does not include ordinary objects such as pencils that may have been used during an altercation. 	COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING STEPS: 1) Call Philadelphia Police 2) Call Serious Incident desk. 3) Complete investigation and issue a suspension, if appropriate 4) Contact Student Rights and Responsibilities at 215-400-4830 5) Could warrant a long-term suspension of 4 or more days.				

Rule	Definitions of Behaviors	Consequence Levels				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all violations of the Code of Conduct, in school interventions should be implemented as means to modify student behavior. Suspensions should be utilized as a last resort if in school interventions have proven unsuccessful. 	Level 1: In- school Interventions (Including In- school suspension)	Level 2: Out of School Suspension	Level 3: Behavior Contract or Lateral Transfer	Level 4: Alternative Education School Assignment	Level 5: Alternative Education Assignment with Expulsion Referral
Levels 3, 4, or 5 consequences are issued by The Superintendent as a result of a disciplinary hearing.						
32.	Reckless endangerment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who take any action that creates a substantial risk such that serious bodily harm could result to any person. For example, throwing objects across a room or out of a window. Reckless Endangerment is NOT cutting class, roaming hallways, or leaving school without authorization 	Grades K – 12 1. Restorative conversation 2. Harm & healing circle 3. Wheel of Nia or another specific community project or assignment 4. Parent meeting 5. COSA with student support plan 6. Youth Court	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12
35.	Gang affiliation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A student who engages in dangerous activities on behalf of an identified gang to commit disruptive or illegal acts within the school or community. 	Grades K – 12	Grades 3 -12 Could warrant a long-term suspension, of 4 or more days	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12	Grades 6 - 12

Gang Violence and Involvement

Universal Family of Schools will not tolerate gang activities and/ or involvement in gangs on any school campus or school sponsored event. Students who do not comply will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with our Code of Conduct. Gangs and gang-related activities pose a serious safety threat to students and staff, which disrupt the educational process. Any information regarding gangs or gang related activity, should be immediately reported to school administration and can also be reported to our Central Education Office.

Referrals to the Philadelphia Police Department

Some of the behavior infractions in the code of conduct are also considered crimes according to Pennsylvania state law. Universal Family of Schools has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) that explicitly states which crimes must be reported to PPD. The crimes that must be reported to the Philadelphia Police Department are as follows:

- Abductions and Attempts
- Assaults
- Bomb Scares
- Burglary
- Drug & Alcohol Offenses
- Fire & False Alarms (Arson)
- Graffiti (if racial or threatening in nature)
- Child Abuse
- Hate Crimes
- Morals Offenses (sexual in nature)
- Property Damage
- Robbery
- Theft
- Trespassing
- Weapons Offenses

A complete copy of the memorandum of understanding is available on Universal Family of Schools website. Students eleven (11) years old and younger will not be subject to arrest unless they have committed one of the enumerated crimes listed in the memorandum of understanding. Parents or guardians of victims and suspects should be contacted immediately about their child's involvement and attempts to contact parents should be documented.

Universal Family of Schools also has a memorandum of understanding regarding the Diversion Program with the Philadelphia Police department. This program permits PPD to offer alternatives to arrest and criminal prosecution, such as social service supports. The Diversion Program allows Philadelphia Police Department to divert a student from arrest if that student has committed a non-violent offense in school and has no prior arrests. In those cases, the student will receive services from the Department of Human Services.

The information in this handbook may be updated during the course of the school year

For copies in languages other English, please visit our website at <https://www.universalfamilyofschools.org/policies/>

Universal Family of Schools does not discriminate in employment or education programs or activities based on race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation (known or perceived), gender identity expression (known or perceived), sex, handicap, disability, nationality, citizenship, union membership, or limited English proficiency.

This policy of non-discrimination extends to all other legally protected classifications. Publications of this notice are in accordance with state and federal laws including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Universal Family of Schools Central Education Office- 1427 Catharine Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia Pa 19146, 215-391-4161