



**Universal Alcorn Charter  
Elementary School  
Parent/Student Handbook  
2022-2023**

*Aaron Starke, Principal*

Dear Student and Family:

The faculty and staff join me in welcoming you to a new school year at Universal Alcorn Charter Elementary School. We look forward to working with you and we hope that this will be your best school year ever!

The Student Handbook has been published to help you better understand the policies and procedures of Universal Alcorn Charter Elementary School. It is also designed to assist you and your parents in meeting your responsibilities to become a successful scholar. We urge you to carefully review the content, and we also encourage you to share the information.

Universal Alcorn Charter Elementary School will provide you with many opportunities for learning and enrichment during this year and we hope that you will take advantage of these opportunities. Our hope for each of our students is that you grow academically, socially and emotionally as a result of your school experiences. During your time at Universal Alcorn, we expect each of you to strive for excellence in your studies, and to make positive contributions to our school and to our community.

Consideration, respect, and safety are the foundations upon which the rules that govern student conduct are based. You will share a school environment with hundreds of other people. Therefore, the rights of all must be preserved, and the safety of no one must be compromised. Your actions must be consistent with the rules and must not infringe on the rights or safety of others. Persistent rule violations will result in disciplinary action, which could include a suspension of student privileges.

Your teacher, guidance counselor, and other school staff members join me in offering you the help you may need during the school year in order to be successful. If you experience academic difficulty, disagreements with other students, or have personal concerns that you cannot resolve, we encourage you to seek someone out for assistance. Remember, we stand ready to help!

Lastly, we hope that you will always strive to be the best student and person you can be. I wish you an exciting, enriching and enjoyable school year, and one in which you will "Aspire To Excellence".

Sincerely,

Aaron Starke  
Principal

## ALCORN BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

Every student at Universal Alcorn receives lunch and breakfast at no cost. Breakfast is served every day before school from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. **REASONABLE BEHAVIOR IS EXPECTED AT ALL TIMES.** Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and students who do not abide by mealtime rules can expect disciplinary action. As in all other school situations, students are expected to follow the directions given by teachers and the climate staff who supervise the cafeteria and the recreation area.

Each student is responsible for disposing of trash in the containers provided. Others must use the cafeteria after you. Students are expected **TO LEAVE LUNCH TABLES AND THE SURROUNDING AREA (FLOOR) FREE AND CLEAR OF TRASH AND FOOD. FOOD, AT NO TIME, IS PERMITTED OUT OF THE LUNCHROOM.**

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORM

These cards will be distributed to students during the first few days of school and must be taken home and completed by parents. Any change of address or phone number must be reported as soon as possible. **IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY THAT THESE FORMS BE KEPT UP-TO-DATE** so that a parent or guardian can be contacted in case of accident or extreme illness.

## HOMEWORK

Many assignments require study and research outside of class. Individual study is essential if students are to better understand the subjects they are studying. Homework provides the student with the opportunity to increase his/her knowledge; helps in needed skills; and leads to proficiency in the subjects being studied. Assigned homework must be completed. Grades may be affected, and after-school academic makeup may result if assignments are not completed. Since students work at different rates, it is difficult to prescribe homework in a set amount of time, although each student should have a minimum of one to two-and-a-half hours of homework per night. Assignments will vary from class to class. Some assignments will be due the next day, and some will need to be completed over a determined period of time. Homework is assigned minimally four times per week.

We encourage all students to have a study partner in each class who can share work that is missed because of illness or special program participation. If a student is absent from school for more than two days and cannot obtain your homework from another student, your parent may call the Main Office at 215-952-6219 after the second day and request your assignments. We ask that parents telephone by 9:00 a.m. and work can be picked up by 3:00 p.m.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Any items such as books and clothing, which are found, should be brought to the Lost and Found in the back of the Auditorium. Items such as money, jewelry, and other smaller items should be turned into the office and given to a secretary for safekeeping. Students who lose items should check at the lost and found bin in the back of the Auditorium or with one of the secretaries in the office. Students should also check in the rooms, and other areas of the school for those lost items. Personal property is the students' responsibility and each student should keep track of personal belongings. If a student finds an item in the classroom or hall, he/she should bring it to the office as soon as possible.

Students must assume responsibility for loss or damage of any school or personal property issued to or belonging to them. The school will try to protect these properties, but it is not the school's responsibility. Students should not bring expensive items to school as they might get lost or stolen.

## **TEXTBOOK ISSUE AND CARE**

All students are responsible for textbooks and all other materials assigned to them. When students are issued textbooks, each student is responsible for covering and maintaining the condition of the books all year. Textbooks and all other materials are to be returned at the end of the school year. If lost or damaged, students are required to pay for the loss or damage. Fines and costs of books will take into account the previous condition of the text and copyright date.

## **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE**

The School Health Center is located on the second floor. Our School Nurse is on duty and ready to assist scholars. In case of illness during a class, **a student must obtain a written pass** from the teacher to see the nurse. The students will be cared for there and, if necessary, sent home. Students should never leave school because of illness without permission from the nurse.

When an injury occurs while traveling to and from school, at school or in connection with athletics, it **MUST BE REPORTED AT ONCE** to either the homeroom teacher, classroom teacher or coach in charge. The student must also report to the school nurse.

All prescriptions and medications brought to school must be in the original container accompanied by a note from your parent/guardian authorizing appropriate school personnel to dispense the medicine. Upon arrival to school, students must bring all medications to the health office and give them to the nurse. Students are not permitted to carry medication with them during the day.

Any student who, because of illness/injury, cannot participate in Physical Education must bring a note from his/her parent to the nurse during homeroom period. Restrictions for more than a week require a doctor's note.

School personnel may not dispense medicine of any kind without proper written authorization. Please see the nurse in such cases. All approved medications will be kept in the nurse's office. **Students may not possess medications in the school.**

## COUNSELING

The guidance counselor is a certified, specially trained, caring person who helps all students. The counselor also works with teachers, school personnel and parents.

Periodic conferences are arranged between the counselor and individual students to help resolve educational, social and personal problems. Parents may notify the school to arrange an appointment with the counselor. If there is an immediate need a student may request permission from the teacher to see the counselor.

The counselor will meet with groups of students for guidance activities and to discuss intervention programs.

## TRANSPORTATION

School buses are provided for the transportation of students who require transportation as part of their Individualized Educational Plan.

Students are expected to conduct themselves properly on the bus and in some cases are supervised by a bus attendant.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

In bad weather, the Central Office will decide whether or not school will open. Announcements will be made between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on KYW-1060 and other radio stations.

## **SCHOOL SECURITY**

The security and safety of students and staff is a priority at Universal Alcorn. Full-time Climate Staff are assigned for that purpose. The following safety and security procedures are observed:

- All visitors must register at the front desk and have permits to enter the building.
- The police will be notified of any trespassers.
- The police will be notified if false fire alarm is pulled.
- Appropriate action will be taken against anyone who threatens the safety and/or security of students or staff at Universal Alcorn.
- Violators of Act 26 (weapons) will be arrested.
- School uniforms must be worn at all times

# SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## ENTERING SCHOOL

Students are permitted to enter the schoolyard at **8:00** a.m. During inclement weather, students may enter the auditorium and lunchroom as early as **8:00** a.m. and wait for the 8:30 a.m. bell.

## AFTER SCHOOL

Students are dismissed for the day at 3:30 p.m. School buses leave from the main entrance area a few minutes earlier, and all riders should board their buses as soon as possible.

There should be no students in the building after dismissal time unless:

1. They have permission to stay with a teacher for extra help.
2. They are participating in a scheduled supervised activity, such as a club or sports activity.
3. They are required to stay for academic makeup.

**UNDER NO CONDITIONS WILL STUDENTS BE PERMITTED TO STAY IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING AFTER DISMISSAL WITHOUT SUPERVISION.**

## STUDENT DRESS

All students are required to dress in complete uniform.  
Dress Code:

- Pants: Navy Blue
- Shirts: White (all shirts must have a collar).
- Jumper: Plaid (can be purchased at Cramers).
- Tie: Red
- Scarves, wave caps and hats should never be worn in the building.
- **No denim may be worn at any time.**
- Large and expensive jewelry should not be worn to school.
- Clothing and accessories must be used for their intended purpose.
- Outer clothing may not be worn indoors.
- Open toe shoes / sandals are not permitted

## **HOMEROOM/ ADVISORY**

Homeroom begins at 8:30 a.m. Students will be marked late if they are not in their assigned seats when roll is taken by your advisor. The first class begins at 8:30 a.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend school regularly. If a student must be absent, they must bring a written excuse note from their parent or guardian. Failure to provide such a note will result in an unexcused absence. All attendance will be monitored and legal action (Truancy Court) will be taken in cases of unexcused absenteeism. These absences are considered parental neglect.

## **LATENESS**

Students are late after **8:40** a.m. Students arriving to school after **8:40** a.m. must report to the front desk. Because you are late, you must complete a late slip and take it to class.

## **FIRE DRILL**

Fire drill directions are posted in all rooms. Students must walk rapidly and quietly as directed by the teacher. Everyone must leave the building for fire drills.

## **CLASS TRIPS**

Throughout the year, field trips may be scheduled for academic enrichment and special purposes. All students may be invited to accompany their class on field trips. Every effort will be made to keep costs to a minimum. Students with poor behavior may lose their trip privilege or may need to be accompanied by a parent.

## **CLASS WORK AND EXAMS**

All students are expected to complete all class assignments. Examinations are essential to the learning process and must be taken by all students. Students are expected to make up all missed work and tests. Failure may result when students do not complete the proper number of assignments and/or examinations.

## **EARLY DISMISSALS**

Early dismissals have a negative impact on the learning process. All parents are encouraged to make sure that all scholars remain in school for a full day. However, we realize that there are extreme circumstances where students may need an early dismissal. Any student receiving an early dismissal will be permitted to leave the building accompanied by a parent or their adult designee. **Early dismissals will not be granted after 2:45pm due to safety issues.**

If a student becomes ill in school or has an appointment, he/she will be excused only into the care of a parent or guardian. For prearranged appointments, a student must present a note from the parent/guardian to the main office stating the reason, the time, and a phone number where the parent can be reached for verification of the request for early dismissal.

Before leaving the building, the student must first report to the Main Office and await the arrival of the parent or guardian. That person must come into the office and “sign out” his/her child. **NO STUDENT WILL BE PERMITTED TO LEAVE THE BUILDING WITHOUT OFFICIAL PERMISSION AND A VERIFIED ADULT ESCORT.**

## **CHILD FIND**

According to special education regulations in Chapter 711 of the Pennsylvania School Code, “each charter school and cyber charter school shall establish written policies and procedures to ensure that all children with disabilities who are enrolled in the charter school or cyber charter school, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located and evaluated.”

Universal Alcorn Charter School is committed to identifying and meeting the diverse needs of all children through high-quality, individualized educational programming. A continuum of supports and services are provided, ranging from supplemental aides and services in the general education classroom to full-time programming in a special education setting.

Universal Alcorn Charter School actively seeks to locate and identify children who are enrolled who may require special education and/or related services through a systematic screening process. If you feel your child may be in need of special education services, please contact an administrator or the Special Education Liaison to discuss your concerns and the evaluation process. For more information on eligibility for special education and/or related services, see the Child Find Brochure on the Universal Companies website.

## CELL PHONE POLICY

# ZERO TOLERANCE

CELL PHONES ARE NOT PERMITTED FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES K-2 (NO EXCEPTIONS).

All cell phones in grades 3-8 will be collected in the morning upon arrival and returned at the end of the school day (No Exceptions). It is the responsibility of each scholar that brings a phone to school turn it in. **This is not an optional request.**

We thank you for your support in matter and look forward to a productive & rewarding 2022-2023 School Year.

Sincerely,

Aaron Starke,  
Principal

