



## UNIVERSAL VARE CHARTER SCHOOL

2100 S. 24<sup>TH</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19145

Phone: 215-952-8611

Fax: 267-239-5866

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### *Stem and Arts Academy*

May 4, 2023

Dear Universal Vare Charter School Community,

We understand this has been a difficult time for students, staff, and school families of Universal Vare, and we thank you for your patience and understanding while the School District of Philadelphia continues to complete work to address environmental issues at multiple schools. Regular inspections in each building are critical to identifying damage so the school district can make appropriate plans for repairs.

During the reinspection this week of Universal Vare, the district confirmed that asbestos fiber release episodes (“FRE”) were identified. An FRE is any uncontrolled or unintentional disturbance of asbestos containing material (ACM) resulting in a visible emission which must be addressed before re-occupancy. Identifying these concerns helps protect the well-being of our scholars and staff.

Based upon this new information of asbestos damage identified this week, mainly including above ceiling tiles and on top of ductwork, Universal Vare will need to remain closed for in-person instruction through the remainder of the school year. The school district has assured us that they are working diligently to develop plans for repairs, cleaning, and air quality testing to determine a timeline for the next steps and the re-opening of Universal Vare. While this information is still being identified, we ask for your continued patience and understanding. I will update you once the district and the environmental contractors notify me of the next steps.

To avoid disrupting the testing schedule of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSAs), the scholars will continue to be shuttled to the Universal Audenried, 3301 Tasker Street, Philadelphia, PA 19145, to complete their assessments over the next week. Again, scholars will be instructed virtually on the days they are not testing.

In addition, Universal Vare Scholars will participate in all off-site field trips and 8th-grade move-up day activities as scheduled. Do not hesitate to contact Principal Howell-Toomer if you have any questions or require additional information regarding school activities.

Again, we appreciate your cooperation, and we will continue to engage with you as information becomes available.

Sincerely,

*Penny Nixon, Ed.D.*

Dr. Nixon

Universal Schools, Superintendent/CEO

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Principal: • Karen Howell-Toomer •

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