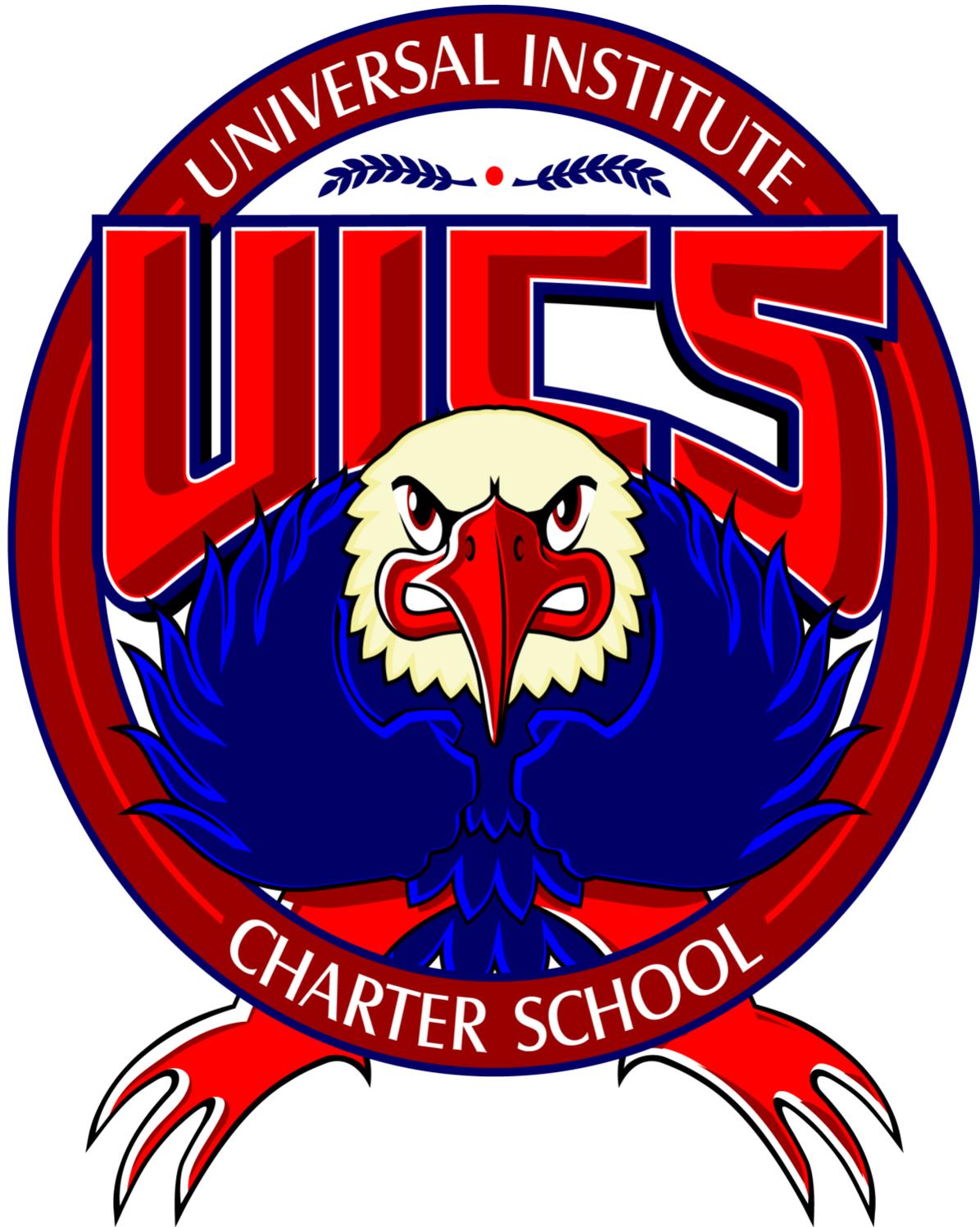


2025-2026

Universal Institute Charter School

Student Handbook



OUR HISTORY

The renowned music impresario and creator of the Sound of Music of Philadelphia, Kenny Gamble, Founder and CEO of Philadelphia International Records founded Universal Institute Charter School in 1999. Mr. and Mrs. Gamble currently serve as UICS Board Members.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Universal Institute Charter School is to provide a school to career academic program that emphasizes self-sufficiency, civic responsibility and problem solving through mathematics, language arts and the sciences. The educational program utilizes community resources within the school's immediate neighborhood through a variety of before, during, and after school partnerships with families, businesses, social agencies, civic groups and community organizations to enhance the academic program and to support students and their families

SCHOOL MOTTO

UICS Scholars Own Actions Respectfully (SOAR)

Daily Schedule

	Regular	Early
Breakfast	6:45 – 7:20	7:00 – 7:25
1 st	7:30 – 8:15	7:30 - 8:00
2 nd	8:15 – 9:15	8:00 - 8:30
3 rd	9:15 – 10:00	8:30 - 9:00
4 th	10:00 – 10:45	9:00 - 9:30
5 th	10:45 - 11:30	9:30 - 10:00
6 th	11:30 - 12:15	10:00 - 10:30
7 th	12:15 – 1:00	10:30 - 11:00
8 th	1:00 – 1:45	
9 th	1:45 – 2:30	

SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ENTRANCE

School begins at 7:30 a.m. All scholars must enter the building through the front doors on Catharine Street. Scholars are not allowed to loiter in front of any UICS buildings or breezeway at any time.

Breakfast is served between 6:45 – 7:20 daily. All Scholars participating in the breakfast program are expected to be in homeroom on time. Scholars are expected to use this early time to study. Please be mindful that High Schools monitor lateness as part of their acceptance criteria. Scholars are not allowed to loiter outside of any of the neighboring convenient stores (i.e. Dunkin' Donuts, Popeyes') before or after school

DISMISSAL

Dismissal is at 2:30 p.m. except on teacher/staff development and assessment days, which is a 11:00 a.m dismissal

TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation for all eligible scholars in 1st – 6th grade will be provided by the School District of Philadelphia as required by Pennsylvania law. LEA of Philadelphia will contact families directly indicating pick-up and drop-off locations and times. A student key card will be provided to all qualified 7th and 8th grade scholars. Call the main office for eligibility requirements

TRIPS

A variety of educational trips are planned for scholars each year. We consider them to be an extension of the classroom and therefore an important part of our program. *scholars with behavioral issues or concerns will be required to have a parent/guardian accompany them on the trip.* When participation is denied pre-payment or deposit, if any, for the trip is non-refundable.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are supplied, without charge, to each scholar. It is the scholar's responsibility to take care of the books he/she is issued. In the event of the loss, destruction, defacing, or more than normal wear, the scholar shall be required to pay for the book. Payment must be made before a replacement is given. All textbooks shall be returned at the conclusion of the school year.

TECHNOLOGY

UICS scholars have access to the latest Mac computers and/or Chrome Books. Besides learning computer basics and word processing, Scholars will learn how to use a database, a spreadsheet and how to incorporate multimedia in projects and demonstrations. UICS scholars are fortunate to have Internet access for research and are expected to follow the school and District acceptable use policy. All UICS scholars will receive a loaner Chromebook to support virtual learning throughout the academic year. Please ensure that you follow all guidelines outlined in the Agreement of Chromebook Usage signed by the scholar's parent/guardian.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is given to reinforce skills taught in class and to extend the school day into the home. Scholars should be able to complete their assignments with little or no help. Homework is for the scholar, not the parent.

If your child has difficulty completing an assignment you should call the teacher. Parents should take an active role in overseeing their child's work. Parents should ask questions, provide quality time and space, make sure resource materials are available, and check for neatness and completeness.

Scholars are never excused from doing homework. If they are absent or sick they are expected to make arrangements with their teachers to complete assignments. **"Study" assignments are considered homework.** Long-term projects are considered homework also, and should be worked on each night.

DRESS CODE

Uniforms

In keeping with the high standards established at UICS all scholars are expected to be in full uniform the first day of school. Scholars are allowed to wear hijabs and thobes in school colors (navy blue and grey only). Scholars are expected to wear their uniform each day. There will be no exceptions. If there are any concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Dean of Students.

Bottoms

Pants should be pulled up and belted around the waist. Skirts should be no more than two inches above the knee.

Gym Uniform

On gym day, scholars are expected to wear their official gym uniform, designated with the school logo, not street clothes.

Shoes

Any casual shoe with a flat heel is acceptable. Heels, sandals, flip-flops, crocs, and high wedge shoes are not permitted. During the winter months scholars are allowed to wear winter boots to school.

Jewelry/Hair Accessories

Earrings are limited to the size of a quarter. No other jewelry is permitted (i.e. silly bands). Removable hair accessories (i.e. bunny ears) are not allowed but scholars may wear headband, bows, ribbons and/or clips that are school uniform colors of navy blue and grey.

Official Uniform Store:

Universal Institute Charter School
Please email Ms. Lisa Whitney at lwhitney@universalcompanies.org any questions related to uniform apparel.

DISCIPLINE

UICS is proud of the positive school culture created by staff and Scholars. We follow the District's guidelines with fidelity. At the beginning of the school year each scholar will be given a District's Code of Scholar Conduct Booklet to review. In brief, the district forbids fighting, weapons, offensive use of language, damage or theft to school property, drugs, assault on school personnel, disrespect of staff members and disregard of classroom rules.

In addition to the District's Code of Conduct, UICS Scholars are expected to follow additional school rules. These rules help make a successful program and successful Scholars. Scholars are expected to:

- Arrive on time for school and on time for each class
- Practice good manners, self-control and good citizenship
- Respect adults and follow directions the first time given
- Respect the personal space and property of others
- Keep our school, building and grounds clean at all times
- Not eat in class or chew gum in the building
- Not bring personal iPad, tablets, cameras or toys of any kind to school
- Keep cell phones off and secured.
 - **First incident** – the scholar will be issued a warning and directed to put their phone up.
 - **Second incident** - the cell phone will be confiscated, and a parent/guardian will be directed to pick-up the phone.
 - **Third incident** – The scholar will be mandated to turn in their cell phone to the Dean upon arrival to school (Daily)

A variety of steps may be taken as the result of poor behavior. Suspension may occur the first time for some violations. Repeated violations of any item of the code of behavior may result in referral to MTSS, suspension or dismissal.

Detention Policy

No scholar will receive an after-school detention on the day it was given. Guardians will be given a written 24-hour notice explaining the infraction with an assigned date and time. Failure to serve a detention will result in progressive discipline.

See Behavior Matrix

Bullying Policy

Please see the 2025-2026 School Code of Conduct

Act 26

Pennsylvania law (Act 26 of 1995) now requires that any scholar, regardless of age or grade level, found to be in possession of a weapon on school property, in a school program or event, or while traveling to and from school or a school program or event including school busses and public transportation, be subject to arrest and expulsion from the UICS for at least one year.

CURRICULUM

Language Arts and Social Studies

Language Arts and Social Studies are taught thematically and scholars' grades reflect both subjects. The goals of the UICS Language Arts & Social Studies programs are to:

1. Build a multicultural vocabulary, literature and knowledge base
2. Become effective communicators
3. Become active, assertive participants in class, in scholar affairs and in society
4. Become responsible citizens, interested in the world around them.

To achieve these goals scholars will be held to the same high standards expected of people in professional fields. Scholars will be expected to write and speak standard English; to do extensive reading in various literature assignments and in current events; to complete intensive, original research; to work to publish perfect standards; to publicly present their finished work; and to increase their word processing and internet skills.

Supplementary Language Arts & Humanities

- iReady
- Foundations
- SRA Reading Program
- PSSA Coach
- Highly Effective Writing by Dr. Charles Pasley

- Cultural Trips

Mathematics and Science

Scholars study Math and Science concurrently. Scholars use math to complete science investigations. We believe that this interdisciplinary approach allows both subjects to be better appreciated and more thoroughly understood. Our program is based on the NCTM and NSES standards. Science instruction is interdisciplinary and directly related to the "world" of our scholars. All scholars will be involved in weekly hands-on science lab experiences. Our Scholars are involved in a number of unique learning opportunities including, but not limited to, the following:

- Strong computer education including Internet instruction and use of graphing software
- Hands-on discovery approach to science, while using math to analyze results
- Carver Science Fair participation
- Edmentum
- Math Hoops
- PSSA Coach
- Curriculum Related Trips

World Art

The goal of the art program is to further develop creative, analytical and alternative thinking skills. This course will broaden multi-cultural understanding and appreciation. Art practice will develop scholars' visualization skills and eye-hand coordination. It is a multi-faceted program, exploring many cultures, many ages and many different uses of art media. Our work fosters an appreciation of art throughout the world and stresses continual development of responsible self-expression.

Digital Literacy

Digital Literacy is a class, that combines international awareness, literacy skills, technology skills and career related skills. Scholars will be challenged to use higher-level thinking and apply understandings across the curriculum. Through problem-based learning, we expect that scholars will understand the design cycle, and enhance their skills in computer-based technology.

Physical & Health Education

The physical education program is designed to increase the scholars' awareness of the values of being physically fit in mind and body. Activities include basic physical fitness, body conditioning, games, aerobics and dance. Health Education is designed to help scholars deal with daily living

issues. Topics that will be addressed are: substance abuse, personal health and nutrition, diseases, consumer health, safety and first aid.

Special Education Programs

UICS provides special education and related services to all children with disabilities who are between the ages of five to fourteen, or scholars who are in Kindergarten through Eighth Grade. The purpose of this service is to describe (1) the types of disabilities that might qualify the child for the program, (2) the special education programs are to screen and evaluate such students to determine eligibility, and (3) the special rights that pertain to such children and their parents and legal guardians.

Extra-Curricular Activities

A list of extra-curricular activities will be sent home at the end of September.

Counseling Services

UICS offers full-time guidance services. The Counselor's door is always open, and help is personal and confidential. The purpose of the guidance program is to be available to the scholars, parents and staff and assist in making the educational process as effective as possible. Services include personal and group counseling, academic guidance, assistance with school related and personal problems, crisis intervention, homelessness (see below the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act) referrals and coordination with agencies and professionals in and outside the school setting and assistance with the high school application and selection.

assure coordinated and cost-effective health services.

- School nursing services should be of high quality in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and with national standards of practice.

At UICS, the nurse is a direct care provider, educator, case manager and advocate who participates, communicates and collaborates to promote good health and educational success for all children

Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness

About McKinney-Vento

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guarantees a free and appropriate public education for all children and youth experiencing homelessness. [B.E.C. 42 U.S.C. 11431](#) outlines procedures for deciding school placement, enrolling students, and determining responsibility. Federal and state laws make our responsibility clear. With the huge number of children experiencing homelessness currently attending Philadelphia public schools, we must provide proper educational support and services.

McKinney-Vento Act Basics At-a-Glance:

What is the definition of a “homeless youth” under McKinney-Vento?

“Homeless” is defined as “anyone lacking a fixed, adequate, regular nighttime residence.”

What situations fit this definition?

- Staying in the home of other people due to unavailable housing, financial hardship, or similar circumstances
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks (in some instances – examples: leaking roof, no heat, etc.), public places, or campgrounds due to unavailable suitable housing options
- Living in an emergency shelter or transitional housing
- Unaccompanied (not living in direct care of legal parent or guardian) or runaway youth
- Refugee and migrant youth

How does McKinney-Vento help these students?

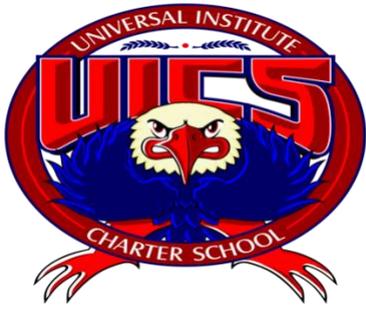
The law makes sure that these students receive a free and suitable public education by removing barriers to school enrollment and full, basic, daily participation in school activities. This includes:

- Immediate enrollment
- Free and Reduced School Lunch
- Help from school with any necessary enrollment documents
- Help from school setting up transportation service (if the student qualifies)
- Help from school with getting basic uniform clothing
- Help from school with basic school supplies
- Help from school with any basic clothing needs
- Help from school with basic high school graduation needs and expenses

Where can I find more information for Pennsylvania?

You can visit the [PA Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#) site. Also, visit

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Policy-Funding/BECS/Pages/default.aspx> for more information.



UNIVERSAL INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL

The Accountability Matrix

The Restorative 5 R's

Relationship, Respect, Responsibility, Repair, Reintegration

	School Community	Own	Actions	Restoratively
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating each other with care • Active listening • Ready to learn • On task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility for your actions • Apologize when you're wrong • Change your behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use kind words • Keep hands to yourself • Follow directions • Accept the differences in others • Respect others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use kind words • Work together • Listen and follow directions • Collective work and responsibility
Bathroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands • Take care of business quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care of business quickly • Wash your hands • Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care of business quickly • Wash your hands • Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the rules • Clean up after yourself • Leave the space better than you found it
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions • Speak quietly • Pay attention • Treating each other with care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility for your actions • Apologize when you're wrong • Change your behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inside voices • Use kind words • Listen and follow directions • Clean up after yourself • Respect others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep voices low • Use kind words • Care for others • Leave the space better than you found it • Respect others
Hallways/Stairwells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face forward • Walk in an orderly manner • Walk silently • Treat each other with care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility for your actions • Change your behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk quietly • Hands and feet to yourself • Walk in an orderly manner • Respect others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk quietly • Care for others • Walk in an orderly manner • Pay attention
Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay in your seat • Listening to directions • Treating each other with care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility for your actions • Apologize when you're wrong • Change behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use kind words • Keep hands to yourself • Listen and follow directions • Stay in your seat • Respect others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use kind words • Care for others • Listen and follow directions • Respect your elders • Stay in your seat
Schoolyard-Recess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the teacher's directions • Play safely • Treat each other with care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility for your actions • Apologize when you're wrong • Change your behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play safely • Follow the rules • Care for others • Use kind words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the rules • Care for others • Sharing • Cooperation • Take responsibility for my actions

VIRTUAL Universal Companies

Universal Schools is committed to providing and maintaining “Continuity of Education” for all students during the period of school closure as the result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Continuity of Education is the overall term for any educational practices that occur in the event of a prolonged school closure. We believe that all students in our schools must have the opportunity to maintain and develop skills while away from their typical school and classroom environment. This will be accomplished through both Planned Instruction and Enrichment and Review. Planned Instruction: Planned Instruction is formal teaching and learning that attempts to, to the greatest extent possible mimic instruction, which occurs in a classroom setting. Within this process, teachers will use planned courses of instruction of new concepts/skills aligned to grade level standards. In order to receive a grade and credit, students must attend virtually regularly and complete the course requirements. Enrichment and Review: Enrichment and Review consists of informal activities to reinforce or extend students’ prior learning. Enrichment and Review can be used to supplement or build upon previous learning. Universal Institute Charter School will:

- Design and implement an online learning model for grades K – 8.
- Assess the level of engagement of each of the activities we design.
- Assess the scholars’ level of learning of each of the activities we design.
- Continuously revise our online learning model to meet the needs of all scholars.

In order to provide Continuity of Education, we believe it is imperative to remain faithful to our district’s mission and to make a good faith effort to provide instructional delivery that replicates, to the best extent possible, the classroom experience. In addition, in these challenging times, we recognize that our commitment to equity and to equitable opportunities for each one of our students does not end. Chromebooks were distributed to families that needed them to ensure access to virtual learning. Our plan also includes non-academic support for our families to address the physical and mental health issues that many of our students’ face. Specifically, Universal Institute Charter School will:

- utilize an online learning model for grades K – 8, which will include activities that attempt to engage students in learning in a positive and productive manner.
 - Assess the level of engagement of different types of activities to see what is possible for the families in our community (e.g. technological availability, parental availability)
 - Assess scholars’ level of learning of each of the activities we design to determine if scholars are able to learn on their own from the different types of activities.
 - Continuously revise our online learning model, possibly providing different types of activities for scholars with access to different resources.

UICS

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

The Universal Institute Charter School, and the parents of the scholars participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the scholars will share the responsibility for improved scholar academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

This school-parent compact is in effect during school year 2025-2026.

REQUIRED SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT PROVISIONS

School Responsibilities

The Universal Institute Charter School will:

- 1.) **Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating academic achievement standards as follows:**
 - *Supervision of instruction focused on building a professional learning community*
 - *Incorporating the 9 research-based strategies that improve scholar achievement*
 - *Creating Professional Development Plans (PDPs) to improve teacher practices and scholar achievement*
 - *Providing professional development to teachers focused on improving their instructional practices (Assessment, Inclusion, Service Learning)*
 - *Continuing our school-wide PBIS*
 - *Continue to support scholars in an after-school program to improve Math and Reading skills.*
 - *Create partnerships that will support the growth of our current school model*
 - *Engage parents in the Home and School to ensure parents voices are heard, particularly with the School Comprehensive Plan*
 - *Continue Coffee with the Principal to engage parents' concerns and ideas about improving the learning experience of their children.*
 - *Implement MTSS with fidelity to support scholars academically and provide supports with scholars with attendance concerns*

2. **Hold parent-teacher conferences (at least annually in elementary schools) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.** Specifically, those conferences will be held:
Each parent will receive a calendar that delineates important dates such as conferences that are based on the District schedule and calendar. On back to school night (September 17, 2025), parents will be able to meet all of the teachers and discuss school academic expectations. Each marking period, parents will have report card meetings for all scholars. Teachers are available during the day to meet with parents regarding grades and behaviors.

3. **Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress.** Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:
Parents have access to teacher assignments via weekly Class Dojo. Interim reports will be sent home to inform caregivers of progress in the middle of marking periods. Teachers will maintain contact with scholars' caregivers via the weekly communication folder, Class Dojo, and phone calls.

4. **Provide parents reasonable access to staff.** Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:
Staff is available on an appointment basis whenever caregivers have concerns. UICS staff will make the appropriate accommodations to schedule a meeting with parents within 24 hours of a request. Teaching schedules are flexible so that parent meetings, if needed, can be conducted.

5. **Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities,** as follows:
Caregivers are welcomed to be chaperones on trips and participate in the UICS Home and School Association Meetings (First Wednesday of each month). Parents will receive written and verbal notice (via Class Dojo). UICS has an open-door policy that invites parents to come and visit classrooms. This year we have had several inquiries from parents willing to support the daily activities in the school.

Parent Responsibilities

We, as parents, will support our children's learning in the following ways:

- *Monitoring lateness and attendance.*
- *Ensuring my child comes to school in full uniform each day.*
- *Making sure that homework is completed.*
- *By having systems in place that are adhered to on a daily basis.*
- *Monitoring amount of television my child watches and the amount of sleep he/she gets.*

- *Volunteering at UICS when possible.*
- *Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my child's education.*
- *Promoting positive use of my child's extracurricular time.*
- *Staying informed about my child's education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school received by my child or by mail and responding, as appropriate.*

Scholar Responsibilities

We, as scholars, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the State's high standards. Specifically, we will:

- *Do homework every day for EVERY class and ask for help when I need to*
- *Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time*
- *Give my parents or the adult who is responsible for my welfare all notices and information received by me from my school every day*
- *Complete all classroom assignments on time*
- *Maintain a notebook in each class*
- *Always ask questions and seek help when needed*
- *Report immediately (to parents or school) when I feel that I may be being bullied*

Reading

- *I will read at least two books independently each month*
- *I will attend enrichment programs when invited to do so*
- *Seek help when I am not sure of something*
- *Complete in iReady (in school and at home)*

Math

- *Compete in Google Classroom Assignments and/or iReady (in school and at home)*
- *I will attend enrichment programs when invited to do so*
- *Seek help when I am not sure of something*

The Universal Institute Charter School will:

1. Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's parental involvement policy, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
2. Involve parents in the joint development of any school-wide program plan, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
3. Hold an annual meeting to inform parents of the school's participation in Title I, Part A programs, and to explain the Title I, Part A requirements, and the right of parents to be involved in Title I, Part A programs. The school will convene the meeting at a convenient time to parents and will offer a flexible number of additional parental involvement meetings, such as in the morning or evening, so that as many parents as possible are able to attend. The school will invite to this meeting all parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs (participating scholars), and will encourage them to attend.
4. Provide information to parents of participating scholars in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon the request of parents with disabilities, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand.
5. Provide to parents of participating children information in a timely manner about Title I, Part A programs that includes a description and explanation of the school's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure children's progress, and the proficiency levels scholars are expected to meet.
6. On the request of parents, provide opportunities for regular meetings for parents to formulate suggestions, and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their children. The school will respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
7. Provide to each parent an individual Scholar report about the performance of their child on the State assessment in at least math, language arts, and reading.
8. Provide each parent timely notice when their child has been assigned or has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified within the meaning of the term in section 200.56 of the Title I Final Regulations (67 Fed. Reg. 71710, December 2, 2002).

To help build and develop a partnership with parents to help their children achieve the State's high academic standards, the UICS will:

1. Recommend to the Regional No Child Left Behind District Liaison, the names of parents of participating children of Title I, Part A programs who are interested in serving on the State's Committee of Practitioners and School Support Teams.
2. Work with the UICS in addressing problems, if any, in implementing parental involvement activities in section 1118 of Title I, Part A.
3. Work with UICS to ensure that a copy of the State Education Agency's written complaint procedures for resolving any issue of violation(s) of a Federal statute or regulation of Title I, Part A programs is provided to parents of scholars and to appropriate private school officials or representatives.

UICS

PARENT FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2025-2026

PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Each school in its School-wide Parental Involvement Policy must establish the school's expectations for parental involvement. [Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA.]

The Universal Institute Charter School agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The LEA will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1118, the LEA will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- The LEA will incorporate this district wide parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the LEA and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the LEA will submit any parent comments with the plan when the LEA submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- The LEA will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The LEA will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving scholar academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;

(B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;

(C) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;

(D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.

- The LEA will inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the Parental Information and Resource Center in the State.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

[NOTE: The School-wide Parental Involvement Policy must include a description of how the school will implement or accomplish each of the following components. [Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA.] Regardless of the format the school chooses to use, a description of each of the following components below must be included in order to satisfy statutory requirements.]

1. The **Universal Institute Charter** will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its school-wide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:
 - Meet with Home and School Association and assess parents' needs and interests and plan the high school extension for UICS.
 - Recruiting members for the Home and School Association
 - Designing ways to support programs and improve communication
 - Supporting 8th grade activities
 - Providing incentives to scholars, teachers, and parents
 - Project learning information and timelines are distributed early
 - Invite participation for in class activities and school trips
 - Invite for class visitation
 - Invite and create workshops (Safety, Common Core Standards, etc.)
 - Invite to concerts and assembly programs and annual Fun Day
 - Invite to participate in Coffee with the Principal
 - Encourage to join schoolwide email chain
 - Encourage to participate in School Survey
2. The **UICS** will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

Invite parents to planning meetings and provide information and invitations via School Messenger/Class Dojo, home and school meetings, school webpage, letters home. Parents will be invited via memo home to participate in the discussions and continued development of the Action Plan, including the federal requirements addendum.
3. The **LEA of Philadelphia** will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve scholar academic achievement and school performance:

The LEA provides a variety of assistance programs for parents. They communicate these programs on their website, newspaper and radio

 - *Provide professional development by parents/caregivers for new and existing principals and other administrators on how to develop promising partnerships with parents/caregivers.*
 - *Train new and existing staff with parental engagement duties (e.g., School Support Liaisons) to assist school sites in implementing parental engagement.*
 - *Provide coordination of professional development efforts through the Education Office.*
 - *Provide workshops to parents on supporting scholar achievement and parent engagement.*
 - *Provide training and other information to Home and School. By November 2025, each Home & School will outline how they plan to work with Title I PREP parents to schedule turn-around trainings for parents within their schools.*
4. The **Universal Institute Charter School** will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: [Insert programs, such as: Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-operated preschool programs], by:

N/A
5. The **UICS** will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A programs. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The LEA will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.
 - Parents will have opportunities to meet with the principal to voice their concerns and recommendations

- Parents will have access to the PA state required School Comprehensive Plan
- Parents will have access to the Parental Involvement Policy and Parent Compact through the Home and School Association
- Parents will be surveyed at the end of the year to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the Involvement Policy (via District Survey)
- Results will be shared with parents via the Home and School Association and online via the District's website under Universal Charter School.

6. The **Universal Institute Charter School** will build the school's and parents capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve scholar academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

A. The **Universal Institute Charter School** will, with the assistance of the LEA, provide assistance to parents, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph --

- the State's academic content standards and Common Core Standards, Code of Student Conduct, Safety and Bullying policy
- the comprehensive planning process
- the State's Common Core Standards,
- the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Title I-Part A,
- how to monitor their child's progress, and
- how to work with educators.
- *Parent workshops on accessing the school website and online lessons, homework and grades*
- *The Title 1 Informational Meeting was held on **Wednesday, September 17, 2025***

B. The **Universal Institute Charter School** will, with the assistance of the LEA, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

- *Assisting your child with understanding their academic portfolios, Fall and Spring*
- *PSSA workshops*
- *PowerSchool training offered during Home and School Meeting in November*
- *Navigating Gradebook*

C. The **Universal Institute Charter School** will, with the assistance of the LEA, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

Providing professional development and training in the following areas-

- *Newsletter*
- *Monthly Calendar, Class Dojo and fliers*
- *Presentations at Home and School Meetings*
- *School web page*
- *Parent, Family and Scholar Handbook & Code of scholar conduct*
- *Agenda Book*
- *Report Card conferences*
- *Interim Reports*
- *Individual correspondence of test assessment info*
- *IEP conferences*
- *Interagency meetings*
- *Parent input forms and information forms for special needs scholars*
- *E-mail*
- *Phone calls and home visits*
- *High School Selection Process*
- *Online lesson plans*

- D. The **Universal Institute Charter School** will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

Parents have access to the school library where several computers are available for their use. Throughout the year UICS will provide parents support and engage them with the creation of or participation in school programs (Science Fair Project, PSSA, High School Selection, Executive Functioning Workshops, Home and School Association Meetings [town hall style with teachers and the administrator], Planning school events and assemblies)

- E. The **Universal Institute Charter School** will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent-programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand (all documents sent home in parent friendly language:

- Title program budget
- Back-to-School Night
- Class Dojo
- Presentations at home and School Meetings
 - Title 1 Informational Meeting Week of September 17, 2024
- School web page
- Scholar Handbook & Code of Scholar Conduct
- Agenda Book
- Report Card conferences
- Interim Reports
- Individual correspondence of test assessment info
- IEP conferences
- Interagency meetings
- Parent input forms and information forms for special needs scholars
- E-mail
- Phone calls and home visits
- Online lesson plans and assignments
- High School Selection Process
- Interpretive services will be provided for any family that needs translations.

PART III. SCHOOL WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

NOTE: The School's Parental Involvement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training;
- providing necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the LEA has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training;
- paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
- training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;
- in order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school;
- adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental involvement;
- establishing a district wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs;

- developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities; and
- providing other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.]

PART IV. ADOPTION

This **Universal Institute Charter School** Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents as evidenced by Home and School

The school will distribute this policy to all parents on or before **September 17, 2025**

UICS
CHILD FIND POLICY

I. Purpose

According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School districts, intermediate units and charter schools are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

II. Legal Standard

Universal Charter Schools is required to:

- Adopt and use a public outreach awareness system to locate and identify children thought to be eligible for special education within the Universal Charter Schools jurisdiction;
- Conduct awareness activities to inform the public of its early intervention and special education services and programs and the manner in which to request services and programs; and
- Provide annual public notification, published or announced in newspapers or other media, or both, with circulation adequate to notify parents throughout the Universal Charter Schools of child identification activities and the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children in accordance with this chapter.

III. Screening

Each school shall establish a system to accomplish the following:

- Initial Screening – Identify and provide initial screening of students to identify any academic, social/emotional, vision, hearing, or speech/language difficulties. To facilitate this process, Universal will:
 - Provide professional development for teachers and other staff to assist them in working effectively with students in the general education curriculum; and
 - Conduct hearing and vision screenings in accordance with Section 1402 of the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P.S. § 14.1402) for the purpose of identifying students with hearing and vision difficulty.
- The screening process shall follow, as appropriate, the school’s procedures for CSAP/RTii. The following areas are to be considered:
 - **Academic** – for students with academic concerns, an assessment of the student’s functioning in the curriculum including curriculum-based or performance based assessments;
 - **Behavior** – for students with behavioral concerns, a systematic observation of the student’s behavior in the classroom or area in which the student is displaying difficulty;
 - **Intervention** – intervention based on results of the above academic and behavioral screenings;
 - **Progress Monitoring** – progress monitoring on the student’s response to intervention;
 - **Appropriate Instruction** – a determination as to whether the student’s assessed difficulties are due primarily to a lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math;
 - **Limited English Proficiency** – a determination as to whether the student’s assessed difficulties are due primarily to a student’s limited English proficiency; and
 - **Parental Involvement** – activities designed to gain the participation of parents and through written notice, inform the parent of the results of the screening and whether follow-up is required.

IV. Public Awareness and Outreach Activities Outreach

Universal Companies conducts professional development activities and ongoing trainings for staff, organizations, and individuals to ensure child find, screening activities, and referrals for special education evaluations are carried out in a manner consistent with the timelines and requirements established by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and operationalized in this procedure manual. Through its communication links with agencies that provide services to children with disabilities within the community, Universal Companies disseminates child find materials to hospitals, clinics, pediatricians, pediatric nurses, and social service professionals involved in the family or child services.

Obligation

Universal Companies will locate, identify, and evaluate all students ages 5 through 21 years within the catchment area of individual schools who may be eligible for special education and related services, including students who are not currently enrolled in a Universal Companies education program, students in nonpublic schools located in Philadelphia, and highly mobile students such as migrants and homeless students. This process will include:

- Collecting, maintaining, and reporting current and accurate data on all public awareness and child find activities;
- Reviewing the overall success and effectiveness of the Universal Companies' public awareness and child find activities;
- Modifying Universal Companies' public awareness and child find activities, as necessary and appropriate;
- Utilizing data relative to Universal Companies public awareness and child find activities to plan for the delivery of services to students with disabilities; and
- Consulting with appropriate representatives of Philadelphia private schools, including religiously affiliated schools, on how to carry out child find activities for students enrolled in these schools.

V. Annual Public Notification

Universal Companies will publish and announce in newspapers and other media, with a circulation adequate to notify parents throughout the catchment area of each school of child identification activities and of the procedures to follow to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children.