



CODE OF CONDUCT

2026-2027

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Universal Central Education Office Directory



The Central Education Office is located at:
800 S. 15th Street
Philadelphia PA 19146

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

Attendance and Truancy	215-732-6518
Culture, Climate and Safety	215-732-6518
Educating Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness	215-732-6518
Family and Community Engagement	215-732-6518
Specialized Services	215-732-6518
Scholar Enrollment	215-732-6518
Scholar Rights and Responsibilities	215-732-6518
Transportation	215-732-6518
ELL Services	215-732-6518

Other important phone numbers:

Bullying Hotline	215-732-6518
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 Charter Schools (Universal) is committed to creating and maintaining safe and supportive school environments, conducive to teaching and learning. Universal strives to develop meaningful partnerships with parents/guardians and all stakeholders, so that we can work together to encourage academic, social and emotional growth in all scholars. Universal's goal is to ensure that all scholars have the necessary resources to graduate and succeed as fully engaged citizens of the world.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to:

1. Outline clear expectations for all school community members
2. Provide information around scholar and parent/guardian rights and supports
3. Outline processes and procedures for addressing scholar behavior and discipline. Universal seeks to eliminate inequitable disciplinary practices for black and brown scholars and therefore the Code of Conduct encourages alternatives to exclusionary discipline.

When does the Code of Conduct apply?

The Code of Conduct applies to school community members while they are in school and/or at any school sponsored activity, such as a class trip or event. The Code of Conduct also applies to all scholars while they are traveling to and from school, using any mode of transportation (walking, school bus, SEPTA, etc.). Finally, the Code of Conduct applies to conduct that occurs off-grounds, virtually, and/or after-hours (including weekends), if the conduct materially impacts the school community (meaning the conduct has a noticeable or considerable impact). All individual schools must follow Universal's Code of Conduct.

Community Member Responsibilities

Families, scholars, school staff and visitors are expected to respect all members of their school community and maintain a positive school climate by being responsible, inclusive and cooperative. Each school community member plays an important role in creating **safe and supportive** learning environments for our scholars. These responsibilities include:

Responsibilities of Scholars

- Seek to understand and comply with Universal, school level and classroom expectations.
- Take personal responsibility to reflect on behavior and admit mistakes.
- Hold yourself accountable to strive for growth and success.
- Find motivation and joy in learning in order to focus on academic success.
- Report any conflicts and/or concerns to a school staff member.
- Ask for help and support whenever needed.

Responsibilities of School Staff

- Create and maintain a welcoming environment for all scholars, parents/guardians and visitors.
- Explicitly teach and reteach expectations for the school community.
- Model appropriate behavior and social-emotional skills for scholars.
- Partner with parents/guardians by proactively communicating with them and responding to meeting requests within two (2) business days.
- Ensure that all scholars are afforded equitable access to all opportunities at school and are not subject to harassment or disproportionate exclusion, consistent with Universal's commitment to dismantle the systemic racism that hinders scholar achievement.
- Cultivate and maintain a learning environment that leads to academic success.
- Thoroughly investigate and document alleged Code of Conduct violations in Universal scholar information systems.
- Respond to Code of Conduct violations with interventions and support to address scholar behavior.
- Report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse Hotline.
- Maintain confidentiality of scholar records.
- Adhere to Universal Charter Schools Employee Code of Ethics.

Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians & School Visitors

- Support the policies of Universal, Code of Conduct and school handbook.
- Make school attendance a priority and emphasize the importance of showing up to school every day, on time, prepared to participate and learn.
- Be an active participant in your scholar's education by both communicating and responding to school outreach regarding scholar needs, concerns and successes.
- Collaborate with school staff and stakeholders, as needed, to ensure your scholar receives the appropriate support needed to succeed.
- Model appropriate behavior and social-emotional skills for scholars.
- Contribute to a safe school environment by seeking to resolve conflict peacefully.
- Schedule visits in advance whenever possible as school administrators cannot guarantee a meeting at the time of an unscheduled visit.
- Comply with all safety expectations including, but not limited to:
 - When arriving at a school, report to the main office to sign in, state the reason for the visit, present photo identification (if possible), and receive authorization from a staff member to proceed with the visit.
 - Refrain from using profane and/or abusive language around any community members, scholar or adult.
 - Refrain from visual and/or audio recording of other community members.
 - Refrain from physical confrontation and from encouraging/inciting physical confrontation.
 - Refrain from bringing weapons of any kind onto school property.

Parent/Guardian Exclusions

Parents/Guardians who do not comply with safety expectations addressed above may be excluded from the school for three (3) months, or the duration of the year depending on the circumstances. Exclusions may only be made by written exclusion letter issued from the school to the parent/guardian. When possible, a written warning letter will be issued prior to the exclusion letter, notifying the parent/guardian of behavior that has not yet warranted an exclusion but may in the future if the behavior is repeated. There are circumstances in which extremely disruptive or violent behavior will warrant an exclusion with no prior warning letter.

During an exclusionary period, the excluded parent/guardian will not be able to enter school property without an appointment approved by a school administrator. School administrators may, at their discretion, meet with excluded parents virtually rather than permitting the parent onto school grounds by appointment. If parents/guardians violate the exclusion letter, the exclusion period may also be extended. Parents/Guardians who believe they were unfairly given an exclusion letter are permitted to appeal the decision. Directions for appealing the decision are listed at the bottom of the letter. The exclusion letter remains in effect during the appeal period.

Student Attendance

Research shows that attendance is a critical factor in scholar achievement. Scholars who attend school on time, every day are more likely to:

- Perform on or above grade level in reading *and* math.
- Build relationships that support their social and emotional well-being.
- Successfully graduate high school on time.

Compulsory School Attendance

Under Pennsylvania law, all scholars between the ages of six (6) and eighteen (18) must attend school every day. Once a scholar is enrolled in school, this includes five (5) year old scholars in kindergarten, they are subject to compulsory school attendance laws until the scholar reaches eighteen (18) or graduates. A parent/guardian who enrolls their scholar in kindergarten may formally withdraw their scholar from school prior to reaching compulsory school age (six) at which point the scholar would no longer be subject to compulsory school laws until they turn six (6) years old.

Attendance shall be required of all scholars during the days and hours that school is in session, except that authorized Universal staff may excuse a scholar for temporary absences in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, Board policy, and Guidelines for Attendance and Truancy.

A scholar 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 scholar's placement is instruction in the home.

Parents/Guardians are expected to:

- Ensure that their scholar(s) attend school regularly, on time, and for the entire school day.
- Provide the school with current contact information (address, phone, email) at the beginning of each school year and update the information with the school whenever there are changes.
- Schedule appointments and family vacations outside of school hours whenever possible.
- Ensure their scholar(s) receive the necessary scholar health examinations and immunizations.
Provide a written note for every absence, late arrival and early dismissals, per policy.
- Participate in school attendance improvement conferences, to improve daily scholar attendance, when necessary.

Excused/Lawful Absence

An excused absence is when a scholar is absent from school for a reason identified by Universal as legitimate, valid and reasonable. The following conditions or situations constitute reasonable cause for absence from school, as outlined in School Board Attendance Policy . Some of these events have their own conditions that need to be met in order for the absence to be excused.

- Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner.
 - Upon written request by a parent/guardian, a scholar 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 scholar to receive the services outside of school hours.
 - The time of necessary absence from school involves a minimum of interference with the scholar's regular program of studies.
- Illness, including if a scholar is dismissed by designated Universal staff during school hours for health-related reasons • Quarantine
- 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 scholar's participation has been approved by the Superintendent or administrator.
 - 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 non-Universal schools, with prior approval.
 - Universal may limit the number and duration of non-school-sponsored educational tours or trips for which excused absences may be granted to a scholar during the school year.
- Observance of a religious holiday observed by a bonafide 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 scholar's family)
 - Requires parental note explaining the emergency received within 3 school days of the scholar's return. School staff will evaluate if the situation constitutes a family emergency.

Temporary Excusals

The following scholars may be temporarily excused from the requirements of attendance at Universal schools:

- For the purpose of receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in Universal's curricula, with certain requirements.
- Scholars participating in a religious instruction program, with certain conditions.
- School-age scholars 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.

Unexcused/Unlawful Absences

An absence is considered "unlawful" or "unexcused" when either a written note from a parent/guardian, licensed healthcare provider, court, or child welfare documentation was not submitted to the school upon the scholar's return from the absence (in accordance to written note protocol), or the reason provided in the written note by the parent/guardian was deemed invalid by the school, and did not meet the conditions or situations outlined in Universal's Attendance Policy. Examples of invalid excuses include (but not limited to) babysitting, waking up late, illness of a family member, and family vacation.

Parental Notice of Absences (Written Note)

- Universal's attendance policy requires written excuse notes explaining the absence.
 - Contact the child's school to verify ways excuse notes may be submitted.
 - Excuse notes must be given to the school within *three (3) days* upon the scholar'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.
 - Excuse notes must include the scholar's name, date(s) of absence(s) and a valid telephone number or other means of contact for verification purposes.
- All absences resulting in a total of three (3) or more consecutive days due to illness will require a written excuse note by a licensed healthcare provider. *An excuse note from a licensed healthcare provider may also be submitted in lieu of a parent note for any absence.*
- For all absences and those that do not total three (3) consecutive days, parents may submit a written excuse note stating the reason for the absence.
- When a scholar has been absent due to illness, excused with a parent note, totaling eight (8) days (cumulative), all subsequent absences may require a written excuse note from a licensed healthcare provider.
- The submission of notes does not guarantee automatic excusal of absences and are subject to school review to determine the validity of submitted notes.

Responses to Non-Attendance and Truancy

Truancy means having three (3) or more unexcused absences during the current school year, by a scholar subject to compulsory school attendance. Scholars who have six (6) or more unexcused absences are considered habitually truant. Scholars who have ten (10) or more unexcused absences are considered chronically truant. For each absence recorded, parents/guardians receive notification via phone call, email, or text, based on messenger preferences.

Notice of Truancy

When a scholar of compulsory school age has been absent for three (3) days (consecutive/non-consecutive) during the current school year without a lawful excuse, Universal staff shall provide the Notice of Truancy to the parent/guardian within ten (10) school days of the scholar's third unexcused absence.

School Attendance Improvement Conference

If the scholar continues to accumulate additional unexcused absences after issuance of the notice, the parent/guardian and scholar will be invited to attend a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) where a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) will be created in order to discuss the scholar's absences, identify barriers and develop meaningful strategies in an effort to improve attendance with or without additional services. The parent/guardian and scholar must be invited to this conference in advance. Neither the scholar nor the parent/guardian shall be required to participate, although it is highly recommended. The SAIC shall occur even if the parent/guardian declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference.

Regional Truancy Court

If the scholar's attendance does not improve after implementation and progress monitoring of the SAIP, and the scholar has accrued ten (10) or more unexcused absences, the scholar may be referred and scheduled for a Truancy Court hearing, in order to prevent, address, and reduce chronic truant behavior. Families are notified in advance by Family Court.

Family Court

If the scholar's attendance does not improve at the Regional Truancy Court level, the case may be referred to Family Court for more intensive services, where a judge has the authority to adjudicate the scholar dependent and assign the case to the Department of Human Services for more intensive services.

Non-Compulsory School-Age Scholars (18 years old and over)

Scholars who are 18 years of age and over are beyond the compulsory age for school. If a non-compulsory school age scholar has been absent, unexcused, for an excessive number of days, school staff may reach out to the family to offer support and notify them of the possibility that the scholar may be withdrawn from roll for non-attendance.

For more information on attendance, including resources, please email lfinney@universalcompanies.org

Scholar Dress Code

Scholars have the right to dress in a manner that celebrates their racial, cultural, religious, and gender identities, is reflective of their gender expression (including gender neutrality) and allows them to focus on their academic, social and emotional growth. Scholars are expected to follow their school's dress code so that their appearance does not constitute a health or safety hazard. School administrators must determine, in collaboration with their school community, what the school dress policy will be and then communicate that decision before the start of the school year.

All school dress policies must comply with the following Universal guidelines:

- Scholars have the right to wear protective hairstyles such as braids, locs, puffs, afros, twists, wigs, including styles with elements such as headbands, head wraps, bonnets, barrettes or beads. Scholars will not be discriminated against on the basis of their hair texture. Discrimination on the basis of protective hairstyle and/or hair texture is illegal racial discrimination.
- Scholars have the right to dress in accordance with their stated gender identity and/or expression (including gender neutrality) within the constraints of the school's dress code.
- Scholars have the right to wear religious garb in accordance with their religious practices, which cannot be restricted or banned.
- Ski-masks or other non-religious face or head coverings are NOT permitted for any reason (excluding medical masks). Make-up/face paint that prevent school staff members from being able to identify a scholar is also not permitted.
- No scholar in Universal Charter Schools may be excluded from the classroom environment including being denied entrance to school, suspended, or expelled for not following the dress code.

Scholars who do not have access to resources to adhere to the school dress code should discuss these circumstances with their school counselor. For more information regarding a school's dress code, please consult the school handbook.

Electronic Devices and Virtual Instruction

All scholars are expected to attend school in person unless there is an official school closure (i.e. COVID-19, inclement weather), a scholar is approved for Homebound services for urgent medical reasons: or a scholar is approved to attend the virtual school due to temporary barriers. Scholars are otherwise not permitted to participate in virtual learning, and it may not be used as a form of discipline by school administrators.

Families who are interested in full-time virtual instruction may inquire about options for Universal Charter Schools's K-12 virtual school. Scholars still have access to in-person support through Academic Support as well as extra-curricular activities. Please email lfinney@universalcompanies.org

Acceptable Use of Internet and Technology

Technology is an ever-growing part of education and as such, scholars may use Chromebooks and other electronic devices/platforms provided by their teacher(s) to complete assignments. Parents/Guardians are expected to review responsible and safe usage of technology with their scholars as outlined in School Board Technology Policy. Scholars should be reminded to:

- Do not share passwords, location, or any personal information on the internet.
- Do not post/share information about other community members on Universal or personal devices. Do
- not visit websites that are harmful or inappropriate for minors.
- Do not plagiarize; always exercise academic integrity when using the internet to support assignment completion.

If parents/guardians identify a security and/or safety concern with their school issued device and/or educational platform, they should notify a school leader immediately. More information on internet safety can be found on the Universal Charter Schools website at www.universalcharterschools.org

Scholar Possession of Electronic Devices

Universal scholars may not use personal computing devices, including for educational purposes, while inside Universal buildings and should instead use their Universal-issued computing device. Cell phones and wearable devices may be used in accordance with school-specific protocols, as outlined in School Board Policy

Scholars should not use cell phones or wearable devices in classrooms unless permitted by a school staff member. Each school creates their own protocols that set expectations for scholar use of cell phones and wearable devices. Schools may create protocols that designate areas within the school and times of day where scholar use of cell phones or wearable devices is permitted, among other rules for scholar use of cell phones or wearable devices during school hours.

Electronic device protocols are designed to increase scholar safety, learning and engagement. If a scholar is unable to use their personal device, and needs to contact a parent/guardian in the case of an emergency, they should make this request to a school staff member. For additional questions/concerns, please contact a school administrator.

Student and Guardian Rights

Scholars Experiencing Homelessness

Universal adheres to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act which ensures immediate enrollment and educational stability for scholars experiencing homelessness. Homelessness is defined as anyone lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes scholars who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason (known as doubled up or couch surfing); living temporarily in motels, parks or campgrounds; living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a sleeping accommodation by human beings; living in cars, abandoned buildings or substandard housing or similar situations; and refugees or migrants if 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. Scholars in the care of a children and youth agency (foster care system) are NOT included unless they are also displaced. Scholars who meet the criteria of homelessness, 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 scholar qualifies.

These scholars may enroll in:

- The school the scholar attended when permanently housed (school of origin).
- Any school that scholars who live in the catchment area in which the scholar experiencing homelessness is actually living are eligible to attend (new neighborhood school).

An unaccompanied youth with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) may also need to have a surrogate parent appointed by Universal within 30 days if the scholar has no one to serve in this role.

For more information, contact Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) in the following ways: Phone: 267-916-0339 | Email: lfinney@universalcompanies.org | Referral form.

Scholars in Foster Care

Universal adheres to the Every Scholar Succeeds Act (ESSA) to support scholars in Foster Care. Scholars in foster care remain in their school of origin (the school where the scholar 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 scholar has recently entered foster care or experienced a change in placement, a Best Interest Determination (BID) meeting will be held to determine if the scholar 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 scholars who are in foster care without a BID meeting. For more information, contact Foster Care Services by phone: 267-916-0339 or email: lfinney@universalcompanies.org.

Act 1

Act 1 removes educational and graduation barriers for scholars who move between school entities due to homelessness, adjudication, foster care, and juvenile justice or court-ordered placements. Universal requires schools to assign a point of contact, adopt clear policies and practices to apply credit for satisfactorily completed coursework, and develop a graduation plan for scholars experiencing education instability. This includes protections to facilitate equal access to school, such as participation in extracurricular opportunities. For questions, email: lfinney@universalcompanies.org.

Legal Guardianship and Educational Decision Making

Universal is obligated to follow any and all court orders that address legal custody and/or physical custody of any Universal scholar. Legal custody addresses who can make educational decisions for a scholar. Physical custody addresses who can pick up and make pick up decisions for a scholar. When seeking enrollment in Universal, parents/guardians should include in their enrollment paperwork all active court orders which address legal and/or physical custody of their scholar(s). For parents/guardians who currently have scholar(s) enrolled in Universal, please make sure that all active court orders addressing legal and/or physical custody of your scholar(s) are provided to the school. For more information or questions, please contact lfinney@universalcompanies.org.

Pregnant/Parenting/Married Scholars

Scholars who are pregnant, parenting and/or married are afforded certain rights and protections under School Board Policy

- The right to reasonable adjustments to facilitate full access to their educational and extracurricular programs.
 - Pregnant scholars are not required to provide medical documentation to participate in school activities unless it is required of all scholars.
 - Includes provisions for appropriate uniform adjustments.
- The right to excused absences for days missed related to pregnancy and/or parenting with reasonable time to complete make-up work.
 - Covered absences may include: healthcare appointments for themselves and/or their child, Teen Parent Leave (6 weeks) after giving birth, or in the case of a child care emergency.
- The right to lactation accommodations to express milk or breastfeed to include:
 - Private and secure room (not a bathroom) with access to electricity and a nearby water source for cleaning equipment.
 - Permission to bring breast pump and any necessary lactation equipment.
 - A place to safely store breastmilk until they go home.
 - Reasonable time (20-30 minutes) to express milk without penalty.
- Confidentiality regarding pregnancy-related health and personal information, with the following exceptions: a reasonable suspicion of child abuse, neglect or a clear and present danger to health or safety.
- School personnel must inform scholars about access to support services to.

Universal commits to a school environment free from discrimination and harassment for all scholars. Any scholar who is eligible to attend Universal schools and who is married, pregnant and/or parenting shall not be denied an educational program solely because of marriage, pregnancy, pregnancy-related disabilities, or potential or actual parenthood. For questions, please contact Universal by email at parentingscholarsupport@philasd.org.

Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Scholars

Transgender and gender non-conforming scholars are afforded certain rights and protections under School Board Policy, including:

- The right to privacy, and this includes the right to keep one's transgender identity private at school.
- While scholars have a right to be "out" if they choose, school staff should not disclose information that may reveal a scholar's transgender identity or gender nonconformity to others, including parents and other school staff, unless the scholar has authorized such disclosure.
- Scholars have the right to be referred to by their chosen name and pronouns. Universal recognizes that faculty, staff, and other scholars who repeatedly and callously refuse to honor a scholar's chosen name and pronouns, is considered discriminatory and that such behavior fosters a harmful, hostile environment.
- The right to be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity; this includes athletic teams and related programming.
- The right to have access to the restroom or locker room that corresponds to their gender identity.

Further, Universal commits to fostering safe and affirming school environments for all scholars, but particularly an environment where LGBTQ+ scholars can be themselves while accessing school in the same manner as other scholars. The Central Education Office further commits to addressing matters of sex, sexuality, and gender-based discrimination and/or complaints related to bullying and harassment of LGBTQ+ scholars.

Requests for Name and/or Gender Change can be made by completing a scholar information form. This form can be completed by the scholar or a staff member on their behalf. For questions regarding the School Board Policy, please visit www.Universalcharterschools.org or contact Universal by email: lfinner@universalcompanies.org.

Religious Rights and Practices

School staff members will not encourage and/or lead religious practices, including praying, reading scripture and similar types of religious activities.

Parents/Guardians may request for a scholar to be excused for the following religious practices:

- **Religious Holidays:** Scholars may be excused from school for religious holidays observed by recognized religious groups.
- **Religious Instruction:** By request, scholars may be excused from school to attend classes for religious instruction.
 - The request shall identify and describe the instruction, and the dates and hours for which the absence is requested.
 - The excusal must be limited to a total of 36 hours per school year.
 - Following each absence, the parent/guardian must provide a statement attesting that the scholar did in fact attend the instruction and the dates and hours upon which such attendance took place.
- **Prayer/Religious Practices During School Hours:** Scholars may be permitted to engage in a recognized religion's prayer during school hours in the school building, however, prayer should not be held during instructional time in order to minimize any academic interruption.
 - Schools should consider a parent/guardian permission slip, if appropriate, that grant scholar permission to engage in religious practices at school.
- **School Meditation/Quiet Room:** All middle and high schools should have a Meditation/Quiet room for scholars and school staff to pray, read scriptures etc., during non-instructional time and/or lunch periods.
 - Scholars who fast outside of Ramadan should be allowed to use the Meditation/Quiet room during lunch breaks if being in the lunchroom is deemed a distraction by the scholar. Please note that these rooms may be utilized for other purposes when scholars are not utilizing the Meditation/Quiet room for religious purposes.
- **Cultural Programs:** Scholars and school staff are permitted to coordinate cultural programs, at the school's discretion, such as Winter Festival, Ramadan & Eid celebrations, Valentines Day, Halloween, New Year celebrations, etc.

Language Access

Parents/Guardians have the right to communications and information from Universal and the scholar's school in their preferred language. If parents/guardians speak and/or write a language other than English, an interpreter must be provided for calls and meetings with school staff, and written communications from the school must be translated into their preferred language. Teachers and school staff should use multiple resources to provide language access, such as Language Line, bilingual counseling assistants, and translation request forms to engage with Universal's English Learners and multilingual parents/guardians. Schools must record a parent/guardian's preferred language and provide them with information about their rights to language services and how to access resources in their preferred languages.

Parents/Guardians can learn more about Universal's multilingual support, submit a language access complaint, and/or provide feedback through the Family Student Resource Center.

Parents/Guardians and Authorized Visitors Accommodations

School Board Policy states that a disabled parent/guardian or authorized visitor who requires a reasonable accommodation to assist in their attendance/participation at a school event should contact the event administrative organizer. This must occur 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. Requests should be made as early as possible because some accommodations require additional time to prepare/arrange.

Request for 504 Service Plan

A scholar who does not qualify for special education services under IDEA may qualify for a 504 plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a civil rights law that protects scholars from discrimination based on disability. To be found eligible for a 504 plan, a scholar must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits their educational performance. Parents/Guardians may request a 504 plan by contacting the school counselor or other school leader. The request should be made in writing and include any relevant medical records along with recommendations for specific services or accommodations the scholar may need.

For questions regarding the 504 process, please contact the Central Education Office at cgary-nelson@universalcompanies.org

Request for Special Education Evaluation

Any scholar with a suspected disability must be evaluated to determine the scholar's eligibility to receive an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). School administrators or parents/guardians may initiate the process. Parents/Guardians should request an evaluation in writing, but requests will be accepted verbally. Once the request is made, the school must respond within ten (10) calendar days. 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 being denied. If a PTE is issued, the school must make three (3) attempts to receive signed consent. If signed consent is not received, then the school cannot proceed with the evaluation.

For questions regarding the special education evaluation process, please contact the Central Education Office at cgary-nelson@universalcompanies.org



Parent/Guardian Appeals

The Central Education Office is responsible for reviewing decisions made by school and/or central office staff to determine if the decision was made in accordance with Universal policies, procedures, and protocols.

The following decisions can be appealed: disciplinary hearing decisions, AEDY placement, homelessness designations, exclusion letters, bullying, harassment/discrimination findings, and school selection. All written findings or decisions issued by Universal must include information about how to appeal. If a written finding or decision fails to include information about how to appeal, the deadline to appeal that finding or decision will be 15 calendar days from when the parent/guardian knew or should have known how to appeal.

- Homelessness Designation
 - Decisions made pursuant to eligibility under Title X, Part C of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
 - Scholars involved in a McKinney-Vento dispute process have the right to enroll immediately in the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute.
 - If there is not a resolution at Universal-level, the dispute will be moved to the state level for final resolution facilitated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) State Coordinator.
- Exclusion Letters
 - Decisions made that exclude parents/guardians from a school building (for a specified amount of time) as a result of behavior that violates the Code of Conduct.
 - The exclusion letter remains in effect during the appeal review period.
- Bullying/Harassment Findings
 - Decisions made on findings of an investigation into allegations of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination.
 - Decisions made related to a Title IX Harassment Formal Complaint, including, dismissal of a Title IX Formal Complaint and the Determination for a Title IX Formal Complaint.
- School Selection
 - Decisions made pursuant to school selection eligibility can be appealed annually during the school selection appeal window. Information on the school selection appeals process will be provided during the school selection application process on the Office of Scholar Enrollment and Placement website.
- Disciplinary Transfer Decisions
 - Decisions made pursuant to a disciplinary hearing or safety interim placement (see Scholar Discipline section).
 - If a scholar received a lateral transfer or Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) assignment, the assignment remains in effect during the appeal period.
 - AEDY Complaints
 - A scholar, parent, guardian or community member may file a complaint about any aspect of a scholar's placement in AEDY, including placement and exiting decisions, the quality of relevant academic instruction, the provision or omission of language assistance services, and services to scholars with disabilities, including reasonable modifications.
 - Complaints may be submitted at any time, there is no deadline to submit an AEDY complaint.
 - If the Central Education Office does not satisfactorily resolve the concerns raised in an AEDY Complaint, the person filing the complaint may file a state complaint with the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Parents/Guardians can email their completed appeal form to lfinney@universalcompanies.org. Parents/Guardians can also contact 267-916-0339 for questions and/or to request the appeal form. All emails will be responded to within 24 hours and will include a due date for a formal appeal response.

Student and Guardian Supports

In addition to scholar and parent/guardian rights and protections, there are additional resources and offices available to support well-being and educational access.

Family Student Resource Center

The Family Student Resource Center (FSRC) offers a wide array of programs and services to support the meaningful Universal-wide engagement of families and community stakeholders with Universal. These supports include:

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 any parent/guardian would like to speak to one of their team members, Family Engagement Liaisons are available to speak with you at your child's school or you can stop by the Parent and Family Resource Center at the School Universal of Philadelphia's Administration Building. For additional information and support requests, please visit the FSRC website or reach out in person via the Family Student Resource Center (FSRC) or by phone:

- Universal Alcorn: 215-952-6219
- Universal Audenried: 215-952-4801
- Universal Creighton: 215-537-2531
- Universal Institute: 215-732-2876

Prevention and Intervention

The Central Education Office Prevention and Intervention provides various supports to scholars in order to address barriers to their education. These supports include:

- **School Counseling**: School counselors work with parent/guardians, school staff, and community partners to ensure that scholar needs are being met. Counselors advocate for scholars' well-being and provide valuable resources for their educational and personal advancement, helping to remove any barriers a scholar may be experiencing. Counselors provide services under three (3) domains: academic, social-emotional and college/career readiness.
- **Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS)**: Each school has an IBHS provider to address the needs of youth providing age appropriate, trauma-informed, therapeutic interventions to address behavioral health needs by providing behavioral health supports in the school, home, and community.
- **Support Team for Educational Partnership (STEP)**: The STEP program includes a mental health team that supports schools by addressing mental health and complex needs for scholars and families in the school setting.
- **Prevention & Intervention (P&I) Liaisons**: P&I Liaisons are a team of Clinicians who support school counselors and school administrators with addressing the behavioral health needs of scholars. They provide clinical consultation for Behavioral Health Emergencies and coordinate Critical Incident Responses at schools.

For more information, visit the Office of Prevention & Intervention email lfinney@universalcompanies.org



Victim Services

If a scholar is a victim of a school related incident, the school should create and institute a safety plan for that scholar, if appropriate. Parents/Guardians should be a part of the planning process and contribute to its final version. Parents/Guardians must sign and receive a copy of the plan once completed.

Additional victim services can be sought through the Pennsylvania Office of Safe Schools Advocate. The Safe Schools Advocate can be reached by phone: 1-877-730-6315 or by email: RA-OSSAPhiladelphia@pa.gov. Families can also contact Universal's Office of School Safety's Victim Assistance Specialist by phone: 215-732-6518.

Scholar Transition Center

The Scholar Transition Center (STC) serves as a centralized "welcome center" located at 800 S. 15th Street for scholars transitioning back to Universal from one of five (5) pathways and are in need of a school assignment after **(thirty) 30+ calendar days**. Scholars will receive a transition meeting, case management services, and mentorship.

Pathways to the STC include:

- Residential Treatment Facility (RTF): Scholars court-ordered or referred by the Department of Human Services, Philadelphia Juvenile Probation, or Community Behavioral Health (CBH).
- ACT 88 Adjudication: returning from placement as a result of being adjudicated delinquent and assigned to an alternative education program.
- Congregate Care: Dependent or delinquent scholars returning from a court-ordered congregate care placement or detention center.
- Long-term Hospitalizations: Scholars discharged from a long-term mental/behavioral health in-patient and/or partial hospitalization.
- Resource Home or Shelter: Scholars returning from an out-of-Universal placement and placed in a foster home or shelter.

The STC Bridge 10-day Initiative Program includes baseline assessments, academic instruction, and reintegrative activities designed to help scholars transition smoothly back into the school community. As a part of the reintegration process, the STC Bridge Program is available to eligible scholars in grades 9-12. Please contact the Scholar Transition Center by email at lfinney@universalcompanies.org to submit a referral to request a school assignment.

The Re-Engagement Center

The Re-Engagement Center (REC) is a "one-stop" shop that provides counseling, school referral services, and information leading to re-enrollment in a high school diploma or GED program. The REC connects scholars who have dropped out or those in danger of dropping out, with several program types, giving scholars a variety of options for completing their graduation requirements. To contact the Re-Engagement Center, please email lfinney@universalcompanies.org

Bullying, Discrimination and Title IX

Universal recognizes the negative impact that bullying, harassment and/or discrimination has on scholar health, welfare, safety and on the school learning environment. All such conduct is prohibited by law and by Board Policies such as Bully Policy.

All concerns related to bullying, harassment, and discrimination are taken seriously and will be investigated. School-based investigations into alleged bullying, harassment or discrimination can take up to 7 school days (this does not include weekends or holidays). At the conclusion of the investigation, parents will be notified of the investigation outcome in writing.

Definitions

Bullying is defined as an intentional electronic, written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at a scholar or scholars, which occurs in a school setting, off-campus conduct, including online or social media conduct, that has a continuing effect on the campus, and which is **severe, persistent, or pervasive** and has the effect of doing any of the following:

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

Harassment is verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic, virtual or physical conduct relating to an individual's known or perceived protected classification. It is conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person's school or school-related performance. Such conduct is:

1. Subjectively and objectively offensive; and
2. So severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school.

Protected Classification: Classifications which are defined under federal, state or local law as being protected. These classes include race, color, ethnicity, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation (known or perceived), gender identity or expression (known or perceived), shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, English language proficiency, veteran status, and disability.

Title IX (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972) is a federal law that prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs and activities. This includes sex-based harassment which is defined as quid pro quo sexual harassment; unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a Universal education program or activity; or sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking.

If there are concerns or questions related to Title IX, please contact:

Inquiries related to scholars:
Your School Principal and/or-
The Central Education Office
800 S. 15th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146
215-732-6518

Inquiries related to employees:
Human Resources Department
800 S. 15th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146
[215-732-6518](tel:215-732-6518)

Reporting

Any person can report concerns about bullying, harassment and/or discrimination, this includes scholars, parents/guardians, friends or other community members. All reports that allege bullying, harassment or discrimination will be investigated regardless of how the complaint was received.

There are numerous ways to make a report:

- Completing the online Bullying Harassment and Discrimination reporting form:
- Calling the Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination hotline at 215-732-6518.
- Submitting a complaint via Safe2Say: www.safe2saypa.org or by phone at 1-844-SAF2SAY
- Emailing the Director, Climate Culture and Safety directly at lfinney@universalcompanies.org.
- Reporting the incident to the building administrator or designee, or to any other member of the school staff, including teachers, guidance counselors, bilingual counseling assistants (BCAs), coaches, and school administrators.

*If a parent/guardian or scholar submitted a complaint and has not been notified of the determination after 7 school days, email lfinney@universalcompanies.org for assistance.

Student Investigation Procedures

Universal takes all violations of the code of conduct seriously and any alleged violations will be investigated. This includes conduct that occurs off-grounds, virtually, and/or after-hours (including weekends), if the conduct materially impacts the school community (meaning the conduct has a noticeable or considerable impact).

The following guidelines apply to conducting investigations into scholar conduct:

- Parents/Guardians must be notified of all serious incidents involving their scholars, however, schools do not need parent/guardian permission to conduct an investigation or obtain statements related to alleged misconduct.
- In accordance with Board Policy, school administrators may “search” a scholar and/or their belongings if there is reasonable suspicion that the scholar has prohibited items.
- If the conduct includes a threat to use a weapon, kill or inflict serious bodily injury with intent/plan, the school must initiate Universal Threat Assessment process by contacting the Office of School Safety.
- If a complaint includes allegations of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity, the Title IX Coordinator must be consulted before proceeding with an investigation or issuing discipline.
- Some alleged conduct may require a notification to ChildLine as Universal employees are mandated reporters.
- At times, it may be necessary to share some information about a serious incident with the school community (parents/guardians and scholars). Schools should conference with the Assistant Superintendent who will reach out to the Office of Communications when considering if a letter/communication will be sent.
- In some cases, Investigators from Central Office will lead or be involved in an investigation.
- Schools should refer to the Central Education Office investigation manual for a complete guide to conducting an investigation.
- For guidance on conducting investigations into alleged employee conduct, school administrators should contact their assigned Labor Relations Officer at lfinney@universalcompanies.org

Philadelphia Police Department Referrals

Some of the behavior infractions in the code of conduct are also considered crimes according to Pennsylvania state law. Universal has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD).

The MOU explicitly states that the following crimes must be reported: 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, and Weapons. Scholars eleven (11) years old and younger will not be subject to arrest unless they have committed one of the enumerated crimes listed in the MOU. Universal also has a MOU regarding the School Diversion Program with the PPD. The Diversion Program allows the PPD to divert a scholar from arrest if that scholar has committed a non-violent offense in school and has no prior arrests. In those cases, the scholar will receive services from the Department of Human Services.

School Reporting Process

In schools with a School Safety Officer (SSO), when an incident occurs that may be a crime, the school administrator should notify the SSO prior to making any police referral for the potential arrest of a scholar. The SSO will contact the PPD School Diversion Program for prior notification and to determine if the offense is eligible. If the school does not have an SSO assigned, an administrator should contact the PPD School Diversion Program at these phone numbers. Offenses not eligible for diversion will be referred to the Philadelphia Police Department. Schools without an SSO are directed to contact the PPD and their School Safety Area Manager.

In any case where it is proposed that a scholar be removed from school due to an arrest or arrest warrant, schools must also contact the PPD School Diversion Program at the provided phone numbers.

Student Behavior and Discipline Procedures

School environments that are positive, equitable and supportive can result in decreased behavioral disruption, increased scholar engagement, and more positive interpersonal interactions between and among staff and scholars. In Universal, all schools are expected to implement one or more evidence-based, school-wide climate approaches including: Relationships First (RF), Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (CR-PBIS), and School-wide Social Emotional Learning (SEL). These climate approaches prioritize relationships, create a culture of caring and restoration, and support the development of positive behaviors.

Regardless of a school's identified climate approach(es), all schools should strive to model, teach and highlight positive behaviors that reflect Universal's core values and support the development of well-rounded, productive and responsible citizens. **Positive Behaviors** can be found **beginning on page 26**.

Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behaviors are defined in Universal's **Code Violation Matrix**, which can be found in **beginning on page 28**. When disruptive behavior occurs, schools must respond by referring to the matrix and make decisions in accordance with Universal's approach to discipline:

- Behavioral incidents should be treated as opportunities for learning and growth.
- Except in cases of the most serious infractions, every incident should be addressed through restorative approaches.
- Restorative approaches are focused on teaching and healing, rather than punishment.
- Schools should utilize school-based approaches before resorting to excluding a scholar. In cases where exclusion is appropriate, additional interventions must also be put in place.
- Collective punishment, such as disciplining a whole class for one scholar's actions, may not be utilized.
- The removal of recess may not be utilized as a consequence for scholar behavior.

Responses to Disruptive Behavior

Responses to disruptive behavior may include, but are not limited to:

- Restorative Conversations
- Mediation
- Detention
- Project or Reflection Community Service
- Reflection or Apology
- Loss of Privilege
- Parent/Guardian Conference
- Referral for Supportive Services
- Safety Plan

*Loss of privilege could range from classroom level privileges to participation in school-wide events. For graduating 8th-grade and 12th-grade scholars, there are additional privileges such as prom and graduation ceremonies. School administrators are expected to outline specific criteria for participation, in writing, with advance notice to both scholars and parent/guardians. Graduation may only be taken for the most egregious violations, in which it would constitute a safety concern if the scholar participates. Schools administrators must make a decision to take away graduation in consultation with their Assistant Superintendent.

There are additional criteria that must be considered before taking away a trip or graduation ceremony for a scholar with a disability. Please see scholars with disability section below for additional guidance.

In addition to school-based behavior responses, schools may determine that exclusionary discipline is warranted for safety reasons. With regard to exclusionary discipline, research shows that Black youth are three (3) times more likely to be expelled than their white peers and scholars with disabilities are two (2) times more likely to receive out-of-school suspensions. Universal does not support the use of zero tolerance policies that require school staff to suspend or expel scholars for certain behaviors except if required by law. Universal is committed to improving educational equity and reducing racial disproportionality in punitive discipline, which includes removing scholars from their school.

Suspension Procedures

According to Pennsylvania law, suspension is defined as the denial to a scholar of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for any period of up to ten (10) consecutive school days. All suspensions must be preceded by notification to the scholar and parent/guardian in writing in accordance with state law. The following guidelines apply for all suspensions and disciplinary removals, even if the school calls the action something else.

In-School Suspensions

In-school suspension (ISS) is an exclusion from the classroom for one or more school days that allows a scholar to remain under the direct supervision of school staff. Direct supervision means that school staff are physically in the same location as scholars under their supervision. Scholars participating in in-school suspension must have the opportunity to complete assignments as well as a reflection related to their behavior that prompted the ISS. Some schools may not have the staffing to facilitate ISS at any given time and therefore this may not always be a disciplinary option.

Out-of-School Suspensions

Kindergarten, first, and second grade scholars may NOT be suspended unless their actions result in documented serious bodily injury or the use of a weapon. Schools must consult with the Central Education Office before issuing a suspension for scholars in these grades. Additionally, scholars must be referred to the counselor for appropriate behavioral health interventions and support. Parents/Guardians are asked to partner with the school to address behaviors.

Scholars in grades three (3) through twelve (12) may be suspended when they have violated the Code of Conduct and a suspension is deemed appropriate for the behavior.

- **Short-term suspension:** an exclusion from school and/or any school activity or function for a period of one (1) to three (3) school days.
- **Long-term suspension:** an exclusion from school and/or any school activity or function for a period of four (4) to ten (10) school days. Schools must consult with their Assistant Superintendent and the Central Education Office before issuing a long-term suspension.

The following guidelines apply to all Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS):

- Scholars must meet with the administrator or designee prior to the suspension, unless it is clear that the safety of the school community is compromised.
- When a scholar is immediately sent home from school following an incident, this counts as the first day of an OSS. • The parent/guardian must be notified and a suspension notice must be issued at the time of the suspension.
- Schoolwork must be proactively provided to the scholar if the suspension will exceed four (4) days and the assignment(s) should be completed by the time of reinstatement.
- A suspension is an excused absence and legally cannot be coded as an “unexcused” absence.
- A parent/guardian conference should be scheduled before or upon the scholar’s reinstatement to school. However, a parent conference cannot be required as a condition of reinstatement in school. Scholars must be allowed to re- enter school upon conclusion of their suspension.
- A scholar serving out-of-school suspension is not allowed to participate in extracurricular activities or events.
- A scholar serving out-of-school suspension is not allowed to come onto school property and may be considered trespassing if they come onto school grounds while serving an OSS.

Scholars cannot be excluded from school unless there is a **documented out-of-school suspension**. Exclusion from school includes:

- Sending a scholar home
- Prohibiting a scholar to return to the building
- Requiring a scholar to stay home from school for any number of days (with or without virtual instruction) • “Overnight suspensions”

Scholars may not be suspended for absenteeism, including lateness, or violating the school’s dress code. These concerns must be addressed through alternative consequences.

Parent/Guardian Conference Procedures

Schools must adhere to the following procedures when scheduling parent conferences to address behavior:

- Notice of a conference must be provided to the parent/guardian in writing, in their preferred language and sent by mail, email, or by other reasonable means.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to attend all scheduled conferences and school administrators should make every attempt to engage guardians so that they are able to participate in-person or virtually, as needed.
- Interpretation will be provided if requested.
- The purpose of the conference should be to discuss the behavior/incident and offer supportive services as needed.
- Parents/Guardians may request a copy of scholar records and any evidence related to the incident(s).
- Statements must be redacted before they can be provided to the parent/guardian.
- Photographs and video recordings of incidents may be shown but copies cannot be provided.
- School administrators will inform parents/guardians of any further disciplinary action and provide an overview of due process rights regarding disciplinary action.
- Schoolwork for scholars with more than a four (4) day suspension must be provided to the parent/guardian at the conference, which is due upon reinstatement.
- Schools must make every attempt to engage a guardian or parent when the scholar returns after a suspension. Scholars may not be kept out of school because of the parent or guardian’s inability to meet with school staff.

Informal Hearing

When a suspension exceeds three (3) school days, the scholar and parent/guardian shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the scholar to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the scholar is being suspended or to show why the scholar should not be suspended.

1. The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the scholar may be suspended and for scholars, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.
2. The following due process requirements shall be observed regarding the informal hearing:
 - i. Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the scholar.
 - ii. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
 - iii. A scholar has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
 - iv. A scholar has the right to speak and produce witnesses on the scholars’ own behalf.
 - v. The informal hearing will be held within the first 5 days of a long-term out-of-school suspension.

Disciplinary Hearing Process

Disciplinary Hearings only apply to scholars in grades six (6) through twelve (12). Scholars in kindergarten through grade five (5) cannot be referred for a disciplinary hearing and may not receive a transfer for disciplinary reasons.

Scholars who commit serious violation(s) may be referred to the Central Education Office for a scholar disciplinary hearing, if the behavior meets the criteria as outlined in the Behavior Matrix. Prior to making a referral, schools must complete a Behavior Performance Review (BPR) for general education scholars to determine if the scholar is thought to have a disability. Scholars have the right to return to school pending the outcome of the hearing, unless they are approved for a safety interim placement and receive an assignment letter.

Safety Interim Placements

- Schools may request a safety interim placement (temporary school assignment) to an Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) transition program for the limited situations where the school has documented that the

scholar's behavior poses a continued threat to the school community.

- If an interim assignment is granted by the Central Education Office, a hearing must be promptly scheduled.
- Scholars with disabilities are not able to receive safety interim placements, unless there are special circumstances. Please read the next section to learn more about discipline for scholars with disabilities.

Scholars who are referred for a disciplinary hearing receive full due process to determine whether the scholar should be removed from their current school placement. Disciplinary hearings are conducted by an impartial Restorative Discipline Liaison.

Scholars and parents/guardians participating in the disciplinary hearing process have the following rights:

- To review any evidence the school plans to present at the hearing.
- To have an interpreter in their preferred language.
- To bring their own witnesses and/or character statements to the hearing.
- To bring a representative and/or advocate to the hearing.
- To be provided with two opportunities to attend the hearing.
- To ask questions of the school and present evidence if it relates to the incident.
- To be provided with the hearing decision within 7 days of the hearing.
- To be provided a copy of the hearing recording if requested.
- To obtain a copy of their scholar's records if requested.

Hearing Decisions

The impartial Restorative Discipline Liaison will consider all evidence, dialogue in the hearing, and a scholar's academic, behavior and attendance records when making a decision. Outcomes can include:

- Remain in current school due to insufficient evidence of violating the code of conduct.
- Remain in current school with a behavior contract.
- Lateral transfer to another Universal or contract-operated school.
- Transfer to Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) transitional program.

Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY)

- Pennsylvania's AEDY program provides support to scholars in grades 6-12 who have been removed from the regular education setting for disciplinary reasons.
 - Scholars must have a hearing prior to placement unless a safety interim placement is warranted due to a serious situation.
- AEDY provides a combination of intensive, individual academic instruction and behavior modification counseling in an alternative setting to assist scholars in returning successfully to the regular education setting.
- Universal and the AEDY program work with families to create behavioral goals based on their reason for placement and assessments.
 - Scholars receive a formal periodic review (progress review) before their presumptive exit date.
 - Once behavioral goals are met, scholars prepare to transition to the regular education setting with a transition plan.
- Placements in AEDY programs are temporary; scholars may only remain until they have met their behavioral goals, unless expelled.
- English Learners (EL) and scholars with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) cannot be placed at AEDY programs that cannot meet their instructional needs. Universal's AEDY program has the right to deny entry if they cannot adequately program for a scholar.
- Universal contracts with SESI Schools as an AEDY program provider. There are two AEDY program locations:
 - Achieve Academy: 1425 N 26th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19121
 - Achieve Academy East: 4224 N Front Street, Philadelphia, PA 19124

Discipline for Students with Disabilities

Scholars with disabilities should receive discipline in accordance with the code of conduct. They must also be provided with a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Schools must adhere to all regulations provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

Suspensions

Suspension procedures provided apply to all scholars, including those with disabilities. In addition, the following regulations must be followed for scholars with disabilities:

- Scholars Identified as Intellectually Disabled: Scholars who are identified as intellectually disabled may only receive a suspension 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). The PDE can be contacted by calling 717-783-6913.
- All Other Scholars Receiving Special Education Services or a 504 Plan: Universal may suspend scholars 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.

For the purposes of scholars receiving any special education services or a 504 plan, a bus removal is considered a suspension if transportation is included in a scholar's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) as a related service and no alternative transportation is provided by Universal. Additionally, an in-school suspension is considered a suspension and included in the number of days permitted as outlined above. Any combination of out-of-school suspension, in-school suspension or bus removals that reach or exceed the permitted days are considered a change in placement and will require a manifestation determination review process.

Exclusion from Criteria Based Events/Programming

Scholars receiving special education services may not be excluded from educational events and programs such as field trips and graduation ceremonies based on their disability. When an exclusion is being considered for a criteria based participation in a school-wide event, the school should meet to ensure the scholar is not being penalized due to their disability. In some cases, it is appropriate to modify and/or accommodate the criteria in which a scholar is eligible to participate in the school-wide event.

Manifestation Determination Process

A manifestation determination meeting must be conducted whenever there is a change in placement. For a scholar identified as intellectually disabled, a one (1) day suspension is considered a change in placement. For all other scholars with disabilities, a change in placement is considered a suspension of ten (10) consecutive days, fifteen (15) cumulative days, a series of removals that constitute a pattern of exclusion, and/or a school transfer for disciplinary reasons.

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 scholar's disability? •
Was the conduct a direct result of the school's failure to implement the scholar's IEP?

The following guidelines apply to the manifestation determination process:

- Provide written notice to the parent/guardian of the recommended disciplinary action and an invitation to participate in the manifestation determination meeting with the scholar's IEP team.
 - This meeting must take place within 10 school days of the decision to change the scholar's placement and must include the Local Education Agency (LEA), the parent/guardian and relevant members of the scholar's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the LEA).

- During the meeting, the team must review all relevant information in the scholar's file, including the scholar's IEP, any teacher observations, any relevant information provided by the parents/guardians, and proposed discipline.
- The completed manifestation determination must be signed by the parent/guardian and IEP team, including School Psychologist. If no parent/guardian signature, there must be 3 documented attempt to contact the parent.
- Issue a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) with the results of the determination and a copy of the Procedural Safeguard Notice (PSN) 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 calendar (10) days.
- Ensure IEP is in compliance as well as other corresponding documents if applicable. For example, a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) or Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP) may be conducted/or reviewed and revised in accordance with federal regulations.
- If the behavior is not deemed a manifestation of the scholar's disability, the school may proceed with the recommended disciplinary action. If the behavior is deemed a manifestation of the scholar's disability, the proposed change in placement may not be granted. Virtual learning is not permitted as a disciplinary change in placement by a school.

45-Day Interim Placements

Schools may request a 45-day interim placement without regard to the outcome of the manifestation determination if the incident involved one of the three (3) special circumstances under IDEA:

- Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.
- Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function.
 - According to IDEA, a weapon is defined as a device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury.
 - This does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2½ inches in length or ordinary objects not designed to be weapons.
- Inflicted serious bodily injury (SBI) upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.
 - According to IDEA, serious bodily injury is defined as a substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. SBI must be substantiated.

The purpose of the 45-day interim placement is for the scholar to receive interventions in an interim alternative education setting while the sending school IEP team re-assesses the scholar's programming and placement. The 45-day interim placement may not exceed 45 days. The default interim placement location is an AEDY setting unless the IEP team identifies another interim alternative education setting (IAES). Under no circumstances may a transfer to AEDY become a scholar's pendent placement under the IDEA unless the parent invokes pendency by filing for mediation or due process. The scholar must remain in the IAES pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period specified in 34 C.F.R. 300.530(c), whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the LEA agree otherwise.

If a scholar qualifies for a 45-day interim placement due to special circumstances, but the behavior is not a manifestation of their disability, the scholar will receive a disciplinary hearing through the Central Education Office and a Restorative Discipline Liaison will determine if the scholar will remain in the interim placement until behavioral goals are met, return to sending school or be laterally transferred.

If a scholar does not qualify for a 45-day interim placement due to special circumstances and the scholar 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 placement. This request can be made to the Universal's General Counsel.

Expulsion Procedures

According to Pennsylvania law, expulsion is an exclusion from school and school activities for more than ten (10) school days and may be permanent. A formal hearing is required in every expulsion action and must occur before Universal's Board of Trustees may expel a scholar. The formal hearing may be conducted before the full Board, an authorized committee of the Board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the Board. When a committee or hearing examiner conducts the hearing, an affirmative vote of a majority of the entire Board is still required to expel the scholar. These requirements apply in accordance with 22 Pa. Code Sections 12.6 and 12.8, the Pennsylvania Public School Code, and applicable Charter School Law requirements.

Pending the formal hearing and the Board's decision, the scholar shall remain in the scholar's normal class unless, after an informal hearing, Universal determines that the scholar's presence presents a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of others and a formal hearing cannot be held within the suspension period. A scholar may not be excluded for more than fifteen (15) school days without a formal hearing unless both parties mutually agree to a delay. Alternative education shall be provided during any lawful exclusion pending the hearing. A preliminary disciplinary hearing or AEDY placement does not constitute, replace, or waive the formal hearing required before expulsion.

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

Notification of the violation(s) must be provided to the parent/guardian in writing and in their preferred language through certified mail.

- At least three (3) days notice of the time and place of the expulsion hearing must be provided, which shall include a copy of the expulsion policy, hearing procedures, and notice of the right to representation by legal counsel.
- A scholar may request the rescheduling of the hearing when they demonstrate good cause for an extension.
- A hearing shall be private unless the scholar or parent/guardian requests a public hearing.
- A scholar has the right to representation by counsel, at the parent/guardian's expense.
- A parent/guardian may attend the hearing.
- Disclosure of the names of scholar witnesses and copies of their written statements or affidavits is required.
- A scholar has the right to request that witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- A scholar has the right to testify, make arguments and present witnesses on the scholar's behalf.
- A hearing shall be held within 15 school days of the notice of violation(s), unless a delay is mutually agreed to by both parties or is delayed by:
 - The need for laboratory reports from law enforcement agencies; or
 - Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to the scholar invoking their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); or
 - 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.
- A written or audio record of the hearing shall be maintained and a copy made available to the scholar at the scholar's expense, or at no charge if the scholar is indigent.
- The written adjudication shall notify the scholar and parent/guardian, in their preferred language, of the right to appeal the expulsion decision under the Local Agency Law to the appropriate Court of Common Pleas within thirty (30) days after receipt of the adjudication.

Only after completion of the formal hearing may the Board of Trustees expel a scholar, and expulsion requires the affirmative vote of a majority of the entire Board. After expulsion, the parent/guardian has thirty (30) days to provide written documentation that the scholar is enrolled in another educational program. If the parent/guardian cannot secure another program during that period, Universal shall make provision for the scholar's education in accordance with 22 Pa. Code Section 12.6. A scholar who has been permanently expelled may apply for readmission. The Board delegates readmission decisions to the Superintendent or designee. A temporarily expelled scholar is automatically eligible to return at the end of the stated expulsion period, subject to an appropriate reentry plan.

Readmission decisions are final within Universal's administrative process, subject to any rights available under applicable law.

Expunging Records for Expelled Scholars

A scholar who has been permanently or temporarily expelled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the School Board, may apply to have the records of expulsion expunged under School Board Policy. Expunging records occurs at the discretion of the superintendent or designee and is not subject to review or appeal to the school board or courts.

Positive Student Behaviors

The following list includes positive behaviors that are representative of model students in the School District of Philadelphia. These are behaviors that students should work to exemplify, and that school staff and parents/guardians are encouraged to model, teach and support with students. If a student has violated the code of conduct, positive behaviors should be identified as areas of growth and development for a student. Additionally, when students exemplify positive behaviors, they should be embraced and celebrated.

Advocacy: Speaking up for the rights and needs of themselves or others in a constructive manner. This includes promoting fairness, equity, and inclusion within the school community, including reporting bullying or harassment. Scholars who advocate for positive change demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility.

Beautification: Contributing to the improvement of the school community through activities such as planting, cleaning, or creating positive visual displays. This includes respecting school property, participating in beautification projects, and promoting a clean and welcoming environment.

Citizenship. Consistently behaving in a manner that promotes a positive, respectful, and productive learning environment. This includes adhering to school rules/PBIS norms, respecting the rights of others, and contributing to a positive school culture.

Collaboration: Actively participating in group activities or projects, contributing ideas, skills, and effort to achieve shared goals. This includes listening to and respecting diverse perspectives, fulfilling assigned roles, and working constructively to resolve disagreements. Scholars who foster a positive and inclusive team environment demonstrate effective teamwork.

Compassion: Demonstrating support, empathy, and kindness to peers who are experiencing distress or difficulty. This includes providing a listening ear, offering words of encouragement, and creating a safe and inclusive environment. Scholars who extend comfort demonstrate compassion and care for the well-being of others.

Conflict Resolution: Seeking to effectively address and resolve disagreements or conflicts through respectful communication and problem-solving. This includes asking for help, actively listening to all parties involved, seeking mutually agreeable solutions, and avoiding retaliation. Scholars who facilitate peaceful resolutions demonstrate maturity and interpersonal skills.

Curiosity: Taking the initiative to explore topics discussed in class, actively engage in inquiry, and other actions to enhance their learning.

Diligence: Demonstrating focused effort, attention to detail, and a commitment to completing tasks thoroughly and accurately. This includes managing time effectively, meeting deadlines, and striving for excellence in all academic endeavors. Scholars who exhibit diligence demonstrate a strong work ethic and dedication to learning.

Educational Commitment: Consistently placing academic pursuits and learning above other non-academic activities during school hours and in their study habits. This includes attending class regularly, participating actively, and allocating sufficient time for homework and studying. Scholars who prioritize education demonstrate a commitment to their academic growth.

Inclusivity: Fostering a sense of belonging and respect for all individuals in their learning environment, regardless of their background, abilities, or identities. This involves recognizing and valuing diversity, challenging biases, and creating opportunities for all scholars to participate and thrive.

Integrity: Demonstrating honesty, trustworthiness, and ethical behavior in all interactions with scholars, school staff and building visitors. This includes upholding academic honesty, respecting the property of others, and adhering to school rules and values. Scholars who act with integrity build trust and contribute to a positive school climate.

Positive Student Behaviors

Leadership: Taking the initiative to guide and support others in a positive and constructive manner. This includes modeling responsible behavior, facilitating group discussions, motivating peers, and representing the school positively. Leadership can be demonstrated in formal roles or through informal actions that promote a positive school climate.

Peer Support: Actively assisting and encouraging peers. This includes offering assistance with coursework, when appropriate, participating in peer mentoring, peer mediation and/or other forms of peer support at school.

Perseverance: Maintaining a determined and persistent approach to challenges, demonstrating the ability to overcome obstacles and setbacks. This includes learning from mistakes, seeking help when needed, and maintaining a positive attitude in the face of difficulty. Scholars who persevere demonstrate resilience and a growth mindset.

Polite Language: Consistently using respectful and courteous language in all interactions, both verbal and written. This includes addressing others respectfully, avoiding offensive or derogatory language, and communicating in a manner that promotes positive relationships.

Preparedness: Arriving to class and school activities on time, with all necessary materials and assignments completed. This includes actively participating in class discussions, seeking clarification when needed, and demonstrating a proactive approach to learning. Scholars who are prepared demonstrate responsibility and a commitment to academic success.

Proactive Safety Measures: Actively contributing to a safe and secure school environment by identifying and reporting potential hazards, following safety protocols, and promoting a culture of awareness. This includes reporting suspicious activity, participating in safety drills, and advocating for a safe and respectful campus.

Productive Use of an Electronic Device: Utilizing electronic devices (laptops, tablets, phones) in a manner that enhances learning, facilitates collaboration, or promotes responsible digital citizenship. This includes using devices for research, note-taking, educational applications, or approved communication, while adhering to school policies and respecting digital etiquette.

Prosocial Organization Affiliation: Actively participating in school-sanctioned clubs, organizations, or activities that promote positive social interaction, community service, or personal development, and remain in good standing with the group for the duration of its existence. This includes contributing to group initiatives, representing the school positively, and/or attending athletic/academic competitions to support peers.

Punctuality: Consistently arriving to scheduled classes and activities on time and remain present for the duration. This includes submitting assignments and other required materials by established deadlines. Scholars who demonstrate timeliness and punctuality show respect for the time of others, exhibit responsibility, and contribute to a productive learning environment.

Resilience: Demonstrating the capacity to adapt and recover from adversity or challenges. This includes maintaining composure in stressful situations, seeking constructive solutions, and learning from experiences. Scholars who exhibit resilience demonstrate emotional maturity and a strong sense of self.

Service: Volunteering time, skill or resources to assist others without expecting personal recognition or reward. This includes participating in community service projects, mentoring peers, or assisting school staff. Scholars who engage in selfless service demonstrate a commitment to serving the greater good.

Welcoming Entry onto School Property: Contributing to a positive school climate by assisting authorized visitors with entering the building, such as holding doors or providing courteous access, and offering a warm greeting as individuals arrive on campus. This also includes refraining from allowing scholars or visitors to enter the building through unauthorized entry ways or propping a door open to get back in.

Code Violation Behavior Matrix

The matrix includes behaviors or code of conduct “violations,” their definitions, and appropriate responses. The levels indicate what responses can be implemented per offense and per grade band. However, just because a behavior is eligible for a level, does not mean a school must issue that response. “N/A” indicates that the response cannot be applied.

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS	RESPONSES					
	RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used.	See Guide to Supporting Student Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
Profane Language/Gestures. Cursing or using vulgar or sexually explicit language and/or gestures. The language does not have to include an intended target. NOTE: Patterns of behavior (3 or more) may rise to an Office Discipline Referral for biased based behavior, threat & intimidation, or other related code violations.	Restorative Conversation* Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection or Apology Parent/Guardian Conference Loss of Privilege Social Skills Lesson Seat Change Detention Referral to School Counselor	All Grades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Taunting/Name Calling. Calling other community members something other than their preferred name; making comments that may be perceived as harmful. NOTE: Patterns of behavior (3 or more) may rise to an Office Discipline Referral for bias-based Behavior and/or investigation for bullying or harassment.	Restorative Conversation* Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection or Apology* Parent/Guardian Conference Loss of Privilege Social Skills Lesson Seat Change Detention Referral to School Counselor Use of Classroom Management Strategies* Restorative Conversation*	All Grades All Grades	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A	N/A N/A
Disruptive Behavior. Intentionally disrupting the school environment by not following expectations despite non-verbal and verbal redirection provided. Disruptive behavior can include: leaving assigned seat without permission speaking when voice level should be zero failing to adhere to posted classroom norms	Parent/Guardian Contact* Calm Corner Reflection or Apology Parent/Guardian Conference Loss of Privilege or other Logical Consequence Social Skills Lesson Seat Change Detention Classroom Job Daily Report or Check-in/Check-Out Referral to School Counselor					

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS	RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used.	RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
	See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
Minor Physical Aggression. Engaging in physical aggression with another community member. This behavior is distinct from assault and a mutual fight, which involves the intent to cause physical harm. Minor physical aggression can include: - Play-fighting/horseplay - Pushing, shoving, and/or bumping - Tripping or blocking another scholar's path - Throwing objects at another scholar in a non-harmful manner - Grabbing or pulling another scholar's belongings without permission NOTE: Patterns of physical aggression or the targeting of a specific scholar(s) may rise to Office Discipline Referrals (i.e. Mutual Fight, Assault, Bullying).	Restorative Conversation* Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection or Apology* Calm Corner Parent/Guardian Conference Loss of Privilege or other Logical Consequence Social Skills Lesson Seat Change Mediation or Circle Detention Referral to School Counselor	All Grades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cheating. Submitting or intending to submit work that is not their own. NOTE: More severe forms of cheating may rise to an Office Discipline Referral for Academic Dishonesty.	Logical Consequence (i.e. failing grade)* Opportunity to submit own work* Parent/Guardian Contact* Parent/Guardian Conference Seat Change Project/Lesson -Detention (could be utilized to re-do assignment)	All Grades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Class Cutting. Intentionally refusing to attend classes on a weekly or daily basis. NOTE: To be used for K-8 schools as high schools track class cuts in daily attendance but responses still apply.	Complete missed work* Parent/Guardian Contact* Detention (could be utilized to complete work) Failing grade for incomplete assignments Parent/Guardian Conference Behavior Contract Daily Report or Check-in/Check-Out Mentoring Career Interests Exploration	All Grades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Elopement. Leaving the classroom, school grounds or a designated supervised area without explicit permission from school staff. NOTE: More severe circumstances of elopement may rise to an Office Discipline Referral for Reckless Endangerment.	Allow Re-Entry* (through proper entry procedures) Parent Contact* Safety Plan* (if recurrent) Daily Report or Check-in/Check-Out Mentoring	All Grades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
Minor Inappropriate Use of Electronic Device. Scholars who use a cell phone or electronic device (including smart phones/watches, laptops, etc.) during unauthorized times. NOTE: Severe cases of inappropriate use of device involving harmful content may rise to an Office Discipline Referral for Inappropriate Use of Electronic Device.		Restorative Conversation* Parent/Guardian Contact Parent/Guardian Conference Loss of Privilege-Detention Classroom Job	All Grades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	Academic Dishonesty & Forgery. Producing a signature for anyone other than self and/or altering documents or official school records such as grades, attendance or reports. Cheating, including plagiarism, on higher level assignments such as state testing, exams, presentations, etc.	Parent/Guardian Conference* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service, Loss of Credit, etc.) Long-term OSS and disciplinary hearing referrals may only be utilized for severe or repeated cases.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
2	Destruction of Property (Less than \$500). Damaging or defacing school property or the personal property of another community member.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Community Service* Restorative Conversation* Report to Central Education Office* Restitution can be requested but not required by UCS as a consequence. OSS should only be utilized for repeat offenses. In some cases a scholar who is displaying destructive behavior is in crisis. Schools should follow behavioral health emergency protocols.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Destruction of Property (More than \$500). Damaging or defacing school property or the personal property of another community member.	The same guidance for less than \$500 applies to this behavior. Long-term OSS and disciplinary hearing referrals may only be utilized for severe or repeated cases. In some cases a scholar who is displaying destructive behavior is in crisis. Schools should follow behavioral health emergency protocols.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
4	Theft (Less than \$500). Taking the school property or the personal property of another community member.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Restorative Conversation* Reflection or Apology* Report to Central Education Office* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Parent/Guardian Conference Short-term OSS if scholar does not return property; context and intent must be considered.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	Theft (More than \$500). Taking school property or the personal property of another community member. This is property that is objectively significant in expense and causes a financial burden.	The same guidance for less than \$500 applies to this behavior. If a scholar does not return the property and harm cannot be repaired, the behavior may result in a long-term suspension and disciplinary hearing referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
6	Robbery. Taking or attempting to take the property of another scholar or community member by force, threat of force, or by putting the victim in fear.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Restorative Conversation* Reflection or Apology* Parent/Guardian Conference* Report to Central Education Office* Restitution can be requested but not required by UCS as a consequence. Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Long-term suspension may only be utilized for purpose of creating a safety plan. Disciplinary hearing referral may be submitted if harm cannot be repaired.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
7	Unauthorized Entry into School Property. Providing and/or gaining entry into School Universal property without the appropriate authorization. Unauthorized Entry can include: attending/visiting school during suspension allowing themselves/other scholars/community members into a school without following entrance protocols. NOTE: If a scholar returns to school at the conclusion of their suspension without a parent/guardian, this should NOT be coded as unauthorized entry.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Restorative Conversation* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Parent/Guardian Conference If there is no suspicion of harmful intent, the response should only be addressed at school level unless the behavior constitutes a pattern. OSS and disciplinary hearing referrals should only be utilized for situations where a scholar allowed other scholars in a building or entered another building with the intent to cause harm.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
8	Mutual Fight. Engaging in a one-on-one physical altercation with the intent to inflict harm through physical contact. This is a physical altercation in which neither of the participants are identified as victims. Participation can include: Offering or accepting escalation invitations• Declining de-escalation opportunities Rejecting adult assistance Refusing opportunities to walk away NOTE: Persistent instigation and participation in mutual fights despite multiple interventions may rise to an Office Discipline Referral for Instigation.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Mediation or Circle* (attempted) Parent/Guardian Conference Reflection or Apology Stay Away Contract Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) OSS should only be utilized for repeat offenses Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	N/A	N/A
9	Mutual Group Fight. Engaging in a physical altercation with multiple willing participants. This is a physical altercation in which none of the participants are identified as victims, only offenders. Participation can include: Offering or accepting escalation invitations Declining de-escalation opportunities Rejecting adult assistance Refusing opportunities to walk away	The same guidance for mutual fight applies to this behavior. For more serious matters, reach out to the school safety officer or PPD for mediation support. Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. Disciplinary hearing referrals may be submitted if group fight results in injury and/or conflict is beyond repair.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
10	Group Assault. Participating in an assault against one or more community members. This is an incident in which participants can clearly be identified as victims and offenders. NOTE: The difference between a group assault and a mutual group fight lies in intent and agreement to engage in group physical conflict.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection/Apology* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan* Report to Central Education Office* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Mediation or Circle Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. For more serious matters, reach out to the school safety officer or PPD for mediation support. Level of participation and context must be considered in the decision to submit disciplinary hearing referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	*Grades 6-12

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
11	Assault. Intentionally causing physical harm on a community member including punching, kicking, spitting at, stomping on or other forms of physical or offensive contact without serious injury.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection/Apology* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan* Report to Central Education Office* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Mediation or Circle Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. For more serious matters, reach out to the school safety officer or PPD for mediation support. Level of participation and context must be considered in the decision to submit a disciplinary hearing referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
12	Causing Serious Bodily Injury.* Intentionally engaging in a mutual fight or assault that results in bodily injury to another community member. This is an injury that warrants medical treatment beyond school first aid procedures. NOTE: IDEA definition of serious bodily injury under special circumstances for scholars with IEPs- An injury that creates a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty.	Medical documentation* Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection/Apology* Parent/Guardian Conference* Report to Central Education Office* Safety Plan* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. Disciplinary Hearing Referral*	All Grades	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12
13	Instigation. Urging, encouraging, inviting, challenging or otherwise advising a community member to commit an act of physical aggression or other dangerous behavior. Instigation can include: Enlisting community members to engage in a fight Encouraging physical conflict verbally or through social media Playing an active role in an incident (i.e. planning time, location or planning to record the incident) Persistent engaging in mutual fights (3+)	Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection/Apology* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Long term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. For more serious matters, reach out to the school safety officer or PPD for mediation support. Level of participation and context must be considered in the decision to submit a disciplinary hearing referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
14	Reckless Endangerment. Knowingly disregarding a substantial and unjustifiable risk that one's conduct will cause physical harm. This is an incident in which the scholar objectively should have known that their actions could cause harm; the focus must be on the risk more than the intent. Reckless endangerment can include throwing or swinging heavy objects; tampering with objects that can cause harm; intentionally setting off a fire alarm; impeding traffic; or flashing or using a lookalike weapon, such as a toy gun. Possession of a true toy gun without wielding or using it should be coded as a minor disruption.	Behavior must qualify under examples provided in the definition. * Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection/Apology* Parent/Guardian Conference* Referral to Central Education Office* Safety Plan Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. Level of participation and context should be considered in the decision to submit disciplinary hearing referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
15	Consensual Sexual Act. Scholars who engage in a consensual sexual act.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Referral to Counselor* Safety Plan	All Grades	Grades 3-12	N/A	N/A	N/A

16	Non-Consensual Inappropriate Touch/Exposure. Engaging in unwanted touching of another community member or exposing oneself or another community member. Non-consensual touch or exposure can include: - groping/grabbing slapping someone on the butt - exposing oneself (flashing) - exposing another community member (pantsing) - exposing another community member by creating and/or sharing a recording of them (using the restroom, engaging in sexual activity)	Any reported groping, grabbing, or exposure of private parts (their own or someone else's) must be reported to the Director, Climate Culture and Safety for a Title IX assessment. Follow these directions: Obtain a statement from the complainant ONLY and email it to lfinney@universalcompanies.org (include all involved scholars' names in the email). DO NOT get statements from the accused scholar(s) or any witnesses. DO NOT issue any discipline. - Parent/Guardian Contact* - Report to Central Education Office* - Restorative Conversation (with education around boundaries) * - Referral to Counselor* - Safety Plan* - Document in Guardian (Bullying/Harassment system) * - Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan (suspension can only be issued AFTER a Title IX assessment) - Intent and impact should be considered in decision to submit disciplinary hearing referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
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BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
17	Bias-Based Behavior. Unwelcome conduct relating to an individual's known or perceived protected classification. Protected classifications are: race, color, ethnicity, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, English language proficiency, veteran status, and disability. Bias-based behavior can include: Graffiti or online posts containing offensive words, phrases or images Using slurs, making jokes or negative comments toward or about another person based on their legally protected characteristic. NOTE: This code should be used for behaviors that do not rise to harassment as defined below.	Restorative Conversation (with education on origin of the action or word/phrase and the impact it has on others)* Parent/Guardian Contact* Reflection/Apology* Parent/Guardian Conference Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) OSS should only be utilized for repeated behavior that has not been resolved through education/intervention.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	N/A	N/A
18	Harassment. Participating in unwelcome conduct relating to an individual's known or perceived protected classification. Protected classifications are: race, color, ethnicity, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, English language proficiency, veteran status, and disability. In order to be characterized as harassment, the conduct must be 1. subjectively and objectively offensive; and 2. So severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school.	Please note sexual harassment and sexual assault are included in the definition of harassment. Follow these directions : Obtain a statement from the complainant ONLY and submit it by completing the form for Title IX and email it to lfinney@universalcompanies.org (include all involved scholars' names in the email). DO NOT get statements from the accused scholar(s) or any witnesses. DO NOT issue any discipline. Parent/Guardian Contact* Report to Central Education Office* Restorative Conversation* Referral to Counselor* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan* Document in Guardian (Bullying/Harassment system)* Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan only AFTER a title IX assessment. Intent and impact should be considered in decision to submit Disciplinary Hearing Referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12

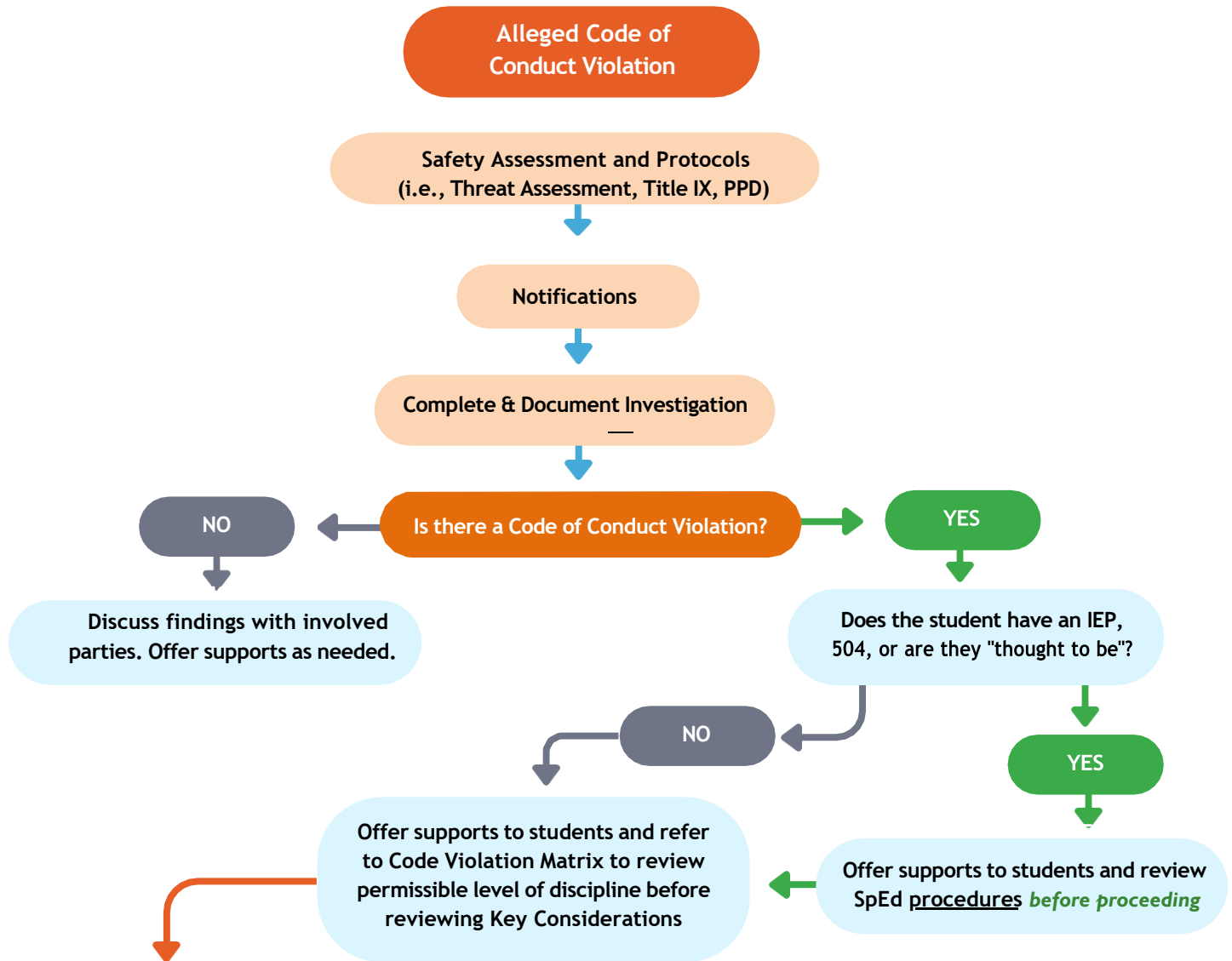
BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
19	Bullying/Cyberbullying. Participating in intentional electronic, written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at a scholar or scholars, which occurs in a school setting, as well as off-campus conduct, including online or social media conduct, that has a continuing effect on the campus, and which is severe, persistent, or pervasive AND has the effect of doing any of the following: 1. Substantially interfering with a scholar's education; 2. Creating of a threatening school environment; 3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. Bullying can take many forms and can include a variety of behaviors including conduct that is physical, verbal, nonverbal, psychological or relational and cyber/online activity.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Report to Central Education Office* Reflection/Apology* Restorative Conversation* Referral to Counselor* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan* Document in Guardian (Bullying/Harassment system)* Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. Intent, impact and ability to repair harm should be considered in decision to submit Disciplinary Hearing Referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12
20	Inappropriate Use of an Electronic Device. Scholars who use electronics (cell phones, chromebooks etc.) in inappropriate ways that cause harm. Inappropriate Use of Device can include - Posting sexual images/videos - Recording someone in a place where they have an expectation of privacy - Impersonating school community members - Posting an incident on social media	Any reported inappropriate use of device involving the non-consensual sharing of sexual content must be reported to the Director, Compliance Monitoring for a Title IX assessment. Follow these directions: Obtain a statement from the complainant ONLY, submit it by completing this form Title IX Assessment and email it to lfinney@universalcompanies.org (include all involved scholars' names in the email). DO NOT get statements from the accused scholar(s) or any witnesses. DO NOT issue any discipline. Parent/Guardian Contact* Report to Central Education Office* Restorative Conversation (with education around boundaries)* Referral to Counselor* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan* if non-consensual sexual content document in Guardian (Bullying/Harassment system)* Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan only AFTER a title IX assessment. Intent and impact should be considered in decision to submit Disciplinary Hearing Referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A

Behavior Definitions		Responses					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		Response Guidance	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
21	Threats/Intimidation. Threatening to engage in an act that could cause harm and/or induce fear in another community member. Threats can be made verbally, in writing, with gestures or on social media, including posting content that materially impacts the school community (such as a weapon or perceived weapon). Intimidation can include intentionally frightening or threatening someone, typically to make them comply with a request or to deter them from an action.	If the incident involves threatening to use a weapon, or a threat to kill, and/or inflict severe injury, the school must follow the threat assessment process before proceeding with discipline. Parent/Guardian Contact* Report to Central Education Office* Restorative Conversation* Reflection/Apology* Referral to Counselor* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan* In some cases a scholar who makes threats is in crisis. Schools should follow behavioral health emergency protocols. Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. Intent and impact should be considered in decision to submit Disciplinary Hearing Referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
22	Threatening Mass Violence. Threatening to engage in an act that could cause serious physical harm or create a substantial risk of serious physical harm to a school community.	The same guidance for threats/intimidation applies to this behavior.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12
23	Hazing. Forcing a scholar to violate criminal law, consume a substance that subjects the scholar to harm, endure physical, mental or sexual brutality or perform any activity that endangers another for the purpose of initiating or enhancing a scholar's membership in a school organization/activity.	Any hazing that is sexual in nature must be reported to the Director, Climate Culture and Safety for a Title IX assessment. Follow these directions: Obtain a statement from the complainant ONLY, submit by completing this form for Title IX Assessment and email it to lfinney@universalcompanies.org (include all involved scholars' names in the email). DO NOT get statements from the accused scholar(s) or any witnesses. DO NOT issue any discipline. Parent/Guardian Contact* Report to Central Education Office* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan* Document in Guardian (Bullying/Harassment system)* Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan only AFTER a title IX assessment. Intent and impact should be considered in decision to submit disciplinary hearing referral.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
24	Gang Affiliation. Engaging in dangerous activities on behalf of an identified gang to commit disruptive or illegal acts on school property on behalf of the gang. Gangs may be identified by signs, symbols, slogans, colors, codes, verbal calls, or clothing items leading to behavior that is disruptive to the school community.	Any information regarding gangs or gang related activity, should be immediately reported to school administration and can also be reported to the Central Education Office The code should only be utilized when there is clear evidence that the behavior is directly connected to the scholar's gang affiliation. Parent/Guardian Contact* Report to Central Education Office* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan* Long-term OSS may only be utilized for safety plan.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12
25	Possession/Use of Tobacco. Possessing or using tobacco including products containing tobacco, alternative nicotine, electronic cigarettes, cigars, vapor product, and hookah.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Restoration Conversation * Report to Central Education Office* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Referral to Counselor Educational course OSS may only be utilized for repeat offenses.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	N/A	N/A	N/A
26	Possession/Use of Alcohol or Drugs. Possessing or using alcohol or other drugs, which includes drugs in edible, liquid, pills, powder or vape form.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Restoration Conversation * Report to Central Education Office* Parent/Guardian Conference* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) Referral to Counselor Educational course Long-term OSS may only be utilized for repeated/severe situations for a safety plan. Disciplinary hearing referral may not be submitted for first time offenses of personal use quantity.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
27	Distribution of Alcohol or Drugs. Selling, distributing and/or exchanging drugs/alcohol or having the intent to sell, distribute and/or exchange drugs/alcohol (i.e. intent could be determined by quantity, paraphernalia, witnesses).	The same guidance for possession applies to this behavior. Long-term OSS may only be utilized for purposes of creating a safety plan. Disciplinary hearing referral may be submitted if widespread.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12

BEHAVIOR DEFINITIONS		RESPONSES					
Behavior definitions must be carefully read to ensure the appropriate code is being used. All incidents must be fully investigated before an Office Discipline Referral (ODR) is created. All incidents must be documented regardless of response level.		RESPONSE GUIDANCE	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
		See Guide to Supporting Scholar Behavior for more detailed information on behavior responses.	<i>In-School Response Only</i>	<i>Short-term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Long-Term OSS and/or other Responses</i>	<i>Disciplinary Hearing Eligible</i>	<i>Expulsion Referral Eligible</i>
28	Possession/Use of a Weapon. Any object, device, or instrument, which, in its inherent and functional purpose, is intended to be a weapon. Weapons include but is not limited to, firearms, whether loaded or not; bullets/loaded magazine, pellet or BB gun, knives, cutting instruments, nunchaku, brass knuckles, electric shock devices, or mace and any other tool, instrument, or object used or intended to be used to inflict serious bodily injury to another. Weapons do NOT include water or gel blaster toy guns, Note: See minor physical disruption and reckless endangerment for action involving non-weapons or threats/intimidation for weapons social media.	The Weapons Protocol provides guidance around weapons, including reporting protocols. Parent/Guardian Contact* Restoration Conversation* Report to Central Education Office* Parent/Guardian Conference* Safety Plan, Weapons Rubric (Grades 6-12)* Safety Plan* Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.), Weapons Waiver, or Disciplinary Hearing Referral (Grades 6-12)	All Grades	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12 or Weapons Waiver	Grades 6-12
29	Possession of an Incendiary Device. Possessing incendiary devices such as matches, lighters, fireworks, or firecrackers.	Parent/Guardian Contact* Restoration Conversation* Report to Central Education Office* Parent/Guardian Conference* Restorative Project/Reflection on Fire Safety* Safety Plan Logical Consequence (Loss of Privilege, Detention, Community Service etc.) A disciplinary hearing referral should only be submitted for extenuating circumstances (e.g. intent to harm).	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	N/A
30	Use of an Incendiary Device. Using or activating incendiary devices such as matches, lighters, fireworks, or firecrackers. This may include accidental or intentional fire starting.	ANY fire (no matter size) must be reported to Phila. Fire Dept. A Fire Marshall respond to determine cause and origin. In most cases, the student involved will be referred to the Juvenile Fire Stoppers Program. In some cases a student who attempts to start a fire is in crisis. Schools should follow behavioral health emergency protocols.	All Grades	Grades 3-12	Grades 3-12	Grades 6-12	Grades 6-12

Incident Flowchart



Key Considerations Before Determining Discipline Three outcome paths:

Alternative Consequence

If there are no prior suspensions and/or harm can be repaired, an alternative consequence is likely appropriate.

Alternative consequences (e.g., mediation, community service, detention, reflection) should always be considered and offered before resorting to out-of-school suspension.

Suspension

*If this is a repeat behavior and/or time is needed to put a safety plan in place, a short-term suspension (1–3 days) is likely appropriate. K–2 suspensions must be approved by the Central Education Office.

All long-term suspensions require approval: 4–6 days: Director of Climate, Culture and Safety
7–10 days: Central Education Office

Disciplinary Hearing Referral (Grades 6-12)

If harm cannot be repaired and the student has not responded to all other interventions, a referral for a disciplinary hearing is likely appropriate. Assistant Superintendent approval is required.

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