

**University Heights
Charter School**



UNIVERSITY
HEIGHTS
CHARTER SCHOOL

Parent and Scholar Handbook

Mission:

To develop in ALL students the
character, **scholarship**, and **leadership**
necessary to succeed in
life, **college**, and **community**.

2018-2019

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UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION & GOALS

The Mission of University Heights Charter School is

1. to provide each scholar with innovative, experiential and collaborative learning experiences emphasizing character education that develop positive intellectual, social, and physical outcomes of significance;
2. to promote self directed, lifelong learning skills;
3. to facilitate the scholar’s ability to make responsible decisions.

In short, UHCS seeks to develop in children:



Goals of University Heights Charter School

All scholars will acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to:

- Communicate effectively by speaking, writing, listening, and reading for information and enjoyment.
- Be an active inquirer, problem solver, and appropriate risk taker.
- Be a responsible citizen, show strong character, showing respect and concern for my classmates, school, community, environment, country, and world.
- Practice effective decision-making and commit to a healthy, productive lifestyle.

We believe to achieve these goals; everyone will have to “Work Hard, Get Smart. Work Harder Get Smarter.” We also practice the REACH core virtues of Respect, Excellence, Accountability, Caring, and Honesty.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Students in grades	May arrive as early as	<u>Must arrive by</u>	Will eat breakfast at
PreK	7:30 AM	9:00 AM	8:30 AM- 9:00 AM
K-2	7:30 AM	8:05 AM	7:30 AM-7:50 AM
3-6	7:00 AM	7:45 AM	7:20 AM-7:45 AM
7-8	7:00 AM	7:30 AM	7:30 AM-7:55 AM

Scholars who arrive late will be permitted to eat breakfast.

For morning entrance, at the **Lower School**, ALL scholars should use the **Main Entrance** at **74 Hartford St.**

At the **Elementary School**, scholars arriving:

- **BEFORE 7:45 AM**
 - Grades 3-6 should use the **GYM ENTRANCE on Internal Driveway.**
- **AFTER 8:00 AM** all students should use the **MAIN OFFICE ENTRANCE on the Internal Driveway.**

ATTENDANCE Students are expected to be present 10 minutes before official class start time so they have enough time to be prepared for school and eat if they choose to do so. School begins promptly at **7:45 AM at the Lower School, 8:00 AM at the Elementary School, and 8:00 AM at the Middle School.**

If a student does not arrive at the designated start time for the school that she/he attends, she/he is considered late to school. Late students are required to get a late pass from the office in order to be admitted to class.

Being late to school robs students of precious educational time. It is also very disruptive to the rest of the class and harms their learning as well. Therefore, tardiness should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Excused Tardiness: Tardies will only be excused for:

- Medical appointment (with a doctor's note)
- Another situation that, in the judgment of the school administration, is serious enough to merit excuse.

All other tardies will be considered unexcused, including those related to transportation or taking siblings to school.

Consequences for Unexcused Tardiness:

Truancy is defined as 10 or more cumulative unexcused absences (N.J.A.C.6A:16-1.3). All school districts are required to have a policy and procedure that includes a definition of unexcused absences that count toward truancy; thus, how "excused" and "unexcused" absences are defined for purposes of expectations and consequences regarding truancy, student conduct, promotion, retention and award of credit is a local decision (N.J.A.C.6A:16-7.6(a)3). The NJ Smart Cumulative Days Towards Truancy field is not considered in the calculation of chronic absenteeism.

ABSENCE POLICY Learning can only happen in school if students are present. Therefore, absences should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Excused Absences: Absences that will be excused include:

- Student illness (with a doctor's note)
- Medical appointment (with a doctor's note)
- Religious holiday (with parent/guardian note)
- Another situation that, in the judgment of the school administration, is serious enough to merit excused status.

In order for a student to be excused, staff must receive written verification of the reason for the absence from a parent/guardian or doctor within two days of the absence. Suspensions will be considered excused absences. If students want to attend a program not sponsored by University Heights Charter School, e.g. a church event, they must bring in a note from a parent and get permission from the principal. Students must also remember to get assignments from all their teachers.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences

- **Four unexcused absences are considered excessive. After the fourth unexcused absence, the parent/guardian will need to come to school to meet with a school leader.** The parent has the responsibility to meet with the school staff within 5 days of being contacted about the need for a meeting. At the meeting, a written attendance plan will be

developed among the three parties. The plan will document the avoidable obstacles to the student's attendance and the concrete strategies that will be implemented in order to overcome these obstacles. All three parties will sign the plan, pledging to make it a reality. If the parent/guardian or student fails to attend the meeting, the student may be denied other privileges until the meeting takes place.

- **After 10 unexcused absences, students will be referred to truancy court, which may include fines of \$100 or more per unexcused absence or mandatory attendance improvement program participation.**

SNOW DAYS, DELAYED STARTING, AND EARLY DISMISSAL Weather and other emergency conditions may require a delay in the opening of school or an early dismissal. Normally, the decision to close school or to delay opening will be made by 6:15 a.m. on the day in question. When weather is questionable, parents should monitor radio stations carefully. When the decision for a two-hour delayed opening is made, all school-related procedures, i.e., starting times, classes, etc., will be delayed for two full hours. However, school will be dismissed at regular time.

Early closings will be avoided whenever possible. However, when an emergency early closing is decided upon, a calling chain of school staff will attempt to telephone all parents or emergency contacts with the information about the situation. No child will be released unless the parents have been notified of the early release. We ask that parents cooperate with us in emergency situations by being available when these emergency calls are being made.

VISITING POLICY To ensure student safety and minimize class disruption, all visitors, including parents, should adhere to our visitors' policy as follows:

- Upon entering the building, visitors should sign in with the Security Guard and walk directly to the office. Parents/guardians must check in with front office staff, in addition to signing in with the security guard.
- If parents are bringing in students late, they should be checked in with the Security Guard and left in the lobby on all days. Staff will escort them to class.
- Office staff will assist visitors with their purpose in visiting. If they cannot address their purpose, they will determine which staff member can best do so and arrange for a meeting.
- At the conclusion of the visit, the visitor should exit directly out of the building, signing out with the Security Guard as they do so.
- If a parent seeks to speak to a teacher, the office will make an appointment. If it is urgent, they should see the principal or executive director first, and they will determine if disruption of class is warranted.
- If a child is being picked up early, a staff member should retrieve that child. Parents are not permitted to go to classrooms to pick up their children.
- At no time should visitors go directly without staff escort to any room except the office. This includes classrooms and support staff offices.

LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY Scholars should bring a signed note, indicating the time and reason for early dismissal. The note should be handed into the classroom teacher first thing in the morning. Parents should go to the Welcome Desk first in the lobby when picking up scholars. The staff member will have your child sent or brought to the office for you.

DISMISSAL Times and locations for dismissal are as follows:

- **Lower School** (PreK-Grade 2) will ALL dismiss at **3PM Monday - Friday** in the Lower School gym. If the gym is not available for dismissal a One Call will go out to notify parents of the modified pick-up location.
- **Elementary School** (Grades 3-6) will dismiss at **3:20 PM Monday-Friday.**
- **Middle School** (Grades 7-8) will dismiss at **2:45 PM Monday-Friday.**

Parents/Guardians should present their dismissal placard (lanyard Lower School) to pick up scholars at dismissal. After 15 minutes, scholars will return to the main lobby until a parent parks and comes in to pick them up. Every minute that students are considered late in being picked up the fee for late pick up is \$1 every minute. A staff member will clock the time the parent arrives and parents will sign the late pick up form. An invoice for payment of this late pick up will be mailed to the family.

CUSTODY & RELEASE OF SCHOLARS Unless the principal has been presented with a valid court decision affecting parental rights, both parents will have full rights regarding school-related matters relating to their children.

Scholars will be released only to parents or designated emergency contacts unless written permission for an alternate has been presented to the principal or teacher. In an emergency situation, please call the main office.

BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION A main goal of University Heights Charter School is to assist scholars in developing positive self-discipline and responsibility for their actions. A second goal is to create and maintain a safe, orderly, and responsible school and classroom environment that promotes individual and group achievement and physical and emotional well-being.

The teachers, staff, and principal look forward to working in partnership with parents and guardians to foster the social and academic development of children. Please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher if you have a concern relative to academic, social, emotional, or behavioral areas. If a problem or concern cannot be resolved at that level, feel free to contact the social worker, or principal who will work together with all concerned to solve the problem.

The school will also attempt to keep parents informed of scholars' progress and potential problems. Teacher notes and newsletters, phone calls, progress reports, report cards, and conferences are some of these methods.

If students do not comply with behavioral expectations, a student's age and maturity level are considered when consequences are given. This can range from a warning and apology, to loss of privilege, time in the Dean's Office or Principal's Office, or in or out of school suspension, depending on the severity of the infraction. Working with students to help them develop an understanding of why particular behaviors are inappropriate is part of the discipline process. A detailed scope and sequence of behavior infractions is outlined in the Code of Conduct on page 10.

AREA & ACTIVITY SPECIFIC RULES Specific rules for the use of the gymnasium and cafeteria are in the addenda to this document. All scholars are expected to know, and abide by, these rules.

ARTICLES NOT TO BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL Large sums of money or other valuables. (The school cannot be responsible for these items).

1. Radios, walkman-type portables, iPods, MP3 players electronic games, beepers or pagers, virtual pets, Pokémon cards, Webkins, etc. These are distracting and are liable to disappear. In addition, they tend to prevent the active physical play so necessary for our children
2. Weapons and other dangerous objects such as knives, box cutters, razor blades, and other items which might intentionally or accidentally hurt people have no place at school. Administrative penalties will be severe. Parents will be notified immediately, and depending on the item, the authorities may be notified.
3. Skateboards and roller-blades; no sneakers with wheels (Heelys a/k/a Heelies).
4. Fireworks. In New Jersey State, the possession and discharge of fireworks by unlicensed or unauthorized persons is illegal. Individuals involved in the discharge of these devices will be suspended immediately, and their parents will be notified.
5. Laser Pointing Devices. The high intensity beam of light from these devices can cause serious eye injuries.

CANDY, GUM, SUNFLOWER SEEDS Candy, gum, mints, sunflower or pumpkin seeds are not to be eaten or chewed during the school day.

CELL PHONES & ELECTRONICS Students may not use or show cell phones or electronics in school without teacher permission. Cell phones and electronics will be confiscated if seen or heard. For the first offense, they will be returned at the end of the day. On the second offense they will be turned over to the principal and must be retrieved by the parent/guardian.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR University Heights teachers know that if they are vigilant about small behaviors, larger ones tend not to occur. They "sweat the small stuff." The following are some behaviors that will prompt immediate correction:

- Talking or making comments while the teacher or a peer is talking.
- Putting one's head down in class or slouching
- Uniform infractions such as un-tucked shirt or wearing a non-uniform sweater/jacket
- Calling out without permission
- Tapping the desk or chair
- Making faces or trying to get scholars to laugh at them
- Playing with an object or one's hair
- Leaning backwards in one's chair
- Pouting when not called on or when not getting one's way

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR Any action, noise or statement that interrupts a lesson or other instructional activity or distracts other scholars or the teacher during such activity can be said to be disruptive.

DRESS/UNIFORM The uniform policy will be strictly enforced and scholars out of uniform will be addressed and parents notified. Boys and girls should not wear hats of any kind within the school building. They tend to distract from scholar concentration on learning. Parents should be careful to assure that scholars wear or bring appropriate coats, hats, gloves, jackets, sweaters, etc., for the weather, as children do go outside throughout the year. See Addendum E for specific Dress Code/Uniform standards. Scholars must wear proper uniform to school. Jewelry is allowed; however if scholars are playing with their items they will be asked to place items in their backpack to avoid academic distractions. Teachers or office staff will call parents of scholars not wearing proper uniform and remind them about uniform code. In some cases, it may be necessary for a parent to bring appropriate uniform to school.

FIGHTING OR BULLYING University Heights Charter School prohibits acts of fighting, harassment, intimidation or bullying on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus. The school expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, and community members, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment.

HOMEWORK Consequences for incomplete (less than 75%), poor, or missing homework will be as follows:

- Parent will be notified and missing work will count against grading. In cases of chronic incomplete or missing homework, students may be required to complete work during a time designated by the classroom teacher or building administrator.

ILLEGAL USE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL The use of alcohol, stimulants and depressants, or other illegal drugs, other than those prescribed by a doctor, are forbidden.

INSUBORDINATION Scholars will be expected to follow the reasonable guidelines and requests of teachers, instructional assistants, bus drivers and other supervisory staff at all times.

BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS Teachers within this organization will utilize positive behavior support frameworks that focus on individual or whole class incentives that are utilized to support the development of a positive classroom culture and the development of individual skills across all developmental domains. If there is a need for an informal behavioral plan for individual students, teachers will inform parents/guardians of the plan. If a formal behavior plan is required a RTI team member will notify parents of the RTI process to support the shaping of positive behaviors.

PLAY-FIGHTING & ROUGHHOUSING Due to the possibility of accidental injury and the chance that what started as play might escalate into a real fight, both play-fighting and other rough body contact are prohibited.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT UHCS is committed to maintaining an environment that creates a safe haven for scholars. The school acknowledges that scholars are entrusted to us with the expectation that their educational experience will take place in such an environment. With this in mind, the school will not tolerate activities on its premises, or on trips and activities, which endanger the safety, morals, health, or welfare of its scholars. Disciplinary

and/or legal actions will take place for individuals who are members of the school community or visitors who engage in the following:

1. Physical violence.
2. The use of foul or threatening language toward a student, staff member or other visitor.
3. Possession, using or selling alcohol, drugs or other controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia, including beepers or pagers.
4. Vandalism.
5. Theft or robbery.
6. The possession, use or sale of weapons, fireworks, or other dangerous instruments, or contraband, including instruments that may have the appearance of a weapon, or may be reasonably mistaken for a weapon. No scholar or visitor shall have on his or her person any firearm, knives, dangerous chemicals, explosives, or any other object which could be used as a weapon.

SCHOOL GROUNDS & BUILDINGS Scholars should use school facilities at times and in ways that are safe and appropriate. Off-limit areas for scholars include driveways, parking lot, basement, elevator, faculty room, the roof of any structure on school property, and school lawns not designated as playing areas. Only scholars participating in approved after-school activities should be in school buildings after school. All other scholars should leave the school premises immediately after school each day.

SELLING ITEMS IN SCHOOL On occasion, Board of Trustees may give permission for the limited sale of items to benefit scholar activities or charitable causes. Other sales are not allowed.

VANDALISM Care and respect for school property is important to our mission of providing an optimal education for all scholars. Therefore, it is important that scholars respect school facilities and supplies. This includes school buildings, grounds, furniture, buses, textbooks and library books, and other school supplies, etc. P'm

VULGARITY-PROFANITY Obscene or other objectionable language has no place in school whether in anger, casual conversation, or as a joke. It will result in immediate disciplinary action. Parents who engage in such acts will not be welcomed at the school in the future.

USE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS

Teachers within this organization will utilize positive behavior support frameworks that focus on individual or whole class incentives, and that support the development of a positive classroom culture and the development of individual skills across all developmental domains. If instances occur during which positive behavioral supports are not yielding appropriate results, and the behavior of a student is impacting his or her own education and/or safety, and/or the education of those around him/her, additional supportive consequences as outlined below may be implemented.

CODE OF CONDUCT

<p><u>Level I: Misbehavior on the part of the student that interferes with orderly classroom procedures or the orderly operation of the school.</u></p>	<p><u>Level II: Misbehavior whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school</u></p>	<p><u>Level III: Acts directed against persons or property</u></p>	<p><u>Level IV: Acts which result in violence to another person or property or which pose a direct threat to the safety of others in the school.</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disruptive behavior ● Classroom tardiness ● Failure to complete assignments or carry out teacher directives ● Failure to follow instructions ● Wearing of or other apparel that can be disruptive to the educational process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unmodified Level I misconducts ● Disrespect of teacher ● Abusive language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unmodified Level II misconducts ● Continued disruptive behavior ● Extreme defiance ● Graffiti & Vandalism ● Stealing ● Threats to others ● Cheating ● Gender, racial, or ethnic harassment ● Unauthorized use of cellular phone ● Using forged notes ● Scholastic dishonesty ● Cutting class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unmodified Level III misconducts ● Possession/use/transfer of weapons ● Extortion ● Threat to teachers ● Fighting ● Bomb threat ● Alcohol/Smoking/Gambling ● Theft/possession/sale of stolen property ● Intimidation/Bullying ● Sexual harassment/Assault ● Arson ● Possession/use/selling of unauthorized or illegal substances ● Use of cell phone to post pictures on social media or to facilitate the commission of a crime or to inflict injury or harm to persons or property
<p>Discipline: Warning Dean’s Office visit Loss of privilege Call home Individual Behavior Chart Complete Refocus Form in a quiet area of the classroom If refocus form is filled out, he/she can return to class after discussing form with the teacher If refocus form is not filled out, parent needs to be called/behavior chart on desk. <u>Lower School Specific:</u> Level 1 Infractions students will utilize the Refocus room using school wide calming technique and are expected to be able to rejoin the classroom when calm in 20 minutes</p>	<p>Discipline: Dean’s Office visit Loss of privilege Call home Complete Refocus Form in a quiet area of the classroom If refocus form is filled out, he/she can return to class after discussing form with the teacher If refocus form is not filled out, parent needs to be called Loss of privilege/lunch with teacher.</p>	<p>Discipline: *Parent Phone Call *Dean of Students Office Notification form *In school Suspension (ISS) *Out of School Suspension (OSS) If student has been sent to Dean of Students office three or more times: *conference with parent *shadowed by a parent for part of the day *receive a parent communication log/behavior chart <u>Lower School Specific:</u> Level III Infractions 1st time offenders of a level III infraction is an automatic referral to the Dean’s Office and a 1 Day In School Removal. Repeat offenders of aggressive behavior (spitting, hitting) will be subject to multiple days of In School Removal or Behavioral Classroom (Administration’s Discretion)</p>	<p>Discipline: *Parent Phone Call *Dean of Students Office Notification form *Out of School Suspension (OSS) = Multiple offenses can result in varying amount of days of OSS. -Scholar Trial Period- re-integration into classroom with Dean of Students Alternate Placement /Expulsion= 2 documented home instruction periods</p>

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING

University Heights Charter School believes that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Therefore, the school will not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

The following is a summary of University Heights Charter School Policy 5131.1: Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying. The full policy was approved on June 21, 2011 and is immediately available on our website www.uhcs-newark.org or by request.

Definition

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” is defined as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus, or off school grounds, in accordance with law, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students, and that:

- A. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student’s property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
- B. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
- C. Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with the student’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

Consequences and Remedial Measures

Consequences and remedial measures for a student who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be varied and graded according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student and the student’s history of problem behaviors and performance. Consequences shall be consistent with the board approved code of student conduct (see next section) and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7. Consequences and remedial measures shall be designed to:

- A. Correct the problem behavior;
- B. Prevent another occurrence of the problem;
- C. Protect and provide support for the victim of the act; and
- D. Take corrective action for documented systemic problems related to harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for any staff member who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to disciplinary charges which could result in suspension or termination.

School Anti-Bullying Coordinator & School Anti-Bullying Specialist

The Executive Director will serve as the school anti-bullying coordinator who is responsible for coordinating and strengthening the school’s policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation, and bullying of students; collaborate with the school anti-bullying specialists and the Board of Trustees to prevent, identify, and respond to harassment, intimidation, and bullying of students in the school; to provide data to the Department of Education regarding harassment, intimidation, and bullying of students.

The School Social Worker will serve as the school anti-bullying specialist who is responsible for chairing the school safety team; leading the investigation of incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the school; and acting

as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying in the school.

School Safety Team

University Heights Charter School has a school safety team to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate by focusing on the ongoing, systematic process and practices in the school and to address school climate issues such as harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The school safety team will be chaired by the school anti-bullying specialist, meet monthly, and will include school principals, teachers, a parent of a student in the school; and other community members.

The school safety team shall:

- A. Receive any complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students that have been reported to the principal;
- B. Receive copies of any report prepared after an investigation of an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying;
- C. Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students in the school;
- D. Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
- E. Educate the community, including students, teachers, administrative staff, and parents, to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students;
- F. Participate in the training required pursuant to the provisions of (N.J.S.A.18A:37-13 et seq.) and other training which the principal or the school anti-bullying coordinator may request;
- G. Collaborate with the school anti-bullying coordinator in the collection of school-wide data and in the development of school policies to prevent and address harassment, intimidation, or bullying of students; and
- H. Execute such other duties related to harassment, intimidation, and bullying as requested by the principal or school anti-bullying coordinator.

No parent/guardian who is a member of the school safety team shall:

- A. Receive complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying of students that have been reported to the principal;
- B. Receive copies of reports prepared after an investigation of a harassment, intimidation or bullying incident;
- C. Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation or bullying of students; or
- D. Participate in any other activities of the team which may compromise the confidentiality of a student.

Investigating Reported Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying

All reported incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying shall be investigated promptly and in accordance with law and the following procedures:

All investigations shall be thorough and complete, and documented in writing, and shall include, but not be limited to:

- Taking of statements from victims, witnesses and accused;
- Careful examination of the facts;
- Support for the victim; and
- Determination if alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy.

The investigation shall be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee within one school day of the report of the incident and shall be conducted by a school anti-bullying specialist. The principal may appoint additional personnel who are not school anti-bullying specialists to assist in the investigation.

The investigation shall be completed as soon as possible, but not later than 10 school days from the date of the written report of the incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. In the event that there is information relative to the investigation that is anticipated but not yet received by the end of the 10-day period, the school anti-bullying specialist may amend the original report of the results of the investigation to reflect the information.

The results of the investigation shall be reported to the Executive Director within two school days of the completion of the investigation, and in accordance with law and board policy. The chief school administrator may initiate intervention services, establish training programs to reduce harassment, intimidation, or bullying and enhance school climate, impose discipline, order counseling as a result of the findings of the investigation, or take or recommend other appropriate action.

The results of each investigation shall be reported to the Board of Trustees no later than the date of the next board meeting following the completion of the investigation.

The Executive Director shall ensure that parents or guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation shall receive information about the investigation. This information shall be provided in writing within 5 school days after the results of the investigation are reported to the board and include the nature of the investigation, whether the school found evidence of harassment, intimidation, or bullying; or whether discipline was imposed or services provided to address the incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Range of Ways to Respond to Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying

University Heights Charter School recognizes that some acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be isolated incidents requiring that the school officials respond appropriately to the individuals committing the acts and provide support programs for victims. Other acts may be so serious or parts of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation or bullying that they require a response either at the classroom, school building or school levels or by law enforcement officials.

In considering whether a response beyond the individual is appropriate, the administrator shall consider the nature and circumstances of the act, the degree of harm, the nature and severity of the behavior, past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.

Retaliation and Reprisal Prohibited

University Heights Charter School prohibits reprisal or retaliation or false accusation against any person who witnesses and/or reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying by any student, school employee, board member, contracted_service provider, visitor or volunteer. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation or false accusation shall be determined by the chief school administrator and/or principal or their designee after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law and board policies and procedures.

Any act of retaliation or reprisal or false accusation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall not be tolerated. Any student, school employee, board member, contracted_service provider, volunteer or visitor who engages in the act of retaliation or reprisal or who falsely accuses another shall be subjected to consequence and appropriate remedial action. In cases where any state or federal law has allegedly been violated, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

Appeal Process

The parent or guardian may request a hearing before the board after receiving the information from the chief school administrator regarding the investigation. The hearing shall be held within 10 days of the request. The board shall meet in executive session for the hearing to protect the confidentiality of the students. At the hearing the board may hear from the school anti-bullying specialist about the incident, recommendations for discipline or services, and any programs instituted to reduce such incidents.

At the next Board of Trustees meeting following its receipt of the report, the board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the Executive Director's decision. The board's decision may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education, in accordance with law, no later than the 90 days after the issuance of the board's decision.

A parent, student, guardian, or organization may file a complaint with the Division on Civil Rights within 180 days of the occurrence of any incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying based on membership in a protected group as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination."

Week of Respect

The week beginning with the first Monday in October of each year is designated as a “Week of Respect” in the State of New Jersey. The school, in order to recognize the importance of character education, shall observe the week by providing age-appropriate instruction focusing on preventing harassment, intimidation, or bullying as defined by law (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14).

ROUTINES & OPERATIONS

Principal’s Message A daily principal’s message drawing from Project Wisdom will begin each day at the designated school start time.

LUNCH all scholars will eat lunch in school. Scholars may not leave school property during lunch. University Heights Charter School is part of the CEP lunch program (Community Eligibility Provision) and all scholars free lunch is available for all scholars. Scholars may also be permitted to bring in nutritious snacks or lunches of their own.

RECESS Because it is important for children to get fresh air and run around, careful consideration is used in determining if the children will have outdoor or indoor recess. On days that the decision is unclear, the temperature and wind chill factor are checked, and at least one staff member goes outside to get a “feel” for the weather. No specific temperature is used as a cut off, but the temperature, wind, and amount of sun are used to make the decision. At no time will the children be allowed to play in the snow. Please send your child to school each day prepared to go outside for recess with hats, gloves, scarves, and winter coats. It is better to be prepared than to be cold!

BIRTHDAYS Birthday celebrations may only be conducted during the student’s lunch time where parents may opt to bring in a healthy snack or cheese pizza for the **entire class**. We ask that parents refrain from bringing in sugary foods, such as cookies, cupcakes and cakes, and it is requested that any Beverages brought in are either water or **100% juice** (no artificial juices). Invitations for out-of-school birthday parties may not be distributed during school hours unless the **entire class** is invited to attend. Parents must notify their child’s classroom teacher prior to the birthday celebration. Siblings will not be permitted to attend celebrations in other classrooms. Remember celebrations should not interfere with instructional time.

LOST & FOUND Articles lost or found will be held in designated area for each respective school. All items not recovered at the end of the month will be donated. Scholars are reminded that placing their names on articles reduces the chance that items may be lost. University Heights Charter School is not responsible for lost items.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS Scholars should limit personal belongings they bring to school. The responsibility for these items is with the parents and the scholars. In the event of loss, theft, or damage of personal property the school cannot accept responsibility.

TELEPHONE USE Scholars may make emergency calls only with teachers’ permission.

FINDING ANSWERS/DEALING WITH CONCERNS When a parent has a concern about a child’s progress in a specific class or school activity, he or she should first contact the teacher. Teachers wish to maintain open lines of communication with parents. For concerns of a general nature, educational program or school activity, parents are asked to complete a parental statement in the office. A school level administrator will then reach out to the parent.

LOST BOOKS Scholars are responsible for textbooks issued to them and library books borrowed from the library. A fee will be charged for lost or damaged books. Report cards will be withheld until fines are paid.

FIELD TRIPS University Heights will offer field trips at each grade level that are educational, and it is our goal for all students to attend. These trips provide “real-world”, hands-on experiences for children. We will require a signed permission slip in order for scholars to attend trips. Parents will be asked to pay for admission and transportation related to all field trips. You will be notified in advance by the teacher of the cost and deadline for submission of money. If a parent has difficulty making a field trip payment by a due date, we ask that he or she please let the classroom teacher know so that we can work together. Field trips are a great time to volunteer with your child’s class and chaperone with the teacher, and there are limited spaces available on each trip for parent chaperones. Students who do not meet behavior expectations may be required to have a parent chaperone.

WEEKLY TAKE-HOME FOLDER

Lower School - Blue communication folders will go home daily. Yellow communication folders will go home every Wednesday. The yellow communication folders will include school-level and district information.

Elementary School / Junior High School - Friday the office will prepare a take-home folder for each scholar. One side will include notices and information. The other side will include items to be filled out, signed, and returned.

HEALTH & OFFICIAL RECORDS

MEDICATION Children may not take medicines in school without a written prescription from the child's doctor. All medications must be delivered by an adult, to the school nurse or her designee in the **original prescription container**. (The pharmacy will divide a prescription into two containers - home and school, if necessary). Children should not carry prescription or other drugs at any time.

NURSE'S OFFICE A scholar who finds it necessary to visit the Nurse's Office during the school day must get permission from the classroom teacher. Parents should notify the school nurse regarding any medical concerns, including instances that require frequent monitoring by the school nurse. Physician's notes may be required in some instances.

SCHOLAR RECORDS Parents, guardians, and scholars are entitled to review school records relating to their children or to themselves. Access to scholar records will be provided according to applicable Federal and State Laws. All scholar records will be considered confidential except for information identified as "directory information." "Directory information" includes information that is not likely to cause harm, embarrassment, or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Such information is limited to the scholar's name and address, telephone number, date of birth, parents' names, dates of attendance, diplomas and awards received, teacher names, and the present and most recent educational institutions attended. State and Federal requirements prohibit the release of any information regarding the special education status of scholars.

Parents, guardians, and eligible scholars may inspect and review the scholar's official record files and data directly related to the scholar by making a written request to the school principal. If a scholar's records are maintained in several locations, they will be collected so that they may be inspected at one location. Access to special education records may be obtained through a written request to the school administration.

SCHOLAR SCREENING & TESTING There are a number of reasons why scholars might be tested or screened at school. For example, state law requires us to screen all new entrants to kindergarten and older scholars who move to University Heights from other districts and states. In addition, other reasons for testing scholars include a follow up on speech, reading, math, or other academic concerns. We also administer PARCC assessments in grades three and higher.

We frequently notify parents whenever individual or group testing will be conducted. This may be through flyers or notes distributed at school, newsletter, phone call, or mail.

In the case of a referral of a scholar for evaluation for possible special needs conditions, parents will be asked to sign the Consent for Testing Form.

DRESS CODE

It is the goal of the school to have a dress code that makes things easier for parents and students rather than more difficult. For that reason, we have made every effort to be clear about this policy and consistent in its enforcement. Although it may seem as if small exceptions should be no problem, we cannot allow deviations from this code. If an exception is made for one student, it would then have to apply to all students, and the code has changed. It is in the best interest of everyone if UHCS means what it says and says what it means.

The dress code for grades Pre-K-5 is as follows:

Regular day:

- Navy blue, short-sleeved or long-sleeved polo-style shirt with UHCS logo (2 or 3 buttons).
- Khaki-colored (tan) or navy blue dress pants, shorts, skorts, or jumper.
 - Skirt, skorts, and jumper length must be no shorter than one inch above the knee cap.
- Navy blue sweaters with UHCS logo are permissible.
- Black or brown belts are preferred.
 - Belts must look professional, must be all black or brown, and may not be overly wide.
- Black, navy blue or white socks or stocking are permissible.
- Dress shoes or sneakers with rubber bottoms are the expectation. No flip flops, open-toed or backed shoes should be worn to school because they present a safety concern.
 - Shoes must be tied and Velcro must be fastened at all times.
- Students may not wear clothing with logos, unless it is the UHCS logo or a small dress pant logo (i.e. Dockers) on the rear pocket. No other logos are allowed.

Gym day/PreSchool Daily Uniform

- Navy blue sweats or shorts with UHCS logo.
- Navy or khaki (tan) t-shirt

The dress code for grades 6-8 is as follows:

Regular day:

- Light blue, short or long sleeved buttoned-down Oxford (UHCS logo)
- Gold and navy blue tie for boys and plaid cross tie for girls
- Navy blue dress pants for boys
- Plaid skirt (no shorter than one inch above the kneecap) or navy blue dress pants for girls
- Navy blue sweaters with UHCS logo are also permissible
- Black, or Brown belt Black shoes or sneakers
- Black, navy, or white socks or stockings

Gym Uniform (to change afterschool)

- Navy or khaki (tan) t-shirt or navy sweatshirt (UHCS logo)
- Navy blue sweat pants or shorts

Students may not wear hats in the school, unless the hat is worn for religious reasons. This goes for girls as well as boys. This is important because students must learn that taking off one's hat is a basic statement of respect in our country. The school is a serious place of work and hats do not belong on heads. There is an additional strategic reason for forbidding hats: the "broken-window" theory. If we let students know that small gestures of disrespect are immediately noticed and addressed, they will be less likely to attempt more daring and disruptive misbehavior. In other words, if we consistently address the little things, the big things should take care of themselves.

Parent-School Commitment Pledge to Our Children

COMMITMENT PLEDGE BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

Attendance

- We believe that our child's attendance and timeliness are vitally important to his/her success in school.
- We will make sure that our child has a safe and reliable means of transportation to and from school each day.
- We are fully committed to a 10-month schedule, from September to June, and support the idea that our child will be in school during September. We will not plan for vacations or other extended absences in September.
- We will make certain that our child attends school every day, except in cases of illness or legitimate reason.
- We will make certain our child arrives no earlier than 7:30 a.m. and no later than the established school start time.
- We will telephone the school prior to 9:00 a.m. on the day of any absence to report why the child is out.
- We will not schedule routine doctor and dentist appointments during the school day. Consulting the school calendar, we will try to schedule appointments on days or at times when school is not in session; or if such an appointment becomes absolutely necessary during school hours, we will return the child to school after the appointment.
- We will provide notes for any absences more than one day and will provide doctor's notes for any absence more than three days or for repeated absences.
- We will see to it that our child arrives on time each morning.
- We understand that 20 or more absences without a doctor's note will require that my child repeat the grade.

Uniform

- We promise that our child will wear the University Heights Charter School uniform to school each day.
- We understand that our child is not allowed to substitute the required clothing and that uniform violations will result in the child missing class, being sent home or the parent bringing the proper items to school.

Homework

- We understand that our children will have homework and at home projects that support school learning, and will do our best to ensure that homework is completed.

Discipline

- We understand and support the University Heights Charter School Code of Conduct including all its rules, rewards and disciplinary consequences.
- We understand that if our child is suspended that s/he will have to be picked up from school on the day of the offense that we will have to accompany the child for a meeting in order for the child to return to classes.
- We understand we will support recommendations from school administrators and leaders that will support our child socially, emotionally, and academically. I understand decisions will be made for the safety and well being of all UHCS scholars.

Promotion Policy

- We understand that our child show appropriate progress to be promoted to the next grade. One failure or more in a core academic subject (mathematics, science, ELA, reading, social studies) may result in a recommendation for summer school and/or retention.
- We also understand that in the lower school other factors are considered regarding student promotion, including appropriate progress in reading and ELA, as well as age/grade level growth in social and emotional domains, which is particularly important in PreK and K.

Parent Conferences and Report Cards

- We understand that parent conferences and the report card are essential to understanding a child's academic growth, strengths and weaknesses.
- We will pick up our child's report card on Report Card Nights and/or check the communication folder on report card distribution days during designated times and will attend parent-teacher conferences.

Parent – School Communication

- We agree to support our child’s academic work by communicating regularly with my child’s teachers.
- We will attend conferences to help our child succeed academically.

We understand that we are not required to sign this covenant as a term of our child’s admission to University Heights Charter School, but do so voluntarily because we believe that University Heights Charter School is a partnership between parents and educators.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Child’s Name: _____

Print name and relationship to child: _____

COMMITMENT PLEDGE BY THE SCHOOL:

1. We will operate University Heights Charter School in accordance with its mission and its charter from the State of New Jersey.
2. We are fully committed to a 10-month schedule, September through June.
3. We will see to it that teachers always come to class prepared and that they continually engage students in the challenging, hard work that paves the way for success in school and life.
4. We promise to keep the school’s doors open to parents, who may come into the school at any time – after gaining office clearance – and enter any classroom for observation, as long as there is no disruptions and appointments are made.
5. Faculty will assign productive, meaningful homework each weeknight (except in special circumstances) to focus students on working to their fullest potential.
6. We will host Report Card Nights and/or Conference Nights during quarterly when faculty will be available to parents to discuss student progress.
7. We will continue to facilitate Parent Committee Meetings, which will provide parents a forum to offer input and express their concerns.
8. We will enforce the University Heights Charter School Code of Conduct consistently and fairly. When students are detained or suspended, we will notify parents of the reason.
9. We understand that this covenant goes above and beyond the call of duty. We sign it voluntarily because we believe that University Heights Charter School is a partnership between the parents and the faculty and staff in creating the best possible education for our students.

University Heights Charter School's Scholar Affirmation

Today I will **REACH** TO BE THE BEST Scholar I AM DESTINED TO BE.

I WILL **RESPECT** THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN.

I WILL SHOW **EXCELLENCE** IN ALL THAT I DO.

I WILL BE **ACCOUNTABLE** FOR MY ACTIONS.

I WILL **CARE** FOR MY PEERS AND SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT.

I WILL BE **HONEST** AND TAKE PRIDE IN MY WORK.

With Love and Respect _____.

University Heights Charter School's Teacher Affirmation

Today I will **REACH** TO BE THE BEST TEACHER I AM DESTINED TO BE.

I WILL **RESPECT** THE OPPORTUNITY TO EDUCATE ALL SCHOLARS.

I WILL SHOW **EXCELLENCE** IN MY INSTRUCTION TO SCHOLARS.

I WILL BE **ACCOUNTABLE** TO ALL SCHOLARS.

I WILL **CARE** FOR MY SCHOLARS AND MY WORK ENVIRONMENT.

I WILL BE **HONEST** AND MAINTAIN MY INTERGRITY.

With Love and Respect _____.