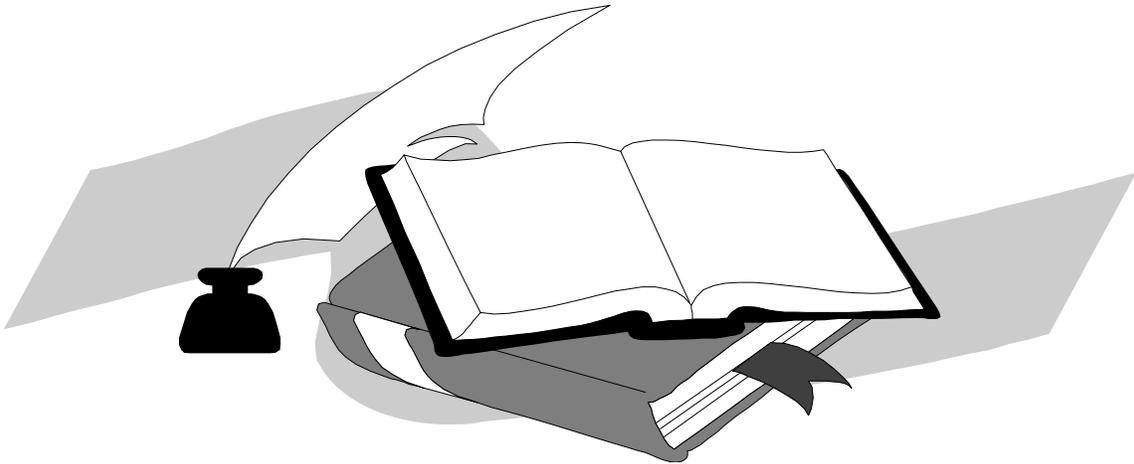


# Universal School

2020-2021



## Parent and Student Handbook

*Recognized by  
The Illinois State Board of Education  
and  
AdvancEd/Cognia  
(North Central Association of Public and Private Schools and Colleges)*

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*Revised on October 19, 2020*

## **I. HISTORY OF UNIVERSAL SCHOOL**

Universal School is a dream come true. In the mid-1980's, a few dedicated individuals committed themselves to the idea of establishing a model Islamic school in the southwest suburbs of Chicago. These individuals were responding to a growing demand for quality education in an Islamic environment. Many of our Muslim parents felt that educating their children in the public school system, where a culture of violence, promiscuity, and drugs prevailed, was too much of a risk to take with our most precious asset, our youth. Construction began after groundbreaking in 1988. Finally, the hard work and long hours of careful planning which began seven years before paid off as the school opened its doors on September 4, 1990 to 140 students and 11 staff members. In 1992, Universal School was recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education. Universal School is also accredited by AdvancED/Cognia. Universal School is a member of the Council of Islamic Schools of North America (CISNA) and is a founding member of the Council of Islamic Organizations in Chicago. Today, Universal is one of the largest Pre-K through 12 Islamic school in North America, with a population of over 640 students and a staff of over 60 committed and hardworking individuals. Every year, the graduates of Universal School provide new testimony to the fine academic and Islamic education they received during the years they spent at Universal as they grace the campuses of some of the finest universities in the nation. We pray to Allah that this will be repeated annually forever, Ameen.

## II. PHILOSOPHY OF UNIVERSAL SCHOOL

From its inception, Universal School has been based on the belief that the Muslim child if he or she is to mature into a well-rounded, socially successful, spiritual human being then he or she should be given the opportunity to freely explore the harmony between creation and the Creator with the guidance of dedicated Muslim teachers and administrators. It is this balance of intellect and spirit that the Universal curriculum seeks to achieve, to educate our pupils in both the religious and the natural sciences and arts.

The board of directors, defines the broad margins of the curriculum as the whole set of experiences that encompasses all that the students are engaged in throughout their school lives.

The Universal school board made its top priority to seek and hire qualified educators who demonstrate a commitment to the values and practice of Islam. It is a pointless endeavor to educate children according to standards and values that are not adhered to by role models- in their lives, both at home and at school.

Universal School meets the crucial challenge of stimulating the minds of Muslim boys and girls, safeguarding their innocence in the midst of a society that in some areas has lost its moral compass, preserving the Islamic cultural heritage and practices of their fore bearers while preparing them for leadership roles in this society.

Universal School directors, administrators, and faculty feel strongly that it is the duty of parents to give their children the opportunity for academic growth in a safe and secure environment according to the Qur'an and the model of the Prophet. The school's role is to help parents in providing such experience It is this experience that will prepare these children to lead wholesome, productive lives in America and the world at large as we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The following are school-wide objectives that we continuously strive to achieve with our students:

- To teach our students to strive for excellence in all that they do
- To teach a love for Islam by example and through Islamic and Quranic studies
- To teach the practice of Islam by demonstration
- To teach our students at the level necessary for worldly success
- To teach our students social awareness and responsibility through involvement in community causes
- To educate the whole child, physically, spiritually, intellectually and emotionally
- To teach the concept of faith with action through the example of our staff and administration
- To teach the love of Qur'an and the Arabic language through classroom instruction and school competitions
- To teach our students to build bridges with youths from other faith communities and be a positive influence in a pluralistic society

### **III. UNIVERSAL SCHOOL ANTICIPATED CALENDAR AND HOLIDAYS**

- ❖ Teachers report to school the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in August
- ❖ First Day of School, half a day, Friday before last Monday of August
- ❖ Labor Day - No School
- ❖ Last Thursday & Friday of November - No School
- ❖ December 24<sup>th</sup> – January 1<sup>st</sup> - No School
- ❖ Ramadan 27<sup>th</sup> - Shawwal 3<sup>rd</sup> - No School
- ❖ Thul-Hija 9<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> No School
- ❖ Martin Luther King Day Observed – No School
- ❖ Last week of March - Spring Break
- ❖ Memorial Day - No School
- ❖ No School ..... – Teacher Institute Days
- ❖ Report Card Conferences - No School
- ❖ 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday/November, Annual Dinner
- ❖ First weekend of June - Graduation

## IV. ADMISSION POLICIES

Admission to Universal School is open to all students in Pre-K to 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Admission into 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade is done on selective bases. **The school does not discriminate in enrollment on the basis of race, age, sex, religion, handicap, or national origin.** Universal School reserves the right to decline admission to students for the following reasons, which are not considered inclusive of all reasons justifying denial of admission: If a student requires special education instruction beyond the purview of the school's capability or capacity; if a student requires English as a Second Language (ESL) beyond the purview of the school's capability or capacity; if a student is academically weak or has had serious discipline problems at previous school.

Enrollment opens during the month of May and continues until all available spots are filled in a given grade. Priority in enrollment is as follows:

1. Students already enrolled at Universal
2. Staff children
3. Siblings of students already enrolled at Universal
4. All others

In order for a **new** student to be considered for admission to Universal School the following must be on file at the school:

1. Completed and signed application form
2. The results of Universal entrance exam for students of 1<sup>st</sup> grade and up.
3. Copies of student's academic record for the past two years
4. Copies of student's standardized exams for the past two years
5. Copy of the student's Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.), if applicable
6. Documentation of passing admission interview for students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and up
7. Copies of discipline record for the past 2 years
8. Interview for high and middle school applicants.

The admission committee will start reviewing a file only when all of the above items are completed. A student will be allowed to attend classes only after they are fully registered in the school. The school reserves the right to deny or revoke admission to students if records show that false or misleading information has been provided on the application forms, or during the interview.

In order for a new student to be considered fully registered at Universal the following steps must be completed:

1. Submit an admission form to the office
2. Complete and sign all the required registration forms. This includes a signed form that acknowledges that the parents and students have read and will abide by the policies included in the parent-student handbook

3. Certified copies of transfer students' records are requested within 14 days of enrollment; the school sends unofficial records of students transferring to other schools with 10 days of the request when all fees and tuition have been settled.
4. Pay the registration and book fees as well as the first tuition installment
5. A certified copy of the student's birth certificate. If a birth certificate is not presented, the Superintendent or designee shall notify in writing the person enrolling the student that within 30 days he or she must provide a certified copy of the student's birth certificate. A student will be enrolled without a birth certificate. When a certified copy of the birth certificate is presented, the school shall promptly make a copy for its records, place the copy in the student's temporary record, and return the original to the person enrolling the child. If a person enrolling a student fails to provide a certified copy of the student's birth certificate, the Superintendent or designee shall immediately notify the local law enforcement agency, and shall also notify the person enrolling the student in writing that, unless he or she complies within 10 days, the case will be referred to the local law enforcement authority for investigation. If compliance is not obtained within that 10-day period, the Superintendent or designee shall so refer the case.
  - a. The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report to the local law enforcement authority any material received pursuant to this paragraph that appears inaccurate or suspicious in form or content.
  - b. The school will check all new students in the missing children database and report any student flagged to the Illinois State Police.
6. Proof of disease immunization or detection and the required physical examination, as required by State law 7:100, Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students. LEGAL REF.: Ill.Admin.Code Part 1290, Missing Person Birth Records and School Registration. 23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 375, Student Records.  
Any student who does not present proof of having had either the required immunizations or physical examination by October 15th of the school term for which such was required or within thirty (30) days of enrollment should enrollment occur after the start of the said school term, **may be excluded from school** until such time as proof of the required health information is presented.
7. Sign all promissory forms for tuition and assessment

**Returning Students:** must fill out and sign an intent of enrollment form by May 1<sup>st</sup>. **Failure to do so may result in loss of enrollment privileges for the family for the following school year.** The signing of the intent of enrollment does not constitute full registration. Parents must fully register a returning student by the deadline set by the school.

In order for a **returning** student to be fully registered, the following must be completed:

1. Complete, sign and return the short registration form
2. Parents must have no outstanding balance with the school
3. Pay registration, and book fees
4. Update health record

**5. Sign all promissory forms for tuition and assessment**

Students who withdraw prior to the beginning of the school year after being fully registered will lose their registration fees. Students who withdraw after school begins will lose registration fees, book fees, and will also be responsible for tuition until the end of the month in which the withdrawal occur.

**STUDENT PLACEMENT IN ELEMENTARY**

Universal has two classes for each grade, Kg through 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Students will be randomly assigned for each class. Universal strongly believes in the ability of the teachers, and students will be well served in whatever class they are placed. Teachers cannot be requested.

**ORIENTATION**

- ❖ All new MS and HS students and their parents are required to attend an orientation session.
- ❖ All seniors must attend an orientation on the first day of school. Failure to attend orientation may result in denial of enrollment privileges for the student.

**FUNDRAISING OBLIGATION**

Parents are required to help with the annual fundraising effort for the school according to school policy. Failure to do so will result in the loss of enrollment privileges for the following school year.

**FUNDING OF UNIVERSAL SCHOOL:**

Its operations and program is done through the collection of tuition, assessment and generous donations. Parents are encouraged to donate generously to cover expenses. Some of the expenses are teachers/staff salaries and benefits, utilities, services, educational materials and books, loans, and others.

**UNIVERSAL SCHOOL REGISTRATION, TUITION AND OTHER FEES:**

**Registration fee for New Students: \$ 250.00 Non-refundable**

**Registration fee for Current Students: \$ 50.00 Non-refundable**

<b><u>Grade Level</u></b>	<b><u>Tuition</u></b>	<b><u>Fees Due At Registration</u></b>	
<b>Preschool</b>	\$ 175.00 per week for full time \$ 120.00 per week for part time <i>(4 weeks preschool tuition due in advance)</i>	<i>Pre School's first month tuition included in "Fees Due at Registration"</i>	
		<b><u>New Students</u></b>	<b><u>Returning Students</u></b>
		PK-3 & PK-4 F/T \$ 1,230.00 PK-3 & PK-4 P/T \$ 1,010.00	PK-3 & PK-4 F/T \$1,030.00 PK-3 & PK-4 P/T \$ 810.00
<b>Kg-5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	\$ 7,300.00	<b><u>New Students</u></b>	<b><u>Returning Students</u></b>
		KG \$ 715.00 1st & 2nd Grade \$ 682.00 3rd-5th Grade \$ 702.00	KG \$ 515.00 1st & 2nd Grade \$ 482.00 3rd-5th Grade \$ 502.00
		<i>(Includes Chrome book's Rental+books)</i>	
<b>6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	\$ 7,600.00	<b><u>New Students</u></b>	<b><u>Returning Students</u></b>
		6th Grade \$ 782.00 7th Grade \$ 902.00 8th Grade \$ 852.00	6th Grade \$ 582.00 7th Grade \$ 502.00 8th Grade \$ 452.00

9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	\$8,200.00	<i>(Includes Chrome book's Rental+books)</i>			
		<u>New Students</u>		<u>Returning Students</u>	
		9th Grade	\$ 782.00	9th Grade	\$ 382.00
		10th Grade	\$ 800.00	10th Grade	\$ 400.00
		11th Grade	\$ 489.00*	11th Grade	\$ 289.00*
		12th Grade	\$ 553.00*	12th Grade	\$ 353.00*
		*Books will be purchased by students		*Books will be purchased by students	

### READMISSION OF STUDENTS WHO LEFT UNIVERSAL SCHOOL UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

A student who left Universal School under special circumstances such as but not limited to expulsion, poor disciplinary record, or poor academic record, **may not automatically be registered at a later date.** Having first proceeded through the steps necessary for admission (entrance exam, interview, and a review of their previous school record), the student's application will then be submitted by the administration to the executive committee or school board for approval.

Students placed on academic or behavioral probation may be asked to leave at anytime during the school year in which they were given probation.

#### Overseas Student Tuition:

Any student eligible for enrollment by meeting admission criteria that did not receive their education in the United States in the past two years will pay 150% of the stated tuition and all applicable fees related to admission and registration at Universal School.

If the student is in need of English as a Second Language services, recommended tutoring will be the responsibility of the Parent or Guardian. Students must maintain a GPA of 2.0 for continued enrollment with the school.

## V. ACADEMIC POLICIES

### A. HOMEWORK POLICY:

#### **Purpose:**

Universal School considers homework to be an important part of a child's education and an integral component of the learning process based on the following goals:

- To provide extra practice for specific fundamental skills.
- To improve academic skills by reinforcing and extending classroom learning.
- To promote independent work-study habits.
- To establish regular homework routines and organizational skills.
- To increase communication between parents and the school.
- To inform parents of the school's curriculum and to provide a means to make ongoing evaluation of their child's progress.
- To develop responsibility, accountability, self-confidence, and time management.

#### **Amount of Homework:**

Research indicates that schools in which homework is routinely assigned and graded tend to have higher achieving students. There is also general agreement that the amount of homework assigned increases significantly as a student progresses through school, be appropriate to the maturity and ability level of the students, and vary according to individual abilities and the speed at which children work and manage their time. Universal follows the “5 minutes of homework per grade level” guideline when establishing its homework plan. It is important to remember that the time would be interrupted time, free from the interference of television, playing, eating, etc. This amounts to 5 minutes per subject in grade 8th etc.

Kindergarten	None
1st grade	5-10 minutes daily (No Arabic Homework; Guided practice during class time only)
2nd grade	10-15 minutes daily
3rd grade	15-20 minutes daily
4th grade	20-25 minutes daily
5th grade	25-30 minutes daily
6th grade	30-35 minutes daily
7th grade	35-40 minutes daily
8th grade	40-45 minutes daily

### **Homework Specifics**

- If your child is not bringing homework home on a regular basis or is excessively exceeding the time guidelines, please contact his/her teacher.
- Unfinished classwork or work missed due to excused absences, although accomplished outside of school, is not part of the regularly assigned homework.
- Weekend homework may be given to students in order to update classwork and/or homework, to reinforce skills taught or to work on long-range projects.
- When no homework is assigned, it is recommended that the students do individual reading, practice math facts, review spelling words, etc.
- An assignment notebook is required for all 6<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- Teachers provide tutorial services before and after school. Students are highly encouraged to contact teachers to schedule tutorials to meet their individual needs.

### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- To provide an environment that is conducive to uninterrupted study time.
- To make sure the child has the necessary materials to do the assignments.
- To encourage the child to be neat and organized.
- To make school the number one priority during the academic school year.
- To model self-discipline, organization, time management and a positive attitude.
- To provide support and encouragement of the child’s efforts.
- To ask the child to share his/her assignments with you and to ask for specific help.

- To contact the classroom teacher in the event of questions or concerns.
- To assist the child, if needed, without doing their work for them.
- To provide private tutors if necessary, when requested to do so by the administration, upon admission to the school.

### Student Responsibilities

- To understand what the assignments are and when they are due.
- To ask questions when instructions, assignments, or deadlines aren't clear.
- To organize time and other resources in order to complete assignments on time.
- To give homework your best effort before asking parents for help.
- To utilize the daily assignment notebooks in grades 5<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> and the “take home” folders and/or homework assignment sheets in grades Pre K- 4<sup>th</sup>.
- To take homework home along with any required materials.
- To turn assignments in by the specific due date.
- To makeup any work missed due to excused absences from class.

### B. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

In order to graduate, **8<sup>th</sup> grade students** must have a G.P.A. of 2.0/4.0 or higher, and no more than one credit loss. Students with more than one credit loss in eighth grade will not graduate and will not be able to participate in graduation exercises. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who take summer school at Universal, or in the local school, and pass all previously failed subjects may enroll in 9<sup>th</sup> grade the following school year.

**High school** students must have a minimum G.P.A. of 2.0/4.0, earn 26 credit hours, and perform 25 hours of community service by February of the senior high school year and pass the U.S. constitution exam in order to graduate from Universal. Transfer students will be assessed based upon their credit evaluation. The following is the breakdown of required credits:

1. English Language	4.0 credits
2. Math & Computers	
(Students who take 3 credits of math must take an additional credit of computers)	4.0 – 5.0 credits
3. Science	2.0 - 3.0 credits
4. Social Studies	2.0 - 3.0 credits
(American History and World History are mandatory)	
5. Physical Education/Health	1.0 – 2.0 credits
6. Arabic Language/Quran	4.0 credits
7. Islamic Studies	4.0 credits
(One may be Islamic History or Geography)	
8. Electives/Senior Project (Optional)	1.0 – 3.5 credits
9. Dual Enrollment/Credit at MVCC	<u>2.0 – 4.0 credits</u> (any subject 100 level)
<b>26 total credit hours</b> (minimum requirement)	

Students entering high school will have 0 credit hours, even though they may have been in an accelerated program. The maximum number of credits that can be earned by a student on school

campus in any given year is eight credit hours. Weighted grades are not available for middle school students.

### **To Earn the Seal of Biliteracy**

Universal High School will offer the Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) to demonstrate language ability in Arabic. Students who successfully complete testing and meet all other criteria will receive recognition through the Seal of Biliteracy.

### **Illinois Seal of Biliteracy for Universal Students with four years of Arabic**

#### **What is the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy Program?**

Universal School is proud to offer the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy, a recognition given to graduating high school students who have demonstrated a high level of proficiency in English and another language in reading, writing, listening and speaking, in Universal School with the second language being the Arabic language.

#### **How is Proficiency determined?**

Proficiency is determined through scores on either the ACT and SAT and for Arabic by meeting criteria established by ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) for Arabic. It is recommended that students earning the seal take four years of the same language during high school.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **What are the benefits of the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy?**

Students who earn the Seal of Biliteracy receive official seals on their diplomas and transcripts, They will also receive a certificate of proficiency from the State, we are pleased with our students efforts and achieving proficiency in multiple languages, it is something to be celebrated and recognized.

By law, Illinois public universities will accept the State Seal of Biliteracy as equivalent to 2 years of foreign language coursework taken during high school if a student's high school transcript indicates that he or she received the State Seal of Biliteracy. Many universities waive any foreign language requirements and/or grant course credit for students who have earned the Seal of Biliteracy.

#### **How do you earn it?**

Students earn the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy by doing 2 things:

1. Demonstrating proficiency in English on the SAT
2. Demonstrating proficiency in a second language on the ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)

#### **How do I demonstrate my ENGLISH proficiency?**

Earn a 540 ELA SAT score

Or

Earn a 21 English score on the ACT

**How do I demonstrate proficiency in my new language?**

Earn a score of I-5 (intermediate high) on the AAPPL test

**What's the AAPPL?**

The AAPPL is a four part test that assesses Interpersonal Listening/Speaking, Presentational Writing, Interpretive Reading, and Interpretive Listening, all the skills your teachers have been practicing in class. It takes about two hours and you will be doing it with your language class. Universal School has purchased tests for all Arabic language students in level 3 with Mr. Alabd's class. Our hope is that we can find out how successful our foreign language programs are and to help you earn the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy.

**How do I demonstrate proficiency in my new language?**

Earn a score of I-5 (intermediate high) on the AAPPL test

**C. VALEDICTORIAN:**

**High School Valedictorian – (For Recognition During Graduation only)**

**To Qualify for Valedictorian the student must meet all of the criteria:**

1. The Valedictorian must have the highest 4 year cumulative GPA upon graduation, starting with their freshman year at Universal School.
2. The Valedictorian of Universal School cannot have any suspensions for the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade school years.
3. He/She must be a member of the National Honor Society.
4. He/she must be graduating in good standing with the school.
5. In the event of a tie in rank at the end of 8 semesters, the highest numerical average grade in all core subjects will be used to determine who is the Valedictorian (The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> semesters will be used)
6. Students will not be ranked by GPA for college purposes.

**Middle School Distinction**

**To qualify for recognition of 4.0 GPA the student must meet all of the criteria:**

- The student must have at least a 4.0 GPA for two consecutive years at Universal School, not averaged.
- The student must have been at Universal School for 2 consecutive years.
- He/she must be graduating in good standing with the school.

**D. ADD/DROP POLICY:**

In general, the school discourages students from dropping courses or transferring between classes and levels. However, the administration will approve the drop of courses or the transfer

to other classes in special circumstances. The drop/add policy is not automatic. A student will be required to show reasons for the request. The administration's decision in these matters is final. **The deadline for any changes in student schedule is the last day of the second week of the semester.** After the deadline, students may not drop or add courses unless initiated and required by the administration. Adding/dropping a course may not take place until all signatures are secured on the proper form. Students are responsible for obtaining all required signatures.

#### **E. EARLY GRADUATION:**

Students who demonstrate superior academic achievement may elect to graduate early in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The following conditions must be met for early graduation:

1. Student must have cumulative G.P.A. of 3.5/4.0, up to and including 10<sup>th</sup> Grade to request early graduation.
2. Student must score 28 on the ACT or equivalent score on the SAT exam or PLAN exam. The exams must be taken by the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
3. Students must file an Early Graduation Intent form no later than the end of the second semester of his/her sophomore year, 10<sup>th</sup> Grade.
4. Maximum of three credit hours of transferred credit from an approved institution per year will be accepted, on line, High School course work is preferred.
5. One credit of Arabic and one credit of Islamic Studies may be substituted with two electives approved by the administration, but no waiver of any credits is possible.
6. Students must have been enrolled a minimum of two consecutive years in the school prior to graduation.
7. Student must fulfill all other graduation requirements.
8. Student graduating early do not qualify for Valedictorian or Salutatorian status.

#### **F. TRANSFER CREDITS:**

Newly enrolled students will have their transcripts evaluated by school officials. All accepted transcript credits will count towards graduation requirements. However, such credits will not contribute to the final grade point average of the student. **Any courses taken by Universal students in other institutions must be approved by Administration in writing prior to enrollment in these courses.** Maximum of two credits are allowed per year, and such credits do not contribute to the grade point average. Any credits earned at other institutions must be verified. **Students may not take courses elsewhere if they are offered at Universal School.**

#### **G. INDEPENDENT STUDY CREDITS:**

A graduating senior may be assigned an independent study class if the student needs the class to graduate. Under no circumstances will a student be given independent study if the course is being offered in the regular schedule. The administration must approve the independent study course. A formal grade sheet must be submitted by the supervising teacher and student graded work must be kept on file in the Assistant Principal's office for a minimum of one academic year after student graduation. The principal must approve independent study credits for the underclassman.

Transfer students may have credits waived as needed for years of study in another accredited institution in areas of Islamic Studies and Quran.

## **H. STUDENT GUIDANCE SERVICES:**

High school students will be advised and given a tentative schedule in early spring. The academic advising will be based on the following.

1. Student performance in current courses
2. Fulfillment of enrollment criteria for honors and advanced placement courses
3. Availability of desired courses
4. Fulfillment of pre-requisites of desired courses
5. College and career preferences as stated by students and their parents/guardians

## **I. PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY:**

Kindergarten through 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers will recommend the promotion of all students with passing scores. Students who fail in two or more subjects may be retained in their grade. A committee made up of the principal/assistant principal, administration and the classroom teacher, will meet to decide if the student will be retained. The decision of the committee is final.

8<sup>th</sup> grade students with more than one credit loss will not graduate. These students will not be allowed to participate in graduation exercises. They will, however, be allowed back into the school as 9<sup>th</sup> graders if they pass failed subjects during the summer in an approved program.

## **J. ACADEMIC ACCELERATION POLICY**

The school administration may accelerate students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> in a given year based on the request of the parents or the recommendation of the teacher. All the following conditions must apply for a student to be accelerated:

1. Achieve straight A's for the entire year.
2. Achieve at least 97% composite score on the IOWA test of basic skills.
3. Acquire the recommendation of all their teachers.
4. Maintain a clear discipline record.
5. Pass a placement exam for the grade the student is going to skip.
6. Socially able to adapt.

### **ACADEMIC ACCELERATION FOR NEWLY ADMITTED STUDENTS**

New students entering to 3<sup>rd</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> grade, who would like to advance a grade, need to be assessed for the school year they wish to be in. After regular registration procedures and at least one month at Universal School and under staff's thorough observation, the student can be promoted if he/she meets the above criteria.

Students in grades Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade may not be accelerated. Students in these grades must meet minimum age requirements upon registration.

## **AGE REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT**

1. Pre-K 3 students must be 3 years of age by December 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. Pre-K 4 students must be 4 years of age by December 1<sup>st</sup>.
3. KG students must be 5 years of age by December 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. 1<sup>st</sup> grade students must be 6 years of age by December 1<sup>st</sup>.
5. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students must be 7 years of age by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

There are no exceptions to the above policy.

#### **K. ACADEMIC PROBATION POLICY:**

Junior High and High School students with a GPA of less than 2.0/4.0 will be placed on academic probation. While on probation, the student will be required to participate in an *Academic Support Program*, which includes counseling and tutoring. If a student does not raise his/her GPA the following quarter, he/she may be asked to leave the school, or not be allowed to re-enroll for the following year. Guidelines for the probation policy are available in the counseling office. Students on academic probation may be banned from participating in extra-curricular activities.

#### **L. REPORT CARD PICK-UP**

The school will operate on a quarterly calendar. Parents will be required to attend a parent-teacher conference for the first and third report card periods. Students will not be able to pick up their report cards if the parent fails to attend the conference. Parents will be given the report card after they meet with the teacher. At the end of the second and fourth quarters, the report card will be handed to the students or mailed home by the school. These dates are listed on the calendar.

#### **M. GRADING POLICY:**

The following is the grading system for the upper elementary, middle school, and high school students. All scores are based on a 0 to 100 scale.

Teachers will distribute to students a syllabus, which includes the specific grading policy of each teacher.

The following is the correspondence between letter grades and numerical ones.

<b>F</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A+</b>
<b>59</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>↓</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>↓</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>0</b>		<b>66</b>			<b>76</b>			<b>86</b>			<b>96</b>	<b>100</b>

Incomplete (I) – Student must complete course work in a given amount of time. Also (WP) is withdrawal without penalty (No GPA penalty). (WF) is withdrawn failing (0 towards GPA).

#### **Issuing of failing grades to students Policy**

Please be reminded that our school philosophy and policy clearly indicates that we will provide each student with all possible and reasonable opportunities for success. As such, teachers must ensure the following, prior to issuing a grade(s) of F:

- Teachers must identify the reason for students who perform below “C” grade level
- Parents must be informed of the grade, in writing.
- Teacher must identify the problem as well as the solution, and inform the parent.
- Teacher must facilitate the implementation of the solution with the parent and document the process.
- Teacher must inform the administration
- If progress does not prove successful then the teacher may issue the grade accordingly and inform the administration to follow up with further action.

#### **N. HOMEWORK/TEST MAKE-UP POLICY:**

Each department will set their own make-up policy for homework in accordance to school policy and handbook guidelines. Students may only miss a maximum of two quizzes per quarter due to excused absences. These will not count against the student. However, on the third and any subsequent absence, students will be expected to take missed quizzes on the day that they return to school. Students will be allowed to make up all exams they missed due to an excused absence. A parent’s note will be accepted as an excuse only three times per year. A doctor’s note or other documented reasons will be the only accepted excuses after that. Long absences due to hospitalization or other emergencies are exempted from this policy.

#### **O. SEMESTER EXAMS:**

All 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to take a comprehensive exam covering all material taught during the semester. Semester exams make up 20% of the semester grade. Students must take semester exam during the scheduled time. Under special circumstances students may be allowed to take early exams. In such case, the student is responsible to study all material to be covered after they leave, and also a charge of \$80.00 per subject will be assessed by the school. This will cover the cost of making up, proctoring, and grading a specially prepared exam. In order for students to take the second semester exam, the balance of payment must be cleared and the account closed for the year.

#### **P. REGULAR COURSES:**

Students at level and performing well will be placed in regular courses.

#### **Q. HONOR COURSES:**

Honor level course work indicates that students are performing at a higher level than those who are taking general courses. The additional course work and requirements will increase the depth of study and place more emphasis on critical thinking skills. Selection of an honor course will be based on student desire, teacher recommendation, meeting established criteria as well as availability. Since the honor courses are more challenging than the basic courses, the grades

received in the course will be weighted differently than in a basic course. Honor students will be graded out of a 4.5 rather than the 4.0 grading scale.

## **R. POLICY FOR ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES:**

The Advanced Placement (AP) program gives students an opportunity to take college level courses in high school as well as gain valuable skills and study habits for college. These classes count toward high school graduation requirement. Students who receive a qualifying score on the AP exam may be able to earn college credit. The amount of credit obtained depends upon the grade the student earns on the exam and upon the particular college the student wishes to attend.

In order to enroll in AP classes, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Earn a grade of 85% or higher in their prerequisite courses offered at Universal School.
2. Be either an 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade student.
3. Received a score on the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) test in the top 20% of the class.
4. Receive recommendations from the English teacher for writing intensive courses such as, History and English Language or Literature.
5. No student shall enter an AP course based solely on grades or teacher recommendations.
6. No students shall take more than 4 courses combined that are honors and/or AP in a school year, no more than 3 AP courses.
7. If any student withdraws from an AP course at Universal School he/she will not be allowed to register for that course in subsequent years.
8. The following is quoted from the College Board website, “Because the College Board is committed to providing access to AP Exams to all students – including home schooled students and students whose schools do not offer AP- students do not have to take an AP course before taking an AP Exam.”
9. Administration has final decision as to which AP class a student may be enrolled in.

Students who choose to withdraw from an AP course may be able to do so under the following guidelines:

- A. An add/drop form must be completed, signed and submitted before the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> week in the first quarter.
- B. The student will need signatures from their AP teacher, parents, and administration in order to withdraw from the course. **Students will not be able to drop an AP course after the end of week four.**

Since the AP course is a more challenging class than the basic course, the grades received in the course will be weighted differently than in a basic course. AP students will be graded out of a 5.0 rather than the 4.0 grading scale.

All AP students are required to take semester one and two exams; semester two exam may be substituted with an alternative form of assessment, pre-approved by the administration.

The AP Board Exam is graded on the following 5 point scale:

- 5 = Extremely well qualified
- 4 = Well qualified
- 3 = Qualified
- 2 = Possibly qualified
- 1 = No recommendation

Scores of 5, 4 and 3 will be accepted by most Universities towards a full credit. The College Board charges a fee of \$ 94.00 per exam, per student. Students who decide to take the AP exam are responsible for paying the fee. Any student who change their mind and choose not to take the exam after the AP exams have been ordered will be charged a \$40.00 cancellation fee.

### **S. WEIGHTED GRADES:**

Students who successfully complete either an honor or AP course have quality points added to their grades, which results in weighted grades. These quality points are used in computing the grade point average.

### **T. GRADING SCALE:**

The following is a chart listing the weight of grades in each of the course types for high school.

	<b>A+</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Regular Courses</b>	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	0.0
<b>Honor Courses</b>	4.5	4.375	4.25	3.5	2.5	1.5	0.0
<b>AP Courses</b>	5.0	4.75	4.5	4.0	3.0	2.0	0.0

### **U. HIGH HONOR AND HONOR ROLL: (1<sup>ST</sup> – 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE)**

The grading scale is figured on a 4.0 scale. High honor roll is attained by students who have a 3.75 GPA and above. Honor roll is attained by students who have a 3.50-3.74 GPA.

## **VI. UNIVERSAL SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

### **I. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS: PHILOSOPHY AND CURRICULUM**

#### **A. Universal School Policies and Policy-Making Procedures**

1. *Policies governing the school board:*  
These policies are identified in the school bylaws as well as in the board minutes and policy manual.
2. *Policies governing the staff:*  
These policies are contained in the staff handbook.
3. *Policies governing students and parents:*

Including admission, academic and non-academic policies are contained in the student/parent handbook and academic program description.

1. The board of directors of Universal School is the source of all policies in the school, both academic and non-academic. Policy may be drafted by the principal or a committee formed by the board. However, the board of directors must approve any policy by a majority vote prior to its implementation. Parties affected by board policies are notified in writing in the form of a memo, through the board's official publication, or through various handbooks published and revised by the school regularly. Board is made of chairman, vice chairman, secretary/treasurer, School's Principal as ex-official at large, three people at large, mothers' representative, and fathers' club representative.

The chairman, vice-chairman, and the secretary form the executive committee of the school board. This committee is in constant touch with the administration to ensure effective communication and timely decisions on many of the operational issues faced by the school.

### **B. Universal School's philosophy, mission, vision, objectives, beliefs, and values:**

The school board adopted its philosophy, purpose and objectives shortly after the school opened in the fall of 1990, and they are as follows:

#### **Universal School's philosophy**

Universal School's philosophy is rooted in the belief that education is a process which encompasses all the experiences students encounter in their school. Classroom instruction is only one small aspect of a child's educational experience. It is also rooted in the belief that students learn from the behavior and actions of the adults around them more than they learn from books. Finally, it is rooted in the belief that children's knowledge and pride in their religion and heritage is key to their well-being and success in the world. As such, the board of directors has strived to ensure that the administration and the teaching staff are qualified educators who themselves are observant of Islamic values in their own lives.

It is fruitless in education to ask children to adhere to anything unless role models exist around them, showing not only that adherence to these ideals is possible, but also that direction, stability, peace, and happiness cannot be achieved otherwise. Universal School believes that being a Muslim is synonymous with excellence in every area. To that end, academic excellence is expected and pursued as part of our religious duties. Our effort to establish an Islamic ethos in the school does not interfere with the establishment of a challenging academic program. In fact, both efforts must go hand-in-hand for us to be able to claim that ours is a model Islamic school.

#### **School Mission**

To provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating Islamic learning environment that enables students to achieve their maximum educational potential and prepare them for their future roles in society as responsible citizens.

#### **School Vision**

We see a school which:

1. Provides an organizational structure, emphasizes communication, creativity, flexibility and accountability.
2. Prepares students for the many diversities and cultural influences that shape their world.
3. Provides an enriched program for all students, which includes an integrated curriculum and basic competency development.
4. Provides an ongoing staff development program that emphasizes professional growth, colleague collaboration and technological training.
5. Provides an enthusiastic and exciting environment for teaching and learning.
6. Encourages innovation and creativity.
7. Provides continuous opportunities for articulation among staff members, students, parents and community.
8. Provides a balanced student assessment program that incorporates a variety of strategies.
9. Promotes a partnership between home and school, which addresses individual values, respect and ethics.

### **School-wide Objectives**

The following are school-wide objectives that Universal School strives to achieve with its students:

- To teach students to strive for excellence in all that they do.
- To teach students at the level necessary for worldly success.
- To teach students social awareness and responsibility through involvement in community causes.
- To educate the whole child, physically, spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally.
- To teach the practice of Islam and the concept of faith with action by example.
- To teach a love for Islam, the Quran, and the Arabic language through classroom instruction and school competitions.
- To teach students to build bridges with youths from other faith communities and to be a positive influence in a pluralistic society.

### **School Beliefs**

We must teach children to work both independently and cooperatively.

- We must empower children to become responsible for their own learning.
- We must provide a multi-method, multi-level framework of instruction in order to acknowledge the reality of individual differences and learning styles.
- We must encourage children to become problem solvers, decision makers, and critical thinkers.
- We must provide opportunities for children to demonstrate civic responsibility and citizenship.
- We must give children the opportunity to learn and achieve.
- We must base all decisions on what is best for the children.
- We must create a supportive community of learners where all adults care about the growth of all children.
- We must have high expectations so children can attain maximum educational potential and achieve a world-class education.

- We must be stronger together than we are apart because each individual brings unique talents and abilities.
- We must ensure that the school improvement process focuses on improving children's performance.
- We must share in the responsibility of a well-rounded child along with the family, community and child.
- We must create a safe, healthy, caring and supportive Islamic school environment.
- We must believe that the quality of school personnel directly influences the quality of the child's school experience.
- We must involve all individuals that are impacted by decisions in the decision making process.
- We must create a positive school environment by valuing honesty, respect, mutual trust and open communication at all levels.
- We must create a responsive learning system in order to prepare children for a continually changing world.
- We must invest in human and financial resources in order to provide a quality learning environment for all children.
- We must provide an education that is student-centered not content-centered.
- We must adhere to a curriculum that is flexible and adaptable to change.
- We must provide children with an Islamic environment where they can learn basic Islamic principles and concept of faith where action by example is essential.
- We must strengthen the home/school partnership to achieve our goals.
- We must educate the whole child, physically, spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally.
- We must teach children social awareness and responsibility through involvement in community causes.
- We must encourage children to build bridges with youths from other faith communities and be positive influences in a pluralistic society.

## **School Values**

### **Respect**

Universal School promotes respect, cooperation, communication, and courteous interactions between students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration in order to create a positive learning environment and maintain an atmosphere of mutual trust. Positive attitudes and the development of comfortable working relationships are essential to the school's professionalism.

### **Individualism**

Universal School values, celebrates, and encourages the unique contribution of each student, faculty member, administrator, staff employee, and parent. Diversity of cultures, backgrounds, talents, and interests contribute to a well-balanced system and can contribute to the school's overall quality.

### **Excellence in Teaching/Learning**

Universal School remains committed to instructional effectiveness and maintains a focus upon student learning throughout the curriculum. Professional learning, collaboration, and sharing is encouraged and supported. Staff members feel responsible for improving their own skills and knowledge to help students learn. All teachers apply and demonstrate a diversity of teaching methods

to promote academic success, and provide positive reinforcement to give students the support and confidence they need to reach their full potential.

### **High Standards**

Universal School establishes and provides academic programs that are broad, challenging, and individualized to promote a lifelong desire to learn. These programs provide opportunities for success through appropriate instruction, encouraging the development of leadership, and realizing that high expectations are necessary for achievement. With an emphasis upon intellectuality, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving abilities, Universal School continues its attention toward students' academic, social, and emotional development.

### **Integrity**

Universal School is open, honest, sincere, and empathetic in its relationships with students, parents, colleagues, and the community. Students develop a positive self-image when given the opportunity to express themselves in a courteous, responsible manner.

### **Honor**

Universal School encourages and supports all individual's demonstration of truth, trust and loyalty (mutual support) in an atmosphere of decency of conduct. Fair and consistent discipline prepares the students to become responsible citizens.

### **Communication**

To ensure student success, Universal School encourages and recognizes the importance of communication among its students, parents, staff, and administration. Universal School upholds its commitment toward effective, open lines of communication and accountability in its dialogue with all parties.

### **Responsibility**

Universal School encourages students to feel responsibility and pride in their school. Universal also recognizes and accepts its responsibility in creating a flexible learning environment, attentive to the specific needs and learning profiles of its students. The school provides an educational framework wherein students can work toward their highest potential. Universal also prepares children to fulfill their civic responsibility as caring, ethical, effective members of society.

### **Environment**

Universal School provides a diverse and evolving environment that breeds excitement about teaching and learning. Students, parents, staff, and administration are active partners. The professional staff is innovative, creative and achievement oriented. The individual members of the school community fit together and work as a team using the strengths of individuals to create a powerful learning organization.

### **C. Non-discrimination Policies:**

In keeping with the universal nature of Islam and with federal mandate, the school adopts a non-discrimination policy. This policy is stated in the student/parent handbook, as well as in the staff

handbook. It states that Universal School does not discriminate in employment or enrollment on the basis of race, age, gender, religion, national origin, or handicap.

105 ILCS 5/10-21.7 NON-DISCRIMINATION Universal School admits students of any race, color, gender, national and ethnic origin, and immigration status to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally available to students at the schools. School does not pursue public policy advocacy as part of our regular program activities. However, being a community school we are occasionally called upon to share knowledge and expertise relevant to society at large. The school Principal may authorize participation in such activities when it is determined that participation coincides with the mission of Universal School. The nature and extent of such participation will be determined by the Principal and staff.

Any equity complaint may be filed by using Uniform Grievance Procedure.

#### Administrative Implementation

The Principal shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator. The Principal and shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy and grievance procedure.

### **4.02 Administration: Supervision and Planning**

Universal School has a full-time Principal and Assistant Principal, who are responsible for all aspects of the daily functioning of the school.

#### **A. Administration's Qualifications**

Mrs. Aminah Murrar joined Universal School in 2001. She graduated from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She received a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and in June 2011 a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. Mrs. Murrar holds a type 75 Administrative Certification; she also holds a standard elementary certification K-9. Mrs. Murrar is certified by the State of Illinois.

#### **B. Planning, Operation, and Reporting**

There are four levels of planning, operation, and reporting at Universal.

1. The board of directors sets the general plans of the school. The board meets quarterly. The board reports its planning and operation in the form of board minutes.
2. The Executive Committee meets biweekly to discuss the plans with the administration.
3. The administration translates the board's general plans into reality. The administration reports its planning to the executive committee as well as to the full board, in the form of regular reports. Reports to the executive committee are generally oral reports, and the ones submitted to the school board are generally written reports.
4. Teachers plan their instruction as well as other extracurricular activities. Teachers report their planning mainly through lesson plans, regular staff meetings, and in-service days. In-service days are held at the beginning, middle and end of school year.

### **C. Continuity of Educational Program**

Universal School understands the importance of designing instruction for children that links children’s prior knowledge and experiences to those of the next grade or level of education. Not only should children’s education flow in a natural progression across the preschool and primary grades toward more sophisticated and complex content, but it should enhance children’s progress in accordance with each child’s rate and style of learning. The following examples demonstrate the achievement of educational continuity:

- Establishing communication between staffs at all levels, either about the entering students or about their respective instructional programs.
- Providing joint professional development opportunities.
- Welcoming incoming children and their parents with special orientations and visitations.
- Involving parents in classroom activities designed to facilitate a smooth transition.
- Use of records from one grade level to the next as a foundation for curriculum development.
- Developing a communication system between teachers to sustain dialogue about teaching and learning curriculum.
- Coordinating instructional strategies, resources, and tools.
- Creating a curriculum committee that studies and recommends textbooks that are in line with the school’s objectives and provide the best continuity of instruction.

### **D. Maintaining Student Records**

Student records shall be reasonably accessible to the parents or guardians of students. Other than the parents, only authorized school personnel, and authorized government officials may access the student’s educational records without the approval or the notification of the student’s parents. Records include information of importance in helping the students are reviewed periodically, particularly when the student transfers into or out of the school. The main office is responsible for requesting and forwarding student records promptly. These records may include general and observational data:

1. Health information
2. Family background data
3. Standardized aptitude and achievement scores
4. Report of support services
5. Discipline data

Official permanent records constitute personal data necessary for operation of the school system and important for student needs. Permanent records shall be maintained in perpetuity and include the following items:

1. Identification Data
2. Academic record
3. Attendance data
4. Record of transcripts sent out

### **MISSING PERSON and SCHOOL RECORD**

Each school shall follow the provisions of Section 5(a) of the Missing Children Records Act, 325 ILCS 50/5, which requires each school to have a system in place that flags records requests for any current or former student reported as a missing person by the Illinois State police. The procedure is as follows: Upon notification by the Illinois State Police of a person's disappearance, a school in which the person is currently or was previously enrolled shall flag the record of that person in such a manner that whenever a copy of or information regarding the record is requested, the school shall be alerted to the fact that the record is that of a missing person. The school shall immediately report to the Illinois State Police any request concerning flagged records or knowledge as to the whereabouts of any missing person. Upon notification by the Illinois State Police that the missing person has been recovered, the school shall remove the flag from the person's record.

## **5.00 Universal School Instructional Programs and Services**

### **5.01 Instructional Programs: Philosophy and Curriculum**

#### **A. Instructional Philosophy:**

Universal School provides instruction from grades Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup>. The curriculum and instructional programs are built upon the belief that all children can learn given the appropriate time and conditions. Furthermore, the school believes that it is the responsibility of staff to modify the use of time and use the instructional strategies so that each child's unique talents and abilities are enhanced and each child is prepared in the basic literacy, numeracy, and technological skills necessary for the twenty-first century. The Arabic and Islamic Studies Program is designed to go hand-in-hand with the academic program to produce students who are rooted in faith, ethical living, social responsibility, and worldly success. Finally, Universal School believes that every child by grade 12 must meet rigorous academic standards and be focused toward further educational preparation and specific career goals.

#### **B. Universal School Instructional Programs:**

##### **1. Preschool Program**

The preschool program uses a learn-and-play approach to prepare them religiously and socially to deal positively with the environment that awaits them beyond our doors. Our program seeks to optimize positive experiences and interaction for every child. The preschool provides an array of Islamic, cultural, and language development experiences for our diverse community. It gives parents peace of mind regarding the safety of their children, as well as the assurance that the child is being given a head start in his or her Islamic and academic experience. The preschool introduces children to productive group play under the supervision and guidance of teachers and aides.

#### **Programs Offered:**

The Preschool provides an academic environment for 3 and 4 year olds who are toilet trained.

1. Full-time: 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
2. Part-time: 8:15 a.m. to Noon

Students in training pants are not considered toilet trained and cannot be admitted to the program. Full time students will have priority registration over part time students.

### **Preschool Curriculum**

The curriculum is based on the developmental philosophy of early childhood education and the belief that children are innocent and require gentle guidance and training, as taught by Islam. Our program has been designed to allow preschooler's to mature at their own rate. The program promotes a comprehensive curriculum that meets the student's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs. Through a variety of activities, children build a foundation for cognitive skills. Their self-esteem increases as they develop mastery of motor skills, pre-writing, and pre-reading skills. The daily routine encourages our children's independence, curiosity, and excitement for learning. While playing, children learn to make decisions, explore, and problem-solve through manipulatives such as puzzles, pegboards, play-dough, etc. Furthermore, children will develop eye-hand coordination. Students also learn from the Qur'an and stories from the Qur'an, along with the study of Arabic and Islamic Studies.

### **Preschool Setting**

Universal School's preschool program is located in a cheery, colorful, spacious play area where integration of academics, socialization, play, and Islamic values blend naturally.

## **2. Primary Instructional Program (K-3)**

The primary instructional program is the vital link between early elementary education and higher level abstract and original thinking. Universal School emphasizes a rigorous core curriculum of basic academic skills of reading, writing, mathematical computation, listening, and speaking built around a quality core of carefully scrutinized textbooks from well-known academic publishers. The curriculum is implemented with innovation and enthusiasm by a first-rate teaching staff. All students are given the opportunity to assess, explore, and develop their unique talents and abilities through regular course offerings as well as special programs and learning opportunities. We expect our students to work to their maximum potential both at school and at home.

Teachers encourage students to expand their learning horizons through exploration. Every teacher incorporates the worldview of Islam into each field, whether through the introduction of the great Muslim figures in the sciences or through the Qur'anic perspective on nature and humankind. One of the primary objectives of the Universal School elementary program is the development of life-long independent study habits in our students. This enables children to get the best out of their in-class experience, and to learn independently of their teacher.

In addition to Arabic, Islamic Studies, and Qur'anic Studies, the curriculum includes reading, writing, spelling, math, science, social studies, physical education, art, and computer. Each grade level is designed to build skills sequentially upon the experiences and abilities of the students in each subject. Objectives represent skills related to previous knowledge, demonstrated

abilities, and expected performance. Each subject furthers the development of specific skills, which enhances the level of thinking skills and involves the learner in the process of his or her own emotional and social development. Materials, activities, and instructions attempt to engage students on every cognitive and emotional level to enjoy a varied learning experience, with thinking seasoned by the values and standards inculcated by Islam.

The language arts subjects begin in the primary grades with basic language skills, speaking, reading, and writing. Fundamental to language training is phonics, word recognition, and word attack. Math at this level emphasizes what is known as the Manipulatives, how numbers work together through the various operations. Both concrete examples and demonstrations are used to help students grasp the basic relationships of quantities in the various processes. In the primary grades, children are engaged in many oral activities that emphasize learning by doing. When a child is taught to associate his or her vocabulary with written forms, he or she experiences a sense of positive recognition. By integrating the language experience approach with other reading methods, the children are further reinforced in the striving to learn to read effectively.

### **3. Intermediate Instructional Program (Grades 4-5)**

The intermediate grades receive instruction where the primary skill-building left off. Continuing to ground students in the basic academic skills, the teachers group children according to academic achievement and need. The reading program stresses comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. The reading for enjoyment and interest are also encouraged in these grades. Progress is evaluated on the basis of daily performance and test scores.

Basic writing skills acquired in language arts is integrated in all areas of the curriculum. Capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure, spelling, and word usage are important language skills emphasized in the intermediate grades.

In social studies, as well as in science and math exploration, research, demonstration, and presentation are the basic tools of instruction. Teachers use a wide array of media in accomplishing their task of introducing students to the people and natural world to which they belong. In addition, students are systematically encouraged to make predictions and assessments of the events, materials, and problems they observe.

### **4. Middle School Instructional Program ( Grades 6-8)**

The distinguishing feature of middle school is its departmentalized approach to teaching and learning. Teachers specialize in various fields of learning, and students study in-depth the basic fields for which six years of elementary education has prepared them. The curriculum prompts students to focus and mature in their thinking processes and allows them to develop into self-directed learners. Independent study assignments, reports, and activities permit students to utilize the resources available to them in seeking out knowledge. They discover the conventions of independent learning in a variety of fields. Students are further given plenty of opportunities to interact with their environment and to make the transition to individualized work.

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students study intensively for and are tested on the Constitution of the United States. This is a state of Illinois requirement for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade diploma and an opportunity for

students to understand the foundation, structure, and operation of the society in which they live. Integrated studies of law and geography provide a forum for critical thinking about civilization and culture. As students learn the history of the life-styles, traditions, and struggles of American society, they naturally begin to evaluate their understanding of Islam, the world Muslim community, and the role of Muslims in American society.

Vocabulary, writing, and grammar in the junior high school are also stressed. In these years, students begin to express themselves and become individuals. Students who have grasped well the rules of grammar and usage begin to develop their own writing styles. Others are encouraged to adhere to the basic rules of grammar and usage throughout their coursework until sufficient mastery allows them to branch out. Teachers become more exacting regarding logical thought processes and the ability to articulate one's questions coherently.

While teachers continue to review fundamentals taught in elementary school, middle school allows students the opportunity to open up to the world of literature, to focus on science and math, and to expand their personal vocabularies. Each subject requires mastery. In addition, teachers promote the investigative method of learning, in which the science fair has been an important component. Innovation and discovery remain the underlying stimulation for each project.

In physical education, students learn concepts concerning health, exercise, physical skill development, and team-oriented sports. All students are encouraged to participate fully in the course and to maintain a positive attitude toward physical development. The creative arts unlock other approaches to thinking.

## **5. High School Instructional Program (Grades 9-12)**

At the high school level, the program is based upon the fundamental knowledge acquired during the primary, intermediate, and middle school years. The skills center on critical thinking, providing a challenge to all students. The program encompasses a spectrum of educational endeavors focused on academic excellence, with the aim of enabling students to enter the premier universities in the country.

Universal offers courses in Math, Science, Social Studies, English, Islamic Studies, Arabic, Qur'anic Studies, Physical Education, and other courses offered through the AP program or as electives.

Students take regular or honors courses based upon comprehensive evaluation and demonstrated ability. Oral and written language ability plays an important part in whether a student is accepted into the honors program. In addition, advanced placement programs and testing are open to qualified students. The total program stresses individual effort and provides a fair opportunity for individuals to achieve and demonstrate excellence.

At this level, students are encouraged to participate in as many programs for academic excellence as possible. It is with exactly this aim of enabling students to mature into outstanding

and academically excellent human beings that Universal was established. The Universal School course book details specific course requirements, the grading policy, and graduation requirements.

## **HIGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENTS**

### **English and Literature**

The English department offers basic and advanced courses, which include Grammar, Writing, regular English, and Dual Credit Journalism in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade for qualified students. The advanced course of AP language and comprehension, and AP Literature are taught at the junior and senior levels. In each of the four years of high school, students build upon the foundation of reading and writing skills. The emphasis on writing with vocabulary development and enrichment in the language phase of studies enables students to think clearly, to write terse prose, and to articulate their thoughts in a comprehensible manner and in a style appropriate to the audience and task. The language phase stresses grammar, usage, various composition styles, and punctuation. As students progress, emphasis shifts from basic composition to specific genres of writing and writing styles, including research writing, comparison and contrast writing, expository writing, descriptive writing, and journalistic writing. The literature phase focuses on the classical literature that forms the bedrock of English letters, and on modern writers addressing issues of modern life. Students will discuss literary concepts and terminology, and will learn the basic skills of critical reading and writing. This exposure is essential for college entrance examination success. Honors courses are available in 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade. AP is offered in the junior and senior levels.

### **Science**

The science department includes a state of the art laboratory and offers basic and advanced courses, which may include Physical Science, Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physiology, Environmental Science, and Physics. The advanced courses vary from year to year and include the following, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science and AP Physics and these are taught at the junior or senior levels. Each student is responsible for reading assigned material, applying the scientific method, and researching special topics. Lectures, laboratory periods, and demonstrations are the primary media use in instruction. Middle School science preparation is essential for success in the Universal High School science curriculum. Students are encouraged to take the full high school science curriculum.

### **Mathematics**

Courses offered in the math department may include Consumer Mathematics, Pre-Algebra, Algebra I and II, Geometry, Pre-calculus/Trigonometry, and AP Calculus. Each course is a challenging and sequential offering designed to develop the aptitude and analytical background of each pupil. Geometry is flexible in the sequence and offers a visual and conceptual view of mathematics. Students are offered the option of taking Algebra I in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade to complete the curriculum with Calculus as a senior. Honors courses are offered in some levels.

## **Social Studies**

Each course covers the events, movements, patterns, scholars in the field, and leaders within the range of the specific topic. Each class will study the following themes: political institutions, economic changes, religious beliefs, and socio-cultural elements. Students read, compare, and analyze the flow of history and the writing of history. Each course is a survey of a specific period, with World History and American History required. Honors courses and specialized studies of various eras or regions are made available at different times and may include Islamic history, general geography, world geography. AP courses are also offered at the junior and senior levels.

## **Foreign Language**

High School students take 4 years of Arabic with an opportunity to place and take dual-credit Arabic in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade as well as an opportunity to achieve the Seal of Biliteracy in a foreign language through the State. The objectives of high school Arabic are to develop conversational Arabic, to build a sufficient vocabulary, and to learn the rudiments of Arabic grammar. These skills are to be applied to the reading of the Qur'an and to the understanding of its content.

## **Islamic Studies**

Four years of Islamic studies offer students' knowledge of Islam's system of belief, practice, and history. Students are expected to demonstrate the values of Islam in their daily interactions. Behavior and attitude reflect identity. The primary objective of Islamic studies is to firmly root students in a Muslim-American identity that expresses itself in their speech, character and actions. Islamic studies offer students an opportunity to discuss the issues and dilemmas they face as members of their community.

At the high school level, students are asked to read excerpts from the Sirah of the Prophet and discuss them. A geography and history of the Muslim World component, discussing its movements and leaders, its successes and shortcomings, and its current challenges within the value system of Islam, is offered to upper-level students. The daily prayer experience, Friday congregational prayers, and khutbah avail students of an opportunity to draw closer to Allah. The English language is the primary language of instruction and of texts for reading.

## **Quranic Studies**

Qur'anic study adds the vital link of Qur'an to the school's Islamic curriculum. The course includes memorization, tajwid recitation, basic understanding of the text, and discussion of the particular times related to revelation. Students gain an appreciation for the value of the Qur'an in their daily lives, for the miracle of the Quran's revelation, and the preservation of its original text.

## **Senior Project (Optional)**

During the high school student's final year of study, each student is given an option to select a topic in a field of particular interest. Students research the topic and develop a position paper on it.

A presentation with display is given, and each student works closely with a faculty advisor in developing this independent project. The student is graded based on research effort, written work, overall development, and presentation of the project. A checklist is utilized to keep track of the student's progress. The senior project spans the entire first quarter. Students are expected to adhere to the deadlines for projects. Any student who chooses to do may use the Senior Project to replace an elective credit.

### **Physical Education/Health**

The physical education department encourages students to take charge of their fitness and physical well-being. Exercise can help students to develop good habits at an early age. Also, the school desires to help students to grow and improve physically, socially and mentally. Students utilize the athletic facility for organized exercise, stamina, and fitness testing. Physical Education is concerned with the teaching of skills, attitudes and theories in physical activity. The purpose of the physical education department at Universal School is to provide students with the opportunity to experience and participate in a variety of physical and health activities which help meet their individual needs. All students are required to earn at least two credit hours of Physical Education/Health prior to graduation.

### **Electives**

Students will be able to use part of their day to study courses that are not required. Each year they will choose from a selection of courses. Availability will depend upon the number of students who sign up for a course.

### **Universal School's Reading Philosophy**

Universal School views reading as being of vital importance. Deriving meaning from the printed word is an essential component to success in virtually every field of endeavor. Universal School's K-12 reading program encompasses a comprehensive, balanced literacy approach that is research-based and combines phonological skill development within language and literature-rich learning environments centered on comprehensive strategies. Grade level differences are reflected in the Illinois State Standards, teacher's choice of learning objectives, resources, and activities. The goal of the reading program is to create fluent, independent readers who have a passion for reading and writing while taking into consideration the general developmental needs of the students as well as their individual reading abilities. When considering the reading needs of students, it is important to realize that all readers (struggling readers, average readers, and proficient readers) differ considerably in their interests, aptitudes, personalities, backgrounds, and learning styles. Their varied needs can be addressed successfully in a balanced reading program that includes features such as the following:

- Phonological and print awareness
- Comprehension strategies
- Varied instructional strategies
- Word attack and phonics skills
- Developing and enhancing vocabulary

- Building reading fluency
- Silent reading
- Teacher read-aloud
- A combination of guided reading instruction and independent reading time
- Building prior knowledge
- Engaging learning activities

### **C. Opening and Closing Dates and Hours of Instruction per School Year**

Universal School’s school year begins on the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the last Friday of every August and ends during the second week of June. There are typically 182 days during an average school year with a total of 1,166 instructional hours. These numbers may vary from year to year.

### **D. Provision for Students with Different Talents**

Universal School is focused on students and is committed to the philosophy that every student should experience success. Every student has different talents and it is our responsibility as a school to help each student recognize his or her unique talents and areas of strength, set realistic goals and achieve them.

The school recognizes the developmental nature of learning and those educational programs need to be inclusive of the needs of a range of children. To make this possible we offer a wide range of courses and opportunities to meet the needs of students of all ability levels. The school also makes provision for students’ personal development. The students respond very well to opportunities to take responsibility, to relate well to each other and to gain an understanding of their own cultural heritage and the cultures of other societies. In addition, there are many programs and clubs that recognize and nurture non-academic talents and provide students the opportunity to develop their skills and attributes over a wide range of activities. Extra-Curricular activities provide opportunities for students to extend and develop their special talents or interests and to further their social and personal development by working in groups and/or teams to achieve specific goals. These opportunities exist because they help meet the different needs of the students in our school. We aim to make a major contribution to the full development of every individual and to turn out students who are independent learners capable of coping in a resourceful and innovative manner with the rapidly changing world in which we live.

### **E. Development of Instruction**

Universal School supports the concept of Optimal Match and incorporates the philosophy into its approach to the development of instruction and curriculum at all grade levels. Optimal Match is a philosophy and approach to education which acknowledges the diversity of learning styles and academic levels found in every classroom and accommodates these differences through instructional and institutional flexibility. Within this framework, the school’s objective becomes the provision of an optimal match between an individual’s identified academic talents and an appropriate educational experience that will advance and mature that capability to the fullest extent. To make this possible we offer a wide range of courses and opportunities to meet the needs of students of all ability levels.

The flexible structure of the primary grades accommodates the students' divergent backgrounds, learning styles and readiness for academic skills, encouraging them to progress at their own rate and to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning. The intermediate grades introduce students to a slightly more formal approach to education, while allowing for continued flexibility and individualized focus.

The instructional program emphasizes strong basic academic skills in reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. In addition specialized resource teachers provide instruction in physical education, computers, Islamic Studies, Arabic, and Quran. The curriculum for each grade level and the expectancies for student achievement are based on the Illinois learning standards. Universal recognizes the need to have its curriculum aligned with instructional materials, media, textbooks, and technology in order to positively affect student learning. The evaluation of the curriculum is an on-going process and the revision is primarily driven by the teachers' experiences and observations during planning and teaching. The teachers ensure that instructional objectives and strategies are grade-appropriate and sequential. The teaching staff is also encouraged to seek out and utilize current and innovative teaching methods and are directed and trained to use multiple teaching styles and to provide multiple methods of assessment in the classrooms.

#### **F. American History and Constitution Instruction**

Universal School provides three classes in United States history, one in middle school, one in 10<sup>th</sup> and an optional class in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. The Middle School and 10<sup>th</sup> grade classes are graduation requirements at Universal School. In addition, no 8<sup>th</sup> grade student can graduate without passing the constitution exam.

#### **G. Economics**

Universal School offers economics to students in grades 11 and 12. Economics is the social science that seeks to describe the factors which determine the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. This course is designed to help students of all abilities achieve fundamental understanding of core economic principles. Key concepts are developed throughout the school year through the text, graphics, transparencies, videos, and online resources-and supported by a variety of activities to help students apply their new knowledge to the real world.

#### **H. Islamic History Instruction**

Universal School offers Islamic History to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students as an optional class. The curriculum is based on the study of the history of Islamic states from the Umayyad Dynasty to modern times. It analyzes and comprehends major themes of Islamic History, such as: expansion, social patterns, Muslim contributions to the arts and sciences, and the decline of Muslim empires. It provides students with a means and methodology which will help them better understand our world today and appreciate the story of mankind. This course requires careful attention to important skills including: development of critical and analytical skills, study skills, and map reading skills.

## **I. Contemporary Issues in Islam:**

This course is a combination of examining contemporary issues that affect our faith and call us into action (community service). Much of the course will revolve around community engagement and there will be some required participation outside of class -some of which can double for community service. Participation will be closely monitored and students will be encouraged to seek extra credit. This course will also examine the basics of other faiths, secularism, feminism, conservatism, some legislative issues, radicalization/extremism and how to counter Islamophobia.

## **J. School In-Service Education Program**

Universal School believes that continuous, on-going professional development is an essential component to an effective instructional program. Professional development activities are designed to provide knowledge that aligns with the development and/or assessment of specific skills and academic standards. These skills and knowledge components focus on such things as student instruction, assessment and management. In-service activities also provide for the attainment of knowledge that produces and increases student achievement and enhances positive self-esteem.

Universal School has one week of in-service prior to the opening of the school year, one day in the fall, one day in the winter, one day in the spring, and three days at the end of the school year. The in-service week prior to the start of new school year updates teachers on changes in curriculum and policies, preparing classrooms, and introducing the staff to the areas of concentration for the school year. Each in-service program during the school year highlights one of the skills identified as needed by the staff such as computer training, learning centers, classroom management, cooperative learning, differentiated instruction, discipline with dignity, learning and the brain, methods of assessment, and reading across the curriculum. The end of year in-service focuses on such things as evaluating the school year as a whole, identifying areas for school improvement, updating curriculum objectives, and updating student cumulative records. In addition to the school sponsored in-service programs, each teacher is encouraged to attend out of school seminars or workshops of their choice where the expense is covered by the school. The school also encourages teachers to further their education by seeking higher degrees in education and motivates them to do so by providing interest free loans for tuition and making adjustments to the teacher's schedule in case of conflicts between college classes and work hours.

### **5.02 Extra-Classroom Activities: Development of Leadership and Social Programs**

Universal School does not regard curriculum as merely a collection of subjects, but as the sum of all the learning experiences that are made available to students while they are in school. During the time that students spend at Universal, a great deal of emphasis is placed upon their personal and social development both through the formal and informal curriculum. Extra-curricular activities are used as a means of developing a wholesome attitude and good human relations, as

well as knowledge and skills. In addition, they provide opportunities for students to extend and develop their special talents or interest and to further their social and personal development by working in groups, or teams, to achieve particular aims. There are a variety of programs at Universal School aimed at the development of leadership and social skills. Throughout the year, these special events enrich the academic program and create a sense of pageantry for the school.

- Student Council
- I.M.A.N Club (Inner City Muslim Action Network)
- Basketball Team
- Volleyball Team
- Soccer
- Dawa Club
- Debka Club
- Middle School Newspaper
- Reading Book Club
- WYSE (World Wide Youth Science and Engineering)
- National Honor Society (grades 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>)
- Regional and State Science Fair
- Middle School Newsletter Club
- Field Trips
- Illinois Math League
- Lexicon Challenge
- American Mathematics Competition (grades 10<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>)
- Math Counts (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Inner Islamic Schools Math, Science, Social Studies, Islamic Studies, and Quran Competitions
- All School English and Arabic Spelling Bees
- All School Quran Competition
- MUNUC (Model United Nations of the University of Chicago)
- International Fest
- MS and HS Robotics Clubs

### **5.03 Pupil Services: Diagnosis and Services**

Universal School maintains health and immunization records for every student enrolled at the school as required by law. The principal is the person responsible for completing the annual Immunization Survey Form ISBE 70-11.

#### **1. Health services:**

Universal School does not have a school nurse, nor does it provide health services at the school. Students are referred to their healthcare provider or to the county health clinic. Health education is provided to students during high school, including information on nutrition, exercise, personal care, smoking, alcoholism, and drug abuse.

#### **2. Physical, Socio-emotional, Mental Testing and Diagnosis:**

The Intervention and Referral Services process is comprised of the Principal or designee, the school counselors (academic and social-emotional), teachers, students and parents dedicated to supporting students experiencing barriers to learning within the general education setting. The goal of these services is to support staff and students to use strategies and interventions to address a diverse range of academic, behavioral, and health challenges experienced in the context of the general education setting. Students may be identified during this process as eligible for referral for a case evaluation by the appropriate district which will determine whether they are in need of additional services such as a 504 Plan or Individualized Student Plan (ISP).

Step 1: The referring person (i.e. student, parent, and teacher) initiates contact with a school counselor. A referral form may be submitted to the counselor's office.

Step 2: The counselor collects information on student academic and behavioral performance from Academic or Social Emotional Counselor and Guidance Office as well as the student file (i.e. grades, testing, and health records).

Step 3: The counselor meets with the referring person to discuss and identify challenges the student is experiencing and strategies that have been or are being used.

Step 4: The counselor determines meeting dates and times with the student, parents and teachers of the student to discuss an action plan. The counselor determines a follow-up meeting date/time to review the plan (i.e. monthly, quarterly etc.)

Step 5: The student's progress towards goals and objectives are documented by the teacher and anyone involved with responsibilities associated with implementing the plan.

Step 6: The counselor notifies individuals with responsibilities in the action plan for a follow-up meeting during which the group will meet and discuss progress of intervention and continuing goals.

Step 7: Members involved in the plan continue to meet regularly to monitor progress and/or amend the plan. If the student is not successful with the implemented interventions after an extended period of time, members of the team or the parents of the student can request a referral to the district for observations which may lead to a case study evaluation and special education services.

For additional services students are referred to the public school district in which they reside.

### **3. Medical Examination:**

The school maintains health records for every child as required by State Law. Every child must provide proof of a health exam when entering the school, through their health care provider or local county health clinic.

### **4. Educational, Vocational, Social-Civic, and Personal Guidance Services:**

These services are provided by the Administration. This is especially true for middle high and high school students who are advised regularly throughout the school year on an individual basis. The

administration meets in the fall and spring semester with students beginning freshman year to discuss performance in current courses and the fulfillment of graduation requirements. Students and parents are encouraged to speak to the administration whenever they want to address an advisement issue.

The administration also presents workshops for each grade level in high school that includes information about universities, colleges, and vocational schools. Students are informed about early and regular admission requirements to various post-secondary institutions, application deadlines, and standardized test requirements such as the PSAT and PLAN tests in tenth grade and the ACT and SAT in junior and senior year. Informative seminars about financial aid, scholarships, and college tuition are also presented to the students. Academic advising includes course offerings and career preferences as stated by students and their parents/guardians.

## **6.00 Facilities and Support Services**

### **6.01 School Facilities: Building Safety and Fire Standards**

- A.* Universal School is accessible to its students, parents and teachers. The school is as free as possible from traffic hazards and distracting noise, and is functional for the instructional program.
- B.* The school has a full time maintenance and custodial staff. They are charged with the cleanliness and upkeep of the building.
- C.* The school is in compliance with applicable standards for heating, ventilation, and illumination.
- D.* The school is in compliance with prevailing state and local fire safety codes. Evidence of this compliance is to be found in school records. The school conducts one tornado drill and three to five fire drills, a lock down drill, and a bus safety evacuation drill as a precaution to ensure maximum protection from injury to staff and students in case of fire or tornado emergencies.

### **6.02 School Food Services: Balanced Meals and Services Operations**

The school operates a cafeteria, which provides a healthy lunch menu to students. The cafeteria is inspected by the health department on a regular basis and complies with all health and safety regulations.

## **7.00 Personnel Qualifications**

### **7.01 Criteria for Selection of Professional Staff**

The professional staff is employed on the basis of educational background, academic accomplishments, number of certifications in various subject areas, experience, recommendation letters, and conduct during the initial interview with the staff selection committee and any

subsequent interviews, as well as their knowledge and understanding of the Muslim culture and religion. The school employs its teachers and its students without regard to their age, sex, religion, handicap, or national origin.

### **7.02 Qualifications of Teachers and Other Professional Staff**

The vast majority of teachers at Universal School have a Bachelor's degree or Graduate degrees. Teachers carry certifications and endorsements in areas of expertise as well.

### **7.03 Teacher Competency in Assigned Areas**

Teachers must demonstrate competency in the following areas:

1. Planning, delivery, and evaluation of instruction
2. Classroom management
3. Participation in school committees and extracurricular activities
4. Effective and positive communication with students, parents, colleagues, and administration

Teachers are evaluated according to the school's teacher evaluation procedures. These procedures are described in the teacher handbook and are explained during the in-service week prior to the beginning of the school year.

### **7.04 Evaluation of Administration's Competency**

- A. Evaluation of the assistant principal is carried out by the principal and is based on fulfillment of the tasks assigned by the principal. The evaluation procedure is described in an attachment to the assistant principal's contract.
- B. Evaluation of the principal is carried out by the executive committee of the school board. The executive committee uses its bi-weekly meeting with the principal and his/her written and oral reports about the state of the school as a basis of evaluation.

### **7.05 System of Selecting Teachers with Less Than a Bachelor's Degree**

Teachers with less than a Bachelor's degree demonstrate their competence by:

1. Working on a day-to-day basis for a trial period of one month or longer at Universal School.
2. Working towards a Bachelor's degree based on a schedule agreed to by the school.
3. Having a satisfactory number of courses or extensive successful teaching experience prior to joining Universal.
4. Being closely monitored by the administration.

## **7.06 System of Evaluating Teachers and Encouraging Improvement of Teaching Competency**

- A. Evaluation: Teachers are evaluated formally by the principal, the assistant principal and/or the department heads. The evaluation is based on class visitations, mastery of content and subject matter, effective classroom management: review of lessons plans, review of grade book, and review of duty and meeting roster. The system is described in the teachers' handbook.
- B. There are a variety of ways in which improvement in teaching competency is encouraged:
  - 1. Mentoring system for new teachers
  - 2. In school in-service
  - 3. Out of school in-service
  - 4. Encouragement of pursuing higher education and additional certification through loans and schedule accommodations.
  - 5. Teachers observe each other classes and provide informal feedback to each other without any documentation or involvement from administration.

## **VII. HEALTH ISSUES AND POLICIES**

### **A. Health Records**

All incoming students are required to have a completed physical and immunization record prior to the beginning of the school year. School personnel will check that every student meets the Illinois Department of Public Health requirements for immunization.

- 1. All preschool, 5th, 6th and 7th graders must have 3 doses of the Hepatitis B vaccine at the proper intervals.
- 2. All kindergarten-12th graders must have 2 doses of the measles vaccine. Each dose must have been given after 12 months of age.
- 3. All students must have up to date DTP and polio vaccines, as well as booster shots.
- 4. All preschool, kindergarten, 5th and 9th graders must have a complete physical examination signed and dated by their physician.

Certificate of health examination sheets will not be accepted without a doctor's signature in the immunization section, as well as, in the physical examination section, along with the phone number and address.

### **B. Health Safety Policies**

The State of Illinois discourages the administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school related activities unless absolutely necessary for the critical

health and well-being of the student. Only, Administrative school employees may dispense medication to students when needed, the school and school personnel incur no liability for injuries occurring when administering asthma medication or an epinephrine auto-injector. The State permits self-administration of these medications by students with proper medical documentation. Please submit the written note to the administration.

- The school will keep all medications in a central, locked location.
- According to the State law, students are required to administer their own medication under the supervision of designated school personnel.
- The school will keep a documented log of use.
- A special form, available in the school office, must be signed by a parent and the child's physician and kept on file. This form must be updated annually. Medication must be clearly labeled in the original prescription bottle. All prescription medications, except inhalers, are kept in the school office. Over the counter medicines are not allowed without a note from the parent and signed consent of a physician. These may be held by the teacher or school office until needed at which time the child may self-administer.

### **Administration of Designated Prescriptions and Medication:**

1. The School has on file for each student with Asthma medication:
  - a. Signed parent permission notification
  - b. The prescription label contains the following:
    - i. The name of the asthma medication
    - ii. The prescribed dosage
    - iii. The time or circumstance in which the medication is to be administered
  - c. The school requests annually an asthma action plan from the parents or guardians
2. Prescribed Epinephrine Injectors
  - a. The school has written authorization from the students physician or PA to administer an Epinephrine injector for the student
  - b. A written statement containing the following:
    - i. The name and purpose of the injector
    - ii. The prescribed dosage
    - iii. The time or circumstance in which the injector should be administered
3. Prescribed Diabetes Medication

The school has on file for each of the students with prescribed diabetes medication

  - a. Signed parent permission notification
  - b. Signed physician diabetes care plan that also carries a parent signature

4. The school will enroll students with other prescribed drugs or medications with the proper forms and documents accompanying the medication or legal drug.  
If applicable a copy of the registry identification card will be requested in addition to physicians' prescription, parent authorization and additional necessary documentation that will be needed to be submitted and kept on file.  
Administration will occur in a private setting only, not in classes, washrooms, public/open areas of the building.
5. A student may possess and use topical sunscreen product while on school property or at a school-sponsored event or activity without a physician's note if the over-the-counter product is approved by the FDA.

### **Administration of Undesignated Medicine**

The school does allow the administration of undesignated epinephrine injectors if needed. The school has on file an authorized standing order from a licensed health provider for one or more doses. The school will report to ISBE as prescribed that the school maintains a supply of undesignated epinephrine auto-injectors.

The school reports to ISBE as prescribed within three days of administering an undesignated epinephrine auto-injector.

The school upon administration of an auto-injector will immediately activate the EMS system and notify a student's parent(s) or emergency contact. Within 24 hours the school will also notify the physician who prescribed the auto-injector that it was used.

### **C. School Exclusion Policy for Communicable Illness**

Control of communicable illness among children is a prime concern. Policies and guidelines related to outbreaks of communicable illness have been developed with the help of the health department and local pediatricians. In order to protect the entire group of children, we ask that parents assist us by keeping ill children at home if they have experienced any of the following symptoms within the previous 24 hours:

- a fever over 100° F (37.8° C) orally or 99° F (37.2° C) axillary (under the arm)
- signs of a newly developing cold or severe coughing
- diarrhea, vomiting or an upset stomach
- unusual or unexplained loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability or headache
- conjunctivitis (pink eye) or any contagious illness

Children who become ill with any of these symptoms will be returned home. We appreciate your cooperation with this policy. If you have any questions about whether or not your child should attend school, please call the school before bringing your child.

### **D. Emergency Policies**

#### **ACCIDENTS**

In case of an in-school accident, students should notify the nearest teacher or staff member. The main office personnel should be notified when there is an emergency or a need for an ambulance. The name of the injured person should be given. School personnel will notify the parents. The office staff will call 911 if they judge that the situation warrants it even if they cannot contact the parent. An accident report will be completed and filed.

## **CONCUSSIONS**

Universal School recognizes that both physical and mental rest is important to recovery from a concussion, which may be followed by a gradual progression back to any activity in athletics and in the classroom. Most concussions resolve within a few days or weeks, so the management of a concussed student may be no different than that of one who has missed a few days due to minor injury. However, some concussion symptoms may linger and have the potential to impact long-term academics and physical activities of a student. Therefore, Universal School established protocols to ensure school accommodations during the time of a student's concussive recovery. If a student is suspected of a suffering from a concussion at school or during a school-sponsored activity, we will institute its procedures. If a student suffers a suspected concussion away from school, we urge parents/guardians to notify the school administration immediately, so that we may commence its procedures.

### **Concussion Signs and Symptoms for Classroom and Physical Education Teachers**

#### Physical Symptoms

- Headache
- Neck pain
- Nausea
- Lack of energy and constantly feeling physically and mentally tired
- Dizziness, light-headedness, and a loss of balance
- Blurred or double vision and sensitivity to light
- Increased sensitivity to sounds
- Ringing in the ears
- Loss of sense of taste and smell
- Change in sleep patterns especially waking up a lot at night

#### Cognitive Symptoms

- Difficulty concentrating and paying attention
- Trouble with learning and memory
- Problems with word-finding and putting thoughts into words
- Easily confused and losing track of time and place
- Slower in thinking, acting, reading, and speaking
- Easily distracted

- Trouble doing more than one thing at a time
- Lack of organization in everyday tasks

### Social and Emotional Symptoms

- Mood changes including irritability, anxiousness, and tearfulness
- Decreased motivation
- Easily overwhelmed
- More impulsive
- Withdrawn and wanting to avoid social situations especially if there is a lot of people

### Concussions and Athletics:

#### Return to Play (RTP) Policy

National playing rule regarding potential head injuries: The rule requires “any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion as listed above to be immediately removed from the game and not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.” In applying that rule in Illinois, it has been determined that only certified athletic trainers and physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois can clear an athlete to return to play the day of a contest in which the athlete has been removed from the contest for a possible head injury.

Policy: In cases when an athlete is not cleared to return to play the same day as he/she is removed from a contest following a possible head injury (i.e., concussion), the athlete shall not return to play or practice until the athlete is evaluated by and receives written clearance from a licensed health care provider to return to play.

For the purposes of this policy, licensed health care providers consist of physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois and certified athletic trainers working in conjunction with physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois.

### **FIRE AND TORNADOS**

Directions for fire and tornado drills are posted in each classroom. Fire drills will be held regularly throughout the year. Tornado drills will be held regularly and students will be given instructions on drill procedure. No student should leave the building during tornado drills.

### **BUS EVACUATION DRILL**

During the academic year, the school conducts a minimum of one bus evacuation drill. The schools’ curriculum shall include this drill and instruction in safe driving practices for all students.

## LOCK- DOWN DRILL

In the event that an emergency situation requires lock-down, do not allow students to leave the classroom. Bring any students in the hallways into your classroom and lock the door. If you and your students are not in danger, place the All Clear symbol in the window of your door, facing the hallway. Move students away from doors and windows. Remain quiet and calm. Do not call the office for information. Be ready to give the names of missing students and extra students to the administration when asked. Do not go looking for missing students. Stay with your class. Students should be informed that in the event of a lock-down, they should walk into the nearest classroom. If you are not with your students, remain where you are. Do not walk into the hallway. Move to an interior corner, away from the door. Maintain lock-down until you have received the All Clear from the office. **“Code Green”** – All Fine, and **“Code Red”** – Student missing from the classroom.

### PERSONAL SAFETY

- All visitors to the school enter through the main entrance and report to the main office to sign in and receive a visitor pass.
- All students should be picked up by 3:30 p.m. unless they are with a faculty person or athletic coach.
- **The school is not responsible for any student unsupervised in or outside the building after 3:45 p.m. on regular days or after 12:30 p.m. on early dismissal days.**
- Students should not arrive before 8:10 a.m.
- The school is not responsible for students who are dropped off early outside. They must report directly to the assembly area upon arrival and remain there until they are dismissed.
- Students in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten must be picked up in their classrooms by an adult. Upper elementary, middle, and high school students may pick up their siblings in lower elementary.
- Students who walk home must have a letter on file giving them permission to do so.

### EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

If for any reason the school needs to be closed, the school will make the following efforts to inform the school community:

1. An emergency call will be sent through School Reach, our automated phone system. The call will be to each family either late at night or in the early morning to inform them of the closing of the school.
2. Universal School is listed with the Emergency Closing Center. The school's name will be announced on the following stations:  
Radio WMAQ, WGN, WBBM, B96 or television FOX 32.

## VIII. DISCIPLINE AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

### A. ATTENDANCE

#### 1. Drop off and pick up:

In general Universal School is a closed campus. Students are expected to be in school from 8:20 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on regular school days.

Parents must inform the school of their child's absence by 10:00 a.m. after which time the student will be considered truant (unexcused absence). Parents are expected to drop their children no earlier than 8:10 a.m. and pick them up no later than 3:35 p.m. Every parent in the elementary school must sign a form expressing if their children will be picked up or will walk home. Students who are not picked up by 3:35 p.m. will be sent to the baby sitting room at the school. Parents will have to sign their child out and will be charged at \$5.00 per 15 minutes. The charge can be paid separately or will be added to the tuition balance.

## 2. Tardies:

It is essential parents ensure their child arrives to school in a timely manner. Punctuality is essential to a healthy academic environment. All students in 6th through 12<sup>th</sup> grade are expected to be at school by 8:15 a.m. and attend morning assembly. Tardiness to morning assembly may result in exclusion from privileges (such as off-campus lunch for seniors or field trips for others). Excused tardies must be pre-arranged the day before with the office. Excused tardies include and are limited to the following:

1. Illness
2. Death in the family
3. Participation in a school planned activity
4. Doctor's Appointments
5. Family emergency
6. Traffic accident

All other tardies will be considered **unexcused**, which includes but is not limited to:

1. Any unauthorized absences from classes
2. Personal business such as traffic concerns, shopping, working, hair/nail appointments, babysitting, outside classes or programs.
3. Oversleeping
4. Any issue that can be taken care of after school hours
5. Leaving school without permission is unexcused and may result in a level 3 consequence
6. Unexcused absences
7. More than 7 minutes of tardy to class
8. Absence to class to prepare for an exam for another class or activity

**Tardiness to school:** Students who arrive to school after 8:20am will be marked tardy; every four tardies (per quarter) shall result in a Saturday Detention for students in grades 8-12. Students who arrive 8:40 am or later, shall be recorded as tardy unexcused (TU) and the tardy will be tallied/ recorded towards the cumulative count of **absences** to class/school for the 1<sup>st</sup>

period class. This may result in being dropped from the students 1<sup>st</sup> period class and students will be responsible for any delay of graduation due to the above policy.

Any Saturday detention due to tardiness will equate to one after-school detention. Any student who misses a scheduled Saturday detention will immediately receive a one day suspension.

### **Pre-K-7<sup>th</sup> Grade Tardies:**

Students who arrive **to class** after 8:20 will be recorded as tardy. Every 4 tardies will equal an absence. Tardies for 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade students will result in an SCR for the first 4 tardies and a detention for every 4 tardies thereafter. Students in all grade levels are responsible for making up missed work.

### **3. Absences:**

#### **8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Absences:**

Students in 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade should only be absent in case of an emergency such as illness or death in the family. **All written excuses must be submitted immediately upon a student's return. Be aware that an excuse might not be accepted after 3 days. Students will be granted 4 excused absent days per semester with written notice. A student who accumulates 10 excused or unexcused absences and/or tardies (arriving 8:40 or later) in a semester in any course or class period will be withdrawn from that course, including absence due to family travel.** Students will be responsible for any delay of graduation due to the above policy.

If an absence is excused, students will be allowed to make up all work upon their return within a limited time, which does not exceed their days of absence. Making up work is the responsibility of the student. Any student who chooses to miss five or more consecutive days of school must seek written approval from the administration. **Absence policy applies to both late morning arrival and early dismissals as well.**

#### **Elementary Absences:**

Regular attendance is expected of all students and is a necessary factor in achieving success. Work missed can never be made up in a completely satisfactory manner because the value of class activities is missed forever. However, when children are sick, they should stay home from school. Students must make up work at most within 3 days of an absence.

#### **Excessive PreK-7<sup>th</sup> Grade Absences/Tardies:**

After the 10<sup>th</sup> absence/tardy, parents will receive a letter of concern indicating the total days absent and the total number of tardies recorded. After 15 days absent/tardy, a meeting is convened to determine the causes of the absences from school and to develop an individual plan to improve attendance. After 20 days absent/tardy, make up work will no longer be accepted and students may not be able to re-enroll the following year.

### **4. Early Dismissal:**

Students from pre-kindergarten to 10<sup>th</sup> grade must be signed out by a parent. Junior and senior students must have written permission in advance to leave the school. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to call home to seek permission from parents, nor will the school release a student based on a phone call by someone claiming to be the parents.

## **IX. DISCIPLINE/PBIS POLICY**

### **A. ELEMENTARY (1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

Helping students maintain appropriate behavior is a priority for all educators and parents. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) is a school-wide prevention program that uses behavior techniques to provide safe, supportive learning environments, promote positive life skills, and reduce negative behaviors. The PBIS process enables educators, parents and community members to work together to help all students know expectations and receive the necessary supports to develop appropriate behaviors and engage in learning. PBIS strategies also help improve school climate and safety.

In order to secure the best possible learning environment, guidelines of acceptable behavior and class rules to be followed consistently will be set school wide and taught at the beginning of the year and after long weeks. These disciplinary procedures and consequences will help the students realize their responsibility to behave appropriately. Inshallah, this system will allow students to make appropriate choices, which will, in turn, ensure the proper Islamic environment in the classroom. The students will be either rewarded or penalized for their behavior. The system to be used is as follows:

## Classroom Management Behavior System



A student's clothespin travels up and down the chart based upon his behavior. If he's making good choices, it's going to be moving up. If not, it's going down. This up-and-down movement is a significant departure from the down-only style of the tally system/card system we have used in the past.

All of the clothespins are clipped to the edge of the middle level. The students didn't start out their day at the top of the chart the way the Pocket Chart had everyone starting with the best color. Every student in this room began the day in a neutral spot and then attempted to work his way up the chart.

A student using the Clip Chart, experiences a true sense of accomplishment as his clothespin moves up the chart because of his good choices. More than merely hanging onto his green card by avoiding negative behavior, he went out of his way to exhibit positive behavior, and if he does end up on Outstanding, it's because he earned it. He didn't start out on that level. He actually got there by being a responsible, productive student. Way to go, hard worker.

Any student who has been asked to move his clothespin down a level or two has the opportunity to improve his behavior and see his clothespin rise to a better level. This fundamental difference affords the teacher the freedom to ask that a clothespin be moved down, secure in the knowledge that the student can be restored to his former position later in the day when he is making better choices. The thought that a child is offered a chance at redemption is not only a powerful motivator for the student, it also enables the teacher to act on problem behavior and not just talk about it.

### Continuum of Reinforcement

Students Behavior will be recorded on Student Portals. Every student is expected to earn 4 pts a day=20 pts for the week. Their progress will be recorded as points in a Behavior Class on Student Portals. Extra good behavior earns them extra points. Positive notes home can be sent physically and through comments on Student Portals. SCRs will also be recorded in the comments section on Student Portals.

Outstanding=Positive Parent Contact, class incentive, 5pt

Great Job=Class incentive, 5pts

Good Day=5 pts

Ready to Learn=4 pts

Think About It=Reflection, 3pts

Teacher's Choice=Reflection, consequence, 2pts

Parent Contact=Reflection, consequence 1 SCR/phone call, 1pt

Bottom of Chart=Call home, 1 SCR (not an additional SCR), 0 pts

In special cases in which elementary students cause excessive classroom disruption, engage in acts of bullying and/or fighting, harm others, or use profanity, will be referred to the Administration for immediate suspension and placed on Disciplinary Probation.

Issuing a Student Conduct Report (SCR) or a detention will be at the discretion of the classroom specials' teacher. Detentions will be based on the offense and severity and will be served with the teacher either before or after school. Securing signed slips and calling home will be handled by the teacher. A file will be created and maintained by the classroom teacher and any correspondence and phone calls to parents must be fully documented and placed in the student's file.

## B. MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

The following list of behavioral issues should be handled by the classroom teacher whenever possible. Ordinarily, a teacher will not refer a student to the Administration until the classroom teacher has made documented, progressive disciplinary actions and has held a conference with the student and parents. Thereafter, the classroom teacher may refer the student to the Administration through a written referral. **However, earlier referrals may be made when the misbehavior occurs outside the classroom or in circumstances where the classroom teacher believes immediate outside assistance is necessary.** The Administration reserves the right to issue consequences based on the nature of the infraction. This list of violations is not all inclusive, but only representative and illustrative. A student committing an improper act of misconduct, which does not happen to be specifically listed, is still subject to disciplinary action.

<p>1. Disruptive Behavior: Engaging in any conduct that causes or results in the breakdown of the orderly process of instruction and/or school activity</p> <p>2. Littering: Throwing or dropping paper, trash, or other material on the floor or ground purposely or otherwise in any location inside or outside of the building</p> <p>3. Refusal to do classroom work: Refusing to complete work, labs, projects, or other assignments given by the teacher</p> <p>4. Verbal Altercation: Engaging in minor verbal altercation. Insulting, taunting, or challenging another person under circumstances in which such conduct could provoke a violent or disruptive response</p> <p>5. Violating classroom rules: Not following the classroom rules</p>	<p>Examples of disciplinary actions classroom teachers can use include, but are not limited to: verbal reprimand, oral or written notification to parent(s); student mediation contracts, teacher or team conference with student/parent(s); separation from peers, denial of class privileges, administration referral.</p>
<p>6. Electronic and other communication devices: No student shall use, display, or possess any electronic device including cell phones. No student shall allow any other student to use, display, or possess their electronic device on school property</p>	<p>In all circumstances, electronic device will be turned in to the Administration and parents will be immediately notified:</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> offense: School will confiscate the cellular phone and parent may pick up on first offense  2<sup>nd</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for three consecutive days.  3<sup>rd</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for five consecutive school days.  4<sup>th</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for ten consecutive school days.  5<sup>th</sup> offense and after: School will confiscate phone for twenty</p>

	<p>consecutive school days.</p> <p>After the first offense, parents will be informed by an email or phone call home.</p> <p>If used during an assessment/assignment, student will receive a <b>zero on the assessment/assignment</b></p>
7. Glass bottles/containers are not allowed anywhere in the building.	Item will be confiscated and disposed of. Consequence include: Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; SCR; detention; 1-3 days suspension
8. Tardiness: Not being seated in the classroom when class is scheduled to begin on the second bell	Tardies are recorded in teacher's gradebook and folder; verbal reprimand; parent contacted; detention given every third tardy
9. Academic misconduct: Plagiarizing, cheating, copying another's work, attempting to gain or gaining unauthorized access to material; using submitting, or providing data or answers dishonestly, by deceit, or by means other than those authorized by the teacher	Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; detention; 1 day suspension, and zero grade on assignment/assessment
10. Food Fight: Throwing food or other items in an inappropriate manner	Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; detention; 1-3 day suspension
11. Inappropriate language: Using any form of cursing, no matter what language spoken in, including hand or bodily gestures	Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; detention; 1-3 day suspension
12. Lying: Intentionally giving or providing untrue or misleading information or communication. Also intentionally withholding pertinent information	Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; detention; 1-3 day suspension
13. Altering official documents: Forging, falsifying, or unauthorized alteration of a document	Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; detention; 1-3 day suspension; recommendation for expulsion
14. Damage\destruction of property\vandalism: Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause damage to school or private property; causing minor damage or defacing school or private property	Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; Under \$50:Restitution; 1-3 day suspension; Police contacted; recommendation for expulsion
15. Misuse of equipment: Students using school online services for illegal, inappropriate, or obscene purposes	Parent contacted by teacher and conference held; detention; 1-3 day suspension; recommendation for expulsion
16. Insubordination: Refusing to comply, either verbally or non-verbally, with a reasonable request or directive	Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; detention, 1 day suspension
17. Loitering\Trespassing: Being present in or about school under one or more of the following circumstances: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. after a reasonable request to leave</li> <li>2. without a legitimate reason for being there</li> <li>3. without proper authorization or permission from anyone authorized to grant permission</li> <li>4. after refusing to identify oneself</li> </ol>	Parent contacted by teacher; conference held; detention; 1 day suspension
18. Truancy:	Parent contacted by teacher; 1-3 day suspension; BPD notified.

Being absent from school without authorization; failure to follow proper attendance check-in, check-out and absence procedures; skipping classes or school	No make-up work will be accepted for classes missed as a result of truancy
19. Horseplay\Playfighting: Engaging in hitting, punching, or any other kind of physical touching, intentional or unintentional whether initiating or retaliating	Parent contacted; conference held; detention; 1-3 day suspension
20. Fighting: Engaging in hitting, punching, or any other kind of physical altercation, whether initiating or retaliating	Parent contacted; conference held; 1-3 day suspension; recommendation for expulsion
21. Bullying/Cyber-bullying: Engaging in verbal, physical, emotional and/or threatening acts of bullying; online or otherwise, examples may include teasing and mocking.	Parent contacted; conference held; detention, conference with Administration; written warning; 1-3 day suspension
22. Physical Contact: Any contact by student to student(s) deemed inappropriate is unacceptable, whether done intentionally or unintentionally	Parent contacted; conference held with Administration; detention, 1-3 day suspension; recommendation for expulsion
23. Electronic access: Using without authorization electronic passwords, or codes for any reason, including but not limited to: accessing, controlling, or disabling technological devices or services	Parent contacted; conference held; 1-3 day suspension; conference with Administration. Parents will be asked to pick up device
24. Uniform Violation: Wearing or dressing in a manner that is not considered uniform and is done intentionally	Conference with Administration; written warning, parents notified; detention
25. Intimidation or Menacing incitement: Threatening another, either verbally or nonverbally, by inflicting fear or damage to property, instigating, or encouraging acts of misconduct	2-3 day suspension, possible recommendation for expulsion; BPD notified
26. Assault/Felonious: Striking with a weapon with the intent to inflict, or inflicting bodily harm	3-14 days suspension; recommended for expulsion; BPD notified
27. Bomb Threats or False Alarms: Making a knowingly false statement regarding the possession or location of explosive or incendiary materials; activating the fire alarm system, or making false "911" calls.	3-14 days suspension; recommended for expulsion; BPD notified
28. Breaking and Entering: Breaking into and/or entering any school building, facility, office, rooms, storage space, or other enclosure without authority to do so	3-14 days suspension; recommended for expulsion; BPD notified
29. Offensive Material: Producing, possessing, or distributing materials that offend common decency or morals in the school community; includes by electronic means as well	3-14 days suspension; recommended for expulsion
30. Reckless Endangerment: Acting in a willful manner, and although not intending to cause	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion

harm, places self or others in jeopardy of injury, or results in the damage destruction, or defacement of school or private property	
31. Theft Stealing, attempting to steal, possessing or transferring school or private property or participating in the theft or attempted theft of school or private property	3-14 days suspension; recommended for expulsion; BPD notified
32. Possession or concealment of weapon or dangerous instrument Using, possessing, attempting to possess, brandishing or concealing any weapon, dangerous instrument, device, materials, look alike, replicas, or any other item deemed to be dangerous. The definition of a knife includes, but is not limited to, a cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle	3-14 days suspension; recommended for expulsion; BPD notified
33. Obscenities, Verbal abuse, vulgarity towards any other individual, or group Directing obscene, abusive, vulgar, profane harassing, insulting, racial, sexual, religious or ethnic slurs, written or verbal, toward any person, student, school personnel or any adult member of the school community. This shall include use of obscene gestures and sign that willfully intimidate, insult, or in any other manner, abuse others through any means of communication	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion
34. Gender fraternization Promiscuous behavior Committing acts that are sexual in nature and fall outside the Islamic teaching on this matter, relations both inside the school and outside. Relations between the sexes-dating, meeting in private-both inside and outside of school. Evidence of Islamically immoral behavior or communication, written or otherwise.	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion

## C. HIGH SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

### (CODE OF CONDUCT)

**The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said:**

**“Righteous is good morality, and wrongdoing is that which waivers in your soul and which you dislike people finding out about” *narrated by MUSLIM***

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#### RATIONALE

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to foster an Islamic environment that is safe and conducive to learning based on Islamic teaching derived from Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet. Parents and students are responsible for reading the Discipline Policy and Handbook for a clear understanding of the school’s expectations for student behavior.

#### CONDUCT IN FORCE:

The Universal Discipline Code applies in the following situations:

1. Violation of Islamic Rules of conduct as prescribed in the Quran or Sunnah of the Prophet at any time while student is registered at Universal School.
2. During regular school hours.
3. On the school bus or other transportation sanctioned by the school.
4. During school sponsored events in/or trips out of the State/out of the country.
5. When going to and from school.
6. During events and activities associated with the school.
7. With respect to any misconduct of personal nature or directed at others which violates this discipline policy, whether on or off school premises.

Additionally, the administration is authorized to take disciplinary action when a student's misconduct away from school has a detrimental effect on other students or on the orderly educational process. The violation is usually directly connected to prior violations at school, threatens to produce further violations at school, poses a likelihood of danger to the physical, emotional health, welfare of students or school personnel and/or whose continued practice by a student of the school is disruptive to the school mission or educational process.

### **DUE PROCESS RIGHTS**

Any student whose conduct may warrant suspension or expulsion will be provided the following due process.

#### **STUDENTS:**

1. A notification of the violation.
2. An opportunity to present his/her side of the story to the appropriate school personnel.

#### **PARENTS:**

1. A written notification of the violation and the consequence decided by the school.
2. Twenty-four hour notice to meet with the proper school personnel for a fair and impartial conference, unless the student's behavior is so disruptive or detrimental that he/she cannot complete the school day. If repeated attempts have failed reaching the parents a letter will be mailed home with the written notification of the violation and the consequence decided upon.

### **THE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNIVERSAL STUDENTS**

<b>STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:</b>	<b>STUDENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:</b>
A quality education	Put forth their best effort to meet classroom expectations
Education without undue interruption, disruption, fear, or inhibition	Conduct themselves in such a manner as to promote a positive educational environment
	Not interfere with the orderly conduct of classes and activities; not force others to participate, and violate the rights of persons who may disagree

Privacy in their person and possessions unless school personnel have reason to believe that inappropriate and/or dangerous materials are being carried and or concealed by the student	Not carry, conceal, or bring onto school property materials, which are inappropriate or may disrupt the educational process
A copy of the Code of Conduct	Read and abide by the Code of Conduct
Receive respect from school personnel and other students	Show respect for other students and school personnel
Due process procedures according to school policies	Read and understand their due process rights
Participate in school functions and extra-curricular activities	Meet academic qualifications, other criteria and qualifications and/or standards of behavior
Protection and confidentiality when fulfilling responsibility to report violations of the code of conduct	Assist school personnel by reporting misconduct

**SCR's:**

Issuance of a Student Conduct Report (SCR) or Referrals to the Deans Office that result in a "SCR" will be considered an infraction. Some may immediately be considered a level 1-3 infraction and consequences will be rendered immediately. SCR's will be tallied, an accumulation of 3 SCR's in a quarter will result in a detention.

**LEVEL 1 INFRACTIONS=CONDUCT THAT IMPEDES ORDERLY OPERATIONS OF CLASSROOM OR SCHOOL**

Level 1 behavior should be handled by the classroom teacher whenever possible. Ordinarily, a teacher will not refer a student engaging in Level 1 behavior to the school administrators until the classroom teacher has taken at least three documented, progressive level one disciplinary actions and has held a conference with the student and parents. Thereafter the classroom teacher may refer the student to the administration through a written referral. However, earlier referrals may be made when the misbehavior occurs outside the classroom or in exceptional circumstances where the classroom teacher believes immediate outside assistance is necessary. This list of violations is not all inclusive, but only representative and illustrative. A student committing an improper act of misconduct, which does not happen to be specifically listed is still subject to disciplinary action.

INFRACTION	DEFINITION	LEVEL 1 DISCIPLINARY
1. Disruptive Behavior	Engaging in any conduct that causes or results in the breakdown of the orderly process of instruction and/or school activity including disrespect to school staff, students or others	Examples of disciplinary actions which classroom teachers can use include, but are not limited to: verbal reprimand, or oral or written notification to parent(s); student mediation contracts, teacher or team conference with student/parent(s); separation from peers, denial of class privileges, administrative referral, detention
2. Littering	Throwing or dropping paper, trash, or other material on the floor or ground purposely or otherwise in any location in the building	“ “ “
3. Refusal to do classroom work	Refusing to complete work, labs, projects, or other assignments given by the teacher	“ “ “
4. Verbal Altercation	Engaging in minor verbal altercation. Insulting, taunting, or challenging another person under circumstances in which such conduct could provoke a violent or disruptive response	“ “ “
5. Violating classroom rules	Not following the classroom rules	“ “ “
6. Electronic and other communication devices.	No student shall use, display, or possess any electronic device including cell phones. No student shall allow any other student to use, display, or possess their electronic device on school property.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense: School will confiscate the cellular phone and parent may pick up on first offense 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for three consecutive days. 3 <sup>rd</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for five consecutive school days. 4 <sup>th</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for ten consecutive school days. 5 <sup>th</sup> offense and after: School will confiscate phone for twenty consecutive school days.  After the first offense, parents will be informed by an email or phone call home.  If used during an assessment/assignment, student will receive a zero on the assessment/assignment
7. Glass bottles/containers are not allowed anywhere in the building.	Item will be confiscated and disposed of.	Consequence include: SCR; detention; 1-3 days suspension
8. Tardiness	Not being seated in the classroom when class is scheduled to begin on the second bell.	Tardies are recorded in attendance folder, verbal reprimand, detention given every third tardy.

**One Saturday detention for behavior equates two after-school detentions.**

**LEVEL 2 INFRACTIONS=ILLEGAL AND/OR SERIOUS CONDUCT**

A student charged with a Level 2 infraction shall be subject to the disciplinary actions listed below. Contact with parents will be made either through a personal conference, phone conference, or in the event the previous are not possible, through written communication. This list of violations is not all inclusive, but only representative and illustrative. A student committing an improper act of misconduct that does not happen to be specifically listed is still subject to disciplinary action.

<b>INFRACTION</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>1ST OFFENSE</b>	<b>2ND OFFENSE</b>	<b>3RD OFFENSE</b>
(9) Disruptive Behavior	Engaging in any conduct that causes or results in the breakdown of the orderly process of instruction and/or school activity including disrespect to school staff, students or others	Examples of disciplinary actions which classroom teachers can use include, but are not limited to: verbal reprimand, or oral or written notification to parent(s); student mediation contracts, teacher or team conference with student/parent(s); separation from peers, denial of class privileges, administrative referral, detention, depending on severity, consequences will result that include detention or suspension.		
(10. Academic misconduct	Plagiarizing, cheating, copying another's work, attempting to gain or gaining unauthorized access to material, using submitting, or providing data or answers dishonestly, by deceit, or by means other than those authorized by the teacher	Detention, or 1 day suspension, and zero grade on assignment/assessment	1-2 days suspension and zero grade on assignment/assessment	2-3 days suspension and zero grade on assignment/assessment
11. Food Fight	Throwing of food or other items in an inappropriate manner	Detention, or 1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension	2-3 days suspension
12. Inappropriate /offensive language	Using any language deemed to be disrespectful or offensive, any form of cursive, regardless of how it is spoken, including hand or bodily gestures	detention, or 1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension	2-3 days suspension
13. Lying	Giving or providing intentionally untrue or misleading information or communication	detention, or 1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension	2-3 days suspension
14. Altering official documents	Forging, falsifying, or unauthorized alteration of a document	detention, or 1-2 days suspension	2-3 days suspension	3-5 days suspension

15. Damage or destruction of property	Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause damage to school or private property; causing minor damage or defacing school or private property	Under \$50 Restitution, 2 days suspension,	Restitution, 2-3 days suspension,	Restitution 3-5 days suspension,
16. Misuse of equipment	Students using school online services for illegal, inappropriate, or obscene purposes	Detention, 1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension or open suspension depending on severity of offense	1-10 days suspension or open suspension depending on severity of offense
17. Insubordination	Refusing to comply, either verbally or non-verbally with a reasonable request or directive	detention,1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension	2-3 days suspension
18. Loitering	Being present in or about a school under one or more of the following circumstances: 1.after a reasonable request to leave 2.without a legitimate reason for being there 3. without proper authorization or permission from anyone authorized to grant permission 4. after refusing to identify oneself.	detention,1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension	2-3 days suspension
19. Trespassing	Being in the school building or on school grounds without permission or authorization, or refusing to comply with a request to leave school premises	detention, 1 day suspension,	1-2 days suspension,	1-10 days suspension, police notified
20. Truancy/Tardy	Being absent from school without authorization, failure to follow proper attendance check-in, check -out and absence procedures, skipping classes or school. Students tardy to class will also receive consequences	1 day suspension, BPD notified No make-up work will be accepted for classes missed as a result of truancy. 3-6 minutes tardiness- detention/Saturday detention 7 or more- Suspension	1-2 days suspension, BPD notified No make-up work will be accepted for classes missed as a result of truancy	2-5 days suspension, referred for expulsion

21. Horseplay/ Playfighting	Engaging in hitting, punching, or any other kind of physical touching, intentional or unintentional whether initiating or retaliating.	Detention, 1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension,	2-3 days suspension, referred for expulsion
22. Fighting	Engaging in hitting, punching, or any other kind of physical altercation, whether initiating or retaliating.	1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension,	2-3 days suspension, referred for expulsion
23. Bullying/Cyberbullying	Engaging in verbal, physical, emotional and/or threatening acts of bullying, may include teasing and mocking	Detention, conference with the dean, written warning, parents notified	1-2 days suspension,	2-3 days suspension
24. Physical Contact	Any contact by student to students deemed inappropriate is unacceptable, whether done unintentionally or intentionally	detention, 1 day suspension	1-2 days suspension,	1-10 days suspension, police notified
25. Electronic access	Using without authorization electronic passwords, codes for any reason, including but not limited to accessing, controlling, or disabling technological devices or services	Detention, 1 day suspension Conference with Administration. Parents will be asked to pick up device	1-2 days Suspension. Device will be confiscated until the end of the school year	2-3 days Suspension. Device will be confiscated until the end of the school year
26. Uniform Violation	Wearing or dressing in a manner that is not considered uniform and is done intentionally	Detention, conference with the Administration, written warning, parents notified	1 day suspension	2 days suspension
27. Sales, use, possession, or distribution of tobacco products	Using, selling, purchasing, distributing, possessing or attempting to possess substances, distributing any tobacco on school property or at school functions or events	1 day suspension	2 days suspension	3 days suspension

28. "Off campus" Rules	Suspected use of tobacco, any alteration in smell, or apparel, If student is late in returning for any reason, reckless driving	Privilege may be suspended or revoked		
29. Driving Recklessly	Includes, but not limited to: Speeding, driving in wrong direction, getting tickets during "off campus" events.	Driving privileges to school may be suspended or revoked		

Uniform Policy infractions will result in consequences, please refer to above policy.

**LEVEL 3 INFRACTIONS: CONDUCT THAT IS SERIOUS OR ILLEGAL AND IS POTENTIALLY LIFE OR HEALTH THREATENING. PARENTS WILL BE CONTACTED FOR ALL LEVEL 3 ONFRACTIONS.**

Universal School considers all level three infractions to be very detrimental to the school and its students. A student charged with a Level 3 infraction may be subject to an immediate open suspension of up to 14 days and a recommendation for expulsion to the school board and/or legal action. Students expelled from Universal School due to a level three infraction may not be reinstated at a later date. The proper authorities may be notified in the event that a student commits any illegal act. Parent(s) or guardian(s) will be required to meet with school personnel and the proper authorities. This list of violations is not all inclusive, but only representative and illustrative. A student committing an improper act of misconduct, which does not happen to be specifically listed is still subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.

INFRACTION	DEFINITION	1ST OFFENSE	2ND OFFENSE	3 <sup>RD</sup> SUSPENSION
30. Intimidation or menacing incitement	Threatening another, either verbally or nonverbally, by inflicting fear or damage to property, instigating, or encouraging acts of misconduct	2-3 day suspension, possible recommendation for expulsion	3-5 days suspension, recommend for expulsion, BPD notified	open suspension, recommend for expulsion, Bridgeview Police Department notified
31. Arson	Utilizing unauthorized fire, smoke, or explosives, which present a risk of danger to life or property	3- 14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified	N/A	N/A
32. Assault/ Felonious	Striking with a weapon with the intent to inflict, or inflicting bodily harm	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified	N/A	N/A

33. Bomb Threats or False Alarms	Making a knowingly false statement regarding the possession or location of explosive or incendiary materials, activating the fire alarm system, or making false "911" calls.	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified. Illinois State Police contacted through SIRS	N/A	N/A
34. Breaking and Entering	Breaking into and/or entering any school building, facility, offices rooms, storage space, or other enclosure without authority to do so	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified	N/A	N/A
35. Explosive Device	Using, possessing, attempting to possess, brandishing or concealing any destructive device which includes but is not limited to any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous, gas, bomb, grenade, mine, missile, rocket or device similar to any of the devices described above	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified. Illinois State Police contacted through SIRS	N/A	N/A
36. Vandalism	Destroying, damaging, or defacing school or private property in a willful or malicious manner	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified	N/A	N/A
37. Offensive Material	Producing, possessing, or distributing materials that offend common decency or morals in the school community	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion	N/A	N/A
38. Reckless Endangerment	Acting in a willful manner, and although not intending to cause harm, places self or others in jeopardy of injury, or results in the damage destruction, or defacement of school or private property	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion	N/A	N/A
39. Extortion or robbery	Obtaining money, information, or property from another by threat, intimidation, or coercion	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified	N/A	N/A
40. Gambling	Participating in or the organizing games of chance to gain money or other items i.e. Playing cards	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion	N/A	N/A
41. Legal but potentially dangerous substances	Using, selling, purchasing, distributing, possessing or attempting to possess, substances capable of producing a change in behavior or altering a state of mind or feeling	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion. Illinois State Police contacted through SIRS	N/A	N/A

42. Sales, use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, drugs, or other chemical control substances	Using, selling, purchasing, distributing, possessing or attempting to possess, mood altering chemicals, or substances (including counterfeit or look alike substances) distributing any narcotics, drugs controlled substances of any kind, or alcoholic beverages, or other intoxicants on school property or at school functions or events	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified. Illinois State Police contacted through SIRS	N/A	N/A
43. Theft	Stealing, attempting to steal, possessing or transferring school or private property or participating in the theft or attempted theft of school or private property	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified	N/A	N/A
44. Possession or concealment of weapon or dangerous instrument	Using, possessing, attempting to possess, brandishing or concealing any weapon, dangerous instrument, device, materials, look alike, replicas, or any other item deemed to be dangerous. The definition of a knife includes, but is not limited to, a cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle. Other examples include laser pointers, and misuse of any instrument.	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion, BPD notified. Illinois State Police contacted through SIRS	N/A	N/A
45. Obscenities, Verbal abuse, vulgarity towards any other individual, or group	Directing obscene, abusive, vulgar, profane harassing, insulting, racial, sexual, religious or ethnic slurs, written or verbal, toward any person, student, school personnel or any adult member of the school community. This shall include use of obscene gestures and signs that willfully intimidate, insult, or in any other manner, abuse others inside or outside of school	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion	N/A	N/A

46. Gender fraternization Promiscuous behavior	Committing acts that are sexual in nature and fall outside the Islamic teaching on this matter, relations both inside the school or outside. Relations between the sexes-dating, meeting in private-both inside and outside of school. Evidence of Islamicly immoral behavior or communication, written or otherwise.	3-14 days suspension, recommended for expulsion	N/A	N/A
47. Pranks	A prank is defined as "A playful or mildly mischievous act" or any other act that impedes or obstructs the educational process or flow of the school day. Universal School does not condone any type of prank.	Any and all students involved directly or indirectly with a prank as deemed by the administration will be subject to all of the following: * Immediate open suspension * A fine of \$ 1,000 will be imposed * Police notified <b>AND</b> criminal complaint filed * Graduation privileges revoked (includes attending graduation dinner and graduation ceremony) * Delay in graduation (includes taking semester exam and issuance of diploma)		

## REPORTING DRUG VIOLATIONS to AUTHORITIES

Each school shall follow the provisions of the School Reporting of Drug Violations Act, 105 ILCS 127 which provides that the superintendent of the school or his or her designee shall report all instances of "drug violations" to local law enforcement officials or to the office of the county sheriff of the municipality or county where the school is located.

- a. A "drug violation" is when any of the following occurs on school property, on a public way within 1,000 feet of a school, or on any property owned, leased, or contracted by a school to transport students to or from school or to or from a school related activity: A person knowingly manufactures, delivers, or possesses with intent to deliver, or manufacture, cannabis in a school, in violation of the Cannabis Control Act, 720 ILCS 550, Section 5.2; or A person delivers a controlled, counterfeit or look-alike substance to a person under 18 years of age, in violation of the Illinois Controlled Substances Act, 720 ILCS 570, Sections 401(b) and or 407; or A person knowingly possesses, procures, transports, stores, or delivers any methamphetamine precursor or substance containing any methamphetamine precursor in standard dosage form with the intent that it be used to manufacture methamphetamine or a substance containing methamphetamine, in violation of the Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act, 720 ILCS 646 et seq.

- b. Reporting. Upon receiving any report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving drugs in a school or on school owned or leased property, the superintendent or his or her designee shall report such drug-related incident occurring in a school or school property to the local law enforcement authorities immediately and to the Illinois State Police. Reports to the Illinois State Police can be made through the School Incident Reporting System (“SIRS”), a web-based application used by schools to report incidents electronically. Note that reporting through SIRS does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well.

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#### 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1B REPORTING FIREARMS on SCHOOL PROPERTY to AUTHORITIES

Upon receiving any report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving a firearm in a school or on school owned or leased property, the superintendent or his or her designee shall report such firearm-related incident occurring in a school or on school property to the local law enforcement authorities no 21 later than 24 hours after the occurrence of the incident and to the Illinois State Police. Reports to the Illinois State Police can be made through the School Incident Reporting System (“SIRS”), a web-based application used by schools to report incidents electronically. Note that reporting through SIRS does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well.

## 105 ILCS 5/27.1A, 5/34-8.05 REPORTING ATTACKS on SCHOOL PERSONNEL to AUTHORITIES

Upon receiving a written complaint from any school personnel, the superintendent or his or her designee shall report an incident of battery committed against a teacher, teacher personnel, administrative personnel or educational support personnel to the local law enforcement authorities immediately after the occurrence of the attack and to the Illinois State Police's Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting Program no later than 3 days after the occurrence of the attack. Note that reporting through the Uniform Crime Reporting Program does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well.

### **DETENTION/SATURDAY DETENTIONS**

Detentions are given for level 1 infractions, and some minor level 2 infractions. A referral for a detention is written by the teacher or faculty member who then passes the written referral to the Administration. The Administration then makes the final decision to implement the detention, depending on the circumstances and infraction. Detentions are after school from 3:35-4:25. Students will be expected to serve a Saturday morning detention, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for every three detentions received in a school week. For example: 3 detentions, 6 detentions, 9 detentions, etc. unless they receive 4 or more detentions in the same school week. In the latter case, they will be suspended for one day. Students who receive 10 detentions in one quarter will be suspended for one day.

Students who miss detentions will have a Saturday or a double detention (meaning two), if a student missed any issued Saturday or double detention they will be suspended.

### **SUSPENSION**

A first-time suspension may be served In-School, if the administration deems it to be beneficial for the student involved, unless the student has committed an infraction that warrants more than a one-day suspension or a level 3 infraction. In-School suspensions (ISS) are held during the school day from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. ISS days do not count as student absences. However, the number of suspensions will be cumulative during High School. Upon returning to school, the student may be allowed to make-up projects, tests and quizzes, which he/she missed during the suspension. The students will not be allowed to make up homework, class work, or participation grades assigned during the suspension, but must hand in all materials due as posted from previous school day(s).

A student may receive an out-of-school suspension for committing an offense or other severe disruption of the educational process. For the duration of the out-of-school suspension, a student is excluded from extracurricular activities; school functions, or be on school premises.

### **EXCESSIVE CLASSROOM DISRUPTION POLICY**

The reason our students are at Universal is to receive a quality education, and we cannot allow any behavior that takes away from this goal. Consequently, the school will adopt the following policy for any class that has excessive interruption of instructional time.

A student who is disrupting the class will be informed either verbally or by having his/her name written on the board without any discussion. The teacher is the only person to decide what constitutes disruptive behavior under this policy. The next time the student disrupts the class he/she will have a check written next to their name. At the third disruption, the student will be sent to the Dean's office with another student from the class. If the Dean is not available, the student must see the next available administrator. If the situation is not resolved or persists, the administration will call home and explain to their parent that they will not be allowed to return to class the rest of the day and will be suspended from that teacher's class for the next day and or may be suspended. Subsequent incidents under this policy by the same student will be referred to the executive committee and the student may be expelled from school.

The imposition of the above policy is left to the discretion of the administration and parents will be informed in writing of the application of the policy. The policy will remain in place until further notice.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Parents may in writing, submit any grievances concerning the disciplinary action taken by the school administration or any other matter to the executive committee of the school board. The committee will review the grievance and will respond in writing. Parents may request a meeting to present their grievance to the committee directly. However, the committee may choose the manner of their response.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION**

If a student earns two suspensions, he/she will be placed on disciplinary probation. He/she also may be placed on probation by the administration or the executive committee for committing a level three infraction. If a student commits a suspendable offense while on probation, he/she will be placed on an open suspension and their name will be submitted to the executive committee for possible expulsion. At the end of each quarter the administration will submit the list of all students on Disciplinary Probation to the Executive Committee. The executive committee will review all information and make a decision regarding the status of the student. A decision to readmit the students or not for the following school year, will be made.

Students are expected to serve all disciplinary assignments given to them, or further action will be taken. Students on Disciplinary Probation may not participate in extracurricular activities without prior approval from the Principal. The administration will review the discipline record of each student at the beginning of each quarter; Students with poor discipline records for that school year will be referred to the Executive Committee even if they have not been placed on probation. Universal School reserves the right to refuse readmission for the next year to students with poor discipline records.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION POLICY**

Students who have accumulated any of the following consequences during the course of a school year, will be placed on probation the following year:

- ◆ Two or more days of suspension
- ◆ 1 suspension with 10 detentions or more
- ◆ Ten detentions
- ◆ Excessive referrals/SCR's
- ◆ Gross disrespect to teacher

3 referrals/SCRs – not processed to a further consequence will count as 1 detention for disciplinary probation purposes.

One Saturday detention equals 2 regular detentions. Except tardy to school which equals 1 regular detention.

Disciplinary Probation entails the following:

1. Students on disciplinary probation will not be permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities. If they are interested, they must seek written approval from the administration, permission will continuously be re-assessed based on student behavior.
2. They will only be allowed to register for school the following year upon the approval of administration.
3. The school reserves the right to restrict certain privileges, such as field trips, school events/parties, etc...

Their status will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and a recommendation for expulsion or non-renewal of admission for the following year will be made if any of the following occurs:

1. No demonstrated improvement of behavior, based on the review by administrative team.
2. Displaying similar behavioral concerns as cited in the probation letter.
3. Continued violation of the disciplinary policy.

## **EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

A student may be referred to the executive committee for expulsion as a result of receiving a suspension while they are on disciplinary probation, subsequent committing of level two infraction, or as a result of committing a level three infraction.

1. When a student is referred to the executive committee for expulsion, the family will be informed in writing that the student is placed on an open suspension and will describe the reason for the school's action.
2. The executive committee will hold a meeting to review the case within 14 school days from the day of suspension.
3. The student and his/her guardian may appeal **in writing** to present their case to the executive committee.
4. The executive committee will make a decision that will be conveyed to the parents in writing as soon as possible.
5. The decision of the executive committee may be appealed to the Board.

Students on open suspensions may not return to school without a decision from the Executive Committee. They may not be on school premises or participate in **any school activity** or function including field trips or after school events.

## **CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Rules and Regulations for Cellular Phone in School

Possession of a cellular telephone by a student is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy. A student may possess a cellular telephone in school, on school property, at after school activities and at school-related functions, provided that during school hours the cell phone remains off and is not seen. Only exception is during scheduled lunch time in the cafeteria.

1. Cellular phone must remain off at all times on school grounds, except during scheduled lunch time in cafeteria.
2. Cellular phone must be placed in student book bag, out of sight, during school day.
3. Student may activate and use phone only after school hours and outside of school building
4. The school may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information in order to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website
5. The school may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is sufficient evidence to suggest the student's social network account violates the school's disciplinary policy
6. The school may require the student to share content in the course of such an investigation

#### Violation of Above Rules:

All of the following are related to offense of using the phone to make a call or check, turning on, phone making noise, being seen with student and other reasons not directly listed. Other use of the phone that is considered more serious, taking pictures, videos, used for purposes of academic dishonesty, as part of a level II or II infraction, will result in more serious consequences.

1. 1<sup>st</sup> offense: School will confiscate the cellular phone and parent may pick up on first offense
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for three consecutive days.
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for five consecutive school days.
4. 4<sup>th</sup> offense: School will confiscate phone for ten consecutive school days.
5. 5<sup>th</sup> offense and after: School will confiscate phone for twenty consecutive school days.

After the first offense, parents will be informed by an email or phone call home.

#### **Cell Phone Policy (Elementary through 8th Grade)**

Universal School students in elementary through the 8th grade are prohibited from possessing a cell phone during school hours. Any student in elementary through the 8th grade in violation of this policy will have their cell phone confiscated and an SCR issued for each occurrence. The cell phone will be returned at the end of the school day to their parent.

Students who have the need to contact parents for personal reasons during the school day may do so after attaining permission from their homeroom teacher to use the school phones located in the main office. Parents needing to contact their child in an emergency situation may call

Universal School and speak with an office staff member who will notify the student at the earliest possible opportunity.

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

### **Purpose**

The Universal School Board recognizes that a school that is physically and emotionally safe and secure for all students promotes good citizenship, increases student attendance and engagement, and supports academic achievement. To protect the rights of all students and groups for a safe and secure learning environment, the Board prohibits acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence. Bullying is contrary to State law and school policy. Bullying or harassment, like other forms of aggressive and violent behaviors, interferes with both a school's ability to educate its students and a student's ability to learn. It is the goal of Universal School to create a learning environment where students are protected from bullying so they feel safe and supported in their efforts to succeed academically and develop emotionally into responsible, caring individuals. The Board expects students to conduct themselves in a manner 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 volunteers. The Board asks every student, with the support of his/her parent(s), guardian(s) and the adults at school, to commit to the following principles, which will apply to everyone on school property and at school-related activities:

- I will not bully others.
- I will try to help anyone I suspect is being bullied.
- I will work to include students who are left out.
- If someone is being bullied, I will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

### **Scope**

This policy protects Universal School students against bullying and harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic. The scope of this policy includes the prohibition of every form of bullying, harassment, and cyberbullying, whether in the classroom, on school premises, immediately adjacent to school premises, when a student is traveling to or from school, or at a school-sponsored event, whether or not held on school premises. Bullying or harassment, including cyberbullying, that is not initiated at a location defined above is covered by this policy if the incident results in a potentially material or substantial disruption of the school learning environment for one or more students and/or the orderly day-to-day operations of any school or school program.

### **Definitions**

**“Bullying/Harassment”** is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts) that is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress. Bullying and harassment also include forms of retaliation against individuals who report

or cooperate in an investigation under this policy. Such behaviors are considered to be bullying or harassment whether they take place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or any time or place where a child's imminent safety or over-all well-being may be at issue.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation, one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

**“Cyberbullying”** means using information and communication technologies to bully. Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

**“Retaliation”** means any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**“Peer Conflict”** means disagreements and oppositional interactions that are situational, immediate and developmentally appropriate. When school employees are aware of peer conflict, they are expected to guide students in developing new skills in social competency, learning personal boundaries and peaceably resolving conflict, and to model appropriate social interactions. These interventions are designed to prevent Peer Conflict from escalating to Bullying.

**“Restorative Measures”** means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

## **Intervening to Address Bullying**

The Board believes that standards for student behavior must be set through interaction among the students, parents, and staff of the school, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline and their ability to respect the rights of others. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school property on the part of students, staff, and parents.

The Board believes that the best discipline for aggressive behavior is designed to (1) support students in taking responsibility for their actions, (2) develop empathy, and (3) teach alternative ways to achieve the goals and solve the problems that motivated the aggressive behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to *prevent* discipline problems and encourage students' abilities to develop self-discipline and make better choices in the future.

### ***Reporting Bullying and Harassment***

#### **Responsibilities of Universal School Employees**

All school employees who witness incidents of bullying or school violence or who possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying, must:

- (1) Intervene immediately in a manner that is appropriate to the context and ensures the safety of all people involved;
- (2) report the incident of bullying or retaliation to the Principal/Designee as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours, on the Bullying Complaint Form (Attachment A) found on the school's website under the PBIS tab;
- (3) cooperate fully in any investigation of the incident and in implementing any safety plan established by the Principal/Designee.
- (4) encourage students *not* to be part of the problem, *not* to pass on the rumor or derogatory message, to notify authority

#### **Responsibilities of Students, Parents and Guardians**

Since bystander support of bullying and harassment can encourage these behaviors, the Board prohibits both active and passive support for acts of bullying. No student who witnesses bullying may stand by or participate in the bullying, but must notify an adult at school and an adult at home as quickly as practicable. Any parent or guardian who witnesses or is notified of bullying has an obligation to advise the Principal/Designee as quickly as practicable. Reports can be made to any school employee in person, or by completing *Attachment A* found on the school's website under the PBIS tab and submitting it to the Principal/Designee. Anonymous reports will be accepted by the Principal/Designee; however, no disciplinary action will be taken on the sole basis of an anonymous report. Anonymous reports will be investigated with the same procedure, timeliness and vigor as other reports and disciplinary action can occur based on the results of the investigation

#### **Response Plan**

1. The principal or designee shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying, by
  - a. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of a bullying incident was received and taking into

consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident.

- b. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
  - c. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the principal or designee shall promptly inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of every student involved in an alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, interventions, and restorative measures.
  - d. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the principal or designee shall promptly inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of every student involved in an alleged incident of bullying and discuss the investigation, the finding of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying
2. The principal or designee shall use interventions to address bullying, that may include but are not limited to social work services, restorative measures, counseling, or community-based services.
  3. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing false information will be treated as *bullying*.

### **Consequences for Universal School Employees not Upholding Policy**

When it is determined that an employee was aware that bullying was taking place but failed to report it, the employee will be considered to have violated this policy. The Principal shall consider employee discipline for such violations.

### **Appropriate Consequences and Restorative Measures for acts of Bullying**

#### Factors for Determining Consequences

- Age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved
- Degree of harm (physical and/or emotional distress)
- Surrounding circumstances
- Nature and severity of the behavior(s)
- Incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behavior
- Relationship between the parties involved
- Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

#### Factors for Determining Restorative Measures

##### *Personal*

- Life skill competencies
- Experiential deficiencies
- Social relationships

- Strengths
- Talents
- Traits
- Interests
- Hobbies
- Extra-Curricular activities
- Classroom participation
- Academic performance

### *Environmental*

- School culture
- School climate and lack of connectedness
- Student-staff relationships and staff behavior toward the student
- Level of consistency in staff responses to bullying or harassing behaviors
- Level of consistency in application or severity of consequences given to students
- Staff-staff relationships witnessed by students
- General staff management of classrooms and other educational environments
- Staff ability to prevent and de-escalate difficult or inflammatory situations
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports
- Social relationships
- Family situation
- Range and number of opportunities for student engagement, involvement, and recognition for achievement (beyond academics and athletics)

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or staff member who engages in one or more acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, in the case of a student, or suspension or termination in the case of an employee. School employees will also be held accountable for bullying or harassing behavior directed toward school employees, volunteers, parents, or students.

Consequences for a student who commits an act of bullying and harassment shall vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with school expectations. Restorative measures shall be designed to: *correct the problem behavior*, *prevent another occurrence of the behavior*; and *protect the victim of the act*. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

### Examples of Consequences

- Admonishment

- Participation in a guided reflection process designed to teach alternative behavior
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Loss of privileges
- Classroom or administrative detention
- Office Referral
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Legal action
- Expulsion or termination (staff)

### Examples of Restorative Measures

#### *Strategies for Individual Behavioral Change:*

- Framing the aggressive behavior as a failed attempt to solve a real problem or reach a goal. The adult assists the misbehaving student to find a better way to solve the problem or meet the goal.
- Restitution or restoration
- Transformative conferencing/restorative justice practices
- Supervised peer support group
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience
- Supportive discipline to increase accountability for the bullying offense
- Supportive interventions
- Behavioral assessment or evaluation
- Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored
- Parent conferences
- Therapy

#### *Strategies for Environmental Change*

- Activities or strategies designed to help the student who engaged in bullying or harassment reflect on the offending behavior, maintaining an emotionally-neutral and strength-based approach
- School surveys for determining the conditions contributing to harassment, intimidation, or bullying
- Change process to improve school culture
- School climate improvement/improvement in conditions for learning and instructional pedagogy
- Adoption of research-based, systemic bullying prevention programs
- Increased supervision
- Disciplinary actions for staff who contributed to the problem
- Referral to family counseling

The Board requires the principal/designee to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the principal/designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within three school days after a report or complaint is made. The parents of the students involved shall receive written notification from the school on the outcome of the investigation (in compliance with current privacy laws and regulations). All reports on instances of bullying and/or harassment must be recorded by the school for annual data review.

### **Retaliation and False Accusations**

The Board prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment or cooperates in an investigation. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administration after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

The Board prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of bullying or harassment. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another as a means of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

### **Training and Prevention**

Students and staff will be given instruction on how to prevent bullying and harassment. This will include instruction on the process for filing complaints and the process/consequences that will result from the complaint.

### **Distribution and Evaluation**

This policy shall be posted on the school's website and included in Parent/Student and Staff handbooks, as well as distributed via the school assignment notebooks.

This policy will be evaluated for its outcomes and effectiveness by analyzing the following:

- a. The frequency of victimization;
- b. Student, staff, and family observation of safety at school;
- c. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;
- d. The types of bullying utilized; and
- e. Bystander intervention or participation

LEGAL REF: 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7

## **X. STUDENT WELFARE-CHILD ABUSE POLICY**

According to Illinois law, a staff member who has reasonable cause to suspect that a student may be an abused or neglected child shall report such a case to the Department of Children and Family Services. In such a situation, the staff member shall notify the head administration that a

report has been made. Traditional consideration of confidentiality shall not constitute grounds for failure to report such cases.

Abuse and neglect as defined by Illinois law but may generally be understood as follows:

1. "**Abuse**" is any physical or mental injury or sexual abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means by a person who is responsible for the child's health and welfare. **Physical abuse** includes striking, spanking, kicking, punching, or otherwise causing physical trauma to a child. **Sexual abuse** includes inappropriate touching, fondling, exposure, display of pornography. **Verbal abuse** includes humiliating, degrading, threatening, or making sexually inappropriate comments to a child.

State laws stipulate the following:

- No room shall have the small window on the door covered by any material - who is in the room must be easily seen, if a student is present
- Teachers may not meet one on one with any student with the door closed
- Teacher and student must be easily seen from the hall by anyone passing by

2. "**Neglect**" is abandoning a child, subjecting a child to an environment injurious to his/her welfare, or failing to provide the proper support, education, or mental or remedial care required by law by one who is responsible for the child's welfare. Neglect includes withholding food, water, or basic care.

All employees, including teachers, are required to report the following:

- **Suicide:** If an employee is told by a student that he or she is contemplating suicide or if an employee comes upon evidence of intent (e.g., a note) to commit suicide, the employee should report this to the Principal immediately.
- **Physical evidence of crime:** If an employee obtains physical evidence that a student has committed or is committing a crime, the employee must turn that evidence in to the Principal within 2 school days (2 calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, if the evidence is obtained at the time of a vacation or at the end of the school year.) The employee may keep the source of the evidence anonymous.
- **Intent to Harm:** If a student expresses the intent to seriously harm another individual, an employee must inform the Principal, who will then take appropriate action.
- **Drug and Alcohol use:** Drug and alcohol use, in or out of school, is illegal, a violation of school policy, and a risk to students' well-being. Employees' must report suspected cases of use or possession to the Principal.
- **Self-Harm:** Employees must report evidence or student reports of self-harming behaviors or the intent to inflict self-harm to the Principal.

### **Anti-Harassment Policy**

Sexual harassment of students is prohibited. Sexual harassment is when a person, including an employee or an agent, or a student engages in sexual advances, requests sexual favors and/or engages in other verbal or physical conduct including sexual violence of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex.

Examples of some prohibited behaviors are as follow:

1. denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or
2. has the purpose or effect of:
  - a. substantially interfering with a student's educational environment;
  - b. creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
  - c. depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or
  - d. making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

The terms "intimidating," "hostile," and "offensive" include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include, touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities. The term sexual violence includes a number of different acts. Examples of sexual violence include, but are not limited to, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

### **Making a Complaint; Enforcement**

Students are encouraged to report claims or incidences of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to Principal, Assistant Principal, or Dean of Students. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Students who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined.

An allegation that a student was -a victim of any prohibited conduct perpetrated by another student shall be referred to the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Dean of Students.

### **Student Supervision Policy**

Universal School provides students' supervision daily during the academic year from 8:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Monday through Friday while teachers and staff are in the premises for instruction. Universal School is not liable for students who arrive to the school grounds before 8:15 am or remain on campus after 3:45 pm, unless a school's permission slip has been signed by the parents/guardians for an extracurricular activity. Students may arrange a meeting time with their teacher beyond the regular school day, in which case the teacher supervision will be provided until such time as the scheduled meeting has ended.

Universal School students and their parents/legal guardians assume the risks involved if the student remains on the premises prior/after supervised hours. Parents/legal guardians are strongly encouraged to pick-up their child(ren) promptly when the students' school obligations have been met. Bridgeview police department will be notified per administration's discretion if a pattern of negligence is noted from a family.

## **XI. UNIFORM POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

Universal School expects all students to abide by the dress code. This includes hair, jewelry, shoes, make up, and clothing. Students who are repeatedly requested to comply with the uniform policy upon entering the building will be given a detention or more severe consequence. Excessive detentions in the same quarter for a student to comply with the uniform policy may result in a suspension.

1. Hair: Students must have regular haircuts. Hair must not be grown longer than normal wear, not covering eyes, etc. No designs or layer haircuts will be allowed. Also students must have natural hair color. No bleaching or "off" colors are allowed. Hair length and styles must meet expectations of the school administration. Absolutely no ponytails or Mohawk style haircuts.
2. Shoes: Students must wear socks and solid black closed toe and heel shoes. No sandals or slippers are allowed.
3. Jewelry: The wearing of excessive amounts of jewelry is not allowed by any student. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings, necklaces, or bracelets. Boys/girls are not allowed to have any body piercing.
4. Make up: Students may not wear make up or nail polish of any kind during school.
5. Clothing: The school has specific uniform specifications. Please obtain your copy for appropriate school uniform from the office. All students are expected to dress according to specifications.
6. No loose or excessively loose belts; no wallet chains.

Students are expected to wear the complete uniform when entering the school building. If a student is not in complete compliance with the uniform code, he/she will be turned away. Students will not be permitted to change into uniforms in the bathrooms. School uniform is required on all school days including field trips, unless otherwise noted through written and verbal communication. Out of uniform requests must be approved prior to any and all events.

## UNIFORM SPECIFICATIONS MIDDLE/HS GIRLS & BOYS

	<b>Middle School Boys</b>	<b>High School Boys</b>
<b>Dress Pants</b>	Solid navy blue or black no tight fitting pants	Solid navy or black no tight fitting pants
<b>Dress Shirt</b>	Light Blue w/collar & buttons; or light blue polo	Solid white w/collar & buttons; or solid white, black, or maroon polo
<b>Shoes</b>	Solid black, closed shoes	Solid black, closed shoes
<b>Sweaters</b>	Solid, black or navy, with uniform shirt under. No jackets to be worn during school hours.	Solid, black or navy, with uniform shirt under. No jackets to be worn during school hours.
<b>Hoodies</b>	School logo hoodies will be allowed; no hats are allowed in the building, therefore, the hood may not be worn on the head.	School logo hoodies will be allowed; no hats are allowed in the building, therefore, the hood may not be worn on the head.

	<b>Middle School Girls</b>	<b>High School Girls</b>
<b>Scarf</b>	Light Blue – 2 piece	Solid gray, white, black or beige scarf only.
<b>Uniform</b>	Navy Blue (Ask for Universal School Uniform) ❖ Top piece must be calf length or longer	Navy Blue (Ask for Universal School Uniform) ❖ Top piece must be calf length or longer
<b>Shoes</b>	Solid black, closed shoes	Solid black, closed shoes
<b>Sweaters</b>	Solid, black or navy, with uniform shirt under. No jackets to be worn during school hours.	Solid, black or navy, with uniform shirt under. No jackets to be worn during school hours.
<b>Hoodies</b>	School logo hoodies will be allowed; no hats are allowed in the building, therefore, the hood may not be worn on the head.	School logo hoodies will be allowed; no hats are allowed in the building, therefore, the hood may not be worn on the head.

Gym shoes will be required for gym time only

Scarves and uniforms must be purchased at designated place.

## UNIFORM SPECIFICATIONS FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

ELEMENTARY GIRLS	ELEMENTARY BOYS
<b><u>Pre-K and KG:</u></b> Uniform	<b><u>Pre-K and KG:</u></b> Uniform
Regulation school jumper White blouse with collar or white turtle neck Plain navy blue sweater/cardigan Black/Navy blue legging OR Black/Navy/White tights Velcro gym shoes White or navy blue scarf (optional)	Blue gym pants White shirt with collar or white turtle neck Plain navy blue sweater/cardigan Navy, gray, or white socks  Velcro gym shoes
<b><u>Grades 1 through 5:</u></b> Uniform	<b><u>Grades 1 through 5:</u></b> Uniform
Regulation school jumper Plain white blouse with collar or white turtle neck Plain navy blue sweater/cardigan Black/Navy blue legging Black soft-soled dress shoes White or navy blue scarf (optional)	Navy blue dress pants Plain white shirt with collar or white turtle neck Plain navy blue sweater/cardigan Navy, gray, or white socks  Solid black soft-soled dress shoes
<b><u>Optional 5<sup>th</sup> Grade:</u></b> Uniform for girls Middle School girls' uniform. Please order from Diana's Fashion 10730 S. Harlem Avenue, Worth, IL 60482	

**Gym shoes and gym uniform must be worn on Gym Days.** The gym uniform may be purchased from schoolbelles or from a department store.

Gym shoes, maroon sweat pants and sweat top, plain white T-shirt (with school logo optional)

**Elementary uniforms may be ordered from schoolbelles. Catalogs are available from the school's Main Office or you can order online: [www.schoolbelles.com](http://www.schoolbelles.com)**

**Students are required to be in FULL school uniform. Students will not be permitted to attend classes unless they are in the proper uniform. Parents will be given the option to bring the uniform to school or to come and take child home.**

## XII. STUDENT DRIVING POLICY

High school students wishing to drive to school will need to fill out a registration form at the office. This form is valid only with the signature of a parent or guardian. Permission will be granted after a review of the application by the administration. The following guidelines need to be followed by student drivers:

1. Student drivers must be registered with the school office and a valid school authorized driving sticker or letter will be issued upon vehicle registration.
2. At all times students must obey the speed limits around the school and Mosque area. Safe driving practices are expected at all times, but especially when younger students are present.
3. No unauthorized riders will be allowed to ride in a student's car. Any student riding with a student driver will need written permission from a parent or guardian.
4. **Student drivers are not allowed to leave the school premises during school hours, 8:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. except per school policy**
5. Students must drive safely, keeping an eye out for pedestrians and parked and moving cars.
6. Only students with a valid state driver's license and proof of insurance will be granted permission to drive to school.
7. Student may be requested to park in an allocated location and must comply with request.
8. Any changes in driving status must be reported to the office.
9. Cars are not to be used for loitering or recreation before, during, or after school. This includes sitting or driving the car with loud or offensive noise.
10. Students are expected to leave the school area promptly after school.

**If any of the above conditions are not met, the administration has the right to revoke driving privileges.**

### **XIII. STUDENT LOCKERS POLICY**

All middle and high school students will be issued a locker to use during the school year. Students may not share lockers and are required to keep their lockers in a clean and organized condition. Damage to lockers will be charged to the student. Lockers are loaned to students and remain the property of the school.

In an effort to maintain a safe environment for all, the school reserves the right to inspect lockers, student's personal effects, and vehicles at any time without notice. Students who refuse to cooperate will be subject to disciplinary action. Periodic inspection of lockers will be conducted each school year and may involve drug-sniffing dogs.

### **XIV. COMMUNICATION**

Our success in our mission of providing quality education in an Islamic environment relies heavily on the interaction between the school and home. Parents are expected to keep up with their child's academic progress and to attend all orientations and meetings announced by the school. They are also encouraged to read the school publications, especially the monthly newsletter sent or mailed home to parents every other month.

Parents may request a meeting with their child's teacher at any time during the school year. Parents are kindly requested to make an appointment. **Teachers are not allowed to confer with parents during class time under any circumstances.** All classroom visits must be arranged in advance. If parents wish to drop items off for their children, they must give them to the office

staff and they will be **delivered** to the child **as soon as possible without disrupting the educational process.**

Parents may request a meeting with the principal or assistant principal regarding any matter. The office secretary will schedule the meeting as soon as possible. Matters concerning your child's academic or behavior performance in the school must be discussed with the classroom teacher first. If the matter is not addressed to your satisfaction you may request to meet the administration. They will address your concerns and may refer the matter to the principal. Matters concerning general school rules, policy, or tuition may be brought to the attention of the principal directly. If you believe that your concern was not addressed by the staff and administration, you may submit your concern to the executive committee in writing. The committee may request further information, in writing or a meeting before addressing your concerns.

The school will abide by court decisions regarding communication with non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to inform the school of the existence of a court order regarding their children; otherwise, the school will assume that both parents are custodial parents. Such notification by the custodial parent must be in writing and a copy of the court order must be provided to the school. Unless otherwise required by the parents, the school will consider any communications, agreements, conferences, or notifications of one parent regarding school matters sufficient.

The Board of Directors, administration, teachers, support staff, Universal families and many members of the community work hard to make Universal School a success. Anyone who openly defames or threatens the wellbeing of the school and any of its staff may be asked to withdraw from the school.

## **XV. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

In addition to a quality educational program, Universal School promotes the emotional, physical, and social well-being of its students by offering a host of extracurricular activities at all levels.

Students participating in extracurricular activities must have **a grade point average of 2.0/4.0.** Students may have to miss school to participate in an extracurricular activity. Any absence due to an extracurricular activity is considered an excused absence. The written consent of classroom teachers and parents must be secured in order for a student to miss school for extracurricular work.

The administration reserves the right to deny a student the privilege of participating in an extracurricular activity, if they have discipline violations or concerns during the school year.

Students who tutor on behalf of Universal School, or through a sponsored extracurricular event, may not charge a fee. Violation of this code will result in disciplinary action. **In addition, students participating in Universal School's athletic program will be subject to random drug testing. Any student refusing to comply will be ineligible to participate in any athletic activity and may request to be reinstated once testing is completed.**

## **XVI. FIELD TRIPS**

In keeping with the philosophy that the education of our children is not limited to the classroom, the school allows students the privilege of participating in field trips. Field trip day is a regular school day and students are expected to report to school and go on the field trip. Students will be expected to do work related to the field trip such as an essay or a report following the trip. Students who do not report to school on the field trip day will be considered unexcused. These students will not be able to make up the missed work. Students who miss the field trip due to illness or emergency will be assigned comparable work to make up for the missed one.

Students must complete and return the permission slip to the teacher responsible for the field trip by the deadline date. The school also may request the presence of the parent on the field trip in order for their child to be allowed to participate in the trip. Students must pay all required fees by the deadline date. The school may deny a student the privilege of a field trip due to safety concerns. School personnel will provide the best possible supervision for your child while on a field trip. However, the school shall not be held liable for any injury or misfortune that may occur on a field trip.

Seniors are given certain off campus privileges. However, they are expected to uphold the school rules and set an example to the student body. Seniors who do not abide by the rules will have their privileges revoked. Seniors are allowed to participate in off campus lunch as scheduled by the administration. All necessary forms must be completed prior to students participating in off campus lunch, which is scheduled once a month starting second quarter, as a senior privilege. Seniors are to sign out for the off campus lunch and are not considered in school during the off campus lunch. The school will not be responsible for seniors during off campus lunch.

## **XVII. FUNDRAISING**

As a private, not-for-profit institution, Universal School relies on annual fundraising events to bridge the gap between the tuition it collects and the cost of educating its students. Parents are expected to help with the school's fundraising efforts.

There are numerous ways in which parents can help:

1. Selling tickets for the annual dinner
2. Making donations during the annual dinner or any other time
3. Helping the school to find sponsors for projects, services, and monthly expenses
4. Contributing to the school's scholarship fund or sponsoring a needy child's tuition
5. Providing educational needs of a classroom or of the school in general.
6. All families must participate in school sponsored fundraising such as annual candy sale, etc.

Failure by parents to help with the fundraising efforts may result in the loss of enrollment privileges for the following school year. The school board determines the policy and amount of funds to be raised by each family. These amounts are subject to change according to school needs.

## XVIII. PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Universal School encourages the participation of parents in the continuous development and growth of the school. Mothers and fathers have been indispensable partners of the school since its inception. They have contributed a tremendous amount of time, effort, and money to ensure that their children receive a good and wholesome education. There are two parent groups at Universal, the Mothers' Club and the Fathers' Club. Presidents of the Fathers' Club and Mothers' Club, in any given year, are automatic voting members of the school board. The Mothers Club and the Fathers' Club are governed by their respective bylaws and provide help to the school in every possible way. Presidents of the Mothers' Club and the Fathers' Club are elected annually for a one year term by parents at the end of the previous school year. Chairperson maybe appointed to the Executive Committee.

## XIX. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The primary role of the Universal volunteer program is to support the work of the teacher by assisting students with their classroom work or other activities. Volunteers work with children and school personnel in many ways, including tutoring, reading, classroom activities, chaperoning field trips, assisting in school gardening, or helping in the office.

Parents and Community-oriented people are encouraged to volunteer at the school to share their expertise. One of the biggest benefits of being a volunteer at Universal School is to learn about the environment and education being offered, and to contribute to the making of a stronger Muslim community. Guidelines and forms for volunteer work are available in the office.

### VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Volunteers are critical to the success of Universal School and are essential to the school's day-to-day operations. Volunteers and paid staff are considered partners in implementing the mission and programs of the school, each with complimentary roles to play. Thank you for becoming a part of the service of Universal School. Equal Opportunity Policy Universal School maintains a strong policy of equal volunteer opportunity. We recruit, accept, train, promote, and dismiss volunteers on the basis of personal competence and position performance, without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, marital status, political affiliation, veteran status, or mental and physical disabilities which do not impact one's ability to perform. A preference for Muslims for certain positions is allowed under Federal Law and does not constitute discrimination.

### **Volunteer Tier System**

**Level I Volunteer:** A Level I Volunteer is:

1. A parent providing volunteer service in their child's school or classroom for 10 or more hours/week
2. An individual providing volunteer service for 5 or more hours/week at a school where s/he does not have a child enrolled
3. Any individual chaperoning an overnight school-sponsored trip, regardless of the hours/week that the volunteer serves (See also the Student Travel Policy)

4. Any individual serving in a coaching capacity, regardless of the hours/week that the volunteer serves
5. Any individual serving as a student teacher, pre-service teacher, pre-service clinician, or other pre-service practicum assignment regardless of the hours/week that the volunteer serves
6. Any individual serving as a One-on-One tutor or mentor, regardless of the hours/week that the volunteer serves and regardless of the setting, whether online or in person
7. Any individual providing volunteer service with students when such service may occur in an unsupervised setting, regardless of the hours/week that the volunteer serves
8. Any individual providing volunteer service for a program where the program's funding agency requires criminal record clearance, regardless of the hours/week that the volunteer serves
9. Any individual providing services to a school through an organization that is not charging the school for such services, and who is not otherwise subject to a criminal background check requirement found in a Board contract with said organization, except as specified in section I.B.3 below.

**Level II Volunteer.** A Level II Volunteer is:

1. A parent providing supervised volunteer service in their child's school or classroom for less than 10 hours/week
2. Any individual providing volunteer service for less than 5 hours/week at a school where s/he does not have a child enrolled
3. An individual providing one-day volunteer service with no ongoing individualized interaction with a student(s) including those who speak at a class/assembly, judge academic competitions, give musical performance, participate in the "Principal for a Day" program, job-shadowing event, corporate philanthropic event, organized community service event or other one-time event provided there is direct supervision of the activity/event by regular school employees
4. A parent accompanying his/her child's class on a one-day field trip or another type of extracurricular activity that does not involve an overnight stay
5. An individual providing volunteer service on projects/activities involving no or nominal contact with children (home-based volunteer activities, volunteers serving at Central or Network office)

## **XX. STUDENT RECORDS**

The school considers student records confidential and they may only be viewed by school-authorized personnel. Records will not be provided to non-school personnel except by written request from the parents/guardian of the student or in accordance to applicable privacy laws. Record's requests must be delivered to the school by mail or in person. Parents may request a copy of all or some parts of the student's record. The office requires two working days' notice to process the request.

Student records will be shared with custodial as well as non-custodial parents unless we have a court order on file to the contrary.

Records of financial arrangements or tuition payments are not considered part of a student's records and are only available with written permission from the person whose name is on the promissory note at the time of enrollment. High school students may request a copy of their transcripts. The school requires two working days' notice to process the request and a fee of \$3.00 for students who already graduated from Universal School.

## **XXI. SCHOOL BOARD ROLE**

The Universal School Board is the governing body of the school. It is responsible for setting school policy, hiring, terminating, and renewal of contracts of all staff members, and evaluating the principal. Parents may contact the school board, in writing, through the school's office or by mail, at:

**Universal School  
P.O. Box 12  
Oak Lawn, IL 60454**

## **XXII. STAFF PERSONNEL LISTING**

All school staff can be reached at the school's office. Parents may leave a message for any staff member and it will be conveyed to them as soon as possible. The school does not release staff phone numbers or personal information without the consent of the staff member. **The school will not interrupt a class to deliver a message, except in severe emergencies.**

## **XXIII. USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Since Universal School is a private institution established to serve the Muslim community in the southwest suburbs, it rents its facilities to various civic groups and social gatherings. For rental agreements and rates, please contact the school office.

The school does not permit the celebration of special student based parties, such as birthday. As such, any symbolic representation of birthday celebrations such as sharing of cake, lighting of candles, presence of decorations, balloons, gifts, cards, etc. will result in consequences.

## **XXIV. HANDBOOK REVISIONS**

Universal School has the right to amend this handbook as the need arises. A revised handbook or an insert to the handbook will be made available to current parents in the school office at the beginning of each school year. It is the duty of the students and parents to obtain and familiarize themselves with the most current handbook.

The Parents Handbook is on our School's website [www.universalschool.org](http://www.universalschool.org). Parents, students, and staff are encouraged to review the handbook on line.