



2024 - 2025

District Handbook

Table of Contents

District Message	3
District Administration	4
Board of Directors	4
School Closings and Delays	5
Standardized Testing	5
Student Information	6
Attendance	6
Code of Conduct	9
Student Discipline	12
Bullying	13
Controlled Substances-Paraphernalia	13
Discipline of Students with Disabilities	14
Electronic Devices	14
Hazing	14
Nondiscrimination and Title IX Sexual Harassment	14
Suspension and Expulsion	14
Terroristic Threats	15
Tobacco and Vaping Products	15
Weapons	15
Health and Wellness	16
Diabetes Management	16
Carry and Self-Administration of Emergency Medications Form	16
Food Allergy Management	16
Health Examinations-Screenings	16
Immunizations and Communicable Diseases	16
Medications	17
Administration of Asthma Inhalers-Epinephrine Auto-Injectors	17
Administering Naloxone	18
Food Services	18
Student Rights and Responsibilities	19
Opening Exercises/Flag Displays	19
Searches	19

Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials	20
Review of Instructional Materials by Parents - Guardians, and Students	20
Student Services	21
Child/Student Abuse	21
Gifted Education	21
Language Instruction Educational Program for English Learners	21
Migrant Students	21
School Wellness	22
Special Education	22
Student Records	22
Student Recruitment	22
Student Services	22
Support for Victims of Violent Crimes	23
Surveys	23
Educational Opportunity for Military Children	23
Technology	24
Use of District's Internet and Computer Networks	24
Virtual Instruction Guidelines	25
Compliance Notifications	25
Discrimination - Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students	25
Nondiscrimination - Qualified Students with Disabilities	25
Title IX Coordinators	25
Child Find Notice of Special Education Services and Programs	26
Homeless Students	26
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	26

District Welcome and District Handbook Overview

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year in the Upper St. Clair School District. The District welcomes you back to a new school year with continued opportunities to learn and grow.

The purpose of the District Handbook is to provide you with district-wide information, required policy notifications, and compliance notices. A supplemental building specific student/family handbook will also be provided to you for further information on your child(ren)'s experiences in each of the buildings that they are enrolled in for the 2024-2025 school year. If you have questions regarding any information in this District Handbook, or other school related issues, please contact your child(ren)'s building principal.

In addition, the District Handbook provides district students and their parents/guardians an understanding of the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our schools. In a case of conflict between Board policy and the provisions of this Handbook, the Board policy most recently adopted by the Board will govern. Similarly, the schools have supplemental handbooks. In the case of a conflict between a school handbook and this District Handbook, the District Handbook will govern.

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that this document is reviewed annually since policy adoption and revision is an ongoing process. Any changes that take place following the annual publication of this Handbook will generally supersede the provisions found in the Handbook, which will be updated for the next year. The Handbook is not a contract between the school and parents/guardians or students. It can be amended at any time at the discretion of the District. If policy changes are enacted during the school year, the administration will post those changes on the District website and/or communicate those changes to students, staff, and parents/guardians.

USC School Board policies and notifications most relevant to students and families are included throughout this Handbook. The policies and notifications in the Handbook are not all inclusive. All policies and regulations are on file as the "School Board Policy Manual" and can be viewed at the Administrative Offices and on the District's website here - [School Board Policy Manual](#).

District Information

Upper St. Clair District Administration

Dr. John T. Rozzo, Superintendent

Dr. Amy Pfender, Deputy Superintendent

Dr. Judith Bulazo, Director of Curriculum & Professional Development

Dr. Sharon K. Suritsky, Substitute Director of Special Education

Dr. Lauren Madia, Director of Pupil Services

Dr. Louis Angelo, Director of Operations and Facilities

Mr. Raymond Berrott, Director of Technology

Mr. Scott Burchill, Director of Business & Finance

Mr. Danny Holzer, Director of Athletics

Mr. Bradley Wilson, Director of Strategic Initiatives

Mr. Jonn Mansfield, Director of Transportation

Mrs. Tina Vojtko, Communications Specialist

Ms. Ashley Lindhurst, Food Service Director

Mr. Sean Bryson, Chief of School Police

Upper St. Clair School District Board of School Directors

Mrs. Jennifer A. Schnore, President

Dr. Danielle Wetzel, Vice-President

Dr. Daphna Gans

Mrs. Barbara L. Bolas

Mrs. Kelly Hanna

Mr. Justin Lamber

Mr. Mike Mascaro

Mrs. Angela B. Petersen

Mrs. Hallie Snyder

School Closings and Delays

The **USCSD Parent Alert System** will be used to communicate information regarding any necessary delays and/or cancellations. Emergency phone numbers for the Parent Alert System are requested during the “Back to School Online” process in mid August. If you have additions or changes to your emergency numbers, please contact your child’s school. In addition to automated phone calls and emails, the District will communicate delays and cancellations through the following resources:

- USCSD website: www.uscsd.k12.pa.us
- USCSD social media (@uscschools): Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- Local television stations: KDKA, WTAE, WPXI and local media websites

Flexible Instruction Day

Information for the District’s Flexible Instruction Day plan approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education can be found [here](#).

Standardized Testing

Keystone Exams are administered following the completion of Algebra I, Biology, and English 10 (literature). Keystone assessment dates will be announced by the respective building. Keystone and PSSA testing information is updated on the District’s website prior to the testing windows:

- [Keystone Exams](#)
- [PSSA Testing](#)

Testing Window for the Keystone Exams 2024-2025	
Time of Year	Date
Winter Wave 1	December 4 - 18, 2024
Winter Wave 2	January 6 - 17, 2025
Spring	May 12 - 23, 2025
Summer	July 28 - August 1, 2025

PSSA Testing Window 2024-2025		
Assessment	Dates	Grades
English Language Arts	April 21 - 25, 2025	Grades 3-8
Mathematics, Science, and Make-ups	April 28 - May 9, 2025	Grades 3-8

OLSAT Administration

The administration of the assessment will be done by building:

Grade 5: Administered in mid-October

Grades 1 and 2: Administered in mid-March

Student Information

Attendance

Attendance (Policy 204)

Regular attendance in school is vital to a student's success. **Compulsory school age** in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires that all students between the ages of 6 and 18 attend school regularly. Students who are enrolled in school, but are not within this age range are also bound by the compulsory school attendance law. Parents/guardians are expected to encourage their children to attend as many school days as possible **so long as they are not ill**. The local education agency and parents/guardians will work collaboratively to support student school attendance.

As stated in the Attendance Policy 204:

The following conditions constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

1. Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated District staff during school hours for health-related reasons.
2. Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth or territory.
3. Quarantine.
4. Family emergency.
5. Recovery from accident.
6. Required court attendance.
7. Death in the family.
8. Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, FFA or combined 4-H and FFA group, upon prior written request.
9. Participation in a musical performance in conjunction with a national veterans' organization or incorporated unit, as defined in law, for an event or funeral.
 - a. The national veterans' organization or incorporated unit must provide the student with a signed excuse, which shall include the date, location, and time of the event or funeral.
 - b. The student shall furnish the signed excuse to the District prior to being excused from school.
10. Observance of a religious holiday observed by bona fide religious group, upon prior written parental request. (as noted in Policy 204). In addition, students may be released from school for a total of not more than 36 hours per year in order to attend classes for religious instruction.
11. Non School-sponsored educational tours or trips/family educational trips as outlined in the District Educational Trip form. (see District website)
12. College or postsecondary institution visit, with prior approval.
13. Other urgent reasons. Urgent reasons shall be strictly construed and do not permit irregular attendance.

An absence for any other reason is considered an unlawful/unexcused absence. When in doubt of the legality of an absence, parents are requested to contact the child's school principal.

After a student's absence from school, parents must send a signed note with the student explaining the reason and date(s) of the absence. The student must present this excuse to the Attendance Office upon returning to school. If the excuse is not provided within three (3) school days, the dates of absence will be labeled as **unexcused absences**.

When a student misses three (3) consecutive days and no communication from the parent/guardian has occurred, the school nurse or counselor will call home to check on the student to determine if the school can take steps to support the student during his/her absence and/or support transition back to school.

When a student misses more than ten (10) cumulative days, parents will receive written notice that an official doctor's excuse will be required for all subsequent absences for the remainder of the school year. Failure to obtain an official doctor's excuse will result in an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences will be addressed in the manner described under the truancy section of school attendance.

Definitions of Truancy

- A student is considered "truant" after three (3) or more unexcused absences during a single school year by a child subject to the compulsory school attendance law.
- A student is considered "habitually truant" after six (6) or more unexcused absences during a single school year by a child subject to the compulsory school attendance law.

Parents/guardians will be notified following each unexcused absence/occurrence. When a student is considered truant (**three unexcused absences**) the school principal will notify the parents. This notification:

- Will be in writing to the person of parental relation with a child within ten (10) school days.
- Will include a description of the consequences that will follow if the child becomes habitually truant in the future.
- Will include steps to arrange an attendance improvement conference.

If the child, of compulsory school age, continues to be truant and incurs additional unexcused absences that accumulate six (6) unexcused absences becoming "**habitually truant**," the procedures to follow are based on the age of the child.

- Habitually truant children **under 15 years of age**:
The school shall:
 - Refer the child to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program
 - Refer the child to the county children and youth agency (CYS) for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act
 The school may:
 - File a citation against the parent of a habitually truant child under 15 years of age in a magisterial district court.
- Habitually truant children **15 years of age and older**:
The school shall:
 - Refer the child to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program;
 - or
 - File a citation against the student or parent in a magisterial district court
 - If a habitually truant child aged 15 or older incurs additional absences after a school refers that child to an attendance improvement program or the child refuses to participate in an attendance improvement program, the school may refer the child to the local CYS agency for possible disposition as a dependent child.

School Attendance Improvement Plan Conference (SAIC)

Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing and by phone of the scheduled School Attendance Improvement Plan Conference (SAIC).

Schools must create attendance improvement plans prior to referring truancy to the courts. A school attendance improvement conference is defined as a conference where the child's absences and reasons for the absences are examined in an effort to improve attendance with or without additional services. The conference will include the following individuals:

- The child
- The person in parental relation to the child

- Other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource (e.g., grandparent, sibling, family friend, advocate, etc.)
- Appropriate school personnel
- Recommended service providers (case managers, behavioral health providers, etc.)

The school must hold the conference even if the parent or guardian declines to participate or fails to attend after the school provides advance written notice and makes attempts to communicate via telephone. A legal requirement does not exist for either the child or parent to attend the conference. The school must document the outcome of any attendance improvement conference in a written attendance improvement plan. Schools may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the date of the scheduled attendance improvement conference has passed.

Magisterial Referral

After all necessary steps have been taken to foster a collaborative relationship between the local education agency and parents/guardians, a citation may be filed in the office of the appropriate judge whose jurisdiction includes the school in which the student is or should be enrolled if a student continues to be habitually truant from school. Judges have considerable discretion to impose appropriate penalties in individual cases.

Tardies

Any student entering school after the official beginning time must report to the attendance office to obtain a class admission slip. Any student who is tardy more than ten (10) days without proper medical documentation may be required to submit a doctor's note for subsequent excused tardiness. The school principal will notify parents when the child has accumulated four unexcused tardies. Disciplinary consequences may be assigned.

Code of Student Conduct

Student Discipline (Policy 218)

The District believes that student conduct is closely related to learning. An effective educational program requires a safe and comfortable school environment.

Student discipline and the enforcing of school rules will be done respectfully, promptly, consistently, confidentially, and equitably regardless of the personal characteristics of the individual student. Discipline is motivated by the intent to correct and promote positive behavior and growth, as well as to maintain order.

The Board shall adopt a Code of Student Conduct to govern student discipline, and students shall not be subject to disciplinary action because of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin or handicap/disability. Each student must adhere to Board policies and the Code of Student Conduct governing student discipline

Any student disciplined by a District employee shall have the right to notice of the infraction.

Off-Campus Activities

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would otherwise violate the Code of Student Conduct if any of the following circumstances exist:

1. The conduct occurs during the time the student is traveling to and from school or traveling to and from school-sponsored activities, whether or not via school district furnished transportation.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.
3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.
4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, for example, a transaction conducted outside of school pursuant to an agreement made in school, that would violate the Code of Student Conduct if conducted in school
5. The conduct involves the theft of vandalism of school property.
6. There is a relationship between the proximity of learning or timing of the conduct in relation to a student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.
7. The conduct constitutes bullying or harassment or cyberbullying as defined by Board Policy.

As it would be impossible to identify and list all types of student infractions or administrative actions, disciplinary consequences will be administered based on an individual basis for violations not specifically outlined in this handbook at the discretion of the building administrators.

MINOR VIOLATIONS	<u>POSSIBLE</u> Administrative Actions
Excessive Noise	Warning, Detention, and/or disciplinary referral
Unjustified tardiness to assigned places	Warning, Detention, and/ or disciplinary referral
Disorder/ disruption in class or hall	Warning, Detention, and/ or disciplinary referral
Damaging books or other materials	Payment, possible suspension, limitations or restrictions on material access
Loitering in the halls or lavatory	Warning, Detention, and/ or disciplinary referral
Poor conduct in the Nutrition Center	Corrective action such as clean up, alternative eating area assigned, Warning, Detention, and/ or disciplinary referral
Failure to pay library or other financial obligations, return school materials (including iPad) such as books, equipment, supplies.	Payment, possible detention, suspension, limitations or restrictions on material access, and/ or referral to law enforcement
Class cut	Warning, Detention, and/ or disciplinary referral
Any behavior which is a distraction to the educational process, but does not endanger the safety of people or property.	Warning, Detention, and/ or disciplinary referral
Cheating	Possible failure for that piece of work, Detention, and/ or disciplinary referral
Violation of activity rules	Warning, Detention, and/ or disciplinary referral, suspension from activity
MAJOR VIOLATIONS	<u>POSSIBLE</u> Administrative Action (Disciplinary referral will be issued for major infractions)
Use of any unauthorized electronic device during the school day, including school bus and field trips	Detention, suspension, device may be taken and held in the Main Office and released only to a parent/ guardian. Possible student expulsion
Engaging in conduct that violates the Criminal Code, the laws of Pennsylvania, Township of Upper St. Clair ordinances or its published- posted policies and regulations	Suspension, possible expulsion, and/ or possible criminal prosecution
Possession and/ or use of any weapon or use of any	Suspension, possible expulsion, and/ or possible

object to cause bodily harm	criminal prosecution
Possession and/ or use of any tobacco product or e-liquid, including but not limited to vapes, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco, etc.	Suspension, possible expulsion, and/ or possible criminal prosecution, Tobacco educational program
Possession, use, transportation, or being under the influence of drugs	Suspension, possible expulsion, and/ or possible criminal prosecution, D & A educational program
Possession, use, transportation, or being under the influence of alcohol	Suspension, possible expulsion, and/ or possible criminal prosecution, D & A educational program
Sale of drugs, alcohol, and/ or tobacco/vaping products	Suspension, possible expulsion, and/ or possible criminal prosecution, D & A educational program
Possession/ use of any look-alike chemicals or paraphernalia associated with the use of drugs, alcohol, or other controlled substance	Suspension, possible expulsion, and/ or possible criminal prosecution, D & A educational program
Throwing objects at vehicles, school, or people	Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution, removal of privileges
Leaving school grounds without permission	Detention, suspension, police notified, removal of privileges
Profanity/disrespectful speech or actions	Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution, possible expulsion
Fighting or rowdy/physical behavior that disturbs the learning environment and/or threatens the safety of others	Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution, possible expulsion
Theft	Restitution where possible, Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution, payment
Vandalism and defacing school property and/ or the property of others (including the school-issued technology device)	Payment, Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution
Tampering with safety equipment, such as fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, sprinklers, surveillance cameras	Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution, Fire Marshall notified, payment, possible expulsion
Possession and/or ignition of any fireworks, smoke bombs, matches, lighters, incendiary devices, etc.	Confiscation, Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution, possible expulsion
Misuse/abuse/forgery of early dismissals, hall passes, excuses, and/or other school communications	Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution, possible expulsion
Repeated minor infractions	Detention, suspension, possible criminal prosecution, possible expulsion
Bullying	May include, but not limited to: Counseling within the school, Parental conference,

	Loss of school privileges, Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus. , Exclusion from school-sponsored activities, Detention, Suspension, Expulsion, and /or other Counseling/Therapy.
Harassment, sexual harassment, other harassment, discrimination, or related retaliation	May include, but not limited to: Counseling within the school, Parental conference, Loss of school privileges, Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus. , Exclusion from school-sponsored activities, Detention, Suspension, Expulsion, and /or other Counseling/Therapy.
Hazing	May include, but not limited to: Counseling within the school, Parental conference, Loss of school privileges, Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities, Detention, Suspension, Expulsion, and /or other Counseling/Therapy.
Any behavior resulting in unsafe conditions or that interferes with the rights of others or that violates the policies of Upper St. Clair School District: Including but not limited to Harassment, Cyberbullying/ Bullying, Terroristic Threats, Other Threats, Weapons, Repeated infractions, etc.	May include, but not limited to: Counseling within the school, Parental conference, Loss of school privileges, Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities, Detention, Suspension, Expulsion, and /or other Counseling/Therapy.
Violation of school district policies or regulations	May include, but not limited to: Counseling within the school, Parental conference, Loss of school privileges, Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities, Detention, Suspension, Expulsion, and /or other Counseling/Therapy.

Additional Student Conduct Policies

Bullying-Cyberbullying (Policy 249)

The District is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for students. The District recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Upper St. Clair School District prohibits bullying by all students.

Bullying is defined as intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, Creating an environment that a reasonable person in the complainant's situation would find threatening, intimidating or abusive, or causing a substantial disruption of the orderly operation of school. Cyberbullying is included within the definition of bullying.

Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.

Controlled Substances-Paraphernalia (Policy 227)

The District expects that students report for class or extracurricular, co-curricular, school sponsored/sanctioned activities in a condition that will allow them to perform their various activities in a safe and efficient manner. The District recognizes that in-school as well as out-of-school use of controlled substances has a negative impact on the institution as a whole and is detrimental to the safety of our student body as well as our goal of a drug-free learning environment. Rules, guidelines and procedures have been developed to provide students information in advance of a problem and to promote the safety of all students, faculty and the public. Violations will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution.

Students are prohibited from using, possessing, distributing, and being under the influence of any controlled substances during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and to and from school-sponsored activities.

Controlled substances include: (1) controlled substances prohibited by federal and state laws; (2) look-alike drugs; (3) alcoholic beverages; (4) anabolic steroids; (5) drug paraphernalia; (6) any volatile solvents or inhalants; (7) substances that when ingested cause a physiological effect that is similar to the effect of a controlled substance as defined by state and federal laws; and (8) prescription or non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications, except those for which permission for use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy.

Students can be excluded from participating in any extra-curricular activity/sport for off-campus use of controlled substances even if the use has no nexus to the District's curricular or extracurricular programs. (See Policy 122).

Discipline of Students with Disabilities (Policy 113.1)

Students with disabilities who violate the Code of Student Conduct, or engage in inappropriate behavior, disruptive or prohibited activities and/or actions injurious to themselves or others, which would typically result in corrective action or discipline of students without disabilities, shall be disciplined in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and Board policy and, if applicable, their Individualized Education Program(IEP), Service Agreement, and/or Positive Behavior Support Plan.

Electronic Devices (Policy 237)

The Board prohibits use of electronic devices by students during the school day in district buildings except as may be specifically permitted by the exceptions in this policy; on district property; on district buses and vehicles; during the times students are under the supervision of the district; and in locker rooms, bathrooms, health suites and other changing areas at anytime. Exceptions may be granted for health and safety emergencies, educational purposes, or when permitted by the building principal or the high school's bring your own device policy.

Hazing (Policy 247)

Hazing includes intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating a student with an organization or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization causes, coerces, or forces a student to engage in certain activities or actions set forth in the policy, including any activity that creates a reasonable risk of physical or emotional harm.

Nondiscrimination and Title IX Sexual Harassment (Policy 103)

The District provides an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex/gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability.

Additionally, Upper St. Clair School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and further prohibits discrimination in its all education programs and activities operated by the District, including in its admission and employment practices as required by Title IX. Any questions or concerns regarding sex discrimination can be reported to a Title IX Coordinator. A full copy of the District's Title IX Notice can be found in the compliance notifications section of this handbook or on the District's website at: www.uscsd.k12.pa.us.

Suspension and Expulsion (Policy 233)

A student may be given an in-school suspension after being notified of the reason for the in-school suspension and given the opportunity to respond. The student's parent/guardian shall be notified of the in-school suspension, and an in-school suspension lasting more than ten (10) consecutive school days shall require an informal hearing with the principal.

The principal or person in charge of the school may suspend any student out of school for disobedience or misconduct for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days and shall immediately notify the parent/guardian in writing when the student is suspended. Prior to being suspended, the student shall be notified of the reason for the suspension and given the opportunity to respond. An informal hearing shall be held for any out of school suspension lasting more than three (3) consecutive school days.

Expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board for a period exceeding ten (10) consecutive school days. The Board may permanently expel from the district rolls any student whose misconduct or disobedience warrants this sanction. No student shall be expelled without an opportunity for a formal hearing before the Board, a duly authorized committee of the Board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the Board, and upon action taken by the Board after the hearing.

Terroristic Threats (Policy 218.2)

Terroristic threat shall mean a threat communicated either directly or indirectly to commit any crime of violence with the intent to terrorize another; to cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly or facility of public transportation; or to otherwise cause serious public inconvenience, or cause terror or serious public inconvenience with reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience. Other threats that do not constitute terroristic threats under this policy may be subject to discipline under the Code of Student Conduct.

Tobacco and Vaping Products (Policy 222)

The District prohibits student possession, use, purchase and sale of tobacco, e-liquid, and vaping products.

Weapons (Policy 218.1)

Possession or use of weapons in the school setting (school grounds, school sponsored activities, in any student vehicle on students grounds, or traveling to or from school) is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by the law.

The term “weapons” includes but is not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury and replica of weapon.

The Board shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this policy. Expulsion will be given following formal due process proceedings required by law and Board Policy. The Superintendent may recommend modifications of the expulsion requirements on a case-by-case basis. If the Superintendent is recommending discipline for a weapon policy violation that does not constitute an expulsion, the discipline in lieu of expulsion may be imposed by the Superintendent and does not require Board approval.

Health and Wellness

Health Services Information - [Link for Additional Information](#)

Diabetes Management (Policy 209.2)

The Upper St. Clair School District recognizes the need for immediate safety of students with diabetes as well as their long term health. Diabetic school orders are required for each school year. The school nurses collaborate as a team with each family individually and their diabetic provider to create a plan for their student to ensure they are ready to learn and participate fully in school activities while minimizing the possibility of diabetes-related emergencies. Students who plan to self-administer and monitor their diabetes will need to have a written statement pertaining to this in their diabetes school orders or have the [Carry and Self-Administration of Emergency Medications Form](#) completed by their diabetic provider.

Food Allergy Management (Policy 209.1)

Parents or guardians who request accommodations for their child(ren) who have severe food allergies must provide written documentation to the school nurse from a physician indicating the nature and severity of the food allergy, as well as emergency procedures to be followed in the event of a severe allergic reaction. Coordination of information on accommodations with the Nutrition Center Food Service Director, the school nurse, and all other pertinent parties will occur in accordance with this policy. Specific guidelines regarding accommodating non-disabling and disabling allergies can be found in Policy 209.1

Health Examinations-Screenings (Policy 209)

State law requires that physical and dental examinations be provided by the school's doctor or dentist or by the student's family physician. These examinations can be provided by the district, but parents usually choose to have these examinations done by their personal physician. Pennsylvania School Law requires that each child entering school, grade 6, and grade 11 have a physical exam and each child entering school, grade 3, and grade 7 have a dental exam. All kindergarten students must have a lead test completed per county guidance. The Medical/Dental forms for a private physical and/or dental exam are located on the Health Services webpage. The district will send the appropriate forms to your home when required. The district encourages parents/guardians to timely obtain the exams and promptly return the applicable forms to the school nurse prior to the start of the following school year.

The school nurse may also complete other screenings during the school day to include hearing, vision, scoliosis, height and weight, and other tests deemed advisable, at intervals established by the district.

Immunizations and Communicable Diseases (Policy 203 and Administrative Regulations)

All students shall be immunized against specific diseases in accordance with state law and regulations, unless specifically exempt for religious or medical reasons. Students in public schools must be immunized for tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B and varicella (chickenpox). Children attending grade 7 are required to have an updated tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) and a meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV). Children entering grade 12 will also need 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV). Without these required immunizations the student will not be permitted to attend school. In the event of an incidence of a reportable communicable disease within the student community for which another student is unimmunized, the unimmunized student may be excluded from school, as permitted by law, to lessen the risk of transmission of the disease and safeguard the well-being of the educational community. The school nurse should be contacted with any questions or concerns in this area.

Where applicable, those individuals who are identified as symptomatic or asymptomatic carriers of communicable diseases, infected with acute diseases, and/or chronic infectious diseases will be restricted from the school environment until such a time that it is ascertained their presence within the educational setting will not present a risk to themselves or others. Individually afflicted students shall be afforded their due process rights in respect to continued attendance or when appropriate be provided with education in the least restrictive environment.

Medications (Policy 210)

A violation of the medication policy may result in student discipline under the Code of Student Conduct.

To ensure proper administration of medication, any student needing “prescribed medication” (prescriptions or over-the-counter medication which has been prescribed by a doctor in writing) during school hours, per the physician’s instructions, must follow these procedures:

1. Obtain and process a medication form, which should outline specific procedures for administering medication.
2. All medications must be brought to the nurse's office by the parent/guardian or student in grades 9-12 immediately upon entry to school. Medications will be stored in a locked area of the building health office. The medication must be in a proper pharmaceutical container, bearing the student's name, physician's name and treatment instructions, including times the medication is to be administered.

All medications must be administered by the Certified School Nurse, or in the absence of the Certified School Nurse by other licensed school health staff (RN, LPN), except as otherwise noted

In some cases, a parent may determine the need for his/her child to take “over-the-counter” medication (such as aspirin, cough medicine, etc.). This medication must also be registered at the school nurse's office, following the procedures previously listed. The district cannot, however, assume responsibility for maintaining a schedule to administer “over-the-counter” medication, unless a physician prescribes it.

Possession-Administration of Asthma Inhalers-Epinephrine Auto-Injectors (Policy 210.1)

Students are permitted to possess asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors and to self-administer the prescribed medication. A student may also be permitted to self-administer insulin under the guidance of a school nurse. Before a student may possess or use an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector in the school setting or self-administer insulin, the student must submit:

1. A written request from the parent/guardian that the school complies with the order of the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant.
2. A written statement from the parent/guardian acknowledging that the school is not responsible for ensuring the medication is taken and relieving the District and its employees of responsibility for the benefits or consequences of the prescribed medication.
3. A written statement from the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant that includes information stated within this policy.
4. A written statement by the school nurse acknowledging the district has reviewed and accepts the parent request and physician statement. The identified student is permitted to self-administer in accordance with self-administration guidelines.
5. A written statement by the student acknowledging the requirements and responsibilities to self-administer.

A written request for student use of an asthma inhaler and/or epinephrine auto-injector will be submitted annually, along with required written statements from the parent/guardian and an updated prescription. Students shall be prohibited from sharing, giving, selling, and using an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector in any manner other than which it is prescribed during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored activities. Violations of this policy shall result in loss of privilege to self-carry the asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector and disciplinary action. Additional guidelines regarding the use of these prescription devices can be found in Policy 210.1. [Carry and Self-Administration of Emergency Medications Form](#)

Administering Naloxone (Policy 823)

Naloxone, commonly known as Narcan, is an opioid antagonist that can be used to counter the effects of an opiate overdose. The drug can save an individual from an otherwise fatal overdose and has minimal side effects, even if administered to someone who is later found to not be under the influence of an opioid. Senate Bill 1164 was signed into law as Act 139 in late September of 2014. This legislation allows certain individuals to obtain a prescription for and administer Naloxone to someone who is experiencing an overdose. The District obtained a standing order for Naloxone from the school physician and has authorized certain individuals (District nurses and any District employee who has been trained to administer Naloxone and is designated by the Superintendent as a person authorized to administer Naloxone) to administer Naloxone if he/she suspects that an individual is suffering from an opiate overdose on District property and/or at District event.

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report incidents involving the use of controlled substances on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or during transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity, to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies

Food Services (Policy 808) [District Food Services](#)

All students that attend the Upper St. Clair School District are provided the opportunity to purchase meals at each building cafeteria in accordance with the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

The District shall provide free and reduced-price school meals and/or free milk to students in accordance with the terms and conditions of the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program and the Special Milk Program. For additional information on applying for Free/Reduced School Meals can be accessed [here](#).

Student Rights and Responsibilities

No student shall be deprived of equal treatment and equal access to the educational program, due process, a presumption of innocence, and free expression and association, in accordance with Board policy and school rules.

It is the responsibility of each student to:

- Be honest and ethical: Respect, Responsibility, Honesty.
- Put forth his/her best efforts in the classroom to develop and improve his/her learning.
- Contribute to making the school a better place in which to learn.
- Exercise proper care when using school equipment.
- Assist in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the school community.
- Be aware of the rules and policies of the school and follow them.
- Attend school daily and report to all classes on time.
- Make-up work when absent from school.
- Respect school property.
- Follow the dress code.

A comprehensive list of student rights and responsibilities can be found in Board Policy **235 - Student Rights and Responsibilities** and [Chapter 12](#) of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code.

Opening Exercises/Flag Displays (Policy 807)

District schools shall provide opening exercises that include a salute to the flag and/or recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance or the National Anthem. Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or National Anthem and to salute the flag on the basis of personal belief or religious conviction. Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do participate.

Searches (Policy 226)

The District has a strong interest in the health, safety, and welfare of the school community.

School officials have the authority to lawfully search students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions, without a warrant, when in school, on school grounds, or when under school supervision, if reasonable suspicion that the place or thing to be searched contains prohibited contraband that would be in violation of the law, Board policy, or school rules. The scope and extent of searches must be reasonable in relation to the nature of the suspected evidence. The principal or designee always should be able to articulate what is being looked for and why it is through to be located in the searched area.

Under certain circumstances, random or general searches of students and their belongings, including student lockers or vehicles parked on school property, may be conducted during the school day or upon entry into school buildings or school activities, in the absence of individualized suspicion focused on a particular student or students, for the purpose of finding or preventing entry onto school property or activities of controlled substances, weapons or other dangerous materials to preserve the healthy, safety, and welfare of the school community.

Searches may be conducted at any time, with or without reasonable suspicion, if the student has given knowing and voluntary consent specific to the place or item to be searched regardless of the student's age.

The legal standards governing searches initiated by school officials are less strict than the standards applicable to law enforcement authorities in many situations. When searches of students, student belongings, vehicles or lockers are conducted by or at the request of law enforcement officials, with or without the involvement of school staff, the law enforcement officials are solely responsible for ensuring that a warrant has been issued or that the circumstances otherwise permit the search to be lawfully conducted in accordance with the standards applicable to law enforcement actions. School staff will not interfere with or obstruct searches initiated by law enforcement, but may assist when law enforcement officials have requested such assistance and have represented that a warrant has been issued or that they otherwise have proper authority for a lawful search.

Lockers are assigned to or otherwise made available to students as a convenience for the safe storage of books, clothing, school materials and limited personal property, and to facilitate movement between classes and activities and to and from school. Such lockers are and shall remain the property of the School District, and to the extent students have any expectation of privacy of lockers at all, it is very limited. A student locker may be opened and inspected for cleanliness, with or without the consent of the student, whenever there are odors, pests or other indications that a locker contains spoiled food, soiled clothing in need of laundering or similarly unhealthy matter.

Prior to an individual locker search or inspection, the student to whom the locker is assigned shall be notified and be given a reasonable opportunity to be present. However, when there is a reasonable suspicion that a locker contains materials which pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of the school population, student lockers may be searched without prior notice to the student.

Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials (Policy 220)

Students have the right to express themselves unless such expression interferes with the educational process, including school activities, work, discipline, safety on school property or at school functions, threatens harm to the school community, encourages unlawful activity, or interferes with the rights of others. The distribution and posting of nonschool materials shall only occur at places and times set forth within the policy to ensure the safe and orderly operation of schools while recognizing the rights of students to engage in protected expression.

Review of Instructional Materials by Parents-Guardians and Students (Policy 105.1)

All instructional materials, including teachers' manuals, audiovisuals, and other supplementary instructional material used in the instructional program shall be available for inspection by the parents/guardians of students, in accordance with Board policy. Instructional materials do not include tests or academic assessments. Conditions relating to such requests are included in School Board Policy 105.1 which can be found on the District's website on the School Board/District Policies tab.

Student Services [Link for additional information](#)

Child/Student Abuse (Policy 806)

The Board requires all employees, independent contractors, and volunteers to complete three hours of training every five years. The training is in compliance the Child Protective Services Law and School Code on the identification and reporting requirements for suspected child abuse.

School employees, independent contractors, or volunteers must make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is the victim of child abuse under circumstances identified in this policy. A report of suspected child abuse can be done through:

1. A written report using electronic technologies (www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis).
2. A verbal report via the statewide toll-free telephone number (1-800-932-0313). A person making an initial verbal report of suspected child abuse must also submit a written electronic report within 48 hours after the verbal report.

After a report is filed, the employee, independent contractor, or volunteer must immediately notify the building principal or administrator and follow the appropriate protocols identified in the mandated reporter training.

Gifted Education (Policy 114)

Specially designed instruction is provided for students who are identified as intellectually gifted in accordance with Chapter 16 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code. These individuals have demonstrated cognitive and academic performance, which has been determined to be significantly beyond age/grade level norms. After a thorough review of each identified gifted learner's educational needs, a team of qualified professionals and the parents develop a Gifted Individualized Educational Plan (GIEP).

Questions about Gifted Education should be directed to the Director of Pupil Services at extension 2113.

Language Instruction Educational Program for English Learners (Policy 138)

The District has developed a formal English as a Second Language (ESL) Program policy to ensure quality educational services to all students. To accomplish this goal, the District's objectives are to provide appropriately planned instructional services for identified students whose primary language is not English. The ESL teacher works closely with the administrative staff and classroom teachers to assist students in developing English proficiency. All students are integrated with their peers except when it is necessary to pull them out of class to provide specific services. The policy adheres to all requirements and guidelines to meet the needs of English Learners.

Questions about ESL services should be directed to the Director of Pupil Services at extension 2113.

Migrant Students (Policy 142)

The District addresses the needs and provides appropriate services to migrant students. Students will have the appropriate educational opportunities to meet the same academic standards required of all students. A continuum of programs and services will be provided. Parents will be informed of opportunities to have meaningful involvement in their child's educational programming.

School Wellness (Policy 246)

Student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. To ensure this, the district will provide the following to students:

1. A comprehensive nutrition program consistent with federal and state requirements.
2. Access at reasonable costs to foods and beverages that meet established nutrition guidelines.
3. Physical education courses and opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day.
4. Curriculum and programs for grades K-12 that are designed to educate students about proper nutrition and lifelong physical activity, in accordance with State Board of Education curriculum regulations and academic standards.

Special Education (Policy 113)

The District will develop educational programs for each student with a disability that appropriately meets the needs for education, instructional, transitional, and related services. Programs and services will be in accordance with the student's individualized education program (IEP). The IEP will provide access to the District's general education curriculum, participation in state and local assessments, and supplementary aids and services that permit the student to be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with his/her peers. A continuum of services and placement options to best meet the needs of students with disabilities will be provided.

For more information contact the Director of Special Education at 412-833-1600, ext. 2064 or access the [Upper St. Clair School District Special Education](#) site

Student Records (Policy 216)

Student records are confidential. A plan for the collection, maintenance and dissemination of student education records that comply with federal and state laws/regulations/guidelines will be developed. Copies of the student records plan will be maintained by the district. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

Student Recruitment (Policy 250)

Post Secondary institutions and military recruiters shall have access to secondary students' names, addresses and telephone numbers, unless the student or parent/guardian requests that such information not be released without prior written parental consent. The district shall notify parents/guardians of the right of the secondary student or parent/guardian to request that information not be released to representatives of post secondary institutions and/or military recruiters without prior written parental consent.

Student Services (Policy 146)

The District will develop and implement a comprehensive K-12 program of student services based on the needs of students. The program plan will be in accordance with state and federal guidelines.

Support for Victims of Violent Crimes (Policy 144)

The district will follow the guidelines established within Policy 144 to support victims of violent crimes. The standards within this policy have been adopted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Surveys (Policy 235.1)

Surveys conducted by outside agencies, organizations, and individuals must be reviewed by the Superintendent or designee and reported to the Board prior to administration to students. Only the surveys following this process will be administered. Surveys conducted on behalf of federal, state or local education agencies shall be reviewed and approved by the Superintendent or designee prior to administration. All surveys used to collect information from students shall relate to the District's educational objectives.

Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Policy 254)

The district will work with active members of military service to eliminate barriers to student attendance, education and graduation; and provide additional support to students in compliance with federal and state laws, regulations, and Board policy. The district is committed to recognizing the challenges encountered by children of military families due to frequent moves and deployment.

Technology

Use of the District's Internet and Computer Networks (Policy 815)

The District complies with CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) and COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act). The District monitors student usage of district-issued devices. However, parents/guardians should monitor their child's technology usage to ensure safety and consistency with your family's technology rules/expectations.

2024-25 Chromebooks

The Upper St. Clair School District provides every student with a Chromebook.

USCSD will be financially responsible for:

- Defective equipment
- Hardware issues
- Non functioning components
- All physical components of the 1:1 device due to accidental damage
- Theft of a device (must provide a copy of the police report)

Students/Parents will be financially responsible for:

- Intentional damage, abuse, vandalism, or improper use/care, which results in structural damage including, but not limited to: bending, missing parts/components, dents, scratches, cracks, modifications, or disassembly of the device, etc.
- Excessive wear and tear
- Missing or damaged charger, charging/power cable and/or stylus
- Loss of a Chromebook

***The Upper St. Clair School District will determine if damages were accidental or the result of intentional damage, abuse, or improper use/care.*

Students are responsible for any and all damage to their Chromebook unless determined otherwise by the Upper St. Clair School District administration. If it is determined through an investigation that the student's device was damaged by another student, all students involved will be financially responsible for the damage incurred.

Chromebook Repair Costs:

If a device needs to be repaired due to intentional damage, abuse, vandalism, or improper use/care, the costs will be billed based on the published fee schedule for the 2024-25 School Year.

You can find the repair costs for Chromebooks by visiting: <https://support.uscsd.k12.pa.us/kb/article/691>

*1:1 devices are owned by the Upper St. Clair School District and all repairs must be completed by the district. Students must use the help desk procedures to request a repair. Parents/Students are not authorized to repair or have third parties repair any 1:1 device.

As per Board Policy 815 - Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources - <https://support.uscsd.k12.pa.us/kb/article/454>, any outstanding technology invoices must be paid in full by the end of the school year.

Information for Students Traveling Internationally

The use of student Single Sign-on (SSO) accounts to access all district resources, including your Chromebook, is geo-restricted to within the United States. Additional steps are required to access your student SSO account when traveling internationally. These additional steps, as outlined below, must be completed before departing from the United States.

1. Set up the Microsoft Authenticator app on your phone. If you do not have one, you may complete the setup using a Parent's or Guardian's phone. It is important to set up Microsoft Authenticator on the phone you will take on your trip.

For detailed instructions on how to set up Microsoft Authenticator, please see the article: uscgsd.org/studentmfasetup

2. The default method that Microsoft Authenticator uses to deliver authentication prompts is a push notification. To receive the push notification, ensure the phone with Microsoft Authenticator is connected to cellular data or WiFi before signing in to your student account.
3. You will be prompted to use the Microsoft Authenticator app whenever you attempt to sign in to district systems such as Canvas or Focus or to log in to your Chromebook when you are located outside of the United States.

You must complete the setup of the Microsoft Authenticator app **before** departing the United States to access your student account or log in to your Chromebook while traveling internationally. The Technology Department cannot override this security requirement nor provide alternative means to access your account or Chromebook while traveling internationally.

If you have questions or need additional help, please submit a ticket by visiting uscgsd.org/support.

For the most up-to-date instructions, please visit support.uscgsd.k12.pa.us/kb/article/669 (Student sign-in required).

Compliance Notifications

Annual Compliance Notifications include the following and additional notifications that can be found on the District's website at [Compliance Notifications](#).

Nondiscrimination Notice:

The Upper St. Clair School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex/gender, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The Director of Pupil Services, Dr. Lauren Madia, has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies for students and can be reached using the contact information listed below.

Title IX Notice:

Upper St. Clair School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and further prohibits discrimination in its all education programs and activities operated by the District, including in its admission and employment practices, as required by Title IX. Inquiries regarding the application of Title IX and its implementing regulations may be made to the District's Title IX Coordinator, or the Office of Civil Rights, or both.

The Title IX Coordinator for student/family concerns is:
Dr. Lauren Madia, Director of Pupil Services / Student Title IX Coordinator
District Administration Building (Student Support Services)
1775 McLaughlin Run Road
Upper St. Clair, PA 15241
412-833-1600 Ext. 2113
lmadia@uscscd.k12.pa.us

A copy of the Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures may be found on the District's Publicly Accessible Website at : www.uscscd.k12.pa.us. Any information regarding conduct that may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX, as well as complaints of sex discrimination under Title IX may be reported to Dr. Lauren Madia (Students), via the contact information provided above.

Discrimination-Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students (Policy 103)

Child Find Notice of Special Education Services & Program

Each school district, along with other public agencies in the commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate and evaluate all children who need special education programs and services because of the child's disability. This notice is to help find these children, offer assistance to parents, and describes the parents' rights with regard to confidentiality of information that will be obtained during this process. The content of this notice has been written in English but can be translated into other languages. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the District's Director of Special Education (412-833-1600 ext. 2064) and request an explanation [Compliance Notifications / Child Find - Special Education Services](#)

Homeless Students

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act program is designed to address situations that students in housing transitions have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. The Upper St. Clair School District is responsible for the timely identification of children and youth who are homeless and/or unaccompanied. Homeless children and youth should have access to the education and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same student academic achievement standards in Pennsylvania to which all students are held. Specifically, students and their families who meet the definition of homeless children and youth are entitled to: immediate enrollment in school, transportation to their school of origin, qualification for free meals at school, referrals for appropriate medical care, family engagement support, and services that support academic success. In the event that a child is unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, the District will provide a Liaison to support enrollment and other educational matters. The District refers children and families experiencing homelessness to community partners and agencies to assist with additional needs.

Please contact the Director of Pupil Services and McKinney-Vento Liaison, Dr. Lauren Madia, 412-833-1600 ext. 2113. More information about the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act can be found on the [District website](#).

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. The rights are identified in the annual compliance notification section at:

[Compliance Notifications / Family Education Rights and Privacy Act](#).

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed without a parent's prior written consent. Directory information is defined in the notice linked above. If you do not want the School District to disclose information designated as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Student Support Services in writing by September 15. Please note, the opt-out for the PTA directory is separate from the directory information opt-out and is not collected or monitored by the School District.

If a person does not understand any of this FERPA notice, he or she should contact the school district (Dr. Lauren Madia, 412-833-1600 ext. 2113) and request an explanation.