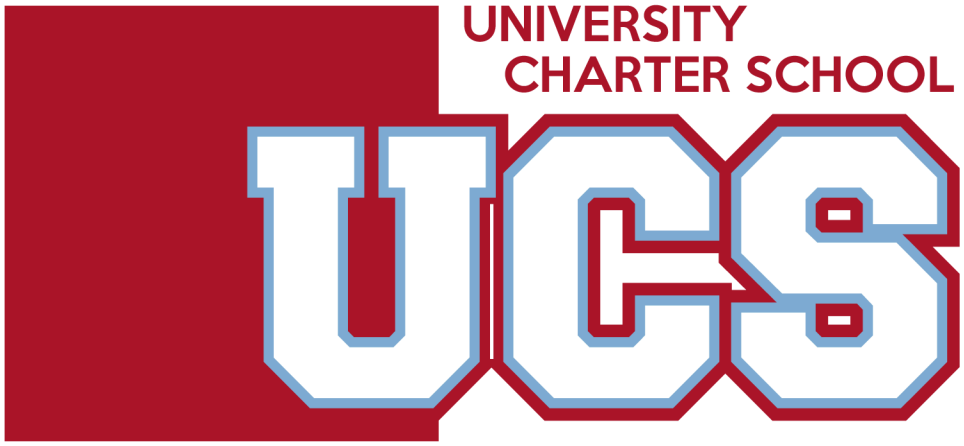

Employee Handbook

2026-2027

Academic Year

Effective 08.01.26

Faculty Dress Policy

Teachers of University Charter School serve as role models for their students. Therefore, they should maintain professional standards of dress and grooming during the workday and any time employees attend work-related activities.

The school requires all teachers to wear clothing that demonstrates their high regard for the profession and presents an image consistent with an exemplary educational atmosphere. Clothes that may be appropriate for physical education teachers are not appropriate for classroom teachers.

Teachers are to wear clothing that is neat and clean. Teachers are not to wear clothing that is tight, revealing, short, torn, tattered, dirty and excessively faded, or with visual, written, or implied messages that are likely to disrupt the school environment. Sweat suits, leisure suits, leggings or jogging/wind suits, may not be worn. Tank tops, backless apparel, midriffs, or see through blouses are not acceptable.

Seasonal/decorated shirts and blouses may be worn.

Denim Blue Jeans may be worn on Fridays, or on designated dress down days with University Charter School shirts or an appropriate work top. Jeans should not have holes or frays. Professional, colored denim pants with no holes or frays are appropriate on all days.

Footwear must be worn at all times. Shoes traditionally worn around the home (i.e. house shoes) or to the beach (i.e. casual flip-flops) are not acceptable.

Appropriate attire will demonstrate a high regard for education and the teaching profession and will present an image consistent with educational atmosphere and community values and expectations.

Examples of professional attire include:

- Collared shirts
- Dress slacks
- Dress coordinates
- Dresses and Skirts (not to be shorter than 3 inches above the knee)
- Dress capris, cropped pants, or gauchos
- University Charter School polo shirts with appropriate pants

Physical Education Teacher Attire:

PE teachers may wear attire that supports active movement, ensures safety, and maintains a professional appearance. Acceptable clothing includes athletic shirts (such as polo shirts or crew-neck t-shirts), athletic pants or shorts that are at least fingertip-length, and closed-toe athletic shoes with proper traction and support. Outerwear like lightweight jackets or track suits may be worn for outdoor or colder conditions. Inappropriate items include tank tops, crop tops, pajama-style clothing, sandals, flip-flops, crocs, or any clothing with offensive or non-school-approved logos or slogans. Excessive or dangling jewelry should be avoided for safety reasons.

Tobacco and Drug Free Campus

Tobacco and Drug Free Campus according to UCS Policy 1030 and 1015, University Charter School is a tobacco, drug and alcohol-free campus. The use of tobacco, alcohol or drug products by students, employees or visitors is prohibited on campus and at all school-sponsored events. Any employee or student violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, may be dismissed immediately and/or possible recommendation for termination of employment.

Board of Directors Meetings

The dates of the Board of Directors meetings are posted on the school website. As an integral part of the success of University Charter School each staff member is encouraged to attend at least one Board of Directors meeting a year. Attendance should be recorded on the Staff Sign in Sheet upon entering the meeting.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are integral to setting strategic goals, team building and receiving crucial school information. All employees are required to attend all staff meetings as assigned.

School Sponsored Events

The students at University Charter School take pride in the events and performances sponsored by the school. We encourage all teachers to attend as many events as possible; however, we realize this is not always possible. We also encourage all teachers to support athletic events as often as possible. Dates for these events are located on the school calendar on the University Charter School website.

Payroll

All salaried staff members will be paid on the last weekday of the month. All hourly staff members will be paid bi-weekly. Any exceptions to this will be communicated to all staff members.

Complaint and Grievance

Informal Complaint Resolution

University Charter School encourages respectful, open dialogue between stakeholders and the teachers as a first step in resolving grievances. The Board of Directors encourages informal resolutions to specific concerns whenever feasible. Complaints that are not specifically included in other policies should be addressed in the following manner:

- The complaint should be received and addressed at the level closest to which the complaint originated. For example, a complaint regarding a classroom should be heard first by the teacher. A complaint regarding the school should be addressed first by the School Level Administrator.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, the complainant can file a formal grievance, as described below.

Grievances

A student/parent who believes that he/she has a dispute with UCS should complete the Record of Dispute Form (Form 2030R) . The form should be submitted to the involved teacher/employee within ten (10) work days after the student/parent becomes aware of the action or other matter which is the subject of the dispute and a copy sent to the School Level Administrator (at each stage in the process a copy of the documentation should be sent to the School Level Administrator). The student/parent should then schedule a meeting with the involved teacher/employee regarding the dispute.

The student/parent should clearly state on the record of dispute form what the issues are, what policies, procedures or practices they contend were misapplied and what solution is requested. The student/parent should then attach any supporting documentation to the form and submit it to the involved teacher/employee prior to the meeting. The supporting documentation will be included with the form at each step of the dispute resolution process. No additional documentation may be attached once the process begins unless agreed to both by the student/parent and the employee currently hearing the complaint.

The involved teacher/employee should respond in writing to the student/parent within ten (10) work days after the meeting. The written response should include the name of the individual at the next level to whom a final appeal may be made. If the involved teacher/employee does not provide a timely response, or if the student/parent believes the dispute has not been resolved, the student/employee may appeal to the School Level Administrator (or if the original dispute involved the School Level Administrator, to the Superintendent).

A copy of the original Record of Dispute Form (Form 2030R), a Dispute Appeal From (From 2030 A-R) including the date when the student/parent met with the involved teacher/employee, and a copy of the involved teacher/employee's response must be submitted by the student/employee to the School Level Administrator (or Superintendent) on appeal. The School Level Administrator (or

Superintendent) will contact the student/parent and set up a time to meet with and review any submitted documentation. Failure of the student/parent to pursue the matter to the next administrative level within ten (10) work days from receipt of the involved teacher/employee's written response shall be interpreted as an end to the dispute. The School Level Administrator (or Superintendent) will give a written response within ten (10) work days of his/her meeting with the student/parent.

There may be unusual cases where the Superintendent agrees to hear the student/parent's concern if the involved employee is the School Level Administrator.

At any point in the dispute resolution process, the employee addressing the dispute may consider additional information from sources other than materials provided by the grievant.

The administrative complaint process ceases after the School Level Administrator makes a decision, except in the unusual case where the Superintendent hears the student/parent's concern. In that case, the complaint process ceases and the Superintendent's decision is final.

The dispute resolution process will involve the student, parent or legal guardian, and the employee addressing the dispute. While the student/parent may obtain advice from anyone of his or her choosing before or after the meeting, the meeting itself will be closed.

Note: UCS has the right to modify stated deadlines in the general procedures when, in its sole discretion, it deems such modifications appropriate.

Please note: This is an abbreviated version of the University Charter School grievance procedure, which is fully set forth in Policy 2030, Student and Parent Grievance Policy.

Employee Email

Employees are expected to monitor their email accounts by regularly reviewing e-mail messages. It is expected that staff will respond to email within 48 hours. Exceptions to this are when the school is closed for breaks or during personal/sick leave, however, it is expected that the staff will respond 48 hours upon the return of either of these exceptions. For staff that are off during the summer (June and July), they are not expected to respond within 48 hours, but when they can as a courtesy to the sender of the email.

University Charter School complies with all federal and state laws pertaining to electronic mail. Accordingly, e-mails written by or sent to school employees may be public records or education records (if their content includes personally identifiable information about a student). E-mails that are public records are subject to retention and disclosure, upon request, pursuant to the Alabama Public Records laws.

Employees are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential. Teachers are encouraged to utilize email and/or GoogleChat as a method of interorganizational communication. These methods are secure and provide protection over the information transmitted. Platforms such as iMessage and GroupMe are not secure, and therefore not advised for workplace oriented conversations.

Information such as student whereabouts, or other personally identifiable information should be considered sensitive, and should not be transmitted electronically.

Upon separation from University Charter School, email accounts are disabled unless other arrangements are made with the Superintendent.

Employee Documents

All documents generated by an employee in the course of performing their duties are owned by University Charter School. Additionally all documents contained on school-owned electronic devices and in school-owned online accounts are owned by the school. Personal files that employees transfer to a school-owned device or through a school-owned account become property of the school and may be viewed or accessed.

Online Services and Accounts

Employees will be issued certain online accounts to use at University Charter School. All such accounts and any documents and information contained in those accounts are owned by University Charter School. Employees may also use free or for-fee online services in performing their duties. All such accounts should reference the employee's school address or school email, not personal addresses.

Transferring Ownership to Third Parties

Employees may not transfer ownership of any documents they produce while employed at University Charter School without the approval of the Superintendent. This includes online lesson websites that allow teachers to sell classroom lesson plans.

Expectation of Privacy

University Charter School retains control, custody, and supervision of all school information technology owned, leased or paid for by it. The school reserves the right to monitor all computer, internet, e-mail and telephone activity by employees and other system users. Employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of school information technology,

including e-mail messages and stored files, regardless of whether such use is for school purposes or incidental personal use.

Cell Phone Use

University Charter School understands that teachers utilize cell phones for personal and school-related purposes. At the same time, cell phones are a distraction in the learning environment. In accordance with state legislation, and to provide the best example for our students, in light of our "Bell2Bell No Cell" policy, teachers are expected to utilize cell phones at appropriate times, and in the manner described below:

Teachers are welcome to utilize personal cell phones:

- Prior to the start of the school day;
- During planning periods;
- Following daily student dismissal times;
- Teachers may use personal cell phones to communicate with administrators, SROs, or other critical personnel in the event of an emergency.

Teachers are expected to minimize use of personal cell phones whenever students are present in the classroom, and/or during instructional class periods.

- Teachers should utilize their in-room computers or laptops as the primary method of monitoring UCS email throughout the instructional day, as well as Google Chat for timely messages from administration, or colleagues.
- Teachers should not utilize personal cell phones to access/view social media content within instructional class periods, or while in responsibility over student supervision, whether in a classroom, gymnasium, or outdoor classroom environment.

Social Media Guidelines

Personal Responsibility

- University Charter School employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face.
- When posting online or to social media, be sure you say that the information is representative of your views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of University Charter School.
- Remember that school blogs, wikis and/or podcasts are an extension of your classroom.

What is inappropriate in your classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.

- The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. By virtue of identifying yourself as a University Charter School employee online, you are now connected to colleagues, students, parents and the school community. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at University Charter School.
- When contributing online do not post confidential student information.
- Interactions with students, parents and the community should always be professional.

Disclaimers

- University Charter School employees must include disclaimers within their personal blogs that indicate that the views expressed are those of the employee only and do not reflect on their employer. For example, "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent University Charter School positions, strategies, opinions, or policies."
- This standard disclaimer does not by itself exempt University Charter School employees from a special responsibility when blogging.
- Classroom blogs do not require a disclaimer, but teachers are encouraged to moderate content contributed by students.

Copyright and Fair Use

- Respect copyright and fair use guidelines.
- A hyperlink to outside sources is recommended. Be sure not to plagiarize and give credit where it is due. When using a hyperlink, be sure that the content is appropriate and adheres to the University Charter School academic standards.
- It is recommended that blogs be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 United States License.

Personal Use of Social Media (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.)

- University Charter School employees are personally responsible for all comments/information they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.
- Keep personal social network accounts separate from work related accounts. When a student or minor wishes to link to an employee's personal social networking site, redirect them to the school approved website. Accepting invitations to non-school related social networking sites from parents, students or alumni under the age of 18 is strongly discouraged.
- Comments related to the school should always meet the highest standards of

professional discretion. When posting, even on the strictest settings, staff should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.

- Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.
- Before posting personal photographs, thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
- Photographs relating to alcohol or tobacco use may be deemed inappropriate. Remember, your social networking site is an extension of your personality, and by that token an extension of your professional life and your classroom. If it would seem inappropriate to put a certain photograph on the wall - is it really correct to put it online?
- Microblogging (Twitter etc.) comments made using such media are not protected by privacy settings, as witnessed by several high profile cases. Employees should be aware of the public and widespread nature of such media, and again, refrain from any comment that could be deemed unprofessional.
- Online postings and conversations are not private. Do not share confidential information whether it be internal school discussions or specific information about students or other staff.
- University Charter School employees who violate these guidelines may be subject to conduct review or disciplinary actions.

Social Bookmarking

- Be aware that others can view the sites that you bookmark.
- Be aware of words used to *tag* or describe the bookmark.
- Be aware of URL shortening services. Verify the landing site to which they point before submitting a link as a bookmark. It would be best to utilize the original URL if not constrained to the number of characters as in microblogs -- i.e. Twitter.
- Attempt to link directly to a page or resource if possible as you do not control what appears on landing pages in the future.

Honor Code

Academic integrity is a fundamental value for any educational institution, and at University Charter School, students and teachers are expected to honor and uphold this value by acting honestly in every aspect of their academic lives, whether in school or off-campus. Teachers will recognize and uphold the Honor Code and Honor Pledge as defined in policy 1010 Honor Code Policy.

The Code addresses academic dishonesty in any form. Examples of Honor Code violations are, but are not limited to:

Cheating: Any practice, method, or assistance, whether explicitly forbidden or unmentioned, that involves any degree of dishonesty, fraud, or deceit. Some examples may include the copying of work or giving your work to another; the unauthorized use of study aids or collaboration during testing; obtaining or distributing copies of testing materials; and/or giving/receiving information regarding a test before, during, or after the test.

Plagiarism: Representing another's ideas or words as one's own, whether published or unpublished, as your own without proper citation of credit. Each student is responsible for working with Teachers to learn and observe appropriate documentation of another's work.
Lying (Falsifying data or fabricating academic documentation): Buying, selling, giving, or receiving papers, projects, essays, notebooks, or the like, from any source, including the Internet. Forging or providing incorrect notes or letters of any kind or lying to an Administrator or Teacher during investigations of academic dishonesty.

Students and Staff are encouraged to make reference to others' works in completing specific tasks, but deliberately using someone else's ideas, words, phrases (even in paraphrased form) and/or designs without giving credit is plagiarism. If students or staff are uncertain about a source and whether or how to credit, they should seek assistance before posting or submitting an assignment. Completing tasks by oneself and always crediting sources will develop qualities of self-sufficiency and responsibility.

The Honor Pledge: I pledge to support University Charter School. I will refrain from any and all forms of academic dishonesty or deception, such as cheating or plagiarism. I will neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance on any academic exercise. I am aware that as a member of the University Charter School's academic community, it is my responsibility to report all suspected violations of the Honor Code.

Students and Staff are encouraged to make reference to others' works in completing specific tasks, but deliberately using someone else's ideas, words, phrases (even in paraphrased form) and/or designs without giving credit is plagiarism. If students or staff are uncertain about a source and whether or how to credit, they should seek assistance before posting or submitting an assignment. Completing tasks by oneself and always crediting sources will develop qualities of self-sufficiency and responsibility.

Harassment

As per policy 1100 Harassment Policy for Employees and Students and policy 5025 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Harassment Policy, University Charter School expressly prohibits any form of employee harassment based on race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other status protected by applicable law. Improper interference with the ability of our employees to perform their expected job duties will not be tolerated.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or any other status protected by applicable law, or that of an individual's relatives, friends or associates;
- Epithets, insults, jokes, slurs, negative stereotyping or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or any other status protected by applicable law; or
- Written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or any other status protected by applicable law that is placed, disseminated or circulated in the workplace.

Prohibited Harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors and other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature if:

- Submission to or tolerance or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision affecting an employee;
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an employee's performance; or
- The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Employee Reports of Harassment

If an employee believes he or she has been treated in an unlawful discriminatory or harassing manner, he or she should promptly report the matter to the employee's supervisor. If the complaint involves the employee's supervisor or someone in the direct line of supervision, the employee may go directly to the next person in the supervision chain. See policy 1100 Harassment Policy for Employees and Students for how to report harassment.

Leave of Absence

University Charter School makes leaves of absence available to employees as follows:

Family Medical Leave: An FMLA is applicable to all eligible employees who have been employed for at least twelve (12) months and have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours during that twelve month period. An eligible employee may take up to a total of twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave during that 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- For the birth and care of the newborn child of the employee;
- Placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care;
- Care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or
- Medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

It is the eligible employee's responsibility to request for medical leave and it will normally be granted to eligible employees who present a physician's written statement that certifies the need for the leave and estimates the length of time the employee will be unable to work due to the disability or caring for someone with a disability. At any time during the medical leave of absence, an employee may be asked to provide medical certification of disability.

University Charter School will follow all guidelines of the Family Medical Leave Act as established by the US Department of Labor.

For the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child, the entitlement to leave for child care expires at the end of the twelve (12) month period beginning on the date of birth, adoption, or placement. Leave associated with the illness of a child will only be provided if the child is under eighteen (18) years of age or is incapable of self-care due to physical or mental disability.

Serious Health Conditions – The term "serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves the following:

a. Any period of incapacity in connection with or following inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility.

b. Continuing treatment by a health-care provider, to include any period of incapacity due to:

1. A health condition, including treatment and recovery, lasting more than three (3) consecutive days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition;

2. Pregnancy or prenatal care;

3. A chronic, serious health condition which continues over an extended period of time, requires periodic visits to a health care provider, and may involve episodes of incapacity (e.g., asthma and diabetes);

4. A permanent or long-term condition for which treatment may not be effective (e.g. Alzheimer's, severe stroke) and for which supervision of a health-care provider is required;

5. Multiple treatments for restorative surgery or for a condition which would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three (3) days if not treated.

Spouse Employed by the School – Spouses who are both employed by the School are limited to a combined total of twelve (12) weeks of family leave for the birth and care of a newborn child, for the placement of a child for adoption or foster care, for the care of a parent who has a serious health condition, and for qualifying exigency leave.

Spouses who are both employed by the School are limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) weeks for military caregiver leave.

Intermittent Leave – An employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule only when medically necessary to care for a spouse, parent, or child or to receive planned medical treatment. Intermittent leave should be scheduled to the extent practicable so as not to unduly disrupt the operations of the School. Intermittent leave may be further limited for teachers in accordance with federal law.

Use of Personal and Sick Leave – If an employee has available sick leave or personal leave or other applicable paid leave, the employee must utilize those forms of leave before taking unpaid leave under the FMLA. In that instance, the paid leave and the FMLA leave will run

concurrently and the employee's twelve (12) weeks of unpaid FMLA leave will be reduced by the paid leave utilized, as long as the need for such leave results from one or more of the qualifying reasons under the FMLA.

Notice – Employees seeking leave under the FMLA must provide thirty (30) days advance notice of the need to take leave when the need is foreseeable. When the need for leave is unforeseeable, employees should notify their supervisors as soon as possible. Employees must also provide notice of the need for qualifying exigency leave as soon as practicable.

Certification for Medical or Military Caregiver Leave – Every request for FMLA leave based upon the serious health condition of the employee or employee's spouse, children, or parents, or leave as a military caregiver must be supported by medical certification issued by the appropriate health care provider on forms provided by Human Resources.

For leave based on a serious health condition of the employee or employee's spouse, child, or parent, the Board reserves the right to obtain a second opinion from an independent health-care provider designated by Human Resources. If the opinion received by the employee and the second opinion conflict, Human Resources and the employee must agree on a third provider to issue a binding opinion. Both the second and third opinions (if necessary) will be at the expense of the School.

Certification for Qualifying Exigency Leave – Certification will be required by the School for requests for qualifying exigency leave. Certification must be timely submitted on forms available from Human Resources. For the first such request, certification may include a copy of the military service member's duty orders or other military documentation.

Return to Work – Human Resources may require an employee who has taken leave due to the employee's own serious medical condition to provide Human Resources with a healthcare provider's certification in order to return to work. Any employee who takes leave under these provisions will be entitled to be restored to the original position held when the leave commenced or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

Maintenance of Benefits – Benefits accrued by the employee before leave is taken are not lost when approved FMLA leave is taken. Employees who are on approved FMLA leave will remain eligible to participate in benefit programs in which the employee was enrolled at the time of the leave, provided that the employee will continue to be responsible for payment of employee's portion of any cost, premium, or like payment that is required to maintain eligibility for the coverage or benefit. An employee that does not return to work after FMLA leave, will be required to reimburse the School for the cost of benefits coverage extended to the employee during the leave, unless the reason for the employee's failure to return to work is (i) a continuing serious health condition suffered by either the employee or a family member, or (ii) other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

Jury Duty: Full-time employees are entitled to regular compensation while performing jury duty or when the employee is summoned under subpoena or other legal requirement to testify at trial in a court of law or in an administrative proceedings constituted under the statutory authority of the agency conducting the proceedings. If the employee is not selected for duty on a jury, the employee will return to work immediately. Upon completion of jury duty, a Verification of Attendance form must be presented to University Charter School. Employees who are excused from jury duty for the day, or are excused early, should report to work when practical to do so. If an employee is called to serve on jury duty at a time that would unreasonably interfere with normal education and business operations, the employee may request that the required service be rescheduled for a later date that would be more convenient for University Charter School. Any jury or witness fee paid may be retained by the employee.

Military Leave: University Charter School complies with applicable state and federal law concerning leaves for military service.

Worker's Compensation: University Charter School complies with applicable state and federal law concerning leave for work-related illness or injury.

General Provisions: The following provisions apply to **ALL** leaves of absence:

1. A request for an extension of a leave of absence must be made in writing prior to the expiration date of the original leave, and when appropriate, must be accompanied by a physician's written statement that certifies the need for the extension.
2. Failure to return to work on the first day following the expiration of an approved leave of absence may be considered a voluntary termination.
3. Coverage for the employee under the school's group insurance plans will be continued on the following basis:

a. For the first thirty days of an approved leave, University Charter School will continue to contribute to premiums as if the employee were actively at work;
b. Employees will be required to pay the entire premium for the continued coverage during the portion of an approved leave of absence in excess of 30 days.
c. Employees must make arrangements with University Charter School to pay their share of group insurance premiums before going on leave of absence.

4. Employees will not accrue length of continuous service for the portion of a leave of absence in excess of 30 days, except for paid parental leave.
5. Employees on a leave of absence will be subject to lay-off on the same basis as employees who are actively at work.
6. Employees on a leave of absence must communicate with Human Resources on a regular basis, at least once each month, regarding their status and anticipated return to work date.
7. Employees who falsify the reason for their leave of absence will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.
8. All leaves of absence must be approved in advance, in writing, by the Supervisor or Superintendent.
9. Except for FMLA leave, Paid Parental Leave, and sick leave requested the night before or the day of, all classroom teachers must have a Substitute Lesson Plan available for review by the approving supervisor before the absence will be considered for approval.
10. If an employee requests additional day(s) off beyond their accrued personal and/or sick hours available and if a substitute is needed, the pay for the substitute will come out of the requesting employee's pay. Exceptions are when an employee is out on FMLA or Paid Parental Leave.

Sick Leave

a. Persons Eligible for Sick Leave – All regular full time employees are eligible for paid sick leave.

Earning and Accumulation of Paid Sick Leave – All eligible employees accrue sick leave at the rate of eight (8) hours per month based upon their placement month (9 month, 10 month, 11 month, or 12 month) annually. For example, a 10 month employee will accrue sick leave at the rate of 6.66 hours over a twelve month period (8 hours x 10 months = 80 divided by 12 = 6.66 hours). Employee's unused paid sick leave will "roll over" from year to year and accumulate an unlimited number of sick leave days. New employees may transfer all unused earned sick leave from another Alabama school board, as permitted by law, upon certification by the previous employer.

b. Use of Sick Leave – Eligible employees may only use paid sick leave for absences caused by the following:

1. Personal illness;
2. Incapacitating personal injury;
3. Attendance upon an ill member of the employee's immediate family, defined as a spouse, parent, child, sibling or any person with a close personal tie;
4. Death of a family member, including a spouse, parent, child, sibling, mother or father-in-law, son or daughter-in- law, brother or sister-in-law, nephew or niece, grandparent, grandchild, aunt or uncle;
5. Death or care of an individual with whom unusually strong personal ties exist because of a relationship other than those listed above.

c. Verification - Employees are expected to use sick leave in accordance with the reasons outlined in Policy 5110 Employee Leave Policy and to ensure that their leave meets those guidelines. We recognize that health matters - both physical and mental - can be personal and complex, and we trust our employees to make responsible decisions regarding their well-being. In rare cases where there is reasonable concern that sick leave may not be used appropriately, an employee's immediate supervisor may request a physician's statement to verify that the employee is under the care of such physician. Any concerns will be addressed with professionalism and respect. Repeated or intentional misuse of sick leave may result in follow-up action in accordance with the school's policies.

c. Sick Leave may be requested in increments, with a minimum of 30 minutes.

d. Sick leave will not be granted for absences for which Employee is eligible to receive workers' compensation.

e. Employee's unused sick leave balance will rollover into an eligible retirement account as service credit as determined by law at an employee's retirement. If Employee resigns or UCS terminates Employee, Employee will be permitted to transfer unused sick leave to another Alabama public school, for use by the employee as provided by law. Employees who do not transfer to another Alabama public school forfeit their sick leave balance.

Personal Leave

Personal leave must be requested in accordance with such procedures as may be established by the Superintendent or the Board. Personal leave may not be taken during the first or last week of school, or immediately before or after a holiday unless special permission is granted by their direct supervisor and a second approval by the Superintendent. In order to ensure that the school is staffed appropriately and instruction to students will not be impacted, instructional positions will be prioritized first. A calendar of these days will be provided annually. All eligible employees accrue personal leave hours based upon their placement (9 month, 10 month, 11 month, or 12 month).

a. Paid Personal Leave – Employees in a 9 or 10 month placement, shall accrue 24 hours of non-cumulative paid personal leave annually, to be granted upon the request of the employee and approval of the supervisor. Employees in an 11 month placement shall accrue 48 hours of

non-cumulative paid personal leave annually, to be granted upon the request of the employee and approval of the supervisor. Employees in a 12 month placement, with exception of the Superintendent, the CFO, and the Assistant Superintendent shall accrue 80 hours of non-cumulative paid personal leave annually, to be granted upon the request of the employee and approval of the supervisor.

b. Personal Leave may be requested in any increment, with a minimum of 30 minutes.

c. Entitlement to Leave –Employees entitlement to personal leave will be prorated based on the Employees start date. If an employee resigns within the same year, the Employee will owe back to the School any personal leave that had been taken but had not yet accrued.

d. Unused Personal Leave -- Unused personal leave hours will roll over into the employee's sick leave balance at the end of the year.

e. A perfect attendance incentive will be awarded to full time employees who do not use any sick leave or personal leave for the school year (August - May). The amount awarded each year will be at the discretion of the Superintendent.

f. Scheduling – Employee must provide UCS at least two (2) weeks' (14 calendar days) advance notice of his/her intention to utilize any personal leave, which UCS may refuse to permit only if Employee is engaged in a time-sensitive project or other circumstances under which, in UCS's sole discretion, the Employee's absence at such time would be detrimental to UCS. For unforeseeable absences, Employee must provide as much notice as is practical and documentation explaining the reason for the absence.

g. Employees will not be permitted to "cash out" or be paid a lump sum for unused personal leave at any time during his employment. If the Employee provides the required notice of resignation/retirement or if USC terminates employment without cause, then unused personal leave hours will be cashed out to Employee on a pro rata basis: 0% if the termination occurs in the first calendar quarter; 25% if the termination occurs in the second calendar quarter; 50% if the termination occurs in the third calendar quarter; and 75% if the termination occurs in the last calendar quarter.

Professional Leave

One in-house professional development day per semester may be delegated by administration as needed for in-house planning days. Other requested professional development days for outside training/conferences will be at the discretion of the employee's supervisor.

Paid Parental Leave

UCS provides paid parental leave (PPL) in accordance with the Alabama Public Employee Paid Parental Leave Act of 2025, codified at ALA. CODE § 36-6A-1, et seq. (1975), and administrative rules adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education. This policy will run concurrently with Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave, as applicable.

Eligible employees must have been employed for at least 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the occurrence of a qualifying event listed below:

- An eligible female employee shall be entitled to eight weeks of PPL in connection with the birth, stillbirth, or miscarriage of her child which occurs on or after July 1, 2025.

- An eligible male employee shall be entitled to two weeks of parental leave in connection with the birth, stillbirth or miscarriage of his child which occurs on or after July 1, 2025.
- An eligible employee shall be entitled to eight weeks of parental leave in connection with the placement of a child with the eligible employee for adoption which occurs on or after July 1, 2025, provided the child is three years of age or younger at the time that he or she is placed with the eligible employee. In the event that parents who jointly adopt a child are both eligible employees, one parent shall be entitled to eight weeks of parental leave and one parent shall be entitled to two weeks of parental leave.

Provisions

- Parental leave shall be paid at 100 percent of the eligible employee's base pay.
- Parental leave shall not require an eligible employee to use or exhaust sick leave, annual leave or any other leave or paid time off.
- During an eligible employee's parental leave, UCS shall continue to pay the employer's contribution to maintain any health care benefits the employee had at the time of the qualifying event for the duration of the leave until the eligible employee returns from the leave.
- The eligible employee shall continue to pay his or her share of the cost of health care benefits, if any, as was required of him or her prior to the commencement of parental leave.
- Employees will remain eligible for salary increases and bonuses while on parental leave.
- An employee who takes parental leave that does not qualify for FMLA leave will be afforded the same level of job protection for the period of time that the employee is on parental leave as if the employee was on FMLA-qualifying leave.

Coordination with Other Policies

If an employee has available sick leave, vacation leave, paid parental leave, or other applicable paid leave, the employee must utilize those forms of leave when taking unpaid leave under the FMLA. In that instance, the paid leave and the FMLA leave will run concurrently and the employee's unpaid FMLA leave will be reduced by the paid leave utilized, as long as the need for such leave results from one or more of the qualifying reasons under the FMLA.

Requests for Parental Leave

- Prior to granting paid parental leave, the employee shall complete a certification form. In addition to the certification form, the employee requesting paid parental leave shall provide acceptable proof in support of the request for paid parental leave.
- An eligible employee may not take paid parental leave unless he or she meets all of the following requirements:

    - Submitted a completed certification as set for above

    - At least 30 days prior to the use of the paid parental leave, the eligible employee shall provide Human Resources a written plan regarding her or her intended use of the paid parental leave and any other leave he or she intends to

take in connection with a qualifying event.

- The eligible employee shall agree in writing to UCS that he or she will not separate from employment for a period of at least eight weeks following the conclusion of any leave taken in connection with a qualifying event. If the eligible employee fails to comply with the return-to-work agreement, UCS may recover from the eligible employee, by offset or otherwise, an amount equal to the eligible employee's hourly rate of pay multiplied by the number of hours the eligible employee failed to work in compliance with the return-to-work agreement.

- UCS may waive the requirement of the above paragraph in circumstances where the eligible employee is unable to return to work due to his or her own serious health condition or a serious health condition of an immediate family member.

- In the event of an emergency that prevents an eligible employee from completing the requirements of the above prior to taking paid parental leave, the eligible employee shall complete the requirements as soon as practicable after the emergency has ended, including providing sufficient documentation to establish a qualifying condition.

Donating Leave Days

Employees may donate Paid Sick Leave or Personal Leave to another staff member in the event of serious illness of the staff member or a family member. In order to donate leave days, the employee must have at least 40 combined Paid Sick Leave and/or Personal Leave hours remaining for the current school year. Time may be donated in 4 or 8 hour increments. Time donated will be deducted from the appropriate days of the person donating the time, and added to the person receiving the time. A "Donating Leave" form must be completed and approved by Human Resources prior to any donation of time.

Employee Classifications

The content of the job and legal requirements determine the status of exemption. University Charter School classifies employees in the following manner:

1. **Full-time regular employees**: Employees hired to work the school's normal, full-time schedule on a regular basis. Such employees may be "exempt" or "nonexempt" as determined by Human Resources based on an analysis of the job as compared to Federal regulations and may be paid hourly or salary. However, to qualify as exempt, employees must meet certain requirements.

2. **Part-time regular employees:** Employees hired to work fewer than thirty hours per

workweek on a regular basis. Such employees may be “exempt” or “nonexempt” as determined by Human Resources based on an analysis of the job as compared to Federal regulations and may be paid hourly or salary. However, to qualify as exempt, employees must meet certain requirements.

3. **Temporary employees:** Employees engaged to work full or part time on University Charter School payroll with the understanding that their employment will be terminated no later than on completion of a specific assignment. (Note that a temporary employee may be offered and may accept a new temporary assignment with University Charter School and thus still retain temporary status. Further, employees hired from temporary employment agencies for specific assignments are employees of the respective agency and not of University Charter School.)

Drug Testing

University Charter School is committed to providing a drug and alcohol free environment for its students and employees. As such, we prohibit the use or abuse of drugs and alcohol during work hours, while on school property, or when performing any school business.

In order to ensure the implementation of 5130 Employment Drug Testing Policy, applicants and employees will be subject to drug testing under the following conditions:

Pre-employment Testing: Any prospective employee may be required to submit to drug testing. Prospective employees will only be asked to submit to a test once a conditional offer of employment has been extended and accepted. An offer of employment by University Charter School is conditioned on the prospective employee testing negative for illegal substances.

Random Testing: University Charter School reserves the right to randomly test employees for compliance with this policy. As used in this policy, “random testing” means a mechanism for selection of employees for testing which results in an equal probability that any employee from a group of employees will be tested, and which does not give University Charter School discretion to waive the selection of an employee selected by this random selection method.

Reasonable Suspicion Testing: Whenever University Charter School has a reasonable suspicion that an employee has violated this policy, University Charter School may insist that the employee submit to a drug or alcohol test as a condition of employment.

“Reasonable suspicion” means a belief that the employee has used, or is using, drugs or alcohol in violation of this policy, based upon such factor as: observable phenomena, such as display of physical symptoms of usage of such substances while on duty or actual observation of such usage; reliable and corroborated reports by others that the employee has used forbidden substances while on duty; evidence that the employee has tampered with one or more prior drug or alcohol

tests while employed with University Charter School; or evidence that the employee has been involved in drug possession, use or sale while on school property or while using school equipment.

Post-Accident Testing: Whenever an employee has been involved in a work-related injury, or has damaged school property, University Charter School may require that the employee submit to a drug or alcohol test as a condition of continued employment. In the event medical care is required as a result of a work-related injury, the employee will submit to a drug or alcohol test.

Background Checks

Criminal background checks, including Alabama State Bureau of Investigation (ASBI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal history background checks through the ALSDE, by means of fingerprinting for prospective and current employees who have unsupervised access to students shall be conducted consistent with requirements of the law (*Alabama Child Protection Act of 1999, as amended, codified at Ala. Code §§16-22A-1 to -34 (1975). This is also required by Section 9(c) (1) of the Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act (Act 2015-3*). If an applicant has previously undergone the State of Alabama ASBI/FBI criminal history background check, it will be confirmed that the applicant is deemed "suitable and fit to teach under state law" as a result of that check.

Work Hours, Tardiness, and Absence

Normal Hours for employees are listed below based upon position and campus:

Lyon Hall Campus

- 7:00am - 4:00pm Front Office Staff
- 7:15am - 3:45pm Teachers, Instructional Aides, Parapros, Nurses, Counselors
- 7:30am – 4:00pm Central Office and Administrative Staff
- For hourly employees, schedule and hours as assigned

Smith Campus

- 7:00am - 4:00pm Front Office Staff
- 7:25am - 3:55pm Teachers, Instructional Aides, Parapros, Nurses, Counselors
- 7:30am – 4:00pm Central Office and Administrative Staff
- For hourly employees, schedule and hours as assigned

Employees must clock in and out each work day when on campus. If an employee leaves their assigned campus during the day and plans to come back the same day, then they must sign in/out at the front desk of their assigned campus. If an employee leaves for the day and does not plan to come back the same day, then they must clock out. If an employee is absent from campus, then an absence request must be in BambooHR and approved by the supervisor. Absence reasons are for an athletic event, band/music event, club event, bereavement leave,

field trip, jury duty, personal leave, professional development, sick leave and unpaid leave. If an employee is absent from either campus and there is no absence request approved by the supervisor, then the absence will be considered leave without pay.

Employees must work their assigned schedules. Regular attendance and punctuality are paramount in reaching our objectives. Excessive absenteeism and tardiness is grounds for disciplinary action, including termination. If the employee is unable to report to work for any reason, he or she must contact their direct supervisor and enter the absence request in BambooHR. It is the employee's responsibility to keep University Charter School informed on a daily basis during a short term absence and to provide medical verification when asked to do so. Advance notice and coordination for a long term substitute is expected whenever possible.

Employees are expected to be at their work station, ready to begin work, at the beginning of their school day as well as at the end of their scheduled breaks and meal period. Except in an emergency, employees must have their supervisor's permission to leave before they are regularly scheduled to do so. A tardy or absence is considered "excused" only when you call ahead of your scheduled work time due to a compelling reason. University Charter School reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine what constitutes a compelling reason. Failing to call according to school policy and/or being tardy or absent for a non-compelling reason will be considered "unexcused." University Charter School considers unexcused tardiness and absence to be a serious problem. Employees who are tardy or absent excessively or show consistent patterns of tardiness or absence, whether excused or unexcused, will be subject to disciplinary action.

Termination

University Charter School policy is to handle all employee terminations in a fair, equitable and consistent manner in accordance with the 5125 Employment Termination Policy. If the termination is initiated by an employee, supervisors should review the circumstances to determine if the termination can be avoided or if there is any action that should be taken to avoid similar terminations. If the termination is initiated by the school, the Superintendent will take care to be impartial, objective, fair and clear to the employee as to the reason for the termination.

Types of Terminations

Voluntary termination is a termination initiated by the employee. Employees should provide at least 30 working days written notice prior to the departure date. In the case of a licensed teacher, 30 days written notice is required to maintain a valid certification. The written notice should include the reason for leaving as well as the name and address of the new

employer, if applicable.

If the Board determines that it is in the best interest of the school that an employee should not be allowed on the school campus, the Board may suspend the employee with full pay during any part of the notice period. Otherwise, the employee is expected to work throughout the 30-day notice period.

If an employee does not call in or report to work for two consecutive workdays, the employee may be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment.

Involuntary termination is a termination that is initiated by University Charter School for reasons other than changing business conditions. Involuntary Termination can be NO Cause With Notice or For Cause Without Notice.

Reduction in force is a termination of employment resulting from changing business conditions that necessitate a reduction in staff. If University Charter School determines, in its sole discretion, that a reduction in force should occur, the following factors will be among those considered when reducing staff: years of service, versatility, qualifications, skill, ability, performance, efficiency, attitude and dependability.

All University Charter School property should be returned to the supervisor on the last day of employment. This includes, but is not limited to, keys, books, computers, and other equipment.

Promotion and Transfer

The University Charter School encourages employees to apply for promotions when positions become available. The University Charter School also encourages the leadership team to provide professional development opportunities in order to prepare employees for promotion.

An employee's past performance, experience, attitude, qualifications and potential are all important factors that will be considered in making promotion and transfer decisions.

Employee Disciplinary Action

University Charter School will make every effort to ensure that employees are treated fairly when school policies and regulations are broken or work performance and/or behavior needs improvement. Our interest is not to punish, but rather correct the situation. In accordance with 5215 Employee Disciplinary Action Policy,, University Charter School will use a three-part corrective action procedure designed to offer the employee a reasonable opportunity to improve the situation. The progressive three-part corrective action is:

1. Verbal warning

2. Written warning reviewed with the employee and placed in the employee's personnel file. This written warning may entail probation or suspension.
3. Termination.

University Charter School reserves the right to terminate an employee without taking corrective action if University Charter School deems termination to be in the best interests of the school, its faculty/staff, and or students. The University Charter School Board of Directors must approve all involuntary terminations.

Personnel Records

University Charter School must always have the most current employee information. An employee should let Human Resources know immediately of a change in name, address, phone number, marital status etc. In the case of a name and/or social security number change, the employee will be required to provide original documentation authorizing the change.

All employees wishing to view their records must make an appointment with the Human Resource Coordinator. Employees will be allowed to review any personnel records that have been used to determine his/her qualifications for employment, promotion or additional compensation, or as a reason for termination or other disciplinary action. Letters of reference and records relating to the investigation of a possible criminal offense are not subject to inspection.

Nepotism Policy

University Charter School prohibits the hiring of a family member of an existing employee when either family member would serve in a direct supervisory role over the other. University Charter School also prohibits the hiring of a family member of a current board member. A family member is considered to be anyone related by blood, marriage or adoption. Family members of existing University Charter School employees who apply for positions within University Charter School will not be shown any form of favoritism in the hiring process, and all applicants will be treated fairly and equitably. Board members, administrators, or supervisors may not use their positions to directly or indirectly seek or secure the employment of any family member as defined in the Alabama Ethics Law.

A member of an employee's immediate family will be considered for employment by the University Charter School if the applicant possesses all the qualifications for employment. An immediate family member may not be hired, however, if the family member is a family member of a current board member or if the employment would:

a. Create either a direct or indirect supervisor/subordinate relationship with a family member; or
b. Create either an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

These criteria also will be considered when assigning, transferring, or promoting an employee. For purposes of this policy, "immediate family" includes: the employee's spouse, brother, sister, parents, children, stepchildren, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, and any other member of the employee's household.
Employees who marry or become members of the same household may continue employment as long as there is not:

a. A direct or indirect supervisor/subordinate relationship between the employees; or
b. An actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

If a family member relationship is established after employment or employees marry and/or become members of the same household, and there is a direct reporting relationship, University Charter School administration will determine within a reasonable time period which, if either, employee must be reassigned (in most cases, this will be done at the end of a term or at the end of the school year). Every effort will be made to provide an opportunity that is similar in scope and salary to their current position, however no guarantee of employment can be offered. In the unlikely event there is not a position available that places the employees in compliance with this policy, or in a position with exception to this policy as approved by the University Charter School Board of Directors, one or both parties may be terminated from employment.

Any relationship between employees must be disclosed to the Superintendent by both parties to the relationship in order for the Superintendent to determine there is no conflict, or make the necessary reassignments. No teacher or staff member that is immediate family of the chief administrator (Superintendents) shall be hired without the board of directors evaluating their credentials, establishing a structure to prevent conflicts of interest, and notifying the Alabama Public Charter School Commission, with evidence, that this process has occurred.

Employment at Will

Employment at University Charter School is "at will." Either the employee or University Charter School has the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. This employment-at-will relationship will remain in effect throughout the employee's service to the school, unless specifically modified by an express written agreement signed by the employee and the Superintendent of University Charter School. However, as a condition of their licensure, teachers are required to give the school thirty (30)

days' notice of their intent to resign pursuant to Alabama Act No. 2018-83.

Faculty/Staff Contracts

Faculty/Staff employed by University Charter School will be required to sign a one year, at-will contract and/or a notice of employment agreement, each year of employment. This contract or notice or notice of employment agreement is a commitment made between University Charter School and the faculty/staff member. Employment-at-will supersedes all other agreements, yet the contract or notice of employment agreement will outline many of the conditions and arrangements of employment.

The UCS academic calendar has 183 instructional days. Instructional staff contracts/notice of employment agreements are for 187 work days. The extra four days within the instructional staff contracts/agreements are for times when they are covering gates at athletic events, supervising students at on and off campus extracurricular activities, attendance at after-hours school functions, as examples. For three of the four extra days, staff will need to cover six events during the academic year to be documented and approved. Two of the events covered must be for athletic gates. TEAMS teachers contracts are for 189 days. The extra six days within the TEAMS teachers contracts are for times when they are covering gates at athletic events, supervising students at on and off campus extracurricular activities, attendance at after-hours school functions, as examples. For five of the extra six days, TEAMS teachers will need to cover ten events during the academic year to be documented and approved. Two of the events covered must be for athletic gates. Should any instructional staff or TEAMS teachers not cover events, their July pay will be reduced accordingly.

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of University Charter School to follow federal and state laws and provide equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to unlawful consideration of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law. This applies to all employment practices, including, but not limited to, hiring, promotions, training, disciplinary action, termination, and benefits.

We expect all employees to show respect and sensitivity toward all other employees and to demonstrate a commitment to the school's equal opportunity objectives. Any employee who believes that another employee is being subjected to unlawful discrimination or harassment should promptly report such conduct to the employee's supervisor or use the alternative reporting options described in the Grievance Policy. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986

University Charter School is committed to full compliance with the federal immigration laws and will not knowingly hire or continue to employ anyone who does not have the legal right to work in the United States.

As an ongoing condition of employment, employees will be required to provide documentation verifying their identity and legal authority to work in the United States.

Code of Conduct

All UCS Educators will be expected to represent the standards of behavior that are outlined in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics per policy 5205 Educator Code of Conduct. This Code defines the professional behavior of educators in Alabama as a guide to ethical conduct. The code protects the health, safety, and general welfare of students and educators; outlines objective standards of conduct for professional educators; and clearly defines actions of an unethical nature for which disciplinary sanctions are justified. University Charter School expects that all staff educators have read and are familiar with this code.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

University Charter School provides a broad range of network resources to students, parents and teachers for the purposes of authorized academic, instructional, administrative and personal use. The term network resources refers to all items owned or leased by University Charter School, including desktop and portable computers/iPads; printers, scanners and other peripheral devices; servers; network and local storage; Internet services; and all other technology-related equipment and services. As members of the University Charter School community, teachers are expected to be responsible in their use of these resources in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this document. These guidelines apply to any use of University Charter School network resources, whether this use occurs on campus or off.

Who can use University Charter School network resources and for what purpose?

1. University Charter School maintains its network resources for use by the entire school community of students, parents, and teachers. Network access is restricted to those who have active accounts issued by the University Charter School technology staff. Accounts can be revoked at any time. We also provide free limited wireless Internet access for registered University Charter School visitors and guests.
2. All members of the University Charter School community are granted free and equal access to as many network services as the education program and technology allow. Users are encouraged to explore the Internet and other resources for academic gain. University Charter School periodically monitors the installed systems and the accounts

used by University Charter School teachers to ensure reasonable, efficient, lawful and safe use.

3. University Charter School believes in treating its teachers with respect and in turn expects that these teachers treat one another with respect. However, teachers must be aware that information assets (computers and the information that users might store on them) belong to University Charter School and that the school has the right to gain access for academic, security or disciplinary reasons, to any of those assets at any time with or without the user's knowledge or consent. Teachers should not expect privacy with respect to any information contained therein.

User responsibilities

1. The secure, lawful and respectful use of University Charter School network resources is a high priority. To protect users from unwanted contact or harassment, University Charter School community members are instructed not to give out to anyone any personal information pertaining to themselves or others. Computer account passwords are confidential; providing your username and password to other persons, thereby allowing them to access the University Charter School network, is prohibited. Use of another person's identity, account, username or password or otherwise gaining unauthorized access to computing or network resources is also prohibited. Users are not permitted to allow other users or friends to use their school-issued computers.
2. The network is a free and open forum for expression. Considerate and respectful disagreement is welcome. Harassing, insulting or attacking of others is not allowed. Offensive speech is disrespectful of the rights of others; be polite in your message.
3. In providing this service to the University Charter School community, the school is aware that there are some areas on the Internet that have objectionable material. Accessing or downloading this material is prohibited. Viewing or transferring defamatory, demeaning, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually explicit, threatening, racially offensive, or illegal material on the network is also prohibited.
4. Impersonation and anonymity are not permitted. Users must take responsibility for their actions and words. Impersonation of an adult, employee or a student in any setting, including online, is not permitted.
5. Users are expected to adhere to copyright laws. Transfer or use of copyrighted material without the express consent of the owner of the copyright is a violation of federal law.
6. Deliberately or inadvertently spreading computer viruses is harmful to the network and is considered vandalism.
7. Teachers may install additional licensed/appropriate software on laptop computers only if the software does not interfere with settings and programs required for academic use. This software must be approved by technology staff before installation.

8. Network-based storage is limited to school-related files only; you are encouraged to delete any inactive files that you might have stored on the network. To ensure deletion of inactive files, the System Administrator will periodically purge these. If possible, advance notice will be given before purges occur.
9. Teachers may not copy University Charter School school-owned software. Copying school-owned software programs is considered theft.
10. The installation and/or use of any Internet-based file sharing programs is explicitly prohibited. File-sharing programs are generally designed to facilitate the illegal sharing of copyrighted material. Individuals with legitimate, school-related needs to use such a program may seek approval from the Director of Technology.
11. Using University Charter School computers or networks for commercial purposes is not allowed.
12. As a federally tax-exempt nonprofit organization, University Charter School must not participate in campaign activity for or against political candidates or any lobbying activities. Therefore, any use of the University Charter School network for such activities is prohibited, including links to other internet sites from the University Charter School Intranet or from the school's external web site.
13. All University Charter School teachers are representatives of the school. Exemplary behavior is expected on "virtual" field trips and when visiting locations on the Internet.
14. University Charter School email distribution lists are for school business only, never for commercial or personal purposes and never for solicitations.

These guidelines are provided to make you aware of the responsibilities that you are about to undertake. University Charter School goal in providing this technology is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. The misuse of University Charter School network resources is not only a violation of major school rules regarding honesty, respect for others, and upholding the good name of the school, but can also be a violation of state and federal laws. Failure to abide by the provisions of the school's acceptable use policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employee Parking

University Charter School provides parking for faculty/staff at both campuses. For both Lyon Hall and Smith Campus, faculty/staff are assigned a designated parking area. Please only park in the designated parking area. Do not park with excessive space between your car and others, and do not create or add a space in areas that are not designated for parking. Please know that parking in an unauthorized parking space could result in a parking ticket or tow.

The following are not permitted:

- Parking in a handicapped space without a proper tag displayed in the vehicle.
- Parking in fire lanes or near fire hydrants.
- Parking in areas designated as “no parking” zones.
- Parking in or blocking a driveway.
- Parking on a sidewalk.
- Careless or imprudent operation of a vehicle on school property.
- Parking an unregistered vehicle on school property.

All students and faculty/staff are required to obtain a parking decal issued by UWA Campus Police.

Travel and Entertainment

Business related expenses may be reimbursed via the purchase request process and are in line with UCS’s Finance Manual. UCS will not pay for any sales taxes incurred with the exception of some food purchases or out of state business that will not allow the tax exempt deduction. The requestor may obtain the tax exempt ID number from the Finance Department prior to purchasing to avoid incurring taxes.

Meals and other travel related expenses must be pre-approved. UCS will reimburse for meals *not* provided by the conference host using the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rates based upon the city and state (or ZIP code) the meal(s) was incurred. All itemized receipts must accompany the request except for those expenses using the per diem rates for meals. For per diem rates meals expenses, a copy of the GSA per diem rates based upon the city and state (or ZIP code) must accompany the reimbursement request. For the GSA per diem rate, UCS will reimburse meals only and not incidental expenses.

UCS will not reimburse for the purchase of any alcoholic beverages. Charging alcoholic beverages or other personal items to a UCS credit card may result in disciplinary action.

When traveling on official School business, UCS will reimburse the round-trip mileage between the School and destination or for the actual miles traveled from the employee’s home to destination and back, whichever is less. Mileage between an employee’s home and the School is not subject to reimbursement.

In cases when multiple employees attend the same event, carpooling is encouraged and mileage will be reimbursed to the employee providing the transportation to the car pool. The reimbursement will be for the distance each way between the school and the destination.

Reimbursement will be paid at the IRS determined standard mileage rate in effect at the time the miles were driven (the IRS establishes this rate annually).