



# **2025-2026**

## **Student and Family Handbook**

**The UCAP School  
75 Carpenter Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903**

## DISTRICT AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

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## THE UCAP SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## THE FUND FOR UCAP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paula DeBlois, Board Chair  
Doug Gray, Board Vice Chair

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### VISION

*At The UCAP School, we level the playing field for every student.*

### MISSION

*UCAP is a safe school that supports students in striving for academic excellence by focusing on equitable outcomes, delivering accelerated learning, and providing a variety of extended learning opportunities, while embedding social and emotional learning for all students.*

### CORE VALUES

*At The UCAP School, we believe in...*

- *Striving for Academic Excellence : At The UCAP School, we believe that striving for academic excellence supports personalization, hard work, high expectations, a growth mindset and goal setting that leads to a love of learning.*
- *Equitable Outcomes: At The UCAP School, we believe that focusing on equitable outcomes fosters creativity and challenges us to deepen our knowledge to further embrace diversity, individuality, and a curriculum that is culturally relevant.*
- *Accelerated Learning: At the UCAP school, we believe that delivering accelerated learning is not only possible, but supports students in graduating on time, building personal grit and empowering our students to know that they can “do hard things.”*
- *Extended Learning Opportunities : At the UCAP school, we believe that providing extended learning opportunities expands the classroom into the community by providing an opportunity for students to socialize, build connections, experience new things and envision their future for high school and beyond.\*
- *Social and Emotional Learning: At The UCAP School, we believe that embedding social and emotional learning into our daily work builds student resiliency, encourages healthy relationships, develops skills for personal wellness, and fosters empathy.*

*These values are the foundation of success for all members of our community (students, families, staff and community partners).*

The UCAP School has developed this handbook to help students and families learn more about the school. This book is available in English and Spanish. If you have questions about The UCAP School after reading this manual, please call the school for assistance at 401-272-0881. We look forward to working with you and your child at The UCAP School.

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The UCAP School does not discriminate on the basis of race or color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, age, country of ancestral origin, or veteran status in administration of its admissions or educational policies, curricular programs, other school-administered programs, or in its hiring and employment practices in accordance with applicable Federal and Rhode Island laws and regulations.

## **The UCAP School Profile:**

The UCAP School is an independent public school district. At The UCAP School, students work to improve their skills and some students are given the opportunity to accelerate in grade if they have mastered their grade level content. The UCAP School serves students in grades seven and eight and enrolls approximately 140 students from Providence. Most students are identified through the guidance departments at their district schools in the 6th and 7th grades. Some students apply directly or are referred through organizations in the community. The UCAP School is a legally independent entity that is governed by a Board of Superintendents from sending districts. The school is funded by the state and the participating school districts. The UCAP School also maintains positive relationships with organizations that support the school in a range of programs beyond the scheduled school day.

## **Location:**

The school is located at 75 Carpenter Street in Providence. At this location, UCAP shares a facility with The Bradley School. Directions can be obtained by calling the school, entering the address into your GPS or looking at our website at [www.ucap.org](http://www.ucap.org).

## **School Day and Calendar:**

*School Day:* The UCAP School hours are from 8:28 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. Each year, families receive a yearly calendar. Hours of school are as follows:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>8:28 a.m. -3:15 p.m.</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>8:28 a.m. -3:15 p.m.</b>
<b>We</b>	<b>nesday 8:28 a.m. -3:15 p.m.</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>8:28 a.m. -3:15 p.m.</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>8:28 a.m. -3:15 p.m.</b>

Each morning, students will be allowed to enter the building at 7:55 a.m. Students who arrive before this time will not be able to enter the building. At the end of the school day, students are expected to leave the building and the campus within ten (10) minutes after the dismissal times listed above. Students who participate in a Beyond U Program activity will be expected to leave the building and the campus within ten (10) minutes of the end of the activity (between 4:45-5:15, depending on the activity).

*School Calendar:* You can find the school calendar on the website or ask for a copy from the school. Two weeks prior to any school year, a mailing goes home to families with a paper copy of the school calendar inside.

## **School Delays and Cancellations:**

In the event of bad weather or other unexpected problems, UCAP will send a robocall and email to families about the school closures. Please also reference our website at [www.ucap.org](http://www.ucap.org) or your local news channel for school cancellation or delay postings, or go to ri broadcasters website to participate in the automated messages we send out for updates related to school closings.

## **Student Attendance:**

Rhode Island law requires children between the ages of six and 16 to attend school, with the exception of certain physical or mental conditions that may render this impractical or where the child is barred by a law or regulation. This is communicated in Rhode Island General Law code section 16-19-1.

It is imperative that your child comes to school, every day, on time and is not absent more than 10% of the school days, which could lead to truancy. This means that if your child is consistently absent more than two days a month, this would qualify your child for truancy. Please click [here](#) to review our attendance practices & procedures.

If you would like to discuss the attendance policy, or if there is any information we should be aware of regarding your student's attendance, please contact us at 401-272-0881.

### **Transportation:**

Students who live in Providence will be supplied RIPTA bus passes (if they meet the distance requirement of 1 mile or extenuating circumstances) and will use public transportation to and from school. For special events and programs that take place during non-school hours, students will be provided RIPTIX, if families are unable to arrange other transportation.

### **Academics:**

The UCAP School provides a rigorous academic program that emphasizes closing skill gaps and preparing students for high school. We have two academic pathways: the traditional and the acceleration pathway. The traditional pathway is for students completing one grade level per school year. The acceleration pathway is for students who have been retained in grade and work toward earning high school credit in 9th grade while completing 7th and 8th grade. For more information about courses, standards, pathways, support services and grading, please refer to the guidance below.

*Saturday School:* Just before the midpoint and end of each quarter, staff will offer a 3 hour study session (9:00am-12:00pm) on Saturdays during which time students can complete missing or late work, study for an assessment, complete a project, etc. Teachers will meet in teams the week before Saturday School to identify students to be invited based on their academic performance.

### **[UCAP Grading Guidance 2023-2024](#)**

### **[The UCAP School Program of Studies](#)** (DRAFT, Not Complete)

### **Counseling and Support:**

Adolescents face many challenges during this stage in their life. With this in mind, UCAP is committed to providing counseling and support for students. UCAP utilizes a case management approach under the direction of the school's licensed Social Worker in collaboration with the school Guidance Counselor. Prior to a student's enrollment in UCAP, the school Social Worker and school Guidance Counselor, along with other members of the school community, will meet with families to conduct an orientation interview called a "Home Visit" with their student. When and if the need arises, students and families are referred to medical and community outreach agencies beyond school.

At UCAP, students participate in an Advisory with approximately 15 students co-led by two staff members. Students check in each morning and at the end of each day with their advisors, and engage in Social/Emotional Learning Competencies throughout the week. In addition, each student participates in the Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) process, in compliance with state regulations and expectations for future academic planning. Families should expect to communicate with their student's advisor on a regular basis for school updates and ongoing, acting as point person for students' families.

### **Beyond U Programs:**

The UCAP School offers many programs after school, on weekends, over vacations and during the summer. Programs include assistance with schoolwork, field trips, recreation, art workshops, and community service. Families receive a great deal of info about possible programs and should call the school if they have any questions about the Beyond U Programs. Information regarding Beyond U programs can be found below:

Overview of Beyond U Programs  Beyond U Overview of Daily Process

Beyond U Expectations  Beyond U Description & Goals

Beyond U Session Information  Beyond U Session Dates

### **Permissions and Release of Liability & Records**

In The UCAP School's student application, families are provided a form to sign affirming that they agree to the following, or not, when applying. In addition, each year in mid-August, students and their families receive a Welcome Back packet of all of this information.

- I approve of submitting this application to The UCAP School. I understand this does not guarantee admission to The UCAP School.
- I grant permission for The UCAP School to videotape, film, photograph and quote my child, reproduce any artwork, writings and other projects produced for school by my child and to publish these items for any editorial, promotional, advertising, trade or other purposes, including The UCAP School's website, with or without her/his name.
- I hereby authorize my child's current school/district to release and exchange academic records and educational information (including special education records) with The UCAP School during the time my student is being considered for admittance, is in attendance at the school, or is transferring to another school. Except as provided by law, the information released with this authorization will not be given, sold or in any way related to any other unauthorized person. Educational records are covered under the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and, under most circumstances, require the signature below prior to their release.

### **Acceptable Technology Use Guidance**

The UCAP School recognizes that computers and the internet today play a vital role in education. The UCAP School will teach appropriate skills to manage and appropriately use technology, including the Internet, Chromebooks, and other educational resources made possible through technology. Each student is assigned a UCAP email utilizing Google Suite to track assignments, write papers, and more. However, the use of technology at UCAP is a privilege, and not a right, and this privilege may be taken away from students who do not comply with our rules and expectations. Please click [here](#) for access to our Technology Use Guidance.

*Use of Computers:* At The UCAP School, students have access to Chromebooks to support teaching and learning. Because of this access and the ability to connect to wifi on every Chromebook, precautions are taken to make sure students do not misuse computers, visit inappropriate websites or access files that belong to others. Students who intentionally or unintentionally misuse or damage computers may face consequences as outlined in the guidance of the Code of Conduct Matrix [here](#).

### **Things to note:**

1. Should students use a UCAP device at home, The UCAP School cannot filter internet access at home. However, we continue to ask students to refrain from accessing inappropriate material at home and for families to monitor student's access at home. The UCAP School will not be held responsible for content accessed at home.



2. At no time should a student bring in their own device and expect permission to use it. This is prohibited unless explicit permission is given through Special Services.

*Cell Phones and Electronic Devices:* The UCAP School is dedicated to supporting the educational process. **To better ensure focus on teaching and learning, The UCAP School does not allow the use of cell phones or other technological devices (Smart Watches, Ear Buds, Air Pods, Video Game Devices, Tablets, and such) during the school day.** Cell phones create distractions that hinder the educational process and create unnecessary conflict between students. It is for that reason that we strongly recommend that students leave their phones at home, and if they choose to bring them, **they must lock them in their lockers at school.** The only exception given would be through Special Services.

Please click [here](#) for additional expectations and consequences should a student not meet these expectations. Families who need to get in touch with their children for **any emergency** during the school day can call The UCAP School at (401) 272-0881.

### **Student-Athletes:**

We are thrilled to be able to offer our students middle school sports.

Fall: Boys and Girls Soccer, Co-ed Volleyball  
Winter: Boys and Girls Basketball, Wrestling  
Spring: Baseball and Softball

*Academic Eligibility (Athletics):* We strongly believe our students are STUDENTS first, ATHLETES second. In order for a student to participate in athletics here at The UCAP School, they must follow the eligibility requirements as outlined by the Rhode Island Principal Coalition on Athletics, known as RIPCOA.

- A student cannot be failing (64 or below) more than one class in order to try out and/or play a sport.
- If the one class a student is failing (64 or below) is Physical Education, the student is automatically ineligible to try out or play.

*When are grades looked at for determination of eligibility?*

Fall Sports - All students are eligible to play fall sports. At the mid-quarter, students' grades will be evaluated to determine whether they are still eligible to play.

Winter Sports - All students are eligible to play based upon their first quarter grades. At the mid-quarter, students' grades will be evaluated to determine whether they are still eligible to play. At the second quarter grading period, students can then become eligible.

Spring Sports - All students are eligible to play based upon their third quarter grades. At the mid-quarter, students' grades will be evaluated to determine whether they are still eligible to play.

In addition to these expectations, the coaches hold our students to high expectations for sportsmanship. This includes how students respond to conflict, and conduct themselves in school and during any and all school sponsored events outside of the school building or school day. Our student-athletes are held to a high standard of conduct in order for them to engage in athletics.

### **Home-School Connection**

It is the purpose of The UCAP School to create and maintain a positive learning environment. At UCAP, we believe that students have a much higher chance of succeeding if we develop strong home-school partnerships. The school will make every effort to inform families of student academic, social, and emotional progress

through the following, but not limited to, academic or attendance letters and report cards. We highly recommend communication in person, by phone, and email for teachers and families to effectively communicate about student progress.

Families are encouraged to check grades and attendance in Jupiter. Also, families are urged to call the school to request updates on student behavior and academic progress when a question or concern arises. When deemed necessary by the school, families will be called and asked to come to school for meetings with appropriate staff. Families may also request a formal meeting(s) and are encouraged to call beforehand to reserve a date and time so that we can provide quality attention and service. Families who drop in without notice or a scheduled meeting may have difficulty meeting with the appropriate personnel needed to meet their needs. On a more informal basis, families may be invited to help out at dances, field trips, or to attend special events for families at the school. The UCAP School believes that it can be most successful when there is mutual trust between families and the school. UCAP will do everything it can to earn and maintain this trust!

### **Incentive, Special Recognitions & Awards**

At The UCAP School, we recognize that many students accomplish great things during their time here. To help motivate our students, we offer incentives such as treats at lunch, field trips, and other activities that appeal to students' interests. Some of those activities include:

*LiveSchool:* The UCAP School LiveSchool Reward System is a way to celebrate UCAP students who exemplify the best qualities of our school, and to build school culture and school pride. Below are some details about LiveSchool:

- LiveSchool reward points are given to students that do well academically, have good attendance and positive behavior. These points are directly related to the *Habits of a UCAP Student*.
- Any adult in the school community can award points to a student. Students can then use their points to purchase rewards at the school store.
- Examples of rewards may include key chains, fancy pens, snacks, and UCAP school swag.

*Gold, Silver and Bronze Club:* At the midpoint and end of each quarter, students are recognized for their excellence in academic achievement, attendance and behavior. There are three levels of recognition called Gold, Silver and Bronze Club. This recognition comes with certain rewards and incentives. Please refer to the following requirements and rewards: [Gold, Silver and Bronze Club Framework](#)

*Student Behavior & Special Activities:* Students who have demonstrated outstanding behavioral and academic achievements will be celebrated with special field trips and events. Below are some of the events that we have here at the school:

- Attendance parties/incentives
- Monthly Beyond U Field Trips: NYC Trips, Mystic Aquarium, Boston Science, Special Lunches
- Dances
- Dinners
- Award ceremonies

*Social Probation:* UCAP students must meet behavioral expectations to partake in UCAP's social events and activities. If the student does not meet the expectations, they will be placed on social probation. For social probation details, click [here](#).



# Code of Conduct

## Overview

*Interventions:* The UCAP School understands that during the school year, minor to moderate behavioral infractions of the classroom and school rules will happen. When events occur, we look at them as educational opportunities for participants in our school community to reflect, communicate, learn, and grow from one another. Interventions may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

- Restorative justice practices
- 1:1 Social Conference with Advisor or Other Adult
- Positive reinforcement
- Re-teaching
- Student support referral
- Behavior contract
- Functional behavior assessment
- Behavior intervention plan

*Consequences:* In some cases, students may be sent to the office when behavioral matters are deemed excessive and pose a significant disruption to the learning process in the classroom. When events like this occur, the student will be seen by an Administrator where they will gather information, assess a resolution(s), and determine possible consequences in a fair and timely manner.

At The UCAP School we provide students with progressive discipline when they display chronic, undesirable behaviors. The higher the number of infractions (and/or patterns of behavior), the more progressive the consequence may be (severity of the actions of the students dictates the outcome). Progressive consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Courtesy parent call home to communicate event/issue
- Restorative justice practices
- Peer mediation
- Teacher and student mediation
- Parent/family meeting
- Lunch detention
- Teacher Detention
- Administrative Detention
- Loss of activities
- ISS/OSS
- Saturday Student Supports (SSS)
- Social Probation

For the Code of Conduct Matrix (behaviors and associated consequences), please click [here](#). *The UCAP School's code of conduct prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.*

*Saturday Student Supports (SSS)* - The requirement of a student to remain outside of normal school hours on a Saturday from 9:00am up to 12:00pm as a disciplinary action off-setting out-of-school suspension or because of some patterned misbehavior on the part of the student. The SSS process exists for the purpose of holding a student accountable for their misbehavior/non-adherence to school rules. SSS may be assigned for a variety of disciplinary infractions and **only** at the discretion of administration.

What rationale exists for Saturday Student Supports (SSS)?

1. A Saturday time frame allows for students who have not shown up for multiple scheduled detentions, is risking an out-of-school suspension, or continues to not engage in positive outcomes for patterned behavior after intervening and providing other levels of support to serve them accordingly.
2. Transportation issues. Families can take a more active role in making sure their student is able to serve detention. Parent/student work conflicts are minimized.

For the Saturday Student Supports details, please click [here](#).

### **Leaving School Grounds**

Students may not leave school grounds during the school day unless they receive explicit permission from their parent/guardian or a staff member. This includes students separating from a group during an off-campus activity. Students choosing to engage in this behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Bullying:**

*Overview:* The entire school community—students, families, staff, and community partners—is responsible for helping to prevent bullying and harassment. A school environment free from bullying and harassment is critical for creating and maintaining a safe, secure, and positive school climate and culture that supports academic achievement, increases school engagement, and respects the rights of all individuals and groups. In accordance with state law (Rhode Island General Law § 16-21-33, "Safe schools act") bullying and harassment are prohibited and must be reported to the appropriate school administrator.

Bullying and/or harassment include, but are not limited to, ***patterned acts*** that:

- Belittle, harm, and/or overpower another individual, cause physical or emotional harm, or place an individual in reasonable fear of harm.
- Create an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.
- Infringe on the rights of a student to participate in school activities.
- Materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- Are directed at an individual or group of individuals based on appearance, intellectual capacity, ability, opinion, race, religion, gender, country of origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

*Cyber-Bullying:* Cyber-Bullying means bullying through the use of technology or an electronic communication, which includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, writing, images, sounds, data, texting or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo or electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communication, instant messages, social media or facsimile. Forms of cyber-bullying may include but are not limited to:

- The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person.
- The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or message.
- The distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the creation, impersonation, or distribution results in previously mentioned definitions of bullying.

*Consequences and Resolutions:* When instances of bullying/cyber-bullying are brought to the attention of the staff, an administrator will immediately investigate and gather information and process accordingly. Below are some actions that may occur from a bullying/cyber-bullying investigation:

- Restorative justice practices
- Individual meetings to gather information about bullying event

- Parent/guardian contact
- Family and staff meetings
- Mediations
- Bullying contract(s) (If reasonable grounds founded)
- In-school suspension; Out-of-school suspension
- Saturday Student Supports (SSS)

In severe cases: The consequences may result in suspension, expulsion, and/or involvement of law enforcement.

### **Illegal Substances or Weapons**

*Weapons:* The UCAP School does not allow or condone any violent behavior, harassment, or threats of physical harm, weapons possession, or illegal activity. Any reporting of false threats is a crime punishable by law.

Consequences for such severe breaches of our school expectations may include:

- Out of school suspension
- Community Hold
- Expulsion
- Referral to Providence Police Department
- Other consequences as determined by the school's administration

Any object brought to the school that is considered to be a potential cause of danger to others including knives (outdoor sport or otherwise); any type of gun - real, fake, airsoft, paint; toys, fake weapons, and laser pointers, will be confiscated and disciplinary action will occur. Disciplinary action may include a referral to the Providence Police Department and a range of disciplinary actions that may result in expulsion from The UCAP School.

*Illegal Substances:* The UCAP School does not allow or condone vaping or vapes of any kind, nicotine, drugs, alcohol or anything related on or around school grounds or at any school-sponsored event on or off campus.

Consequences for such severe breaches of our school expectations, including false claims about another community member, may include:

- Out of school suspension
- Community Hold
- Expulsion from the school community
- Referral to Providence Police Department
- Other consequences as determined by the school's administration

### **Dress Code**

All students at The UCAP school are expected to follow dress code expectations while at school and during school-sponsored events. Good grooming and proper attire contribute to a positive and productive learning environment that is free from distractions.

To access the dress code policy, click [here](#). In short, a student's strike zone must be covered and their clothing must not promote violence, illegal substances or attempt to put down, discredit or exclude any subgroups. Flip flops, slides, slippers or any footwear that is not securely on the foot are also not allowed.

Should students not meet the expectations, administration will offer the following:

- Students may borrow clothing from a friend.
- The school will offer clothing options.

- Students may change into other clothes they have.
- Student can call home and parent/guardian can bring them alternative clothing

*\*If the student does not comply with one of these choices, the student may be sent home.*

*\*Administration makes the final judgment on the appropriateness of a students' attire.*

### **Student Searches**

To help ensure a safe environment there may be times when a student and or/their locker may be searched when reasonable suspicion or claim has been presented. In conducting such searches, staff should attempt to get the student's permission for the search. The UCAP School staff may search a student's belongings and locker when information is received from a reliable informant. Whenever possible, searches will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices with an adult witness, and the student(s) will be present when their possessions are being searched. Belongings may include a backpack, purse, person (such as having a student empty out their pockets, take off shoes, pull up their pant legs) and locker.

It should be noted that all assigned lockers are the property of The UCAP School. Random searches of lockers may occur during the school year. In the course of a locker search, administrative staff or his/her designee will supervise the search. In the course of a locker search, the administration and/or designee will respect the privacy rights of the students regarding items discovered that are not illegal or against school policy or rules.

During a locker search, any illegal or unauthorized items or stolen goods that violate school policy and rules will be confiscated. Such items include, but are not limited to: weapons, flammable material, illegal and controlled substances, and stolen property.

### **Physical Restraint**

We realize that sometimes, students have difficulty controlling themselves in times of emotional crisis. We recognize that students are learning how to control their feelings and emotions in various situations. Sometimes, events happen that make it impossible for some students to do so successfully. In these situations, they may physically lash out at themselves, other students or staff that may result in physical injury to themselves and/or others.

As it is our goal to ensure the safety of all, physical intervention may be necessary. All staff and administration will try several intervention strategies to assist the child in de-escalation to help the student(s) gain control. Should such intervention fail, physical restraint will be used as a last resort.

For safety, certain faculty members have been trained in physical restraint techniques. These staff members, and only these staff members, will respond to situations where physical restraint is needed. Physical restraint is used to assist ONLY when individuals who have lost control of their bodies pose a threat to themselves and/or others. As stated, this is a last resort effort when all other possible strategies to assist the student to regain control have failed, and the risk of continued behavior is greater than that of restraining a student.

It should be clear that The UCAP School does not use physical restraint as a form of punishment or consequence, and it is rare that these measures are used. It is done strictly to ensure the safety of everyone at The UCAP School as a last resort when all other strategies have been tried unsuccessfully. A restraint will not result in an automatic suspension; that will be addressed on a case by case basis. Families or guardians will be contacted if any such incident occurs.

### **Suspensions**

In cases where a student's behavior on campus or at a school-sponsored event requires removal of the student from the academic and/or school setting, the student may be suspended from school (OSS) or required to be in an alternate setting within the school (ISS). You can find more information about the kinds of behaviors that warrant this response [here](#).

When a student is suspended in (ISS), Chance at Progress (CAP) , and out of school (OSS),

- The student and family will be notified of the infraction(s).
- The suspensions will not last longer than ten days.
- The student will have a chance to communicate their side of the conflict or situation.
- The student's parent or guardian will be notified of, and expected to attend, a reentry meeting before the student can return. (A return meeting **may** be required for an ISS.)
- Once a student is suspended, they are not to be on or around school grounds until their suspension has been lifted, a reentry meeting held and told explicitly when they can return to social activities.
- A student who is suspended on those days whether it is ISS or OSS, will not be allowed to participate in any Social or Athletic Activities. Social activities will include Beyond U, Dances, Athletics (whether playing or spectating), and Field Trips. If a student is suspended for two days, for those two days they will miss the social events for those two days. A suspended athlete will miss practices and games during that time frame. Any further consequences are at the discretion of the coach. Once the suspensions are fulfilled students will be allowed back to normal activity status. In case of bigger trips, such as 7th and 8th-grade End-of-year Field Trips, a student's suspensions, and patterns of behaviors will be discussed by the Administration to consider if the student will be allowed to attend.

## **Chance At Progress**

### **Overview**

As an additional alternative to Out of School Suspension (OSS), a new pilot program has been developed to support students who make significant and patterned mistakes that would generally be considered for an OSS. As we know, OSS is not a strategy that ultimately corrects the behavior, nor does it support a student in learning from or not repeating that behavior. In general, we believe students need an alternative to OSS for poor decisions that do not necessarily require that a student be dismissed from the school environment entirely as their behavior is not deemed a "non-negotiable threat to our school community." This alternative to OSS offers the opportunity for students to understand, correct and repair the damage their behavior caused, and to learn to avoid defaulting back to those behaviors in times of escalation or conflict.

**Program's Purpose:** The purpose of this program is to not only decrease the number of students who miss time out of school due to suspension, but to work with the students to resolve the triggers and issues at hand so that repeated offenses decrease.

**Program's Goal:** This program targets behavior that is not necessarily so egregious that they need to stay out of school for the day, but disrupts and decreases the capacity of adults to effectively carry out their roles.

Students will leave the day having engaged in the following learning and agreement to next steps:

- Strategies for repairing their mistakes and avoiding the same behavior in the future
- Opportunities to work on their communication to repair the damage done
- Take accountability and own their behavior
- Carry out the repair process with the appropriate community members
- Participate and commit to a collaborative plan of action between student, family, and identified school team

## **Expulsion from The UCAP School**

Students are accepted into The UCAP School to strengthen their skills, and for some, to accelerate in grade. The UCAP School is a school of choice meaning that it is a choice to attend or not to attend. Having said that, students are asked not to return to the school for many reasons: poor attendance (50%+ attendance rate without improvement and despite interventions), they need/want services that the school does not provide, or in the very unfortunate circumstance, they are asked to leave the school due to their behavior.

When students are asked to leave The UCAP School, their parent/guardian re-enrolls them into their sending district. In these cases, the Executive Director will provide the family with written notice of the reason for the expulsion. Reasons for expulsion due to behavior include, but not limited, to the following:

- Patterns of behavior that consistently disrupts the workings of the school, monopolizes the time of multiple adults weekly or more, and/or threatens the well-being of other community members repeatedly.
- Engaging in a physical altercation with a member of our community. We will do everything we can to intervene before conflicts rise to this level and learn about the facts of the incident to ensure that the decision to expel is warranted. But under no condition, do we condone physical aggression, for any reason, towards another person. It will not be tolerated.
- Bringing about violence or unsafe behavior or actions upon our community or to our front door. At no time, should any community member feel unsafe to come to, or leave from, school. It is our first and foremost duty to ensure that every student is academically, emotionally, socially and behaviorally safe to learn at The UCAP School.

Note: Once a student has been expelled, they are not to be on or around school grounds without The UCAP School's explicit consent.

In the case of poor attendance, we will make every effort to support the student and family in attending The UCAP School every day and on time. This includes helping the family gain outside services and implementing other measures at the school to support their attendance. We maintain a waiting list of students who wish to attend The UCAP School and we hope to give as many students as we can the opportunity to be educated here. Please click [here](#) to see our attendance practices and procedures.

## **Expulsion Committee (EC)**

Should a student's actions put them in a position where the school is considering expulsion, the student's situation will be brought to the Expulsion Committee (EC). The EC is staffed with three members of the UCAP staff. This committee will take into account certain considerations of each case:

- What is written in the student handbook and the schoolwide expectations
- Patterns of behavior
- Genuine remorse from the student with an appropriate plan to rectify the situation going forward
- Interventions already executed
- Behavior referrals and previous discipline measures
- Safety of the school environment - physically, emotionally, socially & academically safe with them in it
- To name a few...

Once the case has been heard, the EC will submit a written communication to the Executive Director about why they voted the way that they did and if remaining at UCAP is what is decided, then they will also submit a safety plan that will be in place to ensure these behaviors do not continue.

## **Hearing and Appeals**



In cases where families do not agree with the decision of the EC to expel their student from The UCAP School, appeals can be made directly to the Executive Director. Appeals should be made in writing by the parent or guardian no more than five days after being notified of a decision regarding the removal of a student from The UCAP School. Upon receipt of a written appeal, the Executive Director will schedule a meeting no more than 10 days after receiving the written appeal from the family. The Executive Director will render a written decision no more than ten days after the date of the meeting and provide a copy of the decision to the parent or guardian. Families or students, who may require translators or any special services that will assist them in communicating their case to the Executive Director, should make such a request in the letter of appeal. Upon a decision by the Executive Director, the parent or guardian has the right to further appeal to the Board of Superintendents and then further to the Commissioner of Education, in accordance with the appropriate rules and regulations of the Rhode Island Department of Education.

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*Message from the Executive Director and Principal ...*

We take great pride in serving our families and our students **every single day**, and we believe it takes a village to educate and raise young men and women in today's complicated society. We want you to know that it is our absolute pleasure in being a part of your student's journey and we will continue to work tirelessly to ensure your student gets the kind of middle school experience **every** young person deserves.

We know that this work is challenging, but we choose it and we choose you. We are confident that, when working together, there is no expectation or outcome we cannot reach!

Thank you!

Alex Desjardin, Principal and Lynn Prentiss, Executive Director