

**2024-2025**

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**UTICA  
COMMUNITY  
SCHOOLS**

**PARENT AND STUDENT  
HANDBOOK**

Language assistance services are available for LEP (speaking, reading, writing or comprehending English) families that are in need or seeking support. Language assistance services are free services provided by the district that include translation and interpretation support. For information or to request services please contact:

- For Albanian: (586) 797-6946
- For Arabic: (586) 797-6906
- For Spanish: (586) 797-6986

Persons seeking or needing language assistance are providing confirmation of such need, further verification is not required.

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Shërbimet e ndihmës gjuhësore ( për të folur, lexuar, shkruar ose kuptuar anglisht) janë në dispozicion për familjet LEP (Njohuri të Kufizuara të Gjuhës Anglese) që kanë nevojë ose kërkojnë mbështetje. Shërbimet e ndihmës gjuhësore janë shërbime falas të ofruara nga distrikti dhe përfshijnë ndihmën me përkthimin dhe interpretimin. Për informacion ose për të kërkuar shërbimet ju lutemi kontaktoni:

- Për Albanian: (586) 797 – 6946
- Për Arabic: (586) 797 – 6906
- Për Spanish: (586) 797 – 6986

Personat që kërkojnë ose kanë nevojë për ndihmë gjuhësore po konfirmojnë një nevojë të tillë. Verifikimi i mëtejshëm nuk është i nevojshëm.

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تتوفر خدمات المساعدة اللغوية (التحدث، القراءة، الكتابة أو فهم اللغة الإنجليزية) لعائلات LEP (أجادة محدودة للغة الإنكليزية) المحتاجة أو التي تطلب الدعم. خدمات المساعدة اللغوية هي خدمات مجانية تقدمها المنطقة التعليمية وتشمل دعم الترجمة التحريرية والفورية. للحصول على معلومات أو لطلب الخدمات، يرجى الاتصال ب:

- اللغة الألبانية: (586) 797-6946
- اللغة العربية: (586) 797-6906
- اللغة الإسبانية: (586) 797-6986

يقدم الأشخاص الذين يبحثون أو يحتاجون إلى مساعدة لغوية تأكيداً لهذه الحاجة، ولا يستلزم تقديم أي إثبات.

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Los servicios de ayuda con el idioma están disponibles para las familias de dominio limitado del inglés (hablar, leer, escribir o comprender inglés) que necesitan o buscan apoyo. Los servicios de ayuda con el idioma son servicios gratuitos proporcionados por el distrito que incluyen apoyo de traducción e interpretación. Para obtener información o solicitar servicios, póngase en contacto con:

- Para albanés: (586) 797 – 6946
- Para árabe: (586) 797 – 6906
- Para español: (586) 797 – 6986

Las personas que buscan o necesitan ayuda con el idioma están proporcionando confirmación de dicha necesidad, no se requiere una verificación adicional.

# Vision, Mission and Core Values

As part of the strategic plan, Utica Community Schools Executive Leadership Team worked with the Board of Education to re-evaluate and reinvigorate our vision, mission and values to better reflect the future of the district. The following vision and mission statements were adopted by the UCS Board of Education on August 15, 2022.



## VISION

Definition: A collective expression of an organization's aspirations.

Utica Community Schools, in partnership with our community, will empower students to positively transform their future and the world.



## MISSION

Definition: An overview of the steps to achieve an organization's future vision.

Utica Community Schools ignites a passion for learning in all students. We strengthen our community by welcoming all learners, honoring culture, and inspiring remarkable growth and achievement.

### WE ACCOMPLISH THIS BY:

- Ensuring students are at the heart of all decisions
- Collaborating with all stakeholders
- Providing a safe and supportive environment
- Encouraging mindsets that are open to innovation
- Reimagining what school can be
- Promoting high expectations throughout Utica Community Schools
- Committing to multiple pathways toward excellence and achievement for all

## CORE VALUES

STUDENT-CENTERED	EXCELLENCE	EQUITY	WELL-BEING	TEAMWORK
We will ensure the individual and collective needs of students are at the forefront when decisions are made	We commit to making every interaction, experience, and work product, of the highest quality	We will provide students, families, and staff members with the experiences and resources they need to thrive	We will promote overall wellness (mental, social, and physical health) for all students and staff members	We will collaboratively engage with students, families, staff members, and the greater community to reach our goals



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# WELCOME TO THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

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Dear Parents,

There is a legacy of excellence that lives within Utica Community Schools. We honor this legacy through our focus on providing the community with a school environment and opportunities that inspire remarkable achievement in our students. Our UCS vision, mission and core values set a clear direction for the future of this school district.

Critical to our success is a safe and positive learning environment for our students. We want our students to feel a sense of purpose and belonging.

UCS will continue its tradition of forging strong relationships with parents and guardians toward this goal. To do this, your help is essential. Please familiarize yourself with the information, policies and procedures in this handbook and discuss its contents with your child.

We look forward to our continuing partnership that will empower our students to change their future and the world.

Sincerely,



Robert S. Monroe  
Superintendent of Schools



Mary K. Thomas, Ph.D.  
President, Board of Education

## **Board of Education**

Mary K. Thomas, Ph.D. - President  
Denyeal Nesovski - Vice President  
Michele Templeton - Treasurer  
Kelli Rankin - Secretary

Kimberly Becker - Trustee  
Steven R. Meyer, Ph.D. - Trustee  
Machele Fitzpatrick - Trustee

Robert S. Monroe - Superintendent of Schools

# Our K-12 Approach To Academic Excellence

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## Planning for Success

You are an important partner in our K-12 plan for your child. At each grade level, there are important items to consider as you look at the future opportunities for your child.

## Early Elementary

Everything is new! Welcome to your K-12 journey!

Some important things to consider:

- You should always reach out to your teacher should you have any questions during the school year. Built into our calendar are several areas where you will receive information on your child's progress and expectations. These include an Open House in September, report cards four times each year, and parent teacher conferences in the fall and the spring.  
Kindergarten students are administered NWEA (which continues through Grade 10) and third graders begin the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress.
- PowerSchool is an essential tool for families to follow the achievement path for their students. It is where reports cards and NWEA results become available and, beginning in third grade, is where teachers post grades.
- Your child will be issued a district iPad to support instruction in kindergarten and first grade. The iPad will be preloaded with apps that your teacher will be using to support instruction during the year. In second grade, your child will transition to a laptop.

**Pathways to Success is a district event that allows UCS parents to explore the many options available to them in Michigan's second largest school district. This year, pathways will be held on December 5 at Henry Ford II High School.**



# OUR K-12 APPROACH

Every school uses a system to communicate through email, texts and automated phone calls. The information used comes through the PowerSchool. If you are not receiving regular updates from your school or Utica Community Schools, please update the information in your PowerSchool account.

## **Upper Elementary**

Parents should begin to explore the specialized programs and services offered in UCS that are focused on the unique learning styles and interests of your child. The junior high school programs will offer more choices for students beginning to explore their career goals. Choices made in the upper elementary level will have a direct impact on the criteria for enrollment in many secondary courses.

Also, sixth grade students have the opportunity to choose an elective in vocal or instrumental music, physical education, art and the media center. Families also should carefully research the district's advanced math programs and how they will impact future enrollment.

## **Junior High School**

Our junior high school programs and services build on the strong elementary foundation that was created in your UCS student. Our schools work together closely on a school-centered continuum of learning.

Course selection is held in the late winter/early spring of each year. Counselors are available beginning in junior high school to assist students with programs that will best support their emerging career interests. Beginning in 9th grade, students have access to a unique specialty programs: The Gene L. Kilda Utica Academy for International Studies, the Utica Center for Science and Industry, the Utica Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology, the Stevenson Center for Manufacturing, Automation and Design Engineering and the newly-create Utica High School Health and Human Services academy. The application period begins in late winter.

Xello is a powerful tool available to secondary parents. Xello is a mobile-friendly, comprehensive website that families can use to make plans about colleges and careers.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## High School

Parents should become familiar with high school graduation requirements and how they will impact your child's education. To meet minimum graduation requirements, a total of 22 high school credits must be earned; one-half credit is granted for each semester course.

In addition, students have access to a wide array of clubs and athletic offerings through their comprehensive high schools.



"UCS has given me the resources and support necessary for my success. My teachers and peers throughout my years in the district have empowered me to achieve my future academic, professional, and personal goals."

Tejaswi Krishnan

INSPIRING  
*Remarkable*  
ACHIEVEMENT

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Inspiring Remarkable Student Achievement**

UCS builds a strong foundation in our students that serves as the building blocks leading to graduation and beyond. A UCS education is a K-12 journey that is dedicated to inspiring achievement, empowering our students and igniting a passion for learning.

The district provides a continuum of services that creates a strong foundation with each succeeding grade building on the skills toward the awarding of a nationally-recognized UCS diploma.

## **Elementary**

Student achievement is the number one goal in Utica Community Schools, and the journey toward College and Career Readiness begins in the elementary school. The elementary-level curriculum is briefly outlined below. Through a rigorous curriculum, students are challenged to reach their highest potential and encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

## **Language Arts**

The Language Arts curriculum enables students to develop and achieve independent and strategic oral and written communication skills necessary for the 21st century. Daily classroom instruction includes:

- Reading – Students receive literature and informational-based reading and writing instruction with an emphasis on comprehension, vocabulary, oral language, fluency, phonics, and reference and study skills.
- Writing – Genre and process writing is taught through the Writer’s Workshop framework. Students develop an understanding of the different types of writing and write a variety of pieces such as Narrative, Informative, and Opinion.
- Word Study/Spelling – Students learn strategies that enable them to recognize, spell, use, apply, and understand words presented in all content areas
- Handwriting – Students begin with printing and move to cursive writing, generally in second and third grades.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Mathematics**

The elementary mathematics curriculum features hands-on learning strategies and techniques, such as sorting, collecting data, measuring, computing, graphing, and calculating. These strategies help students:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Model with mathematics and use appropriate tools strategically
- Acquire a deep understanding of how math works by applying math to all subject areas and all areas of their lives
- Connect math instruction at all grades to algebraic thinking through appropriate math experiences at each grade level

In addition, students have access to digital content that supports their understanding of mathematical concepts.

## **Science**

The UCS science program conditions students to ask questions about and understand and appreciate the world around them. It also teaches students to develop solutions to problems through hands-on activities and digital content based on the “5E” instructional model:

- Engage
- Explore
- Explain
- Elaborate
- Evaluate

## **Social Studies**

The social studies curriculum encourages students to become self-directed, responsible and thoughtful citizens by establishing the connection between them and their families to local, state, national and international governments. The curriculum covers:

- History
- Geography
- Civics
- Economics
- Culture



# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Media Center**

At the heart of each UCS elementary school is a technology rich center in which students can seek, access, summarize, organize, analyze and evaluate information. Media center teachers provide instruction to students on how to use digital information and communication technology appropriately. Students learn digital citizenship principles and begin to apply that knowledge through the strategic use of digital media. Media center teachers guide students in independent and classroom-related projects using a literature and information-rich library collection featuring a wide range of authors, writing styles, genres and formats.

## **Physical Education**

The primary goal of UCS's elementary school physical education program is to help students develop and practice positive lifelong habits. Students are introduced to healthy lifestyle choices through games and activities that highlight:

- Physical activity
- Fitness and wellness knowledge
- Motor skills
- Teamwork
- Positive personal/social attitudes and skills

## **Art**

UCS' art curriculum celebrates each student's individuality by exploring the many creative approaches to a given situation. Beginning with basic color and shape recognition in kindergarten, the elementary art program connects with other areas of the curriculum through various media, and introduces students to:

- Drawing
- Painting
- Print making
- 3-D crafts
- Art history
- The influence of art on world culture

## **Music**

Grade-appropriate song and rhythm instruction creates a framework for all students to learn different music styles, grow their talents, and develop a lifelong interest in and appreciation of a variety of musical activities. Sixth grade students have the opportunity to choose instrumental and/or vocal music as a semester long elective.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Young Fives Program**

The UCS Young Fives program is available for children with birthdays between September 1 through December 1. Children are offered placement based on a professional evaluation done by the district. Upon completion of a year in Young Fives, students will start kindergarten the following fall.

## **Montessori Program**

Utica Community Schools offers a Montessori program at Messmore Elementary School.

## **School Age Child Care (SACC)**

School Age Child Care offers quality childcare and supervision before and after school at select elementary buildings. The program typically operates from 6:45 a.m. until school begins and after school until 6:00 p.m. Hours may vary at some locations. Contact UCS Community Education for information and fees.



Arts & Communications



Business Management  
Marketing & Technology



Health Science



Engineering Manufacturing &  
Industrial Technology



Human Services



Natural Resources &  
Agriscience

## **Secondary Education**

UCS is committed to preparing our students for continued success after high school graduation by providing a comprehensive curriculum within a safe and supportive educational climate.

The departments use career pathways supported by UCS programs and services. Students select their course work during their careers.

# GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

For complete graduation requirement details, visit [UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements](http://UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements).

SUBJECT AREA	DESCRIPTION	PERSONAL CURRICULUM GRADES 10-12	MODIFICATIONS
<b>English Language Arts</b> 4 Credits	Aligned with subject area content expectations developed by the Department and approved by the State Board of Education. • English 9 or Honors English 9 • English 10 or Honors English 10 • English 11 or AP English Language & Composition • English 12 or AP English Literature & Composition • EL English Level 1, 2, 3, or 4	No Option for Personal Curriculum.	AP Seminar and/or Research may replace the English 11 or English 12 requirement if AP Seminar/Research is taught by an English Certified teacher. Writing Center in 12th grade may replace the English 12 requirement.
<b>Mathematics</b> 4 Credits	Aligned with subject area content expectations developed by the Department and approved by the State Board of Education. • Algebra I • Geometry • Algebra II • One additional math or math-related credit in the final year of high school	For <b>Personal Curriculum Math Options</b> , visit <a href="http://www.UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements">www.UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements</a> .  Note: Must align with Educational Development Plan.	No Modification.
<b>Science</b> 3 Credits	Aligned with subject area content expectations developed by the Department and approved by the State Board of Education. • Biology • Chemistry or Physics • 1 additional science credit	No Option for Personal Curriculum.	No Modification.
<b>Social Studies</b> 3 Credits	Aligned with subject area content expectations developed by the Department and approved by the State Board of Education. • 0.5 Civics • 0.5 Economics • U.S. History and Geography • World History and Geography	<b>All students:</b> Complete 2 credits in social studies, including civics.  <b>Personal Curriculum Options:</b> One additional credit in English Language arts, mathematics, science or in a language other than English  OR Complete a formal Career Technical Education program (see Note 6 at <a href="http://www.UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements">www.UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements</a> ). Note: Must align with Educational Development Plan.	No Modification.
<b>Health and Physical Education</b> 1 Credit	Aligned with subject area content expectations developed by the Department and approved by the State Board of Education.	<b>Personal Curriculum Options:</b> One additional credit in English Language arts, mathematics, science or in a language other than English.  OR Complete a formal Career Technical Education program (see Note 6 at <a href="http://UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements">UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements</a> ). Note: Must align with Educational Development Plan.	Physical Education credit may be awarded through a flex option for students who participate in district approved extracurricular athletics or other district approved extracurricular physical activity.
<b>Visual, Performing, Applied Arts, CTE</b> 1 Credit	Aligned with subject area content expectations developed by the Department and approved by the State Board of Education.  One credit must be in the area of Visual, Performing or Applied Arts.	<b>Personal Curriculum Options:</b> One additional credit in English Language arts, mathematics, science or in a language other than English  OR Complete a formal Career Technical Education program (see Note 5 at <a href="http://UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements">UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements</a> ). Note: Must align with Educational Development Plan.	No Modification.
<b>Online Learning Experiences</b>	Online course or learning experience. OR Online experience is incorporated into each of the required credits.	No Option for Personal Curriculum.	No Modification.
<b>World Languages</b> 2 Credits	Aligned with subject area content expectations developed by the Department and approved by the State Board of Education.  Students must complete two credits in grades K – 12 that are grade appropriate in a language other than English or course work or other learning experiences that are substantially equivalent to 2 credits.	No Option for Personal Curriculum.	Students may fulfill 1.0 credit with a formal Career Technical Education program or curriculum (see Note 5 at <a href="http://UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements">UticaK12.org/GraduationRequirements</a> ). OR Visual, Performing and Applied Arts course, plus 4 additional elective credits.
<b>Personal Finance</b> 0.5 credit	Requirement starting with the Class of 2028. May take as an independent course or embedded in Economics.	No Option for Personal Curriculum.	No Modification.
<b>Michigan Merit Exam</b>	Students must participate.		Defined by the State of Michigan applicable to Special Education students.
<b>Available Endorsements</b>	UCS Seal of Global Language  Multi UCS Seal of Global Language proficiency pathways exist. For qualifying information, visit <a href="http://UticaK12.org/GlobalLanguage">UticaK12.org/GlobalLanguage</a>	STEM Endorsement • 6 math credits • 6 science credits • 0.5 technology activities credits • 0.5 engineering activities credits	AP Capstone Diploma Score of 3 or higher on the following exams: • AP Seminar Exam • AP Research Exam • 4 additional AP Exams

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## 7-8

Junior High School is a time when students begin to specialize their interests and their career goals. Curriculum for students include courses for English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education and Health, World Language, Art, Instrumental and Vocal Music Department, Theatre Arts, and Career and Technical Education.

## 9-12 Curriculum

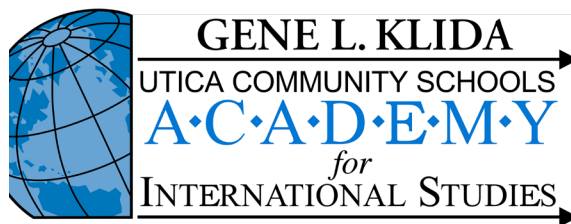
The first steps toward successful completion of the course requirements for high school graduation are taken in the ninth grade, when a student begins earning credits toward graduation. Students and their parents should keep in mind the Michigan Merit Curriculum state graduation requirements when selecting courses each term. Note these are the minimum state requirements and may not fulfill all admission requirements at some post-secondary institutions. All students are required to take a full-day program each year.

## Specialty Programs

### Gene L. Klida Utica Academy for International Studies

The mission of UAIS is to engage our students and to cultivate their abilities through individualized attention and the support of our community of educators, learners, and parents.

This collaborative environment and the rigorous, comprehensive, and internationally-minded curriculum challenge the learner to grow personally and academically.



As our students develop into enlightened, globally-aware citizens, the skills and understanding that they acquire at UAIS will help them lead today and improve tomorrow.

### Utica Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology

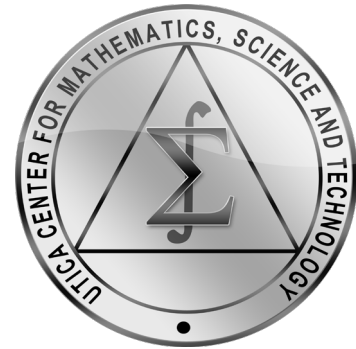
The Utica Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology (UCMST) is designed for students who have an interest in mathematics, science, computer science and curriculum integrated technology.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

All students have one half day of course work at their home high schools including English, social studies and electives. Students are transported to the center for their mathematics, science and technology instruction.

The UCMST is an active member of the National Consortium for Specialized Secondary Schools of Mathematics, Science and Technology.

The UCMST Junior Internship Program has been recognized by the Michigan Department of Education. Each junior is given a career experience in a selected professional setting. Each student develops a formal presentation of his or her experience in the fall of the senior year.



## **Utica Center for Science and Industry**

The Utica Center for Science and Industry (UCSI) is a marriage of rigorous academic content and relevant, real-world applications of this knowledge through projects. The UCSI students have access to work-based learning opportunities, including job shadowing, mentoring and work-site internships.

All ninth graders take CSI Design Principles, which focuses on art foundations, technical illustration (CAD) and the Design Thinking Process. They also take two core classes, English and geometry, both taught in a constructivist, student-as-discoverer format.



Tenth graders choose one of the three Career and Technical Education pathways: Multimedia Production, Mechatronics (Advanced Robotics Systems) or Engineering Technology, and enroll in that pathway's related elective course. Students also take English 10 and the appropriate math placement in either Algebra I or Algebra II.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Stevenson Manufacturing, Automation, and Design Engineering (MADE) Academy**

Stevenson MADE blends rigorous academic content with relevant, real world applications by making use of strong business relationships and post-secondary partners in the field of Advanced Manufacturing. All course work has project based learning with design thinking and problem solving at the core.

All MADE ninth graders will take a full year design thinking course focused on developing their understanding of the design thinking process. As tenth graders, students will be immersed in a 10-12 week exploratory unit for each of the three academy pathways: Fabrication (Welding/Machining), Automation, and Design Engineering.



As juniors, students will choose a major (Fabrication, Automation, or Design Engineering) and begin focusing on challenges proposed by industry partners to develop their pathway skills.

Senior MADE students will complete a senior capstone with multiple internship/externship opportunities. All math, social studies, English, and science course standards taught in the MADE Academy will be intertwined with connections relevant to each academy pathway.

## **Utica High School Academy of Health and Human Services**

Becoming available to 9th and 10th grade students in the 2024-2025 school year, UAHHS will utilize therapeutic medical, public safety and rehabilitation services themes to help students develop technical and critical thinking skills while exposing students to in-depth industry related challenges through a medical lens.



## **Extracurricular Activities**

Participation in extracurricular activities provides a valuable educational experience. More than a means to have fun or be with friends, activities help support the academic mission of the school and are an extension of a quality educational program.



# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Extracurricular Activities (Continued)**

UCS elementary schools offer many before and after-school activities and evening events. Students can challenge their creativity and problem-solving skills by taking part in a variety of programs such as Academically Talented and Gifted, Geography Bees, Destination Imagination, Science Olympiad, Math Olympiad, Social Studies Olympiad, Lego Robotics, Chess Club and others. In addition, Community Education enrichment programs, scouting troops and youth sports programs are often centered at the schools.

Flyers and school newsletters provide participation details. Parents are responsible for their children's transportation to attend activities apart from the regular school day. Safety patrol and adult crossing guards are not on duty for students attending after-school functions.

Whether a student's interests lie in future careers, the environment, social events, community service, student government, world cultures, robotics, fine or performing arts or others too numerous to list here, his/her school offers a related activity or organization.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities tend to have higher grade point averages, better attendance records, lower dropout rates and fewer discipline problems than students who do not participate. Through their involvement, students learn self-discipline, build confidence and develop skills to handle all types of situations.

## **Assemblies and Events**

School assemblies, pep assemblies and athletic events take place at all junior high schools and students are encouraged to attend. The observance of school rules, particularly the display of good sportsmanship and respect, is expected at all such events. Spectators must be orderly and courteous. They should use applause only to show respect for the people involved in the events.



"The MADE program that is affiliated with UCS gave me the resources to harness my skilled trade abilities. With help from instructors and peers, I was able to achieve a professional skill set for the real-world workplace."

Kristina Kopp

INSPIRING  
*Remarkable*  
ACHIEVEMENT



# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Evening Programs at the Junior High Schools**

Normally, students should not attend after-school activities, such as concerts, plays or athletic events, unless they are accompanied by an adult or are participating in the program or event.

## **School Dances**

Dances are scheduled periodically during the school year. All district policies and conduct regulations are in effect during dances. Normal school dress is required at all school dances unless otherwise announced. Dance attendance is a privilege which may be affected by citizenship grades.

Each junior high dance lasts approximately two hours. Students may not arrive late or leave early. Guests from other schools will not be admitted. At the high school level, Tickets are sold at school prior to a dance. Any student who leaves a dance before it ends will not be readmitted. For special dances, non-students may be required to be registered as a guest well in advance of the dance. The administration reserves the right to limit attendance.

## **National Honor Society**

The junior high and high school National Honor Society chapters give special recognition to students who have demonstrated excellence in scholarship, leadership, service and character. The organization is sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Membership is governed by national by-laws. Students are eligible during their junior and senior years. A faculty committee is responsible for decisions regarding membership.

Note: Participation in extracurricular activities, including those above, requires a student to be in attendance at school for one-half of the school day on the day of the event.

## **Athletics**

Athletics can play an important role in rounding out the educational experience. In addition to developing physical skills, athletic participation encourages goal setting, organizational and time management habits and sportsmanship.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

In UCS, athletic participation is not a right, but a privilege. A student may be removed from athletics for failure to meet the standards and requirements of the team, school, district or the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA).

A student must pass a physical examination and present a record of it before trying out for a team. No tryouts will be permitted without proof of a current year physical exam. Most schools arrange economical physical examinations for students each spring and fall.

Seventh or eighth grades students must have passed at least 50 percent of the previous semester's classes and be passing at least 50 percent of his/her current classes in order to participate in sports.

To practice or play in a game, a student must be in attendance for three school hours that day.

A pay to participate fee is required for athletics. Contact the school's athletic director for specific information. Depending on the sport, additional costs may be incurred.

Board of Education policy states that students are forbidden to use any performance-enhancing substances including, but not limited to, those banned by the bylaws of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and those that may be listed by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Discipline for students who violate this policy could range from warnings, detentions and suspensions up to and including expulsion. For more information, contact the school's athletic director.



"The values that I have developed from my years in the UCS system have shaped me to be driven to accomplish all my goals personally and professionally. "

Nathan Steinwascher  
Detroit City FC Goalkeeper

INSPIRING  
*Remarkable*  
ACHIEVEMENT

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

Game day transportation: District transportation for athletes will only be provided to the event (with the exception of football, because of equipment). Parents/guardians will be responsible for their child's transportation home.

## Junior High School Athletics

Fall	Winter	Spring
8 <sup>th</sup> Football	8 <sup>th</sup> Boys Basketball	8 <sup>th</sup> Boys Track
7 <sup>th</sup> Football	7 <sup>th</sup> Boys Basketball	7 <sup>th</sup> Boys Track
8 <sup>th</sup> Volleyball	8 <sup>th</sup> Girls Basketball	8 <sup>th</sup> Girls Track
7 <sup>th</sup> Volleyball	7 <sup>th</sup> Girls Basketball	7 <sup>th</sup> Girls Track
8 <sup>th</sup> Sideline Cheer	8 <sup>th</sup> Competitive Cheer	
7 <sup>th</sup> Sideline Cheer	7 <sup>th</sup> Competitive Cheer	

## Junior High School Athletic Eligibility

The following Michigan High School Athletic Association eligibility rules apply to seventh and eighth grade students competing in athletic events.

Students must be enrolled in school by the fourth Friday after Labor Day or the fourth Friday of February of the semester in which student is competing. A seventh grade student competing in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under 14 years of age. Exception: a student whose 14th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year is eligible for the balance of that school year. An eighth grade student competing in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under 15 years of age. Exception: a student whose 15th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year is eligible for the balance of that school year. There is no limit to semesters of enrollment or seasons of competition for seventh and eighth graders.

A record of a current physical examination given on or after April 15 of the previous school year must be in the school files.

A student may not be a junior high or middle school graduate and must have earned credit in 50 percent of the previous semester's work. A student must be passing 50 percent of current work within seven days of a contest. A student-athlete may not accept ANY award valued at more than \$40. A student may not accept money, gifts, loans, merchandise, membership,

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

privileges, services or other valuable consideration for participation in any form of sports, athletics, games or interscholastic athletic contest officiating, except as allowed in the MHSAA Handbook Interpretations, listed within Regulation I, Section II.

A student may not compete in an outside event during the season in which that athlete competed for the school in the same sport. Three-on-three basketball tournaments are included in this regulation.

Note: In all sports except football, during the junior high/middle school season (from a student's first participation in a contest or scrimmage until the last day of competition for that student) a member of the school team in that sport may participate in a maximum of two (2) events not sponsored by his/her school in that sport while not representing his/her school. An event held on not more than three (3) consecutive calendar days is considered a single event for the purposes of this section, only.

For a complete understanding of the MHSAA athletic handbook, please contact your school's athletic director.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## High School Sports

Fall	Winter	Spring
Varsity Football	Varsity Boys Basketball	Varsity Baseball
JV Football	JV.Boys Basketball	JV.Baseball
9th Grade Football	9th Grade Boys Basketball	9th Grade Baseball
Varsity Volleyball	Varsity Girls Basketball	Varsity Softball
JV Volleyball	JV Girls Basketball	JV Softball
9 <sup>th</sup> Volleyball	9 <sup>th</sup> Girls Basketball	9 <sup>th</sup> Softball
Girls Swim	Varsity Wrestling	Varsity Girls Soccer
Varsity Boys Soccer	JV Wrestling	JV Girls Soccer
JV Boys Soccer	Boys Swim	9 <sup>th</sup> Girls Soccer
9 <sup>th</sup> Boys Soccer	Varsity Competitive Cheer	Varsity Girls Tennis
Boys Cross Country	JV Competitive Cheer	JV Girls Tennis
Girls Cross Country	9 <sup>th</sup> Competitive Cheer	Boys Golf
Girls Golf	Varsity Hockey*	Varsity Boys Track
Varsity Boys Tennis	JV Hockey*	Varsity Girls Track
JV Boys Tennis	Boys Bowling*	Varsity Boys Lacrosse*
Varsity Sideline Cheer*	Girls Bowling*	JV Boys Lacrosse*
JV Sideline Cheer*	Varsity Dance*	Varsity Girls Lacrosse*
9th Grade Sideline Cheer*	JV Dance*	JV Girls Lacrosse*
Varsity Dance*		
JV Dance*		
*Club Sports Club Teams may not be offered at each building due to insufficient student interest.		

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## High School Athletic Eligibility

To be eligible for participation in high school athletics, a student must comply with the following rules:

- **Enrollment:** Have been enrolled in a high school not later than the fourth Friday after Labor Day (first semester) or the fourth Friday of February (second semester). A student must be enrolled in and passing at least 66 percent of a full credit load (four classes) at the school for which he or she competes.
- **Age:** Be under 19 years of age at the time of contest unless the nineteenth birthday occurs on or after September 1 of the current school year, in which case, the student is eligible for balance of that school year in all sports.
- **Physical Examinations:** Have passed a current year physical examination. A record of this must be on file in the school office. A physician's statement for the current school year is interpreted as any physical examination given on or after April 15 of the previous school year.
- **Semesters of Competition:** A student once enrolled in ninth grade, pursuant to the MHSAA Handbook, Section 4, shall be allowed to compete in four first semesters and four second semesters. When two seasons leading to a state championship of the same sport are offered, an athlete may participate in only one.
- **Semester of Enrollment:** Not have been enrolled for more than eight semesters in grades nine to twelve, inclusive. The seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in a school beyond the fourth Friday after Labor Day or the fourth Friday of February or participation in one or more athletic contests constitutes a semester of enrollment.
- **Undergraduate Standing:** Not be a high school graduate.
- **Previous Semester Record:** Have received at least 66% of full credit load (four classes) for work taken during previous semester of enrollment.
- **Current Semester Record:** Academic eligibility checks of not less than five or more than ten weeks are required. A student not passing at least 66% of full credit load (four classes) when checked is ineligible for competition until the next check (but not less than the next Monday through Saturday).
- **Transfers:** In general, a full and complete change of residence (as defined by the MHSAA Handbook, Section 9) by the athlete's parent, guardian or other person with whom he/she has been living during the period of his/her last high school enrollment is required by the receiving district or service area of the school, in order for the athlete to be eligible during the first semester of attendance.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## High School Athletic Eligibility (Continued)

- **Undue Influence:** The use of undue influence for athletic purposes by any person or persons directly or indirectly associated with the school to secure or encourage the attendance of a student or the student's parents or guardians as residents of the school district shall cause the student to become ineligible for a minimum of one semester and a maximum of one year.

Examples of undue influence would include but not be limited to offers of or acceptance of financial aid to parents, guardians or student; reduced or eliminated tuition and/or fees; any special privileges not accorded to other students, whether athletes or not; transportation allowance; preference in job assignments; room, board or clothing.

- **Awards:** Athletes **MUST** not have accepted any award or merchandise exceeding \$40 in value for athletic performance. Athletes accepting membership, privileges, services and/or negotiable certificates of money are in violation.
- **Amateur Status:** Not have accepted money, gifts, loans, merchandise, membership, privileges, services or other valuable consideration for participating in any form of athletics, sports or games, or for officiating in interscholastic athletic contests, or signed a professional baseball contract. (Reinstatement will not be considered for one year). A student may be compensated for giving lessons as part of a youth camp or recreation program but may not also be a camper or participant in the program.
- **Limited Team Membership:** Not have participated in any outside competition in a sport during the season after the athlete has represented his/her school in that sport, except during the high school season in the individual sports, a member of the school team in that sport may participate in a maximum of two non-school meets or contests in that sport while not representing his/her school. Not have participated in a so-called all-star or exhibition contest during the school year. In addition, a member of a school's interscholastic team may not participate in either a school or non-school 3-on-3 (or more) competition in that sport during the MHSAA season for that sport without loss of eligibility under this regulation.
- **Attendance Required for Participation:** Utica Community Schools requires that a student must be in attendance for three school hours the day of an athletic contest in order to participate.



# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Athletic Eligibility Criteria Source**

UCS Student Athlete Code of Conduct, UCS Athletic Coaches Handbook and  
\*Michigan High School Athletic Association Handbook.

Note: Ninth graders of a designated junior high/middle school in a district with multiple junior and senior high schools may be counted for athletic purposes and therefore be eligible in the senior high school designated by residence. Ninth graders not housed in their designated UCS high school may participate in sports at their designated high school. Any ninth-grade student who competes at the high school level in any sport is expected to participate at his/her feeder high school, not another high school out of his/her attendance area.

Game day transportation: UCS transportation for athletes will only be provided to the event (with the exception of football, because of equipment). Parents/guardians will be responsible for their child's transportation home.

\*For clarification of the MHSAA handbook, please see your school's athletic director.

## **Student Services**

### **School Counseling**

Each junior high and high school student is assigned a counselor to assist in course selection and program planning. Counselors are also available by appointment to discuss academic issues, personal concerns or career planning. It is important for students and their parents/guardians to become acquainted with the counselor so that all can work together for the student's benefit.

The counseling department provides many student services, including course selection, program planning, testing and administration and interpretation, college planning and financial aid, vocational planning, job placement, personal and social guidance and employment recommendations. Computerized information about careers, colleges, vocational schools and scholarships is also available.

Situations needing immediate attention will be promptly handled.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **School Counseling (Continued)**

Parents/guardians and teachers may request counseling services for a student. Counselors are available to meet with parents during the school day to discuss curriculum or individual student concerns.

College applications, test applications and job postings are available through on-line sources. Students completing college applications are strongly advised to follow up with their high school counselors to make sure all necessary admissions materials are included and completed correctly. Students can arrange to see their counselor by filling out a request form from the counseling office or by personally arranging an appointment. Parents/guardians are invited to call the counselor for information or to make an appointment.

## **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

The district, in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, will ensure that homeless children and youth in transition have access to a free and appropriate public education, including preschool, and be given a full opportunity to participate in state and district-wide assessments and accountability systems.

A student may be considered eligible for services if the student is presently living in temporary shared housing, a shelter, or transitional living program; in a hotel/motel, campground, or similar situation due to lack of alternatives; at a bus station, park, car, or abandoned building; or in a temporary or transitional foster care placement.

The Board of Education has designated the Director of Student Services as the district's coordinator under the Homeless Assistance Act. For questions and assistance, please contact the Director of Student Services at (586) 797-1120 or visit the Student Services Office located at 11303 Greendale in Sterling Heights during regular business hours 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

## **Programs for English Language Learner Students**

Parents of limited English proficient (LEP) students participating in a language instruction program will be notified, no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year of the following:

- Placement and reason why their child was identified as LEP;
- The student's academic achievement level and level of English proficiency (including method of measurement);
- The methods used for language instruction;

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Programs for English Language Learner Students (Continued)**

- How the language program will meet the student's instructional needs;
- How the program will help the child to learn English and meet the academic standards required for promotion or graduation;
- The exit requirements for the language program; and
- An explanation of parental rights, including the parent/guardian's right to enroll or remove a child from the language instruction program.

## **Newcomers/English Learners (EL)**

An intensive program is provided for students enrolled in Utica Community Schools who have limited or no English language skills. Students' skills are brought to a level of fluency that will enable them to take part in the regular classroom program. After completing the initial program, elementary students may continue to receive support as needed.

## **Section 504 Notice**

Utica Community Schools has a duty to locate, evaluate and identify any child residing in the District who qualifies for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or services. Children eligible for Section 504 accommodations or services include those who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. If you suspect your child has a disability and may require Section 504 accommodations, please contact your school principal for information.

## **Special Education and Child Find Notice**

Utica Community Schools has a duty to locate, evaluate and identify any child residing in the district who qualifies for Special Education services. Children eligible for special education include those with disabilities such as autism, visual impairment, blindness, developmental delay, emotional/behavior disability, hearing impairment, deafness, mental disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment or traumatic brain injury and who, because of such an impairment, need special education services. If you suspect your child has a disability, please contact your school principal for additional information.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **Special Education and Child Find Notice (Continued)**

An integral part of the Special Services department is to provide evaluation services for students suspected of having a disability. Free evaluation Child Find services are conducted by a team of educational specialists. Child Find seeks to identify and refer individuals with special needs, birth through age 25, for evaluation and possible special assistance. Any parent/guardian who has a concern about their child's development may contact Child Find. There is no charge for evaluations or services.

For children under age three:

If you have concerns about your child's development, you may contact Child Find at the Macomb Intermediate School District at 586-228-3321 or visit their website at Child Find ([misd.net](http://misd.net)). The MISD offers free evaluations in the following areas:

- Audiology (hearing)
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Psychology
- Speech and Language

For children over age three:

Utica Community Schools provides evaluation and referral services for students who are between three to five years of age. These services are provided through the Utica Community Schools Early Assessment Center for children suspected of having delays in communication, cognition (thinking), socialization and global development. If you have concerns about your child's educational development, please contact the UCS Special Services Department at 11303 Greendale, Sterling Heights, MI 48312 or at 586-797-1020.

## **Community Resources**

Information about community resources for students, such as the Macomb County Crisis Center and Macomb County Health Department, is available through the counseling office. The district also partners with CARE Solce.

# OUR K-12 APPROACH

## **School Insurance**

Utica Community Schools provides a free basic accident insurance policy for students. The policy covers students while at school or participating in school-sponsored events. A student must report any accident to the school office immediately. To collect benefits, a parent or guardian must complete a claim form. Only expenses not covered by family, employer or group insurance will be considered. Accident victims may be required to pay a deductible. The benefit period covers 52 weeks from the date of injury. A 24-hour coverage policy may be available on a voluntary pay basis.

## **Work Permits**

Any student under 18 years of age must obtain a work permit in order to accept employment. Most employers must comply with state and federal child labor laws concerning hours and working conditions.

Applications for work permits are available from the main office in each secondary school. Offer of Employment forms, which must be completed by a prospective employer, can be obtained at the high school office. Information about the hours and times minors are allowed to work is available in the school office.

# Creating A Winning Team

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## **Help Your Child Learn**

Helping your child develop good study habits and providing the proper tools and work environment are vital to academic success. You can help your child develop good, consistent study skills by:

- Setting high expectations for learning and behavior.
- Establishing and enforcing study rules and routines.
- Creating a quiet, comfortable place for reading and studying.
- Providing materials such as a dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopedia and school supplies.
- Asking about schoolwork and reviewing homework assignments.
- Making him or her responsible for knowing what the assignment is, bringing home the textbooks and school materials necessary to complete work, understanding the teacher's directions, concentrating during study time, asking for signatures on notes or assignments that must be returned to school and completing all assignments, even if your child thinks they are not important.
- Reading to your child or having your child read to you each day and letting him/her see you reading.
- Helping your child select fiction and non-fiction books from the library or bookstore.
- Encouraging your child to reflect and write about what they read or learned.

## **Setting the Stage for Success – Success Skills**

Utica Community Schools is dedicated to helping students grow and succeed personally, as well as academically. One way to promote this growth is to emphasize the Success Skills (below), designed to help students in kindergarten through high school build character and self-esteem:

- Show respect by treating others as they want to be treated.
- Show responsibility by being accountable for what they say and do.
- Demonstrate positive communication by being considerate with their words and actions.
- Do their personal best by putting forth their best effort.
- Show integrity by being truthful and trustworthy.

# WINNING TEAM

## **Setting the Stage for Success – Success Skills (Continued)**

You can help your child make positive lifestyle choices by:

- Understanding children’s developmental stages so you can put his/her behaviors into the proper perspective.
- Offering encouragement that builds confidence and self-esteem, provide opportunities for your child to make age-appropriate decisions and praise his/her accomplishments.
- Listening with undivided attention to both what your child says and how he/she is feeling.
- Helping your child recognize and accept feelings such as happiness, anger or frustration and demonstrating how to constructively talk about them.
- Teaching your child good communication skills, including honesty, respect, clear language, good timing, trust and consistency.
- Setting clear expectations and consequences with consistent follow through.
- Helping your child learn responsibility by experiencing the results of his/her own decisions.

## **Parent Involvement**

### **School-Home Communication**

Education is a team effort involving student, parent/guardian and teacher(s). A strong partnership between school and home based on two-way communication, cooperation and trust creates the foundation for your child’s educational success.

Emails, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings are ways to engage in two-way communication. Sharing your insights about your child’s strengths and weaknesses, interests, accomplishments and family traditions with teachers can bridge the educational gap between home and school. Parents/guardians are urged to get to know the principal, teachers and staff who work with your child each day and take part in school events and activities whenever possible.

In order to keep parents/legal guardians well-informed about events, programs, and their student’s progress, the district and school communicates in a variety of ways.



# WINNING TEAM

## **District and School News**

News of the district and school instructional programs and activities is shared via the district website [www.cticak12.org](http://www.cticak12.org), school newsletters, social media sites, the UCS App, text alerts UCS TV channels 15 (WOW) and 22 (Comcast), and the district newsletter Focus for the Community. The district automated phone calling/text/email system is used to notify parents about events, activities, and school closings. The email and text systems used by schools and the district are from the student's PowerSchool account. Please make sure this information is accurate. In addition, the district provides teachers with the ability to use Remind texting system to support classroom communications.

## **PowerSchool Online Parent Portal/Unified Classroom**

Parents/guardians of upper elementary, junior high, and high school students can view their child's progress online using the Parent Portal in PowerSchool, the UCS student information system for scheduling, attendance, grades, etc. Report cards and NWEA results are also shared with families through PowerSchool. Contact the school for directions on how to access your child's information.

## **Grade Reporting During Marking Periods**

Grades 3-12 – at the midpoint of each marking period, principals will notify parents that grades are up to date in PowerSchool.

## **Grade Reporting Periods Elementary**

Grading periods are separated into four marking periods. Report cards can be viewed in PowerSchool at the end of each marking period.

# WINNING TEAM

## Secondary

The school year is divided into two semesters. Each semester is comprised of two marking periods. Semester grades will be determined using the following criteria. Beginning in the 9th grade, any combination of two failing marks within the semester will result in a failing grade (i.e., 1st marking period = F, 2nd marking period = C and final exam = F will result in a final grade of F).

	Grades 7 and 8	Grades 9-12
Marking Period 1 or 3	45%	40%
Marking Period 2 or 4	45%	40%
Final Exam	10%	20%
Final Grade	100%	100%

## Grading Scale

Although daily classroom grading systems may vary amongst teachers, at the end of a marking period, classroom percentage scale or letter grade systems will adhere to the district wide grading scale.

## Report Cards

Report cards are issued at the end of each marking period. The report cards are made available through your child's PowerSchool account. Access to the report cards are not available through the PowerSchool app. The report cards are available by logging into your account through your favorite browser (Edge, Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc.). Utica Community Schools will send an email and text to families when the report cards are posted.

# WINNING TEAM

## District Wide Grading Scale

(Required for marking period and semester posted grades)

Letter Grade	Percentage	College Prep Course GPA	National Reported Course Exams (i.e., AP or IB)
A	94-100	4.00	4.50
A-	90-93	3.67	4.17
B+	87-89	3.33	3.84
B	83-86	3.00	3.50
B-	80-82	2.67	3.17
C+	77-79	2.33	2.83
C	73-76	2.00	2.50
C-	70-72	1.67	2.17
D+	67-69	1.33	1.83
D	63-66	1.00	1.50
D-	60-62	0.67	1.17
F	*50	0.00	0.00

# WINNING TEAM

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parents/guardians are invited to meet with teachers to discuss student progress during scheduled conference days in the fall and spring. At conference time, teachers will usually present information on a student's classroom activity, homework record, and test results. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to email, call a teacher at school or schedule a conference if special issues need to be discussed. Email correspondence between parent and teacher can be arranged by completing an Acceptable Use of Technology Parent Request for Academic Progress via Electronic Message form available at school.

## **Xello**

Xello is an interactive online college and career readiness resource available to students, enabling them to survey their own career strengths and interests and gain information about career fields and postsecondary education. Xello is introduced to parents and students in junior high schools.

## **Questions or Concerns – Who to Contact**

### **Your Child's Teacher**

- Classroom curriculum, materials, instruction, and/or assessment questions
- Questions regarding your student's progress
- Information that may impact your child's learning

### **Your Child's Principal**

- Program and classroom concerns, following conversation with teacher
- Discipline concerns
- Building management questions
- School and classroom curriculum, materials, instruction, and/or assessment questions

### **School District – Executive Administrator of Schools**

- If questions/concerns have not been addressed after speaking with the building principal, please contact the Executive Administrator of Schools Office at (586) 797-1114
- Parents and eligible students who have questions or concerns regarding pupil rights may contact the Executive Administrator of Schools Office at (586) 797-1116.

# WINNING TEAM

## **Parental Involvement in Education**

The involvement of parents/guardians and community members is an essential component to nurture students and ensure their success. Utica Community Schools will make every effort to invite and consider parent/guardian and community input to ensure the success of our students. Parent involvement in Title I schools will be governed by the Rules & Regulations associated with Utica Community Schools Board of Education Policy 5510 – Title I Parent Involvement.

Utica Community Schools shall maintain web access to the following:

- Annual Report information
- District events calendar
- Individual school websites
- Parent/Student Handbook

Utica Community Schools shall also provide to parents online or print versions of the following:

- UCS newsletter, Focus for the Community
- School newsletters
- Parent/Student Handbook

Utica Community Schools provides information for parents/guardians regarding school activities and district updates on community access cable television.

Utica Community Schools shall coordinate and integrate opportunities for parent/guardian involvement with:

- Academic support programs
- Academic competitions

Parents/guardians can be involved in school activities by volunteering at the school, helping their children with homework, attending open houses and attending parent/guardian and teacher conferences and joining a school parent/guardian or booster organization

Utica Community Schools will do the following to build the capacity for strong parent/guardian involvement in our schools:

- Help parents/guardians understand the state's academic content standards, academic achievement standards, state and local assessments and the requirements of Title I, Part A.
- Make available opportunities for parents/guardians to monitor their children's progress and work with educators.

# WINNING TEAM

## **Parental Involvement in Education(Continued)**

- Make available materials and resources for parents/guardians to help them work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement.
- Educate administrators and staff members on how to reach out to and communicate and work with parents/guardians as equal partners.
- Coordinate parent/guardian involvement activities with state and federally funded programs available to students.
- Ensure that information related to school and parent/guardian programs is sent to parents/guardians in an understandable and uniform format, including an alternative format upon request.

## **Federal Title I Funds: Parent/Guardian Involvement**

Specific schools within the district receive federal Title I funding. In accordance with law, the Board of Education has adopted a parent involvement policy. The district is committed to establishing and maintaining positive relationships with families and the community. To that end, the district will provide a variety of opportunities for families and other members of the community to become involved in children's education.

Parents/guardians may request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers in writing submitted to the Executive Director of Human Resources. The request may include:

- Whether the teacher has met Michigan qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- The teacher's baccalaureate degree(s), major, any other graduate certification or degree(s) held, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and
- Whether the student is provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, the paraprofessional's qualifications.

# WINNING TEAM

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

### **Rights Under FERPA**

The federal law known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 30 days after the day the district receives a request for access. Parents/guardians or eligible students who wish to inspect their education records should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents/guardians or eligible students who wish to ask the district to amend their child's or their education record should submit a written request to the school principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed and specifying why they believe it should be changed. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student at the time they are notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the district discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent is the disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A designated school official with a legitimate educational interest includes a person employed by the district as an administrator, teacher, or other person designated by the Board of Education. A school official also includes a police liaison officer who, while not employed by the district, may be granted access to student educational records (including video footage) at the direction and supervision of a school administrator. A school official also may include a contractor or consultant who, while not employed by the district, performs an institutional service or function (such as design and maintenance of the district's security camera system) for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the district with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from student education records.



# WINNING TEAM

## **FERPA (Continued)**

4. The right to refuse to allow the disclosure of ‘directory information.’  
“Directory information” regarding a student may be released to any requesting person or party, in addition to the eligible student or the student’s parent/guardian, without written consent. The Board of Education has defined “directory information” to include a student’s: name; address; dates of attendance; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors, and awards received; information generally found in yearbooks; students’ names, addresses, and telephone numbers, when requested by military recruiters only.  
Eligible students and parents/guardians may refuse to allow the district to disclose any or all of such directory information upon written notification to the district within thirty days (30) days after receipt of the district’s public notice. Parents/guardians may submit written notification to the principal of their child’s school.
5. Parents/guardians and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:  
Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue SW Washington DC 20202-5280

## **United States Armed Forces**

The district is required to provide United States Armed Forces recruiters with at least the same access to student directory information as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students as is permitted and/or required by law. “Armed Forces of the United States” means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and United States Coast Guard. An eligible student or the parent/guardian may submit a signed, written direction to the district that the student’s directory information not be accessible to United States Armed Forces recruiters. In such case, the information will not be disclosed.

## **Other Agencies and Institutions**

As permitted by FERPA, the district may forward education records, including disciplinary records, without student or parental consent, to other agencies or institutions in which the student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student’s enrollment or transfer and upon receipt of a request for a student’s school or education records.

# WINNING TEAM

## **Compliance**

The district will comply with legitimate requests for access to education records within a reasonable period of time, but not more than thirty (30) days after receiving the request or within a shorter period as may be applicable by law for students with disabilities. The requesting party may be charged a processing fee for the information.

## **Age of Majority**

After informing the principal or designee in writing, high school students who are 18 years of age may have all personal school correspondence mailed directly to them and may access their school records and sign excuses for themselves.

Age of majority students are still subject to Board of Education policies and the rules and regulations of their school.

## **Parent Guardian Inspection of Instructional Materials**

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the district's educational curriculum. Parents/guardians will be provided access to instructional materials within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the principal. The term "instructional material" means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, including printed and representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the internet). The term does not include academic tests or assessments.

## **Student Privacy and Parent/Guardian Access to Information**

Under the federal Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, no student will be required as a part of the school program or district's curriculum, without prior parent/guardian consent, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family
- Sexual behavior or attitudes

# WINNING TEAM

## **Student Privacy and Parent/Guardian Access to Information (Continued)**

- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purposes ("marketing surveys"), and certain physical examinations and screenings.

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will be given access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the principal.

## **Health Education Exclusion Disclosure**

According to Public Act 226 of 1977, parents/legal guardians have the right to review materials to be used in courses in which reproductive health is taught. They have the right to excuse, without penalty, their son/daughter from participation in a class or course of instruction in reproductive health and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). AIDS instruction is included in Health Education classes.

# School Safety

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## **School Safety and Security**

Utica Community Schools is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment at all school and program sites throughout the district. UCS has comprehensive safety and security plans in place for the well-being of students, staff, and visitors. These plans include teaching and practicing with students and staff the appropriate steps to take should an emergency situation occur. Each school conducts drills to practice responding to fire, weather, medical, and other safety emergencies following standard response protocols. Locked doors, cameras, and our law enforcement partners are included in the comprehensive plan.

## **Visitors**

Visitors who have legitimate business at UCS school and program sites are always welcome. All visitors, including parents/guardians, must identify themselves and provide identification to office personnel before being buzzed into the building and proceeding to the office to sign in.

Individuals granted permission to go beyond the main office will be issued a visitor's badge that must remain visible at all times. All visitors are subject to Board of Education policies and must leave promptly when their business is completed.

## **Background Check for Volunteers**

To protect students' health, safety and welfare, every volunteer must have an approved Volunteer Request form on file well in advance of volunteering at school or school-related events. UCS conducts criminal background checks on volunteers through the Michigan State Police. All volunteers are required to sign in and out at the school office and obtain a badge every time they enter the building.

# SCHOOL SAFETY

## MULTI-LAYERED APPROACH TO SAFETY & SUCCESS

At Utica Community Schools,  
everyone has a role to play  
in the safety and success of  
our students.

### STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOLS:

A uniform response that is clear for  
any crisis.

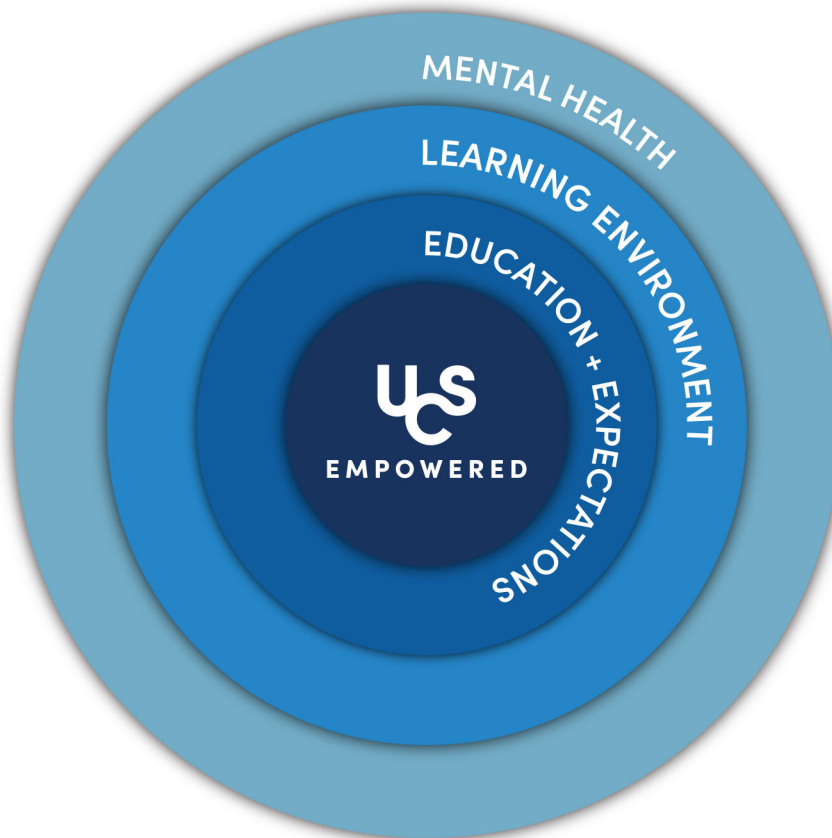
**Hold!** in the room or area and  
clear the halls.

**Secure!** Get inside. Lock outside  
doors.

**Lockdown!** Locks, lights, out of  
sight.

**Evacuate!** (A location may be  
specified)

**Shelter!** Hazard and safety  
strategy.



# SCHOOL SAFETY

## EDUCATION + EXPECTATIONS

- **Training** – Staff have been trained in protocols related to incidents, threat assessments, CPR and medical response, and Automatic Defibrillator use.
- **Emergency Operations Plan** – Each school maintains an Emergency Operations Plan that identifies protocols and responses to a wide variety of school related safety issues.
- **Director of Safety and Management Services** – This role supports implementation of safety protocols and practices throughout the district.

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- **Secure Entryways** – All visitors must show photo I.D. and be buzzed into the facility. All visitors should enter through the main office area.
- **Swipe Door System** – All exterior doors are locked. Access to enter buildings is restricted to authorized personnel through computer swipe badges.
- **Door Locking System** – Door hardware is scheduled to be replaced to improve locking system and Night Locks have been installed.
- **Security Cameras** – Cameras can be accessed by law enforcement in emergency situations.
- **School Resource Officer** – Law enforcement officer assigned to each comprehensive high school.
- **School Security Specialist** – Former law enforcement officers hired by the district are assigned to each junior high school and all “open concept” elementary schools.
- **Law Enforcement** – Our local law enforcement agencies work directly with the entire district to identify and implement best practices for a safe learning environment.
- **Common Language** – The Standard Response Protocols (SRP) have been adopted to ensure everyone in the school understands what to do if a situation occurs.

## MENTAL HEALTH

- **UCS Wellness** – Resources to provide guidance and awareness of mental health services.
- **Communication** – The district is working with school counselors on understanding common safety communication and language.
- **SMART Moves & DARE** – Education provided by law enforcement partners to promote positive decision making.
- **Training** – Staff members are trained in Trauma-Informed and Resilient Schools through Starr Commonwealth.
- **Care Solace** – Confidentially finds available mental health providers and substance-use treatment centers matched to the individual needs of students, families, and staff.
- **OK2SAY** – A student safety program which allows students to confidentially report tips on potential harmful or criminal activities directed at students or the school.
- **Character Strong** – A research-based K-12th grade wellness curricula and professional learning service that positively impacts lives.
- **MI-BEST (Macomb Intermediate Behavioral & Emotional Support Team)** – Counseling services provided to UCS students through a referral system.

# SCHOOL SAFETY

## **Weapons on School Property, in School Settings, in School Vehicles or at School-Sponsored Events**

UCS prohibits any person from possessing, storing, making or using a weapon in any setting that is under the control and supervision of UCS including, but not limited to, property leased, owned or contracted for by UCS, a school-sponsored event or in a UCS-owned vehicle.

This prohibition applies regardless of whether the person is otherwise authorized by law to possess the weapon in non-school settings, including if the person holds a concealed weapons permit. The following are exceptions to this policy:

- Weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel. Items approved by a principal as part of a class or individual project or presentation under adult supervision, if used for the purpose of and in the manner approved (working firearms and ammunition shall never be approved), theatrical props used in appropriate settings starter pistols used in appropriate sporting events.
- Instruments or equipment as required by District operations, including school or District security.
- Persons who knowingly violate this policy may be referred to law enforcement. Additional information is contained in Policy 6120 and can be found on the UCS website.



# SCHOOL SAFETY

## **Junior High and High School Student ID Badges**

Ensuring safety and security for all students and staff is a priority each day. In addition to enhancing security, the wearing of ID badges by students and staff provides a professional setting and promotes College and Career Readiness for all students.

Wearing of IDs is required as part of many workplace environments, as well as on many college and university campuses. One student ID and lanyard will be provided to every student at no cost.

The benefits and reasons for students wearing a current student ID card are:

- To be in class
- To borrow library books and textbooks
- To obtain early dismissal
- To allow movement during school, going to and from restrooms, etc.
- To be on campus before or after school
- To participate in school activities, assemblies, dances, etc. at school.

## **Student ID Guidelines**

A student's ID card authorizes him/her to be on the school campus. EVERY student must wear his or her student ID card while on school grounds. It is crucial that the school staff is able to identify everyone on campus. Identification of staff and students is a safety issue and will not be compromised.

Student IDs may be left in the student's assigned locker overnight to ensure the student ID is not left at home. The following guidelines must be adhered to when wearing student ID cards:

- Student ID cards must be worn and visible at all times (i.e., not kept in a purse, pocket or backpack).
- The student ID card must be presented to any school staff member or person of authority upon request.
- The front and back of the student ID card cannot be altered (i.e., no markings, other photos, etc.). Defacing or altering the student ID is prohibited.
- Wearing another student's ID card is prohibited.
- Lost, stolen, altered, damaged and/or defaced student ID cards must be replaced immediately.



# SCHOOL SAFETY

## **Student ID Guidelines (Continued)**

Students who fail to adhere to the above guidelines are subject to a lunch detention (or after school detention) and a replacement fee of \$5.00 to replace a lost ID badge. Students can purchase a new lanyard from the school or purchase one on their own. Tear away lanyards are recommended. Students who are insubordinate or persistently disobedient are subject to further school consequences.

## **Bad Weather Procedures and Emergency School Closings**

In the event of severe inclement weather and/or loss of electrical power, heat or water or other emergency, Utica Community Schools may: close the school(s) for the entire day; open the school(s), but without bus transportation; delay bus transportation and start time(s) or dismiss students early.

Parents will be notified of emergency school closings by an automated telephone calling and/or email system. Depending on conditions, the calls/emails may go out the night before or the early morning of a closing.

If students must be dismissed early, efforts will be made to contact a parent/guardian or your emergency designee. Please make sure your child knows your family's plan for emergency dismissal.

Emergency closings will also be broadcast on radio stations WJR-760 AM, WWJ-950 AM on TV stations WJBK-2, WDIV-4 and WXYZ-7 and on the district's website [www.uticak12.org](http://www.uticak12.org) and UCS-TV cable channels 15 and 22.

## **Automated Phone Messaging**

In the event of emergency school closings, parents/guardians will be notified by an automated telephone message using the contact numbers listed on their student's emergency information in PowerSchool. Parents/guardians are asked to immediately notify the school of any changes to their emergency contact information. The automated system may also be used for other types of notifications.

# Student Health and Wellness

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Utica Community Schools is committed to educating the whole child. Student Health and Wellness services help students develop skills that support healthy habits and lifeline learning.

## UCS Wellness Resources

You can find a host of information and resources on wellness on our website under the About Us tab. The site includes Monday Moments (tips on a positive start to your week), a podcademy series sponsored by UCS counselors, and community resources.

The district also partners with Care Solace and MIBEST to provide mental health services.

## Promoting Good Health

The best way to prevent illness is to encourage healthy habits such as:

- **Hand Washing** – dirty hands are a primary cause of infection. Children should always wash their hands before eating and after using the bathroom or wiping their nose. Make sure your child thoroughly washes all surfaces of his or her hands vigorously with soap and water, rinses them well and dries them with a paper towel.
- **Good Nutrition** – eating nutritious food, especially at breakfast, helps children concentrate.
- **Rest and Sleep** – most children need at least eight hours of sleep each night.
- **Exercise** – physical fitness is important to good health. Children can get their exercise through outdoor play, organized sports or family activities.
- **Good Hygiene** – children are more comfortable and have a better attitude about themselves and their schoolwork when they are clean and neatly groomed. Check your child's appearance before he/she walks out the door.



# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## **Medication**

All student medication should be administered under the supervision of a parent/guardian at home. As reasonably necessary, the district will administer and supervise the administration of prescription (only FDA approved) and non-prescription (only FDA approved) medications at school in compliance with Policy 5325 – Administration of Medication and the associated Rules and Regulations.

Parents/guardians must file an Authorization for Medication form with the school office in order for students to receive prescription (only FDA approved) and non-prescription (only FDA approved) medications at school and during school related student travel and field trips.

Utica Community Schools maintains at least two functioning epinephrine auto-injectors at each school building it operates.

## **Immunization Requirements**

At enrollment, state law requires parents to provide the school with detailed immunization records providing the month, day and year your child was vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), chicken pox (varicella), polio, hepatitis B, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus (DTaP, DT, Td or Tdap). Waivers are available through the Macomb County Health Department.

Parents of children who are in kindergarten, seventh grade or new to the district will also be asked to sign a release to allow or decline sharing immunization information with the Macomb County Health Department. In addition, all students entering seventh grade, regardless of when they entered the district, are required to meet the current immunization requirement for measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus; chicken pox (varicella), polio, hepatitis B and meningococcal conjugate vaccines and provide a written record of having received these immunizations.

Immunization records or a waiver are required prior to the first day of school. Students who do not comply with the immunization law or who fail to file a waiver will be excluded from school. For more information, call the Macomb County Health Department School Immunization Clinic at 586-466-6840.

## **Hearing and Vision Screening**

Hearing and vision screenings are required for kindergarten entrance. These screenings can be done by the child's doctor or the Macomb County Health Department.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## **Vision Screening**

The Macomb County Health Department will provide vision screening to students in kindergarten, first, third, fifth, seventh and ninth grades or upon other referral.

## **Dental Screening**

The Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services requires kindergarten students to have a dental assessment prior to starting kindergarten for the 24-25 school year. Enforcement of the kindergarten screenings will begin in the 25-26 school year, as the program is expanded to all health departments across the State of Michigan”

## **Recuperating at Home**

When is your child too sick to attend school? The following guidelines, along with the advice of your family doctor, will help you decide when your child should stay home:

- Cold and/or cough – a child with deep mucus that causes a cough and heavy nose drainage cannot function at school.
- Fever – fever is a warning that something is wrong. A child should remain at home for 24 hours after the fever is gone without the use of medication.
- Rash – a rash, spots or blotches on the skin can be the first sign of many illnesses. Rashes require a physician’s release stating they are not contagious.
- Stomachache/Upset – a child who is vomiting or has diarrhea should be kept at home and may return 24 hours after the symptoms are gone.
- Head Lice – a child with head lice must remain at home until treatment is complete and school officials confirm he or she is free of lice. Check your child’s head before school begins in the fall and routinely during the school year or if he or she complains of an itchy scalp. Look around your child’s ears and back of the neck for nits, which are tiny, white, oval-shaped lice eggs that are attached to the hair near the scalp. Nits may look like dandruff or scalp flakes, but nits do not move and are difficult to dislodge. Notify the school office immediately if your child has head lice. Begin treatment immediately by contacting your doctor or purchasing over-the-counter medication from the drug store. To prevent spreading head lice, wash all infested garments, hair accessories, bedding and other surfaces with hot water and disinfectant. You must sign your child in at the office when he or she is returning to school after treatment for head lice.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## **Accident Care**

Any student injured during school hours or while participating in school-sponsored activities or athletics, must report the injury to an instructor and/or the office immediately. An accident report will be completed, and parents/guardians are notified when necessary.

If the injury requires professional medical attention, parents/guardians will be asked to pick up their child at school or at a medical facility. If a student requires emergency medical treatment and the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the school will call 911 to transport the child to the hospital by ambulance. If a student must be transported by ambulance to a hospital, a school official will accompany him/her until a parent/guardian appears at the hospital. The hospital must have prior parent/guardian approval before treating a minor.

## **Emergency Contact Information**

At the start of every school year, and throughout the year, parents/guardians are asked to complete or update their child's emergency information in PowerSchool. The information provided will enable the school to notify you in the event of your child's sudden illness, injury, or for an emergency school closing. You must provide your home, mobile, and workplace phone numbers. You must also provide the names and phone numbers of adult relatives or friends available during school hours who have agreed to assume temporary care of your child if a parent/guardian cannot be reached. In emergency situations, the parent/guardian is notified first followed by the emergency contact listed if the parent/guardian is unable to be reached.

## **Concussion Awareness**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a fall, bump, blow or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. A fact sheet about the symptoms and what to do if a concussion is suspected appears on the district website <http://www.uticak12.org> under the forms section of the athletics tab. Contact your building principal if further information is needed.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## **Medical Information**

Students requesting accommodations to support a permanent or temporary physical disability, allergy, or illness should contact the principal at the elementary level or counseling department at the secondary level, at the beginning of the school year or at any time support is needed. This information will be provided to teachers and other staff members, as necessary.

## **Safety Glasses**

Safety eyeglasses will be furnished to students and must be worn in classes where required.

## **Student Insurance**

Utica Community Schools provides a free basic accident insurance policy for students that covers them at school and while participating in school-sponsored events.

A student must report any accident to the school office immediately. To collect benefits, a parent or guardian must complete a claim form. Only expenses not covered by family, employer or group insurance will be considered. Accident victims may be required to pay a deductible. The benefit period covers 52 weeks from the date of injury.

## **Drug- and Alcohol-Free Environment/Protection**

The Board of Education recognizes that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the entire school community. In accordance with the federal and state law, the Board of Education establishes a "Drug-Free School Zone" that extends 1000 feet from the boundary of any school property. The Board of Education prohibits the use, possession, concealment, delivery, or distribution of any drug or any drug related paraphernalia, including alcohol and marijuana, at any time on district property, with the Drug-Free School Zone or at any district-related event. Further, the Superintendent of Schools or designee will take the necessary steps to ensure that any individual who knowingly delivers or distributes controlled substances so designated and prohibited by Michigan statute within the Drug-Free School Zone to another person is prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Use of tobacco by students or adults is not allowed in school buildings, on school property or on school buses at any time (24 hours a day, 7 days a week), per MCL 750.473 and Policies 4240, 5100 and 5125.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## **Notice of School Buildings Inspected for Asbestos**

Each school building within Utica Community Schools has been inspected for the presence of asbestos-containing materials as required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). A copy of the Building Inspection and Management Plan for each building is available in the building's main office. The plans may be inspected by members of the public and by UCS employees during normal business hours.

## **Advance Notification of Pesticide Application**

Utica Community Schools provides advance notice to parents in the event a pesticide is being applied for the purpose of preventing or managing weeds or common indoor or outdoor pests, such as ants.

The notice will include the area being treated, date of application, purpose and contact information. The notice will be placed on the entrance of the school being treated and the front page of the building's website. Parents can also contact their school at any time to review historical information regarding the school's pest management program and records.

## **Food and Nutrition Services**

### **Health and Wellness**

UCS is committed to providing a healthy school environment that promotes students' health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Our child nutrition program complies with federal, state and local requirements and food safety standards. Please check the website for more details at <https://www.uticak12.org/foodandnutrition>.

Find us on Facebook  
and Instagram

/eatatucs



# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## **Menus**

Menus, allergen, and nutrition information are posted at <https://uticak12.nutrislice.com/> and available on the Utica Community Schools and Nutrislice app.

## **Breakfast**

A nutritious and delicious breakfast is available at all district schools. Service times and other breakfast information are available at <https://www.uticak12.org/foodandnutrition..> Please refer to your school for breakfast times.

## **Lunch**

A nutritious and delicious lunch is available in the school cafeteria. All students are eligible for a complete lunch, or they may bring lunch and purchase milk.

Elementary meals must be ordered that morning with your student's teacher. Junior high and high school students order and purchase their lunch when they arrive in the cafeteria.

All UCS schools operate a closed campus during the school day. Elementary students combine lunch and recess. Junior high and high school students must remain in the building during the lunch period.

## **Meal Applications and Education Benefit Forms**

We are pleased to announce that the State of Michigan will cover the cost of all meals for the 2024-2025 school year through the Michigan School Meals. So that our schools may qualify for additional educational and federal funding, we are encouraging parents to fill out the Educational Benefit Form. This form covers other programs and discounts, such as pay-to-play sports, low-cost internet, low-cost AP exams and college application fees and more. If you do not fill out this form, you may not qualify for any additional benefits. For confidential and timely access to benefits, families may apply for the program online at <https://utica.familyportal.cloud> or complete a paper form available at the school office. The paper forms may take about two weeks to process.



# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

All meals consist of five components: grain, meat/meat alternate, fruit, vegetable and milk. Students must take a minimum of three items, with one being at least ½ cup of fruit or vegetable, for the meal to qualify under the free provision. Items such as cookies, chips, second entrees, just a milk or bottled beverages do not qualify under these free and reduced-price meals. All a-la-carte items, bottled beverages, snacks and second meals must be paid for by the student.

## **Meal Payments**

Because all meals are free of charge this school year, no items or meals may be charged to the student's account. Students must pay for all a la carte purchases, extra meals and additional beverages not covered in the meal program. Check the website for more details at <http://www.Uticak12.org/foodandnutrition>.

## **Food Allergies**

Student safety is a priority for Utica Community Schools. If your student has any food allergies, please have your physician fill out the Michigan Department of Education Dietary Needs form and return it to the school office or food service office. We are happy to work with parents/guardians and students to help accommodate needs. We cannot accommodate your request without this form being filled out properly. For questions about food allergies and menu selections please call the UCS Food and Nutritional Services Office at 586-797-1180.

## **Lunchroom Expectations**

- Use good table manners and show respect for others.
- Cooperate with cafeteria staff and lunchroom supervisors.
- Leave the table and floor in a clean condition for other students.
- Deposit all trash and recyclable items in proper containers.
- Return all trays and utensils to the designated area.
- Do not bring glass containers into the building.
- Elementary students are to remain seated until dismissed by the lunchroom supervisors.

Note: All applicable rules for appropriate school behavior listed elsewhere in this handbook are in effect in the cafeteria.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## **Elementary Recess Guidelines**

Fresh air and exercise are proven to enhance a child's physical and educational growth. Recess is an important part of the Utica Community Schools elementary program and is supervised by authorized school personnel. A doctor's note is required to excuse a student from recess for more than two days.

Your child should come to school appropriately dressed for outdoor play, even in the winter months. During inclement or bitterly cold weather, recess will be held indoors.

## **Lost and Found**

Students should report lost items to the office. Any items found should be reported or brought to the office as soon as possible so the owner can claim them. Items not claimed at the end of the year are donated to charity or discarded if necessary.

# Technology

Utica Community Schools encourages and strongly promotes the use of technology in educational settings. To ensure students, staff and parents can take full advantage of the technologies available, all use of technology in the school district must have proper authorization and adhere to district policy.

All use of technology must be in support of and consistent with the purposes and stated goals of the school district. Misuse of technology will result in disciplinary action, up to and including loss of computer privileges, suspension or expulsion.

## **Technology Guidelines:**

- Students shall not use technology unless authorized by appropriate school personnel.
- Only software legally owned by the district and authorized by a UCS administrator may be put on district computers.
- Illegal/inappropriate activities of any kind are forbidden.
- Students shall not use district technology for online purchasing or any other non-UCS education/personal purposes.
- Nothing will be placed on a building web page without prior approval of the building principal or district administrator. Web pages representing Utica Community Schools will only be placed on district-authorized web servers.
- Establishment of web pages and/or distance learning activities must have an educational/management purpose related to an assignment, project, job or function that meets UCS goals.

## **Technology Users Will:**

- Comply with district policies, rules and regulations.
- Notify the appropriate Utica Community Schools staff member immediately of a webpage that contains questionable content.
- Use networks and technology in support of education, consistent with the goals of the district.
- Keep all passwords confidential.
- Obey all copyright laws.
- Report any malfunction of equipment immediately to a UCS staff member.
- Report any misuse of networks and technology to the building administrator or teacher.
- Use equipment responsibly and respect individual work, files and programs.
- Return any borrowed equipment when requested by an authorized UCS staff member.

# TECHNOLOGY

## **Technology Users Will Not:**

- Tamper with computer or network components in a way that will make them either temporarily or permanently inoperable.
- Access the district network through unauthorized technology.
- Access or modify other accounts, data, files and/or passwords without authorization.
- Use district technology for commercial or for-profit purposes.
- Use district technology to obtain illegal copies of software, printed materials or other materials of which they do not have ownership.
- Use district networks and/or technology to download and/or store games, videos, music or pictures that are not part of an educational/district project.
- Use district technology to send, receive, print or display messages that are inflammatory, harassing in nature, sexist, racist or otherwise inappropriate. When using district technology, appropriate and polite language and behavior is required.
- Use UCS technology to distribute material that: violates the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; jeopardizes the health and safety of students; is pornographic, obscene or libelous; causes disruption of school activities; plagiarizes the work of others; is a commercial advertisement; contains political lobbying or is not approved by the building administrator or web manager.

## **Non-School Issued Electronic Communications Devices**

The personal use of non-school issued cell phones or other electronic communications devices (ECDs) by students is prohibited at any time while in school or in a district vehicle. Students may carry ECDs during the school day, but they cannot be displayed or used without permission from a teacher or administrator for educational purposes at the junior high school and high school level. Elementary students may bring device to school but the devices must remain in their backpacks or locker area.

Personal use of the device shall be limited to the time before and after the school day and only when students are outside the building. ECDs shall not be used during instructional time, lunch, passing time between classes or on any school bus without permission of a school official.

The use of an ECD's picture-taking or internet connection capability is not permitted without permission of a teacher or administrator. Utica Community Schools will not be responsible for the theft, loss or damage of any ECD.

# TECHNOLOGY

## **Non-School Issued Electronic Communications Devices (Continued)**

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against students who violate the policy regulating ECDs.

## **Electronic Device use Protocol for Statewide Testing**

Students are required to only use district-provided electronic devices during testing sessions. Students are not permitted to access personal, non-testing electronic devices when in an active testing session or while on break.

## **Electronic Device Examples**

Examples of electronic devices include, but are not limited to:

- Any electronic device that can be used to record, transmit, or receive information, not used for testing computer tablets, iPads, e-readers (for example: Kindle)
- Smart watches (for example: Fitbits; Apple, Garmin, Samsung watches; any watch with access to other applications or the internet) smart phones and cell phones
- Bluetooth headphones, smart earbuds (for example: Beats, iPods), or any headphone with access to other applications or the internet)
- Smart glasses (for example: Google Glass)
- Desktop computers, laptops, not used for testing

## **Protocols for Students**

All personal student devices are to be left at home or will be kept in a secure location as determined by the building administrator for all state assessments.

Students are not permitted to use, wear, or access any personal, non-testing electronic device during testing or while on a break when any active testing session is in progress. These electronic devices include but are not limited to smartphones, cell phones, smartwatches, Bluetooth headphones, headphones that allow access to voice assistant technology, and computers and/or tablets not being actively used for testing purposes. If any personal electronic device is brought into the testing environment, the staff member will collect, power down the device, label it with the student's name and place it in a secure location.

If an electronic device is medically necessary for a testing student, the device must be left with the test administrator, or the test must be administered to the student in a one test administrator-to-one student setting, and the student must be actively monitored at all times while testing.

# TECHNOLOGY

## **Protocols for Students (Continued)**

Additionally:

- Students are not allowed to access the device used for testing for any other purpose than to complete the test during the test session.
- A student may not access any additional websites or applications during testing, or for any other purpose after testing, while in the testing room
- Staff is to ensure that all testing devices are configured properly and that all background applications are disabled before testing begins.
- No pictures or videos may be taken during testing.

Students bringing additional electronic devices into the testing room or accessing these devices during testing will have their test invalidated.

## **Student Consequences for Violating the Protocols**

If a student has access to a non-test electronic device and/or “wearable” technology at any point during a test session even if the student has exited or submitted their test, that student’s test has been compromised and will be invalidated due to prohibited behavior, even if the student did not use the electronic device. The student is to be removed from the testing environment and the parent or guardian will be informed of the incident. In addition to violating this policy, students will be subject to school discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion for violating the District Acceptable Use of Technology Policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Device Insurance**

Utica Community Schools is proud to deliver 1:1 technology to our students. Depending upon the grade level, your child has been issued either an iPad or a Dell laptop including charging cords and any applicable accessories. Your child is responsible for the device at all times.

In the event of damage to an iPad or laptop, district policies and practices require a charge be assessed to cover the repair or replacement cost of the device.

An annual insurance plan has been designed to help families if there is an accident that causes damage to the school issued device. The insurance is offered to all families at the beginning of the school year. For information on coverage and fees, please visit this site: <http://uticak12.org/device>.

# Traveling To and From School

## **Walking to School**

Students walking to and from school should follow such common pedestrian safety rules as:

- Walking on sidewalks wherever possible
- Crossing streets at corners, except where otherwise designated
- Obeying crossing guards (Crossing guards are the responsibility of our local municipality and are positioned at certain major intersections.)

## **Riding Bicycles to School**

Students riding a bicycle to and from school should follow common pedestrian and traffic safety rules and local laws. Each school establishes and communicates bicycle riding procedures and the location of bicycle storage while on campus during the school day. UCS prohibits mopeds, motorized scooters and skateboards on school property.

## **Transportation by Family Vehicle**

Drivers are expected to follow the student drop-off and pick-up traffic pattern established by each school including following the directions of school personnel. Parents/guardians who drive their children to school must keep bus and fire lanes free by parking or standing only in designated areas.

## **Student Drivers**

High school students eligible to drive and park on campus must register their vehicle and obtain a parking permit from their school. Student drivers are expected to follow established traffic patterns and park in designated areas on campus.

Parking is a privilege, not a right, based on good behavior and good attendance. Students must apply at the associate principal's office for permission to drive a vehicle to school. Students driving to school must register their vehicle with the office and receive a parking pass which must be displayed on the windshield. Students must park in their assigned parking space.

All vehicles on school property are subject to search with or without cause. Students may not use their vehicles during the school day for any reason.

Students who are in a shared-time program (taking a class at another UCS high school) are provided bus transportation to the second school. Students are not allowed to drive to shared-time classes, UCSI or UCMST.

Drivers of unauthorized vehicles and those who do not comply with these rules will be subject to disciplinary action.



# BUS TRANSPORTATION



## **UCS Bus Transportation**

UCS Board of Education policy and Michigan State Board of Education guidelines are used to determine student eligibility for bus transportation, based on the distance from home to school. Safety conditions for walkers are also taken into consideration. Your school office will know if your street is on a district busing route. Routes may be altered during the school year to accommodate enrollment changes.

Bus transportation is a privilege. Students may lose the privilege of riding the school bus for misconduct on a bus or at a bus stop.

## **Bus Notes**

- Students are dropped off and picked up in designated bus lanes near the school entrance.
- Students should be at their assigned bus stop approximately ten minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive, wait in an orderly manner and be alert to traffic when entering or leaving the bus.
- For the first two weeks of school, kindergarten and first grade students riding the bus should wear a tag indicating their name, address and bus number.



# BUS TRANSPORTATION

## **Bus Notes (Continued)**

- Student conduct while riding to and from school should be an extension of good classroom behavior. Whether at the bus stop or on the bus traveling to and from school or on an off-site field trip, students are expected to behave appropriately.

## **Bus Guidelines**

- Obey the bus driver, show respect to the bus driver and fellow passengers.
- Remain seated at all times and keep all parts of your body inside the seating area.
- Eating, drinking and gum chewing are not allowed.
- Hold all carry-on items, such as backpacks, musical instruments, etc. in your lap.
- Board and exit the bus in an orderly manner at your assigned bus stop.
- Name calling, vulgarity, profanity, abusive or derogatory comments or gestures, bullying, harassment, hate speech or threats of violence are prohibited.
- Use of electronic communication devices (such as cell phones or cameras) are not permitted.
- There are no preferential seat assignments, however, the bus driver or administrator may assign seats.
- Only students eligible for transportation may ride home with another student. The students must have a permission note from both sets of parents/guardians and signed by the principal. Seating space is reserved for assigned riders.

Call the UCS Transportation Department at 586-797-7100 with busing

# Attendance and Student Success

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UCS has created a series of services and policies that support student learning. Good attendance and participation are essential to taking advantage of the opportunities offered students in UCS.

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance, being on time, and active participation in class contribute to student success. Families are encouraged to make attending school a priority by promoting good health, planning medical and dental appointments outside of scheduled class time, and taking vacations on days when school is not in session.

## **Report an Absence**

When a student is going to be absent, parents/guardians should report the absence before the school day begins. Calls to the attendance line can be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week and will be received by an answering machine during non-school hours.

The following reasons for an absence will be accepted as an excused absence: student illness, hospitalization, doctor ordered bed rest, mandatory court appearance that has been pre-arranged, death in the immediate family, family vacation that has been pre-arranged and approved, medical appointments and administrative permission. All other absences will be marked unexcused. Documentation or other verification may be required to establish an excused absence.

Parents/Guardians will be notified of unexcused absences either by a staff member or automated phone system. If the absence is due to one of the reasons in the excused list, the parent/ guardian has until the end of the next school day to correct an absence. Be aware that a secondary student with an unexcused absence may lose participation points or be given a zero on the day's assignment.

## **Illness During the School Day**

A student who becomes ill during the regular school day must report to the school office. The school will use the student's emergency information in PowerSchool to attempt to notify you if he or she becomes ill during the day; therefore, it is vital that parents/guardians keep the emergency information updated in PowerSchool.

# ATTENDANCE

## **Early Dismissal**

A student must remain in school until the end of the school day or permission for an early dismissal has been gained from the school office. If it becomes necessary for a student to leave the building during the school day, please conform to the following:

- Notify the office by phone or note beforehand of the reason for and time of dismissal.
- At the designated time, the parent/guardian or other person designated on the student's emergency contact designee must come into the office to sign the student out of school.
- All adults must be prepared to show photo ID.
- The student will be called out of class when the parent or emergency contact designee arrives.

Please avoid scheduling appointments during standardized testing assessments, such as M-STEP testing, unless necessary. Parents will be notified before testing windows.

## **Pre-Arranged Absences**

Absence for family travel during scheduled school days is discouraged. However, should family travel be necessary, parents/guardians must submit a written request to the principal for a pre-excused absence at least one week in advance. Family travel requests of more than ten days in a semester will not be approved for excusal.

For approved pre-arranged absences, students and/or their parents/guardians should discuss with the classroom teacher(s) the missed work expectation. At the secondary level, work may be due immediately upon return from vacation or family travel.

## **Absence and Missed Work**

When absent from a class, a student should arrange make-up work. Except for pre-arranged absences where work may be due upon return, students will be given at least the same amount of time to complete the work missed as the amount they are absent.

# ATTENDANCE

## **Absence and Missed Work (Continued)**

Homework requests may be made for an absence of two or more days in the case of both excused and pre-excused absences. Homework requests require 24 hours to process. Arrangements to complete classroom assignments can be made with the teacher.

If a student will be absent for ten or more consecutive days due to a physical disability or illness, parents/guardians can arrange for home study through the school principal.

## **Notify School of Changes in Contact Information**

To facilitate communication between school and home involving attendance, please make sure your contact information is up to date in PowerSchool.

## **ELEMENTARY**

### **Daily Arrival**

General supervision begins 10 minutes before the start of school. Students should not come to school before that time unless enrolled in School Age Child Care (SACC). If a student arrives late to school, the parent must accompany the student into the office, and the student must be signed in before he or she can go to class.

### **Daily Dismissal**

Students are expected to be picked up promptly at dismissal time, unless they are involved in a parent-authorized, supervised activity or enrolled in School Age Child Care (SACC).

**Suspensions** – If a student has been suspended from school, that student will be expected to make up missed work and tests, without a reduction in the grade/score earned.

### **Attendance Concerns**

When a teacher and/or the school office recognizes that an attendance / tardiness problem is developing, a personal contact by the teacher (or other appropriate personnel) may be made to the parent/guardian.

After the 10th absence, the parent will receive written communication from the principal.

# ATTENDANCE

## **Attendance Concerns (Continued)**

After the 15th absence, there will be a parent/principal conference. In addition, the parent will receive written communication from the principal.

After the 20th absence, the parent will receive written communication from the principal. School personnel may initiate a truancy referral to Macomb ISD.

Additional interventions may be utilized to address chronic absenteeism. In the event that a child is absent due to chronic health problems or hospitalization as verified by a physician's note, the principal will handle each situation on a case by case basis.

## **JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

### **Help Your Student Avoid Excessive Absences**

"Excessive absences" is defined as more than 10 in a semester. Please be aware that excessive absences can negatively impact learning and possibly lead to a truancy referral. Establishing good attendance habits in 7th and 8th grade will help students academically as they start high school classes in 9th grade.

### **Excessive Absences**

The school will notify the parent/guardian about excessive absences in the following ways:

- Absences are recorded daily by the teacher and/or attendance secretary at each school. When an absence is not excused, an automated phone call will be made to the primary contact number as listed in PowerSchool. A parent/guardian is responsible for notifying the school office if this phone number or any other contact information changes. A parent/guardian will have until the end of the next school day to correct any errors in attendance.
- Students and parents are responsible to track and review student attendance in PowerSchool on a regular basis to monitor student attendance.
- When a student has accumulated between seven and 10 absences\* in any one class per semester, the student's assistant principal will meet with the student. The assistant principal may use this opportunity to warn the student about any class that has five absences or more. A letter signed by the student and assistant principal will be scanned and emailed home (sent United States mail if no email address on file).

# ATTENDANCE

## **Excessive Absences (Continued)**

- When a student has accumulated 11 absences\* in any one class over the course of a semester, a letter will be sent via email (or U.S. mail if no email address on file) stating that the student's absences have become excessive, which may result in a referral to a truancy officer.  
\*The following absences will be exempt from this absence total: school approved absences (field trip, student government activity, etc.), death/ funeral of an immediate family member (mother, father, brother or sister), court appearance when documentation is submitted, suspensions, and absences where a parent/guardian has submitted medical documentation supporting the absence within five school days of the absence will not be considered in these totals. Chronic medical conditions can be reflected in a doctor's note indicating the student has an ongoing medical condition that can cause them to be absent from school.
- Between 14 and 16 absences: the assistant principal will call home to discuss the excessive absences.
- Twenty unexcused absences will initiate a referral for truancy.

## **HIGH SCHOOL**

High school attendance rules start in the 9th grade even if 9th grade is in junior high school. Under the guidance of their parents/guardians, 9th to 12th graders take on more responsibility when it comes to attendance. Along with this greater responsibility comes more opportunities for educational activities outside the classroom during the school day. Students are expected to maintain the balance between good class attendance and these education opportunities. They need to be aware of their attendance and the fact that excessive absences can lead to a student being placed on Credit Review.

When taking advantage of opportunities that would cause a student to miss class, the student is responsible for arranging in advance the absence. While students are asked to arrange outside activities outside of school hours, students with approval of their parent/guardian should obtain permission from the office for these out of school activities. For in-school activities, students should obtain permission in advance from the teacher whose class will be missed in advance of the activity and arrange make up work according to the teacher's expectations. Absences from class for approved school-related activities will not count in a student's overall attendance.

# ATTENDANCE

## **High School (Continued)**

Students should monitor their attendance in PowerSchool daily. Students should take steps to correct any errors including notifying their parents/guardians when an absence was not called in to the attendance line.

## **Credit Review Definition**

Credit Review is a process designed to decrease chronic absenteeism in a restorative way. Chronic absenteeism is defined as having more than ten (parent excused, unexcused, or truant) absences per class period each semester. For the purposes of the Credit Review every three tardies will count as one unexcused absence. Students who do not take advantage of the restorative nature of credit review will receive an F in any class for which they lost credit due to excessive absenteeism.

## **Credit Review Notification and Restoration of Credit Process**

- Absences are recorded daily by the teacher and/or attendance secretary at each school. When an absence is not excused, an automated phone call will be made to the primary contact number as listed in PowerSchool. A parent/guardian is responsible for notifying the school office if this phone number or any other contact information changes. A parent/guardian will have until the end of the next school day to correct any errors in attendance.
- Students and parents are responsible to track and review student attendance in PowerSchool on a regular basis to monitor student attendance.
- When a student has accumulated between seven and 10 absences\* in any one class (in the case of GLK-UAIS, in any one block) per semester, the student's assistant/associate principal will meet with the student. The assistant/associate principal may use this opportunity to warn for any class that is at five absences or more (the warning should be added to the letter that will be sent home, there will not be an additional meeting when the student reaches seven to 10 absences in those classes). A letter signed by the student and assistant/associate principal will be scanned and emailed home (mailed in the case of no email address on file).

# ATTENDANCE

## **Credit Review Notification and Restoration of Credit Process (Continued)**

- When a student has accumulated 11 absences\* in any one class over the course of a semester, the student will be notified in a meeting with an assistant/associate principal that they have lost credit in that class and that they are placed on an attendance contract to earn the credit back. There are two parts to a contract. First, the student must pass the class with a D- or higher. Second, the student will show improvement in attendance in ALL classes. Improvement is determined on a sliding scale which allows for 1 absence for every three weeks (rounded up) left in the semester for each class. For the purpose of this contract, absences\* include excused, unexcused, truant, and the three tardy rule (every three tardies equals an absences). At the meeting, the assistant/associate principal may place a student on an attendance contract for any class the student has been previously warned about but has yet to reach eleven absences. The contract will be the same as described above with the addition of the number of absences short of eleven being added to the number determined on the sliding scale. Following the meeting a letter will be sent via email to the parent/guardian (or United States mail should no email be on file) stating the student has lost credit and been placed on an attendance contract to earn the credit back (as well as notifying parent/guardian of any other contracts discussed).
- \*The following absences will be exempt from this absence total: school-approved absences (field trip, student government activity, etc.), death/funeral of an immediate family member (mother, father, brother or sister), court appearance when documentation is submitted, suspensions, and absences where a parent/guardian has submitted medical documentation supporting the absence within five (5) school days of the absence will not be considered in these totals. Chronic medical conditions can be reflected in a doctor's note indicating the student has an ongoing medical condition that can cause them to be absent from school.
- Students who fail to meet the attendance contract will be given a semester grade of an F. If the failure to meet the contract was due to the student failing the class, the credit is lost, and the student may need to make it up in credit recovery. If the student passed the class and the failure was due to excessive absences, the student can request to test out following district test out rules to have the F restored to a grade and thus credit earned. If the subject area does not have a test out option, a score of 77% on the course exam or better will earn the student a grade and credit back. A student who fails to do a test out or fails to meet the 77% requirement will receive an F as the final grade in the permanent record.



# ATTENDANCE

- Students (if 18 or over) and/or their parents/guardians may appeal a loss of credit due to extensive absences by requesting a conference with the assistant/associate principal within ten days of the student being notified of the loss of credit and being placed on an attendance contract. The purpose of the conference is for evidence to be presented that would show the assistant/associate principal that the student did not really exceed the ten-absence limit or that the student/parent/guardian never received fair warning of the pending loss of credit. The assistant/associate will review the evidence and either restore the credit or uphold the loss of credit. The assistant/associate principal's decision is final and there is no further appeal.

## **ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

### **Unexcused Absences and Suspensions**

- I. Upon evidence that a student has an unexcused absence to a class, that student will:
  - A. Not receive participation credit for that day.
  - B. Not be permitted to make up missed work.
- II. Upon evidence that a student has an unexcused tardy to a class, that student will:
  - A. Not receive a portion of their participation credit for that day.
  - B. Not be permitted to make up work missed.
- III. Upon evidence that a student has been suspended from a class, that student will:
  - A. Not receive participation credit for that day.
  - B. Be permitted to make up missed work for full credit.
  - C. Be allowed to take the semester final exam for full credit.

# Student Code of Conduct

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## **Student Code of Conduct**

Well-behaved students help make school an effective place of learning. Students' safety and welfare depend on their compliance with the following guidelines, which apply while students are in school, on school property, going to or from school or at any school activity.

Students are expected to be courteous and show respect for ALL classmates and ALL adults. Student language and attitude must be respectful to all.

Disciplinary action may vary depending upon the situation. Consequences used at all levels to deal with rule infractions include, but are not limited to; administrative intervention, detention, special work projects, suspension, and expulsion.

If a law has been broken, local law enforcement will be contacted. Once law enforcement officers are involved, their actions may include physical restraint or arrest, if necessary.

## **Citizenship**

Good citizenship is essential to the educational process. Citizenship marks may determine attendance and participation at assemblies, dances, club meetings, athletic events and other activities. Students who receive poor citizenship marks may be excluded from special school events.

## **Freedom of Expression**

Students have the right to exercise freedom of speech. This includes the right to distribute or display written material, petitions, buttons, badges, signs or other insignia subject to reasonable times, places and manner.

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UCS Policies and Procedures are available on the UCS  
Website under the About Us tab

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Freedom of Expression (Continued)**

Exceptions include information that is:

1. Obscene.
2. Libelous
3. Indecent or vulgar.
4. Advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law.
5. Constitutes insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses other people (i.e., threats of violence, defamation of character or of a person's religion or ethnic origin).
6. Presents a clear and present likelihood that either because of its content or the manner of distribution or display, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations or the commission of an unlawful act.

Distribution and/or display of material in any of the above categories is prohibited on school premises at any time or at any school-related or school-sponsored event, on or off campus.

Any student wishing to distribute or display non-school sponsored material must first submit for approval a copy of the material to the building principal at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the desired distribution/display time, together with the following information:

1. Name and contact information of student or organization
2. Date(s) and time(s) of day of intended display and/or distribution.
3. Location where material will be displayed and/or distributed.
4. Grade(s) of students to whom the display and/or distribution is intended.
5. Student publications are also sponsored to provide students the opportunity to learn – under adult direction and supervision – the rights and responsibilities of the press in a free society.

Publications and related advertising will be prohibited which:

1. Are prejudicial to the race, color, religion, national origin/ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, marital status of a person or persons.
2. Libel any specific person or persons.
3. Seek to establish the supremacy of a particular religious denomination, sect or point of view over any other religious denomination, sect or point of view.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Freedom of Expression Continued)**

4. Advocate the use or advertise the availability of any substance or material which may reasonably be believed to:
  - a. Constitute a direct and substantial danger to the health of students.
  - b. Contain obscenity or material otherwise deemed to be harmful to impressionable students who may receive them.
  - c. Incite violence, advocate the use of force or urge the violation of law or school regulations.

Publications will also be prohibited that:

1. Fail to identify the student or organization responsible for distribution.
2. Solicit funds for non-school organizations or institutions when such solicitations have not been approved by the Director of Community Relations.
3. Promote, favor or oppose any candidate for election to the Board of Education or the adoption of any bond issue, proposal or question submitted at any election.

Non-compliance with the above guidelines will be halted and disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with procedures established in this handbook. For more information, please see policy 6100.

UCS Policies and Procedures are available on the UCS Website under the About Us tab.

## **School Appropriate Attire and Appearance**

Utica Community Schools takes pride in its students and encourages school appropriate attire and developing good hygiene and grooming habits. Student dress and appearance that is neat and clean contributes to a positive school environment. Student dress and appearance should not be disruptive to the educational process.

Consider the following guidelines when selecting school clothing:

1. Indecent, tattered or unsafe dress or footwear, or attire that calls undue attention to the wearer or has lettering or symbols that are disrespectful or derogatory are not allowed.  
Beach wear, low-cut tops, tank tops, sleeveless tops, muscle shirts, see-through clothing, short skirts or shorts, pajamas, tight clothing without proper coverage and clothing exposing the shoulders or mid-section are not allowed.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **School Appropriate Attire and Appearance (Continued)**

2. Knee length shorts and skirts are acceptable. Shoes must be worn.
3. Outerwear, such as coats and hats, is not to be worn in school.
4. Clothing that promotes illegal substances or drugs, illegal activities, violence, tobacco or alcohol is prohibited.
5. Clothing or head coverings worn as group identifiers that promote a disruptive school climate are prohibited.
6. Clothing consistent with religious or cultural beliefs is acceptable.
7. Jewelry and accessories that may be deemed dangerous are prohibited.
8. Costumes and costume accessories are not to be worn at school unless otherwise authorized by school administration (holidays, specific events, etc.).

## **Hallway Regulations**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly and courteous manner in the hallways. Students who are in the hallways during class time must have a pass issued by a member of the school staff. Hallway Restrictions may be implemented for students who are not able to meet the above expectations.

## **Lockers**

At the beginning of the school year, every junior high and high school student is issued a locker and is required to purchase a school lock from the bookstore. Additionally, locks and lockers are issued to students taking physical education.

## **Lockers Are School Property**

1. All lockers assigned to students are the property of Utica Community Schools.
2. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of its lockers.
3. A student who uses a locker that is the property of Utica Community Schools is presumed to have no expectation of privacy in that locker or that locker's contents.
4. The school principal or his/her designee shall have custody of all the combinations to all lockers and/or locks.
5. Students are prohibited from placing locks on any locker without the advance approval of the school principal or his/her designee.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Legitimate Use of School Lockers**

The school assigns lockers to its students for the students' convenience and temporary use. Students are to use lockers exclusively to store school-related materials and authorized personal items such as outer garments, footwear, personal grooming aids, or lunch.

1. Students shall not use lockers for any other purpose, unless specifically authorized by the school principal or his/her designee, in advance of students bringing the items to school.
2. Students are solely responsible for the contents of their lockers and should not share their lockers with other students, and not divulge locker combinations to other students unless authorized by the principal or his/her designee.
3. If the principal or his/her designee assigns more than one student to a locker, the locker or lock combination should not be shared with anyone other than the assigned locker partner.

## **Search of Locker Contents**

Random searches of school lockers and their contents have a positive impact on deterring violations of school rules and regulations, ensure proper maintenance of school property and provide greater safety and security for students and personnel.

Accordingly, the Board of Education authorizes the school principal or his/her designee to search lockers and locker contents at any time without notice and without parent or guardian consent. The school principal or his/her designee shall not be obligated but may request the assistance of a law enforcement officer in conducting a locker search.

Law enforcement may utilize the services of a police canine to assist in the search. The school principal or his/her designee shall supervise the search. During a locker search, the school principal or his/her designee shall respect the privacy rights of the pupil regarding any items discovered that are not illegal or against school policy and rules.

## **Search and Seizure of Unauthorized or Illegal Items**

School authorities are authorized to take reasonable steps to safeguard the safety and well-being of the students by, among other things, implementing Board of Education policies and student code of conduct. Within the discharge of responsibilities, district personnel may search students, student property, and school property in the manner permitted by law.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Search and Seizure of Unauthorized or Illegal Items (Continued)**

When conducting locker searches, the school principal or his/her designee may seize any illegal or unauthorized items, items in violation of Board of Education policy or rules or any other items reasonably determined by the school principal or his/her designee to be a potential threat to the safety or security of others.

Such items include, but are not limited to, the following: tobacco products, vaping paraphernalia, drug paraphernalia, firearms, explosives, weapons, flammable material, illegal controlled substances or controlled substance look-alikes or other intoxicants, contraband, poisons and stolen property.

Law enforcement officials shall be notified upon seizure of dangerous items, or seizure of items that schools are required to report to law enforcement agencies under the Statewide School Safety Information Policy.

Any items seized by the school principal or his/her designee shall be removed from the locker and held by school officials for evidence in disciplinary proceedings and/or turned over to law enforcement officials. The parent/guardian of a minor student, or a student eighteen (18) years of age or older, shall be notified by the school principal or his/her designee of items removed from the locker.

The Board of Education also authorizes the use of canines trained in detecting the presence of drugs and devices. Canines are used to determine the presence of drugs in locker areas and other places where such substances may be concealed. Canine detection is conducted in collaboration with law enforcement authorities and is not used to search individual students without legally sufficient suspicion or unless a warrant or parent/guardian permission has been obtained.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Discipline**

A student's right to a public education carries with it a responsibility to know and observe school rules. The primary objective of student discipline and control is to produce a safe school environment in which complete attention may be directed to the teaching-learning activities. Discipline may be defined as the control of conduct by the individual or by external authority. Board of Education (the external authority) policies and in some instances, state law, establish behavioral expectations and consequences for violations. The goal of discipline is for students to become responsible, productive and self-disciplined citizens within and outside of school by assuming personal responsibility (individual authority) for their own behavior.

Utica Community Schools treats discipline as an individual matter for each student. Students must be dealt with as individual's according to their age and maturity, disciplinary history, whether the student is a student with a disability, experiences, abilities and interests, and values. Students who are eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 shall have the district's discipline policies applied in a manner consistent with their rights under federal and state law.

Disciplinary action may vary depending upon the issues. The discipline procedures used to deal with rule infractions include restorative practices, detention, suspension (exclusion from school), and expulsion. Utica Community Schools will apply its discipline policies and procedures consistent with the requirements of Michigan law.

The Board of Education prohibits corporal punishment as an acceptable method of disciplining students. A school employee, volunteer or contractor may use reasonable physical force as necessary to maintain order and control a school or school-related setting for the purpose of providing an environment conducive to safety and learning.

The best discipline is preventative in nature. School personnel along with parents working together can help students develop self-control and self-discipline.



# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Due Process**

Due process is a fundamental right of all individuals. Therefore, constitutionally and legally sound procedures have been implemented in the district. For discipline that results in restorative practices, detention, or exclusion from school for less than five days, parents may request an appeal hearing with the principal. The principal will hold the hearing within five days of the request. The principal will issue a decision within two days of that hearing. The principal's decision is final.

Based on state and federal laws governing education, building principals in Utica Community Schools are delegated the authority to temporarily separate or suspend (exclude) a student from school. In such actions, the following procedures shall be in effect:

1. As a general rule, prior to any out-of-school suspension, the building administrator will: Inform the student of the misconduct or behavior for which discipline is being considered and, if the student denies the misconduct or behavior, an explanation of the evidence the administrator possesses; Provide the student an opportunity to explain their version of the facts; and consider each of seven individual factors listed within Policy 5100.
2. If a student's presence in school poses an immediate danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process, the building administrator may immediately suspend the student, and as soon thereafter as reasonable, provide the student with their due process rights as set forth above.
3. If, after following this procedure, the administrator determines that the student has engaged in a prohibited act under the Student Code of Conduct, the administrator may impose a disciplinary penalty of a suspension not to exceed ten (10) school days. The principal or designee shall inform (in person or by phone) the student's parent/guardian of the suspension and of the reasons and conditions of the suspension and, thereafter, in writing.

Appeal procedures available to parents or guardians include:

1. As a first step, parents may request an appeal hearing with the principal within the period of exclusion from school. The principal shall affirm, modify or reverse disciplinary action within two school days of the hearing date.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Due Process (Continued)**

2. If the exclusion is for more than five (5) days or a recommendation for something greater than ten days, the parents(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent of Schools or designee within five (5) school days from the principal's decision to exclude the student. Within five (5) school days of the appeal request, the Superintendent or designee will hold an appeal hearing.
3. The Superintendent shall affirm, modify or reverse the decision of the principal within three school days from hearing the appeal. Recommendations for more than ten days may result in a Superintendent's Suspension (11-59 days of exclusion) or a Superintendent's Expulsion (60-180 days of exclusion). The Superintendent's decision is final.
4. If the recommendation is for permanent expulsion, the parents(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent of Schools or designee within five (5) school days from the principal's decision to exclude the student. Within five (5) school days of the appeal request, the superintendent or designee will hold an appeal hearing. The superintendent shall affirm, modify, or reverse the recommendation of the principal within three school days from hearing the appeal. If the superintendent affirms the recommendation of permanent expulsion, the parent(s) or guardian(s) may appeal to the Board of Education. The Board of Education's decision is final.

This Student Code of Conduct balances the School District's obligation to maintain safety and a conducive educational environment with the School District's obligation to teach appropriate behavior to students who engage in misconduct and inappropriate behavior. The Student Code of Conduct establishes the rules governing the most serious and obvious types of student misconduct. The prohibited acts listed in this Student Code of Conduct are not to be considered as an all-inclusive list or as a limitation upon the authority of school officials to deal appropriately with violations of a school building's individual rules and regulations, or other types of conduct which interfere with the good order of the school system, the proper functioning of the educational process, or the health and safety of students.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Due Process (Continued)**

A student violating any of the prohibited acts listed in this Student Code of Conduct will be disciplined in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Additionally, a student who engages in a prohibited act which violates the law may be referred to the appropriate police authority.

The prohibited acts and penalties listed below are applicable when a student:

1. Engages in a prohibited act on school property;
2. Engages in a prohibited act in a motor vehicle, including one being used for a school-related purpose;
3. Engages in a prohibited act at a school-related activity, function, or event;
4. Engages in a prohibited act enroute to or from school;
5. Engages in a prohibited act involving another student who is enroute to or from school;
6. Engages in a prohibited act off school premises, which act is either prohibited by law or, in the judgment of the building administrator, is of such seriousness that the student's continued attendance in school would present a danger to the health and safety of students or employees, and/or would substantially interfere with the proper functioning of the educational process; or
7. Engages in a prohibited act when the student was not enrolled in the School District or was enrolled in another school district, if the act of misconduct would constitute a sufficient basis for suspension or expulsion had it occurred while the student was attending school in the School District.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## Unacceptable Behaviors/Prohibited Acts

**Advocating Unacceptable/Prohibited Acts** – A student shall not advocate for illegal drug use, violence or other disruptive behavior.

### **Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs, Chemical Substances –**

A student shall not sell, buy, possess, give, deliver, receive, accept, use or be under the influence (legal intoxication not required) of tobacco (see Policy 5125), alcoholic beverages, narcotics, illegal drugs, performance enhancing substances (as defined in Policy 5165), unauthorized prescription drugs, look alike or alleged drugs, or behavior-altering substances on school property, in school-owned vehicles or at school related events.

A student shall not sell, deliver, or transfer, or attempt to sell, deliver, or transfer any prescription or non-prescription drug, medicine, vitamin, or chemical substance (e.g., pain relievers, stimulants, diet pills, pep pills, No-Doze pills, cough medicines, laxatives, stomach or digestive remedies, etc.), nor shall a student use or possess these substances for an improper purpose.

**Arson** – A student shall not burn or attempt to burn any property or intentionally set a fire on school property or cause or attempt to cause an explosion on school property. A student shall not commit an act of arson, prohibited by MCL 750.71 through MCL 750.80. Arson offenses shall be controlled by Policy 5105.

**Bullying** – A student shall not engage in conduct, whether written, verbal, or physical, that unreasonably interferes with another's participation in or enjoyment at school or school-related activities as defined in Policy 5145.

**Buying/Selling** – A student may not sell or buy any item from another student in school, except as authorized by the principal for sale by the student store.

**Coercion, Extortion, and Blackmail** – A student shall not commit or attempt to commit coercion, extortion, or blackmail. A student shall not engage in the act of securing or attempting to secure money or other items of value by the use of threats and/or violence, nor shall a student, by threats and/or violence, force another person to perform an unwilling act.

**Criminal Acts** – A student shall not commit or participate in any conduct or act defined as a crime by federal or state law or local ordinance.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Unacceptable Behaviors/Prohibited Acts (Continued)**

**Criminal Sexual Conduct** – A student shall not commit criminal sexual conduct. “Criminal sexual conduct” means conduct which would otherwise constitute a violation of Sections 750.520b through 750.520e, and 750.520g of the Michigan Compiled Laws. Criminal sexual conduct offenses shall be controlled by Policy 5105.

**Damage of Property or Theft/Possession** – A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to school property or the property of another person, or steal, attempt to steal, or knowingly be in the unauthorized possession of school property or the property of another person.

**Discriminatory Harassment** – A student shall not engage in unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or unwelcomed sexual touching. A student shall not engage in other verbal or physical conduct relating to a person’s sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, or handicap or disability (e.g., sexual or racial comments, threats, or insults, etc.).

**Disruption of School** – A student shall not, by any type of conduct (violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, etc.), cause the disruption or obstruction of any function of the school, nor shall the student engage in any such conduct if such disruption or obstruction is reasonably likely to result. Neither shall a student urge other students to engage in such conduct for the purpose of causing such disruption or obstruction. While the following acts are not intended to be exclusive, they illustrate the kinds of offenses encompassed within this rule. It should be understood that any conduct which causes disruption, is likely to result in disruption, or interferes with the educational process, is forbidden.

1. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or a part thereof, without the permission of a school building staff member, which deprives others of its use;
2. Blocking normal pedestrian or vehicle traffic, the entrances or exits of any school building or corridor or room, without the permission of the building principal;
3. Preventing, attempting to prevent, or interfering with the convening or continued functioning of any class, activity, meeting, or assembly;
4. Instigating or participating in a disturbance, or causing a disturbance, which interrupts the educational opportunities of others or threatens the general health, safety, and welfare of others on school property or at a school sponsored activity.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Unacceptable Behaviors/Prohibited Acts (Continued)**

**Dress** – A student shall not dress or groom in a manner, which in the judgment of a building administrator, is unsafe to the student or others or disruptive to the educational process.

**Electronic Communication Devices** – Students are prohibited from using or possessing active (i.e., turned on) electronic communication devices in restrooms, locker rooms, offices, and other locations where students and staff have a reasonable expectation of privacy without the express permission of school building principal.

**Failure to Comply with Directions of School Personnel** – A student shall not be insubordinate or fail to comply with instructions and directions of School District employees (including substitute and student teachers), volunteers, or persons acting as a chaperone or in a supervisory capacity.

**Failure to Cooperate** – A student shall not refuse to cooperate with School District administrators and/or staff investigating a possible violation of this Student Code of Conduct, other codes of conduct, and/or building rules. No student shall make false statements or give false evidence to School District administrators and/or staff. A student shall not refuse to testify or otherwise cooperate with School District personnel in any disciplinary proceeding.

**False Alarms** – A student shall not knowingly cause a false fire alarm, or make a false fire, bomb, or catastrophe report.

**False Allegations** – A student shall not libel or slander, or make false allegations against another student, School District employee (including substitute and student teachers), Board of Education members, or volunteers.

**Falsification of Records** – A student shall not use the name of another person or falsify times, dates, grades, addresses, or other data on School District forms or records. A student shall not provide false, misleading, or inaccurate statements or information on School District forms or records.

**Fighting/Participating in a fight** – A fight is defined as a hostile encounter, to contend in physical combat, wrestling (non-sport related), or disruptive verbal disagreement. Participants in a fight could also be charged with physical assault.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Unacceptable Behaviors/Prohibited Acts (Continued)**

**Gambling** – A student shall not participate in games of chance or skill for money, profit and/or extortion.

**Group or Gang Activity** – A student shall not participate in group or gang activity which advocates illegal drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior. Gang activity is further governed by Policy 5135.

**Hate Speech** – A student shall not use abusive or threatening speech or writing that expresses prejudice based on ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or similar grounds.

**Hazing** – A student shall not participate in hazing such as initiating another student into any grade, school, or school-related activity by any means or methods that may cause physical or emotional pain, embarrassment, or discomfort. Hazing is defined in Policy 5140.

**Inappropriate Material(s)** – A student shall not possess, create, and/or distribute pornographic and/or other inappropriate material(s).

**Indecency** – A student shall not engage in conduct that is contrary to commonly recognized standards of decency and behavior, which includes obscenity, indecent exposure (Michigan Compiled Laws 750.335a), or the use of language in verbal or written form, or in pictures, or in caricatures or gestures, which are offensive to the general standards of propriety.

**Language** – A student shall not use profane and/or obscene language.

**Laser Pointers** – All students are prohibited from possessing or using laser pointers on school premises and at school-related activities without the express permission of school building principal.

**Motor Vehicles** – A student is not permitted to operate or park motor vehicles (exception with school authorized parking pass), including motorcycles and mopeds, on school property.

**Misconduct Prior to Enrollment** – An otherwise eligible resident may be suspended or expelled for an act of misconduct committed while the student was: (a) a resident of another district; (b) enrolled in another school; (c) outside of school hours; or (d) off school premises if the misconduct would have constituted a sufficient basis for suspension or expulsion had it occurred while the student was enrolled in the School District.



# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Unacceptable Behaviors/Prohibited Acts (Continued)**

**Personal Protection Devices** – A student shall not possess, handle, or transmit a personal protection device (e.g. pepper gas, mace, stun gun, electric shock device, etc.) capable of inflicting bodily injury or causing physical discomfort to another person.

**Physical assault** – A student shall not commit physical assault defined as intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence. A physical assault of a school district employee, volunteer, or contractor, as set forth in Section 1311a of the Revised School Code, shall be controlled by Policy 5105.

**Physical contact and displays of public affections** – A student shall not engage in physical contact such as hugging, handholding, kissing, etc.

**Safety** – A student shall not engage in any behavior or action that endangers the safety of others, including unintentionally harming staff or students.

**Scholastic Dishonesty** – A student shall not engage in academic cheating. Cheating includes but is not limited to the actual giving or receiving of any unauthorized aid or assistance or the actual giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work. A student shall not engage in plagiarism, which includes the copying of language, structures, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and represent it as the student's own original work.

**Sexual Harassment** – A student shall not engage in behavior such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is defined under Policy 5130.

**Suspended Student on School Property or Attending School Activities** – A student, while suspended, shall not enter onto School District property without the prior permission of a building administrator. A student, while suspended, shall not participate in, or attend any school related activity, function, or event, held on or off school property, without the prior permission of a building administrator.

**Threats** – A student shall not make threats of any kind (harm, kill, shooting, bomb, etc.) in any form (verbal, nonverbal, written, drawn, etc.) toward students and/or staff and/or Utica Community Schools property.



# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Unacceptable Behaviors/Prohibited Acts (Continued)**

**Trespassing/Loitering** – A student shall not be on school property or in a school building except to participate in the educational process of the School District, nor shall a student loiter in building hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, etc.

**Verbal Assault** – A students shall not commit verbal assault as defined as any willful verbal threat which creates a reasonable fear of imminent injury, coupled with apparent ability to inflict injury.

**Violation of Acceptable Use Policy** – A student shall not violate or attempt to violate School District policies, administrative regulations, and directives concerning School District or personal computers, networks, and telephone systems. Violation of any of the rules and responsibilities may result in a loss of access privileges/technology privileges/computer usage and may result in other disciplinary or legal actions including restitution.

**Violations of Building's Rules and Regulations** – A student shall not commit or participate in any conduct or act prohibited by a school building's rules and regulations.

## **Weapons:**

1. **Dangerous Weapons** – A student shall not possess, handle or transmit a dangerous weapon as defined by section 1313(4) of the Revised School Code and possession of a firearm as defined under 18 USC 921, controlled by Policy 5105.
2. **Weapons and Dangerous Instruments** – A student shall not possess, handle or transmit a knife with a blade length of three (3) inches or less, blackjack, baton, martial arts device, paint ball or splat gun, lighters, matches, fireworks, stink/smoke bombs, laser pointers, explosives or other object or instrument that can be considered a weapon or is capable of inflicting bodily injury.
3. **Lookalike Weapons** – A student shall not possess, handle, or transmit any object or instrument that is a "look-a-like" weapon or instrument (e.g., starter pistol, rubber knife, toy gun, etc.).

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Disciplinary Action**

Disciplinary action may vary depending upon the situation. Building administration will complete a thorough investigation prior to taking disciplinary action, providing due process to all involved parties and informing parents/guardians. Unless otherwise specified, the consequences for all prohibited acts range from administrative intervention to permanent expulsion, depending on a number of factors, including: the severity of the conduct; the impact of the conduct on the school and surrounding community; applicable Board of Education policies; and state and federal laws.

## **Considerations Before Imposition of Discipline**

In accordance with state law and Board of Education Policy, and except as specifically provided below, before a student may be suspended, expelled or permanently expelled, the District administrators making the disciplinary decision shall consider each of the following factors:

1. The student's age;
2. The student's disciplinary history;
3. Whether the student is a student with a disability;
4. The seriousness of the violation or behavior committed by the student;
5. Whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member;
6. Whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior committed by the student; and
7. Whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior committed by the student.

The fact that consideration of these factors has occurred shall be documented in the record of the disciplinary decision. Except as provided below, the District has discretion over whether to suspend, expel or permanently expel a pupil. In exercising this discretion, there is a rebuttable presumption that a suspension (more than 10 days), expulsion or permanent expulsion is not justified unless administration can demonstrate that it considered each of the factors listed above. The obligation to consider the factors listed above shall not apply to a student being permanently expelled under state law for possessing a firearm in a weapon-free school zone.

The District shall consider using restorative practices as an alternative or in addition to suspension or expulsion of a student. If the District suspends or expels a student, the District shall consider using restorative practices in addition to suspension or expulsion.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Restorative Practices**

School staff will always consider restorative practices instead of or in addition to exclusion from school (suspension/expulsion). Restorative practices may include victim-offender conferences that are initiated by the victim; that are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least age 15, by the victim; that are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender member or the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender; and that provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected by the misconduct and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm.

The attendees, known as the restorative practices team, may require the pupil to do one or more of the following: apologize; participate in community service, restoration, or counseling; or pay restitution. The selected consequences shall be incorporated into an agreement that sets time limits for completion of the consequences and is signed by all participants. Restorative practices should be the first consideration (in addition to or in replacement of exclusion) to remediate offenses such as interpersonal conflicts, bullying, verbal and physical conflicts, theft, damage to property, class disruption, and harassment and cyberbullying. Other research based restorative practices, not described above may be used to resolve the issue.

## **Administrative Intervention**

Disciplinary action which does not result in an out-of-school suspension and which includes, but is not limited to, restorative practices may include the removal of a student from a class period, in-school suspension, a reprimand, restitution, detention and/or work assignment before or after school, additional classroom assignments, and revocation of the privilege of attending after school functions and activities, events, etc.

## **Snap Suspension**

If, during a class, subject, or activity, a teacher has good reason to believe: a student has engaged in conduct which unquestionably interferes with the education of that student or other students, or a student has engaged in conduct which poses a clear and present danger to that student or other students, the teacher may suspend the student from that class, subject, or activity for up to one full school day.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Detention**

A teacher or the principal has the right to assign a student to before or after-school detention for disciplinary reasons or academic makeup work. A day's notice is given in all cases of detention and a student may be detained for a reasonable amount of time. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to arrange transportation for the student when detention is assigned.

## **Special Work Projects**

Special work projects may be assigned for improper conduct, as determined by the teacher or administrator. Such projects are intended to reinforce the importance of proper behavior.

## **Suspension**

School suspensions will be administered by the principal or his/her designee. Short-term suspensions may vary from one to 10 days, depending on the severity or frequency of the violation. When a suspension is necessary, parents or guardians shall be notified if the student is excluded from school before the end of the school day. Suspended students are not allowed on school district property or admitted to any school function during the course of the suspension. Suspended students will be permitted to make up missed work following the guidelines listed previously in the handbook. Long-term exclusion up to and including permanent expulsion from school may be recommended by the building principal or designee to the superintendent.

## **Principal Suspension**

A principal's suspension is defined as an exclusion of a student from school and school district activities for disciplinary reasons by a principal for ten school days or less. Parents/Guardians may appeal to the principal to reconsider the exclusion from school. For exclusions less than five days, the principal's decision is final. For exclusions more than five days, parents or guardians have the right to an appeal hearing with the superintendent or superintendent's designee. The superintendent's decision is final (See section on Due Process).

Such a suspension may be made pending an investigation of a student's conduct and recommendation of other disciplinary actions.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Superintendent Suspension**

The Michigan Revised School Code defines a Superintendent's Suspension as an exclusion of a student from school and school district activities for disciplinary reasons for up to 59 days. This type of suspension is initiated when a principal recommends to the superintendent in writing that the student's action warrant an exclusion of more than 10 days. The superintendent may affirm that recommendation and assign a Superintendent's Suspension of 11 to 59 days, or assign a Superintendent's Expulsion (see below) modify the recommendation to 10 days or less, or reverse the decision by removing the suspension altogether. The Superintendent's decision is final. (see section on Due Process).

## **Superintendent Expulsion**

The Michigan Revised School Code defines a Superintendent's Expulsion as an exclusion of a student from school and school district activities for disciplinary reasons for a period of 60 to 180 days. This type of suspension is initiated when a principal recommends to the superintendent in writing that the student's actions warrant an exclusion of more than 10 days.

The superintendent may affirm that recommendation and assign a Superintendent's Suspension of 11 to 59 days or a Superintendent's Expulsion of 60 to 180 days, modify the recommendation to 10 days or less, or reverse the decision by removing the suspension altogether. The Superintendent's decision is final. (see section on Due Process).

## **Board of Education Expulsion**

The Michigan Revised School Code defines a Board of Education expulsion as a permanent exclusion of a student from all Michigan public schools and activities. This type of exclusion is initiated when a principal recommends to the superintendent that the student's actions warrant permanent expulsion under district policy and the Michigan revised School Code. The Superintendent may affirm that recommendation and recommend to the Board of Education that the student be permanently excluded, amend the recommendation to a Superintendent Suspension or Expulsion or Principal's Suspension, or reverse the recommendation and remove all disciplinary action. The Board of Education may affirm the recommendation of the Superintendent and permanently exclude the student, amend the recommendation to a Superintendent Suspension or Expulsion or Principal's Suspension, or reverse the recommendation and remove the disciplinary action. The Board of Education's decision is final.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Police Investigations**

Utica Community Schools cooperates with local police authorities in the interest and welfare of all citizens and the school community. Parents/Guardians will be notified if police wish to question and/or arrest their student in school. The timing of parental/guardian notification will depend on the circumstances. UCS will comply with the mandatory reporting of specific crimes/events to local law enforcement and the Michigan Department of Education.

## **Transfer of Disciplinary Records**

Michigan law requires school districts to record in the student's permanent record (CA-60) permanent expulsions for violations of Michigan statutes prohibiting possession of a dangerous weapon, arson or criminal sexual conduct 380.1311(3); UCS Policy 5105). The same is required for students permanently expelled for physical assault against an adult or verbal assault or bomb threat (MCL 380.1311a(3); UCS Policies 5100 and 5105). Discipline recorded in the CA-60 will be transferred to any private or public school to which a student is transferring and in which he/she is enrolling. Other suspensions and expulsions are recorded in the student disciplinary record and are available to the next school if a student transfers/moves.

## **Hazing**

Utica Community Schools has policies prohibiting hazing by both students and employees of Utica Community Schools.

Hazing is inherently hazardous and may place its victims at risk of physical or emotional harm. Consequently, hazing is absolutely prohibited. As defined, hazing is any action or the coercion of another – including the victim – to perform any act that endangers physical safety of a student or employee, produces mental or physical discomfort, causes embarrassment or ridicule or degrades the student or employee, regardless of that person's willingness to take part.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who participates in hazing.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Bullying and Cyberbullying**

To maintain a positive school atmosphere that fosters learning, promotes a safe learning environment and develops self-worth and dignity of its students, Utica Community Schools will not permit bullying behavior. Bullying in all of its forms and practices is absolutely prohibited, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against students who participate in bullying. Bullying shall be defined as any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits or programs of one or more pupils.
2. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district's or public school's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health.
4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.
5. Bullying often occurs when a student is exposed repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students.

Additional information is contained in Policy 5145 Anti-Bullying and can be found on the UCS website.

## **Student Gangs**

Gangs and gang-related activities are prohibited on, to and from, any premises owned or used by the district and at any district-related function. Gangs and gang-related activities are also prohibited to the extent they are related to or interfere, or threaten to interfere, with school or other district related functions, even when they occur off school premises (for example, on the internet).

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Student Gangs (Continued)**

The term gang, as used in this policy, means a group of two or more persons whose purposes or activities include the commission of an illegal act(s) or a violation(s) of district policy, procedures or rules, or the defense of its members against another gang or group of persons. District students are prohibited from engaging in gang or gang-related activities, which include:

1. Dressing or grooming in a manner which, in the reasonable judgment of a district administrator, teacher or student, communicates membership in or affiliation with a gang.
2. Communicating, verbally or non-verbally (e.g., gestures, handshakes, tagging, etc.) in a manner which, in the reasonable judgment of a district administrator, teacher or student, conveys membership or affiliation with a gang.
3. Committing an act(s) in furtherance of the interest of a gang or gang-related activity including, but not limited to soliciting others for participation, membership affiliation in any gang or gang-related activity; intimidating or threatening any person or inciting any other person to use force, intimidation or threats.

## **Reporting Concerns**

Students who have concerns about any conduct or physical contact by a person employed by the district, by any fellow students or by any person, should immediately report this concern to the building principal, to a counselor, any trusted adult and/or to the superintendent.

Students should also discuss their concerns with parents or guardians. Students are encouraged to report any conduct that makes them feel uncomfortable, is bothersome or is contrary to a stable learning environment.

Any person who receives a complaint of conduct perceived to be sexual harassment should immediately report the concern to the building principal, Executive Administrator of Schools or the Superintendent's designee.

## **Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure**

Sexual harassment of students by other students or by employees of the Utica Community Schools is unlawful under both Michigan and federal law and is contrary to the district's commitment to provide a stable learning environment.



# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure (Continued)**

It is the district's policy that all contact between students, teachers and other adult employees and others in the district be in keeping with respect for the individual student and be of a nature which does not make the student feel uncomfortable.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances.
2. Subtle or overt pressure for sexual activity.
3. Engaging in improper physical contact, such as patting or pinching, etc.
4. Making improper sexual comments, including sex-oriented kidding creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational learning environment.
5. The threat or suggestion that student's education and/or advancement depends upon whether or not the student submits to sexual demands or tolerates such improper behavior

A Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information Guide can be accessed [here](#).

## **Weapons, Criminal Sexual Conduct, Arson and Physical Assault of an Employee**

The following behaviors, as defined under state law, are subject to permanent expulsion from all public schools in the State of Michigan:

1. Possession of a dangerous weapon\*
2. Arson
3. Criminal Sexual Conduct\*\*
4. Physical assault at school by a student in grade six or above against an employee, volunteer or contractor of the school.

Michigan law requires the permanent expulsion of a student for possession of a dangerous weapon at school unless there is clear and convincing evidence of one of the following:

1. The student did not possess the object for use as a weapon or for delivery to another person for use as a weapon.
2. The student did not knowingly possess the weapon.
3. The student did not know or have reason to know that the object constituted a dangerous weapon.
4. The student possessed the weapon at the suggestion, request or direction, or with the express permission of the school or police

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Weapons, Criminal Sexual Conduct, Arson and Physical Assault of an Employee (Continued)**

There is a rebuttable presumption that permanent expulsion is not justified for possession of a dangerous weapon other than possession of a firearm (as defined by 18 USC §921) in weapon-free school zone if both of the following are met:

1. The district determines in writing that at least one of the factors listed above has been established in a clear and convincing manner; and
2. The student has no history of suspension or expulsion.

Students permanently expelled as is permissible under Board policy and Michigan law, shall be referred to the local police agency and the appropriate county department of social services or community mental health agency. The parent or legal guardian and student shall also be notified of the referral. Additional information is contained in Policies 5100 and 5105 and can be found on the UCS website.

**\*\*Students should be aware that in Michigan, depending on the circumstances, it may be criminal sexual conduct to have consensual sex with anyone under the age of 16.**

### **Dangerous Weapon Defined**

A dangerous weapon means a firearm, dagger, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocketknife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar or brass knuckles.

A student who possesses a weapon that constitutes a dangerous weapon on school property must be expelled unless he/she can establish one of the following in a clear and convincing manner:

1. The object or instrument possessed by the pupil was not possessed for use as a weapon, or for direct or indirect delivery to another person for use as a weapon.
2. The weapon was not knowingly possessed by the pupil.
3. The pupil did not know or have reason to know that the object or instrument possessed by the pupil constituted a dangerous weapon.
4. The weapon was possessed by the pupil at the suggestion, direction, request or with the express permission of school or police authorities.

As permitted by Board policy and law, the district reserves the authority to permanently expel students.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Firearm Defined**

A firearm means any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; any destructive device or any explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four (4) ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or similar devices; or any other weapon as set forth in 18 USC §921. UCS also prohibits the possession of use of airsoft guns or BB guns on school property.

## **Physical Assault Defined**

A physical assault means intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.

## **Arson Defined**

Arson means conduct which otherwise would constitute a felony violation of Sections 750.71 through 750.80 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

## **Criminal Sexual Conduct**

Criminal Sexual Conduct means conduct which otherwise would constitute a violation of Sections 750.520b through 750.520e, and Section 750.520g of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

## **Reinstatement**

Students permanently expelled for reasons covered in this policy may seek reinstatement. Such reinstatement is not a matter of right but is discretionary with the Board of Education. A Petition for Reinstatement (Continued) Reinstatement must be completed in writing to the Board of Education through the Superintendent or designee. The final decision to reinstate is made by the Board of Education.

1. An individual who was in grade five or below at the time of permanent expulsion and who has been expelled for possessing a firearm or threatening another person with a dangerous weapon shall not be reinstated before the expiration of 60 school days after the date of expulsion.
2. An individual who was in grade five or below at the time of permanent expulsion and who has been expelled for a reason defined in Section 1311(2) of the Revised School Code of the State of Michigan other than possessing a firearm or threatening another person with a dangerous weapon shall not be reinstated before the expiration of 10 school days after the date of expulsion.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Reinstatement (Continued)**

3. An individual who was in grade six or above at the time of permanent expulsion for an offense covered by Policy 5105 shall not be reinstated before the expiration of 180 school days after the date of expulsion.

The time limits and procedures for filing a petition for reinstatement and reinstatement shall be governed by the provisions of Sections 1311(6) and 1311a(5) of the Revised School Code of the State of Michigan.

Once action has been taken by the Board of Education on a Petition for Reinstatement, a petition regarding the same student may not be submitted again until 90 school days have passed.

Additional information is contained in Policies 5100 and 5105 and can be found on the UCS website. Reference: Gun-Free School Act of 1994 as amended by PL 1103-382 and Michigan PA 250-1995.

# Non-Discrimination Policy

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In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, it is the policy of Utica Community Schools that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any instructional opportunities, programs, services, job placement assistance, employment or in policies governing student conduct and attendance.

Any person suspecting a discriminatory practice should contact:

Executive Director of Human Resources  
Utica Community Schools  
11303 Greendale  
Sterling Heights, MI 48312  
Phone: 586-797-1000

Grievance procedures for Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act are:

Any person believing that the Utica Community Schools or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (4) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, (5) Title II of the Americans with Disabilities of 1990, (6) the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and (7) the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance to:

Executive Director of Human Resources  
Utica Community Schools  
11303 Greendale  
Sterling Heights, MI 48312  
Phone: 586-797-1000

# NON-DISCRIMINATION

The person who believes a valid basis for grievance exists may discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the building principal or the Executive Director Human Resources, who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply with an answer within five (5) business days.

The complainant may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

## Step 1

A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the Executive Director of Human Resources within five (5) business days of receipt of answers to the informal complaint. The Executive Director of Human Resources shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days.

## Step 2

A complainant wishing to appeal the decision of the Executive Director of Human Resources may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) business days after receipt of the Executive Director's response. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days of this meeting.

The Executive Director of Human Resources, upon request, will provide the complainant with a copy of the district's grievance procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure. A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations on which the notice is based may be found in the office of the Executive Director of Human Resources.

## Report Violations

Parents and eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605