

The U School



Student Handbook

2024-2025

Table of Contents

Welcome Letter	5
Mission + Vision	5
EXPECTATIONS	6
The U School Student Constitution	6
The Preamble	4
Our Rights	4
School-wide Expectations	6
Progressive Consequences	7
Reflections	7
Learning Spaces	8
Cutting Classes	8
Lateness Policy	9
Scanning into the Building	9
Lateness - Over the course of a quarter (progression of lateness)	9
Project U-Turn	9
GRADES & GRADING POLICY	10
Competency-based Education Overview	10
Grading Policy	13
Target Performance Level	13
Performance	13
Progress & Evidence Requirements	13
Grade Breakdown	13
Final Grades	14
Converting Scores	14
Advanced and Honors Credit	16
Academic Progress and Performance	16
Habits of Success (HOS)	17
Possi Grades	17
BEHAVIOR & CODE OF CONDUCT	17
Rules (The Law)	17
Bullying	18
Appearance Policy	18
Academic Integrity	18
Technology	19
Attendance/Absentee Policy	19
Excuse Notes	20
Leaving the Building	20

Early Dismissals	21
Work Rosters / Early Dismissal for Extracurriculars	21
ORGANIZATION & MEDICAL	21
Schedule	22
Calendar	22
Transportation	24
Weather & Emergencies	25
Records	25
Medication	25
Appendix	25
Competency-to-Grade Conversion	25

Welcome Letter

Dear U School Students and Parents,

Our journey together is here! We have had the pleasure of personally meeting most students and families, and we all share a commitment to nurturing youth ready to face the challenges of our world.

Learning is difficult. The U School is a place to challenge students, teachers and parents/guardians alike. Our approach to growing young people will place a lot of responsibility and effort in the hands of our students. For many of our young people this is a challenging shift.

We expect all community members to **be present, be productive** and **be positive** at all times. We all share a commitment to nurturing youth ready to face our world.

Welcome again to the U School family! Together, we will nurture the development of our community.

Mission + Vision

OUR VISION

We Love. We Dream. We Do. Students are given real world opportunities to apply knowledge and fulfill their greatest potential. Those who use the school are empowered with responsibility to create the world for themselves.

OUR MISSION

The U School readies ALL young people for college and careers by supporting students to accept challenges and opportunities through: student agency, real-world problem-solving, developing engaging high-quality products with the purpose of demonstrating mastery, and to push the boundaries of seat time through asynchronous learning.

EXPECTATIONS

The U School Student Constitution

Written and approved by student representatives in October 2014

The Preamble

We, the Students of The U School community, in order to make a school that sincerely works for all of us, do establish that we must Respect and Care for one another and show Tolerance for differences, and absolute intolerance for disrespect in any form, must Love in order to Dream, in dreaming we discover what we need to Do in order to succeed, that we will only succeed as a Team, and only Teamwork will make the U work, do establish this Constitution for our Founding U School Cohort.

Our Rights

We have the Right to ***an education in a considerate environment*** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Clean up and reorganize a space after ourselves, and help others do the same, before we leave it
- Take the risk to respectfully confront our peers who are not showing consideration for the needs of others using polite, specific language, directly describing what consideration is needed
- Ask for support from our peers to address inconsiderate behavior
- Share a sincere concern about inconsiderate behavior with their Possi leader, counselor, officer or principal either openly or anonymously
- Give sincere feedback to peers who are showing inconsiderate behavior on our own behalf and on the behalf of others affected
- Accept sincere feedback without come-back or comment, without disrespectful language or body language

We have the Right to ***an education that respects our academic strengths and needs***, and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Come to school on time each day
- Follow all staff expectations and guidelines
- Enter learning spaces without an attitude, being completely present and ready to learn
- Speak up for ourselves when confused or unsure of what to do
- Respond to the needs of our peers, respecting that our learning needs are different, honoring those differences
- Provide help to others, when appropriate
- Not to use the responsibility of helping others to avoid other responsibilities
- Take the risk to respectfully confront others who do not honor this right

We have the Right to ***express ourselves, our thoughts, our opinions and our beliefs and to have an appropriate space in which to practice our beliefs*** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Be sincere in our self expression
 - Respond to other's sincere expression respectfully, without disrespectful, discriminatory, hateful or dismissive language or body language
-

-
- Take the risk to respectfully confront others who do not honor this right

We have the Right to **a productive learning space** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Be only where we belong, on time
- Take the risk to respectfully confront others who do not honor this right
- Utilize a hallway pass if we need to leave our rostered area.

We have the Right to **have learning opportunities off campus for school approved trips, classroom/POSSI related learning** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Remain within stated boundaries
- Demonstrate all in-school responsibilities off campus
- Honor the U School's reputation by demonstrating commitment to learning first

We have the Right to **be physically safe in and around school** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Not threaten the physical safety of others or their property by our words or deeds
- Not play-fight, horse-play or otherwise put our hands on or physically interfere with others
- Immediately report any persons unknown to us, or other unsafe conditions to the Climate Manager, School Police or other staff member
- Take the risk to handle our problems peacefully, asking for support when necessary
- Take the risk to respectfully confront others who do not honor this right

We have the Right to **possessing our own property** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Be aware of what items may not be brought into school, and bring only allowed items
- Ask others before touching their property
- Return any found property to the owner, when known, or to the lost and found in the front office when unknown
- Follow the expectations set forth for cellphone use and possession during school hours
- Accept reasonable limitations staff may place on our personal property in school
- Take the risk to respectfully confront others who do not honor this right
- Turn in "cash" money totaling more than \$50 to be kept in office in safe

We have the Right to **be heard** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Listen respectfully when others speak without disrespectful, discriminatory, hateful or dismissive language or body language
- Use our voice when it is our turn
- Not use our voice during someone else's turn
- Advocate for others who are not being heard
- Take the risk to respectfully confront others who do not honor this right

We have the Right to **belong** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Openly include visitors, newcomers and others in conversation and activities
 - Sincerely help others
 - Greet others, including invited guests, visitors and School District Personnel warmly, introducing ourselves and offering our help
 - Teach U School values to each other
 - Volunteer to be a student guide for a visitor or newcomer
 - Take the risk to respectfully confront others who do not honor this right
-

We have the Right to **elect a student council** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Vote for representatives we sincerely believe will act in the best interests of all of Us
- If elected, serve in our elected capacity, and act in the best interests of all of Us

We have the Right to **organize student interest committees** and therefore, we accept the Responsibilities to:

- Include everyone with a sincere interest
- Actively plan U School activities and events
- Show appreciation for the student organized activities
- Organize a student interest committee if we aren't satisfied with the activities organized by others

School-wide Expectations

Established by all students during the 2015-2016

The school-wide expectations are connected to our core values:

- ☐ Empathy
- ☐ Agency
- ☐ Collaboration
- ☐ Creativity
- ☐ Persistence
- ☐ Reflection

The School Expectations

EMPATHY

- Be caring, listen and be open-minded

AGENCY

- Make choices that positively impact YOU and YOUR community

COLLABORATION

- Team-work makes the dream work

CREATIVITY

- Work hard, and be yourself

PERSISTENCE

- Stay focused, set goals and work to achieve them

REFLECTION

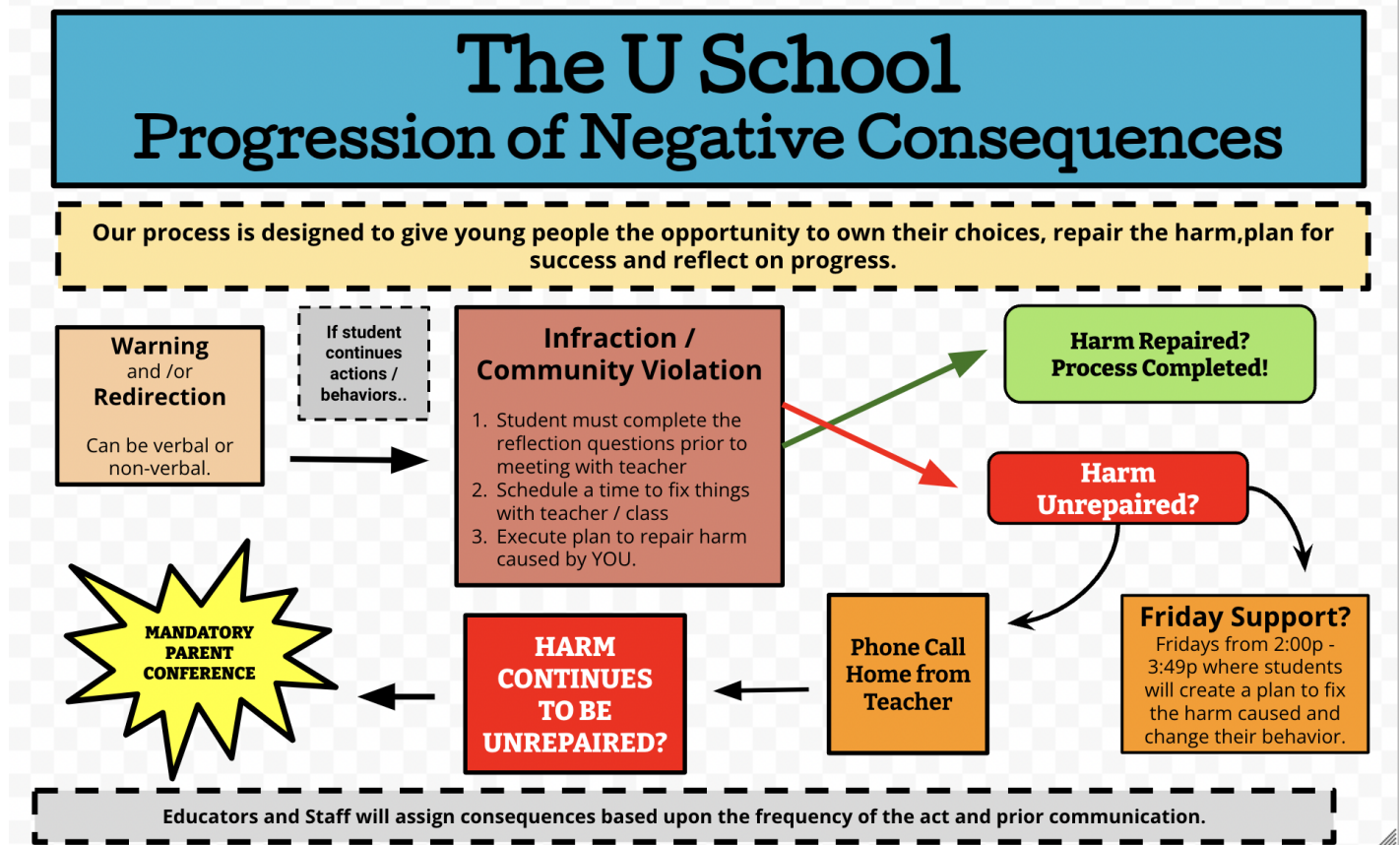
- Stay Positive and seek the answer in yourself

Progressive Consequences

At The U School, ***it is the responsibility of the student to control their behavior and fix any harm they cause.***

The U School gives every student the opportunity to identify their choices, and work with a teacher to plan changing the choice that is causing harm to themselves and others in our community.

Below is the basic process of behavioral consequences:



U School Progression of Positive Consequences

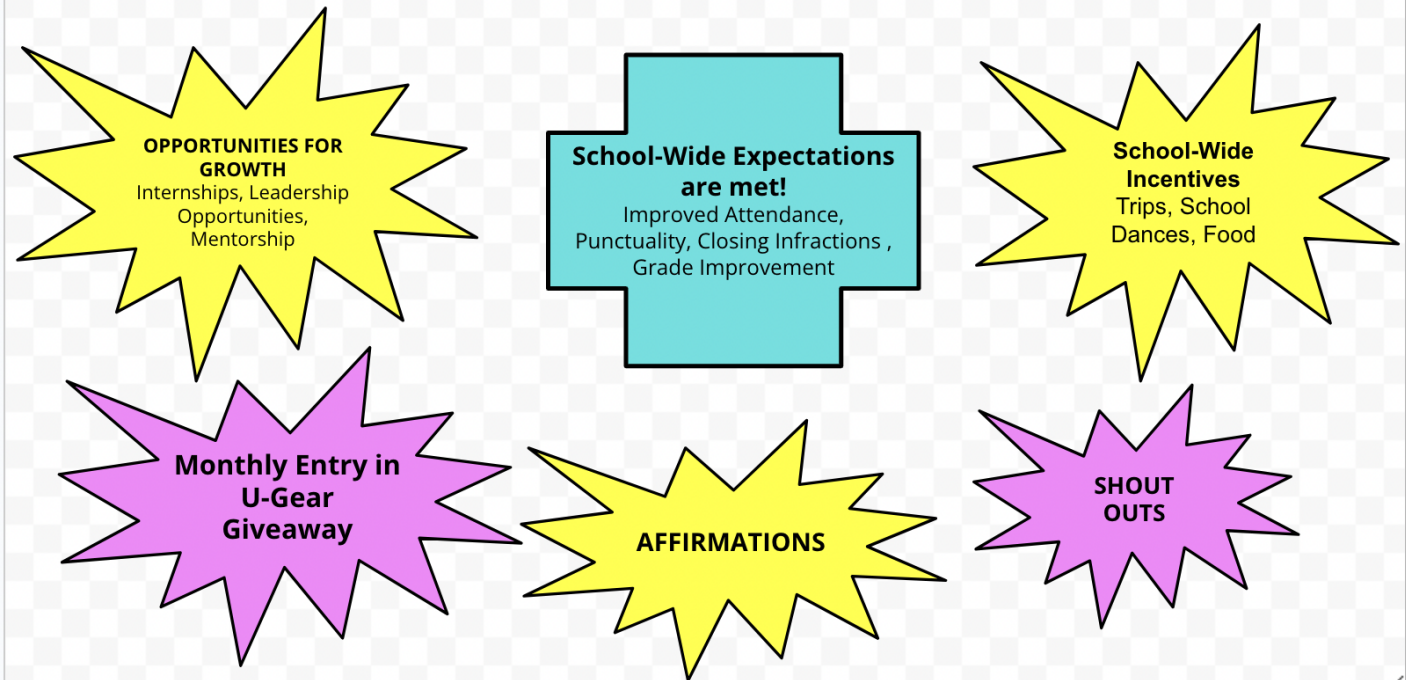
There will be instances when students do not cause harm and/or when students repair the harm they have caused. In other instances, students may have made progress in their behavior, warranting positive reinforcement for their efforts. For students who meet The U School's expectations, there will be opportunities for them to be recognized for positively contributing to The U School community.

Below, you will find the opportunities available for positive behaviors:

The U School

Positive Consequences

This process is designed to recognize young people for making the right choices and reward them for being positive examples for members of our community.



Reflections

Reflections represent the responsibility students have to fixing anything they do in the school.

What is a Reflection?

Students at The U School have a responsibility to fix any problem or harm they cause. This is called a Reflection. A required time to speak with someone you caused harm to, for a behavior that affected yourself or others!

Example Behaviors -- choices students make that harm selves or others

- ☐ Disruption
- ☐ Disrespect
- ☐ Tardiness
- ☐ Class Cutting
- ☐ Profane Language
- ☐ Inappropriate Use of Devices

Your Responsibility -- Complete your reflection with the teacher. This means solving the problem with your teacher by taking responsibility for your action and planning to fix it!

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking?
3. What have you been thinking about since?
4. Who has been affected by what you have done?
5. What do you need to do in order to make it right?

Reflections represent the responsibility students have to fixing anything they do in the school. Taking responsibility to fix the issues is important, and students who fail to fix the problems they cause will follow a course of actions until a student and parent determine that the school community may not be the right place to learn.

Open Infractions are the responsibility of the student to address. Infractions must be closed within 7 days of receiving it, otherwise students will run the risk of receiving more Open Infractions than they are able to resolve. Here are the expectations for closing Open Infractions:

- ☐ After **3 Open Infractions**, student and Possi Leaders will have a documented conversation with a student about their behavior.
 - ☐ Possi Leader will send an email or text message to parent/guardian and student. Possi Leader will document the intervention (Tier I).
 - ☐ We expect students to remain at school until close on Friday to work with staff on a plan to deal with their infractions during the following week.
 - ☐ **Failure to attend will result in a meeting with your parent/guardian.**
- ☐ After **5 Open Infractions** students will have to develop an action plan to address the behavior that will be signed by the student *and* their Possi Leader.
 - ☐ Students are required to close their Open Reflection(s) in person.
 - ☐ Parent(s)/Guardians will need to attend an in-person/virtual meeting.
 - ☐ Meetings for these action plans will be held on Fridays after dismissal.
 - ☐ Students must begin attending activity support or Friday Support Sessions to get help with the behavior as part of their action plan.
 - ☐ **Students will be assigned to The U-Turn Room on the following Friday until 3:00pm if their reflections aren't closed.**
- ☐ After **10 Open Infractions**, student and parent(s) will meet with an Administrator to discuss future placement at the school.

Fighting and School Level Harm

- ☐ Any harm on the school level will generally receive the following set of consequences:
 - ☐ **Restorative Action Plan**
 - ☐ Student reflection on their actions and the path to making it right
 - ☐ **Parent Conference**
 - ☐ A meeting when we review the events and responsibilities of the students in the process to ensure everyone is on the same page
 - ☐ **Restorative Conference**

- ☐ A conference with all of those impacted by the event where the students are taking the feedback and Restorative Action Plans and taking responsibility for their actions and determining how they will repair the harm. The conference portion is not completed until all harm is restored authentically.
- ☐ **Peace Project**
 - ☐ The student plans to bring an equal amount of peace into the community that they brought violence.
- ☐ **Whole School Presentation**
 - ☐ When students share their learning about the harm caused, what they did to repair it, their peace project and what the whole community should expect from them moving forward.
- ☐ **Good Shepherd Conflict Resolution Course**
 - ☐ This is a course either on Saturday or online to support students in reinforcing their conflict resolution abilities.

The U-Turn Room (In-School Suspension)

The U-Turn Room is a space where students spend the day reflecting on their behaviors and designing a plan to restore the harm they caused, while completing their academic assignments. *Not every student who spends time in this space is serving an In-School Suspension.*

In-School suspension is an alternative to an Out-of-School suspension. Students will be able to come to school, but will receive support planning their return to the school community and creating a restoration plan with the help of the Climate and Counseling teams.

Students will remain in The U-Turn Room until the harm is restored and their restorative assignments are completed. When they are done doing so, they can fully return to the community!

Learning Spaces

The Hallway

- ☐ Students are expected to arrive to class on time, keep the hallway clean by using trash cans, and be respectful/mindful of volume.
- ☐ Students must be where their schedule dictates. Any exception must be with expressed permission of the Team Member with whom the student is scheduled.
- ☐ When a student needs to leave class during a period, they are expected to sign out and take a pass.
- ☐ **No students should leave class in the first or last 10 minutes of a class period.**
- ☐ If a student reports to class late, they **MUST** bring a note from a staff member.
- ☐ When in the hallway during class, it is important to be mindful of volume in the hallway as sound can distract learning.

Breakfast + Lunch:

Breakfast is served from 8:20am-8:40am, any request for exception should be taken to the lunch manager.

All students have lunch at the same time daily. Any request for exception should be taken to AP Esposito, the Lunch Manager, or Ms. Rivera to ensure that food is held.

Monday - Thursday	Friday
ALL STUDENTS HAVE LUNCH 11:58AM - 12:40PM	LUNCH TO GO 1:28PM - 12:10PM

- ☐ School store and vending machine snacks must be purchased and eaten during designated lunch periods.
- ☐ **Students may only use the microwave on the 1st Floor during their assigned lunch periods.**
- ☐ B010 will be open during lunch periods for students. Be sure to clean up after yourself while in this space.
- ☐ **Students are to remain in designated areas during lunch and recess.**
 - ☐ **Designated Eating Spaces:** B010, Cafe 1 (B004), Cafe 2 (B006) + School Store
 - ☐ **Designated Recess Space:** Yard
 - ☐ **You may leave these spaces under the following conditions:**
 - ☐ You receive a pass from an educator before breakfast/lunch
 - ☐ Students going to other spaces should not be in the hallways other than the first 3 minutes of lunch or at the 10 minute mark in the organized groups going to the specified spaces.
- ☐ ***EVERY student is responsible for cleaning up after themselves! Failing to clean up after yourself could result in cleaning duties during the week or Friday Cleaning duties from 2p-3:49pm.***

Classrooms:

- ☐ Food and Drink:
 - ☐ **Only people who work in the building are permitted to order food for delivery to the school for consumption during lunch hours.**
- ☐ Drink
 - ☐ In our community we strongly encourage students to **consume water**. It is best to bring a refillable water bottle to school every day.
 - ☐ If it is sticky drink only from containers with sturdy, sealable lids.
 - ☐ **Glass bottles will be confiscated by the School Police per School District of Philadelphia policy**
- ☐ **Students are not permitted to leave any class nor the building, to purchase food.** You may purchase food during Possi in the event that your Possi Leader takes the entire Possi on a walking trip.
- ☐ **Students are not permitted to order food delivery to the building through any third-party app (Uber Eats, GrubHub, DoorDash, etc.)** Your parent/guardian may bring food to the main office on your behalf.

Cutting Classes

Cutting class is when you are not in your assigned space for any amount of time without a note from a person who works in the building. It is the responsibility of students to attend their scheduled classes when they are in the building. Morning Possi, Choice Activity, and Possi Support count as classes.

Over the course of a quarter (progression of cutting)

- ☐ After 3 open class cuts students and Possi Leaders will have a documented conversation

- ☐ Possi Leader will send an email/text message to parent/guardian and student
- ☐ After **5** open class cuts students will have to develop an action plan **with their parent(s) and their whole grade team** to address the behavior. The action plan will be signed by the team.
- ☐ After **7** open class cuts students and parents will meet with an administrator
- ☐ A student who is found to have left the building without permission will receive an immediate parent/guardian phone call by a Climate Team Member or Administrations. If the student leaves again, the parent/guardian will be expected to come to the school for a meeting.
- ☐ **Students must receive an early dismissal from the main office to leave school grounds and must report to Ms. Rivera during Morning Meeting or during lunch to be coded in attendance as an early dismissal.**

Lateness Policy

We expect every student to be in school on time every day. Be on time every day, unless you have a documented excuse note from your parent/guardian (not just a note from the dentist, parent needs to sign it with contact information). Nearly all tardiness is inexcusable and demonstrates a need for students to take responsibility for punctuality.

Lateness to School

- ☐ Our expectation is that you are here on-time EVERYDAY!
- ☐ Class begins at 8:46 daily, and students are expected to be in Possi at that time.
- ☐ **Students arriving at school after 9:30am will get a late pass from the Scholarchip machine when they sign in and will have to call their parent to explain the lateness/receive a text.**

**At The U School a student will be late at 8:46 a.m.
School starts at 8:45 a.m in the designated classroom.**

Admission to the building begins at 8:20am for breakfast.

Scanning into the Building

- ☐ It is your responsibility to sign into **SIS/Scholarchip machine** EVERYDAY when you enter the building; please be advised that there are two forms of attendance- classroom and building with one feeding the other, for your own safety, please be sure to scan.
- ☐ Replacement IDs cost \$5 dollars: Please pay and obtain a receipt from Ms. Rivera, then see Climate Manager Jones in Room 104 to get your ID.

Lateness - Over the course of a quarter (progression of lateness)

- ☐ After **3** latenesses students and Possi Leaders will have a documented conversation
 - ☐ Possi Leader will send an email or text message to parent/guardian and student

- ❑ After **5** latenesses students will have to develop an action plan to address the behavior. The action plan will be signed by both the student and their Possi Leader.
- ❑ After **7** latenesses students will have to develop action plans **with their parent(s)** and **their whole grade team** to address the behavior.
- ❑ After **10** latenesses students and parents will meet with an administrator.

Project U-Turn

Project U-Turn is where students spend time when they are unable to plan or fix the harm they caused in their respective community. Students will be able to reflect on the cause and effect of their actions, and develop strategies to restore the damage that had been caused to their community or individual.

Any student that disrupts the ability of others to learn will be referred by their teacher, and removed from the classroom. Students will be required too:

- ❑ Complete all assigned classwork provided by their teacher.
- ❑ Turn over all Cell phones/electronic devices to the governing body.
- ❑ Students will be instrumental in devising a plan to resolve the issue with the teacher/student.
- ❑ Complete a restorative action plan/ apology letter/public apology before returning to their class.
- ❑ Students **MUST** have a direct restorative conversation with the teacher before returning to class.

Students who are unable to accept responsibility for their actions, and make the choice to not properly restore the issue will be subjected to Progressive Discipline consequences. Students will receive:

- ❑ An **AUTOMATIC** Parent Request
- ❑ Be placed on a Behavior/Attendance Contract
- ❑ Extended stay in Project U-Turn
- ❑ SAP Referral
- ❑ Community Services
- ❑ Out of School Suspension

GRADES & GRADING POLICY

Competency-based Education Overview

Competency-based education is an approach to education that requires students to show that they have mastered the skills & knowledge of a particular level before they can advance to the next level. All students

are held to the same high standard, and all students receive individualized supports and continuous feedback to help them progress in their learning. This approach ensures that students have a strong foundation to build on as they continue through school. The goal of competency-based education is that every student graduates from high school prepared for college, career, and life. There are four key characteristics of competency-based education: [See One Page Overview Here](#)

1 “Competencies” are learning targets that describe the key skills & knowledge that students need in order to graduate from high school ready for college or an entry-level job.

In a competency-based school, the learning targets for each subject area are clearly communicated so that students know exactly what they are expected to know and be able to do in order to earn credit. Students build their competencies continuously throughout grades K-12. As they progress through school, they are expected to perform at higher levels for each competency.

Example “Competencies:”



SCIENCE:
“I can conduct a scientific investigation to explore a question.”

“Don't raise your voice, improve your argument”

— Desmond Tutu



ENGLISH:
“I can write an argumentative essay to persuade my audience.”

2

Assessments require students to use their skills & knowledge to complete challenging tasks that involve real world problems — and that result in creative & meaningful work products.

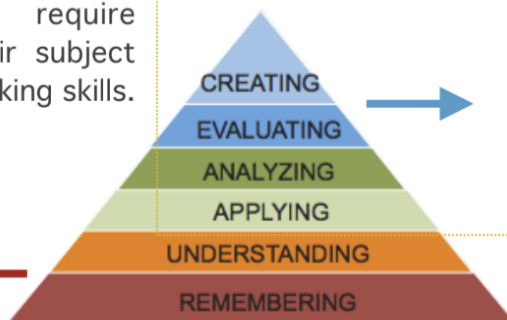
Students must “show evidence” of their learning through performance-based assessments — such as a written essay, media project, or oral presentation — which require students to combine their subject knowledge with higher thinking skills.

True / False Test
 (“Do you know it?”)



Example: “What human systems are most negatively impacting air quality in your neighborhood? Present your research and construct a solution.”

(Do you know it AND can you use it?)



(Bloom's Taxonomy for Higher Thinking Skills)



3

Students get continuous feedback on their work so that they know exactly where they stand at every step of the learning process.

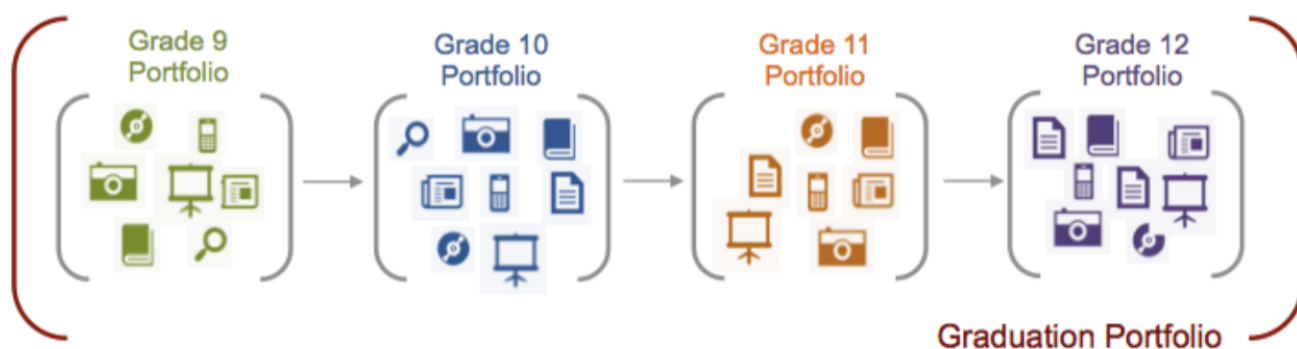
Component	Target = 9 points	Target = 10 points	Target = 11 points	Target = 12 points
Supporting and Comparing the Thesis Statement	- Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement.	- Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement.	- Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement.	- Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement.
Organization	- Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement.	- Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement.	- Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement.	- Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement. - Student is able to identify the main idea of the text and use it to support the thesis statement.

Each column in the rubric describes clearly what student work should look like at each grade level.

Rubrics are used to score student work and to provide students with feedback. Rubrics describe the target performance level for each grade. A ninth grade student should be completing work at a ninth grade performance level, which would receive a score of “9” on the rubric. If a ninth grade student scores at a “level 7” for a written essay, this means he is writing at a seventh grade performance level. He will receive clear feedback and additional supports to help him make improvements to his work, accelerating his learning so that he can reach the learning target for his grade level.

4

Students advance to the next level after they demonstrate mastery of the learning targets by completing all the required tasks at the target performance level.



Just like an artist builds a portfolio of their best art work, students also build portfolios of their best work for each grade level. Once they have completed all the required tasks or projects at the target performance level for their grade (“Grade 9 Portfolio”), students can advance to the next level of work (“Grade 10 Portfolio”). In this way, students can move at their own pace, complete their tasks as soon as they are ready, and earn graduation credits as soon as they “show evidence” that they have mastered the learning targets and are ready to move on.

Grading Policy

There are TWO factors that influence a student's grade: **PERFORMANCE** and **PROGRESS**. Students must complete 100% of their portfolio (projects)! Every student has a certain number of skills they must complete to advance to the next course.

Performance

Performance refers to how well you perform in a particular skill. For example, scoring a 6 on the skill: "How well do I introduce my claim?" means that your performance level is 6, and you are performing at a pre-high school level.

LA.3 WRITING ARGUMENTS

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Level 10	Level 12
How well do I introduce my claim?	I can write a thesis statement that identifies my claim. I can use a quotation or reference to something from popular culture to hook my reader.	I can write a thesis statement to identify my claim(s) in the order they will be discussed. I can use a quotation or reference to something from popular culture to hook my reader. I can explain how the hook relates to my own argument. I can use transition words or conjunctions to establish connections between them. I can identify at least one alternate or counterclaim.	I can write a thesis statement to identify my claims(s) in the order they will be discussed. I can write an engaging hook, and I can explain how the hook relates to my own argument. I can use transition words or conjunctions to establish connections between them. I can distinguish my claims from alternate or counterclaim(s).	I can write a thesis statement that precisely introduces my claim(s) and logically connects my claim(s) and counterclaim(s) in the order they will be discussed. I can write a compelling hook to captivate my audience, and I can explain how the hook relates to my argument. I can clearly explain the connection among all claims using original transition phrases. I can distinguish my claims from alternate or counterclaim(s).	I can write a thesis statement that knowledgeably and precisely introduces my claim(s) and logically connects my claim(s) and counterclaim(s) in the order they will be discussed. I can write a provocative hook to captivate my audience, and I can explain how the hook relates to my argument. I can use original transition phrases to connect each claim in a sequence that makes the most compelling argument for my specific audience.

Target Performance Level

- ❑ Target Performance Level generally represents grade level (9, 10, 11 or 12). Sometimes students have more significant strengths in a subject area (a 9th grader performing at level 11) and other times a student might still be growing in an area (a 9th grader performing at level 6).
- ❑ Target Performance Level allows for a teacher to evaluate a student's best independent performance

Calculating Grades

There is one way to earn a PERFORMANCE grade at The U School.

We score assignments at The U School based upon level performance on our competencies.

Advanced and Honors Credit

Students performing above grade level have the opportunity to have their course title changed. Performing .5 years above grade level on average results in earning an advanced credit. Performing a full grade level above on average results in earning an honors credit. See the chart below:

Academic Progress and Performance

Progress - Students are expected to stay on-track in all of their classes.

If students are ever done with **less than 75%** of their assigned portfolio in any course their Possi Leader and Grade-team Leader.

- ☐ After **the 1st instance conversation** students and Possi Leaders will have a documented conversation
- ☐ After **the 2nd instance** students will have to develop action plans to address the behavior. The parent will have to be involved physically or via phone in the process. The action plan will be signed by the parent.
- ☐ After **the 3rd instance** students will have to develop action plans **with their parent** and **their whole grade team** to address the behavior
- ☐ After **the 4th instance** students and parents will meet with an administrator to discuss future placement at the school

Habits of Success (HOS)

Habits of Success are a large part of student performance during their time at The U School. They represent daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly performances of a student's readiness for greater opportunities in life. The 5 major categories are listed below:

HOS.1 MY WORK HABITS

HOS.2 PLANNING MY FUTURE

HOS.3 BUILDING COMMUNITY & COLLABORATING

HOS.4 PROFESSIONALISM

HOS.5 PRODUCT QUALITY

★ To see them in detail click [here](#)

Possi Grades

Possi is a graded course! In fact for morning Possi you receive a daily preparedness grade. Possi Begins at 8:26 every day. Every Possi and member should be circled up shortly afterwards.

BEHAVIOR & CODE OF CONDUCT

Rules (The Law)

In accordance with the agreement between the Philadelphia Police Department and the School District of Philadelphia, the school is required to notify law enforcement in any of the following incidents occurring on school property, at any school sponsored activity, or traveling to or from a school or school sponsored activity:

- possession of a weapon; defined as an instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury
- threats, acts or instigation of violence
- indecent/sexual assault
- arson
- vandalism
- burglary/theft
- trespassing
- possession, use or sale of controlled substance, designer drug or drug paraphernalia: students should not be in possession of tobacco or any other nicotine delivery device.
- attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit any above.

Bullying

In accordance with the provisions of the Pennsylvania Public School Code, 24 P.S. Sec. 1301-A et seq 1303.1-A, and State Board of Education Regulations, 22 PA Code Sec. 12.3, The School District of Philadelphia ("the District") adopted SRC Policies 248 and 249 to address bullying and harassment. It is the intent of the District to maintain safe environments for all District students. Therefore, it is the District's policy to prohibit all forms of bullying and harassment.

Bullying can be exhibited by an intentional physical, psychological, verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive. Bullying is never resolved in Peer Mediation. Bullying/Cyberbullying is reported immediately to any U School staff member/adult!

Fighting and School Level Harm

Fighting and School Level Harm

- ☐ Any harm on the school level will generally receive the following set of consequences:
-

- ☐ **Restorative Action Plan**
 - ☐ Student reflection on their actions and the path to making it right
- ☐ **Parent Conference**
 - ☐ A meeting when we review the events and responsibilities of the students in the process to ensure everyone is on the same page
- ☐ **Restorative Conference**
 - ☐ A conference with all of those impacted by the event where the students are taking the feedback and Restorative Action Plans and taking responsibility for their actions and determining how they will repair the harm. The conference portion is not completed until all harm is restored authentically.
- ☐ **Peace Project**
 - ☐ The student plans to bring an equal amount of peace into the community that they brought violence.
- ☐ **Whole School Presentation**
 - ☐ When students share their learning about the harm caused, what they did to repair it, their peace project and what the whole community should expect from them moving forward.
- ☐ **Good Shepherd Conflict Resolution Course**
 - ☐ This is a course either on Saturday or online to support students in reinforcing their conflict resolution abilities.

Students will remain in the U-turn Room (In-School suspension) **until the harm is restored**. When they are done doing so, they can fully return to the community!

Appearance Policy

At The U School there is no uniform. However, we expect every student to represent themselves as young professionals who are work ready and dress appropriately for school every day. We are preparing our students for post-secondary environments and now is the time to practice!

The following violations of expectations will result in two options: **(1) purchase a U School t-shirt for \$7 or a U-School Hoodie for \$20 or (2) change into clothes from The U School clothing bins.**

- ☐ **Open Toe Shoes:**
 - ☐ Wearing open toe shoes increases likelihood of injury (Also School District Policy)
- ☐ **Exposure of Undergarments:**
 - ☐ Undergarments should not be visible at any time. Key word under!
- ☐ **Revealing Chest or Stomach:**
 - ☐ The stomach and chests of students not be visible
- ☐ **Hurtful language or imagery**
 - ☐ Any language or images that **HURTS** any student or staff member in the community must be removed.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the highest level of academic integrity. Incidents of cheating, plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will be met with appropriate interventions. ***Performance tasks submitted with integrity questions after they have been discussed during the feedback process, will not count toward the student's yearly body of work.*** Students will have to propose equally challenging tasks to complete instead of the original task they chose to not exercise academic integrity.

Technology

At the U School, we are proud to be a 21st century school and we promote responsible and thoughtful use of personal electronic devices. **However, Cell Phones, iPods, mp3 players and other items are not permitted to be used during school hours. Students will store their devices in the cell phone case located in their Possi's classroom, their locker or personal bag during Morning Meeting. The Possi Leader will lock the case and students can retrieve their phones during Possi at the end of the day.**

The U School is a cell phone free school.

- ❑ We expect students to store their cell phones with their Possi Leader / Advisor every day during Morning Meeting, in their locker or in their personal bag. **Cell phones should not be seen during the school day.**
- ❑ Students coming to school after 9:30am will store them at the Front Door with an Administrator or with the educator they are assigned to at the time of arrival.
- ❑ Students will return to their advisories at the end of the day to collect their devices.

Every Student's Responsibility is to safely store their electronic device during Morning Meeting. If a student's cell phone is stored in a locker, they must pick it up at the end of the day from there. If a student is unwilling to comply with our policy, contact an Administrator.

- ❑ 1st Refusal - Infraction, Restorative Conference with Educator + Phone Call warning with a reminder of the policy from an Administrator
- ❑ **2nd Refusal - Infraction, Restorative Plan + Meeting with Administration to discuss future enrollment at the school**

A device is an extension of the person using it, and therefore if used in a manner that violates the rules, expectations and norms of the school, the young person will own responsibility for their actions in accordance with our Student Intervention Plan. For example, an email, tweet, post, or any other communication made from home about a fellow student at the school will be treated as documentation of saying it directly.

- ★ A device may not be used as accessories in any act of intimidation, indecent/sexual assault, burglary, vandalism, or illegal purchase.
- ★ Cell phones and other electronic devices should be locked in case during class time.
- ★ All students will be assigned a device that they will use for the year. The student is responsible for the care and management of the device during the school day. Prior to receiving the device, the student and their parent/guardian must sign both an acceptable use policy and an agreement of

responsibility.

- ★ Devices damaged by a student will be charged to them prior to re-issuing. If a student, or family is concerned about damage to a device, they may purchase insurance for their device.
- ★ Students must properly secure their laptop everyday. This means storing it in a safe place while at home and at school.
- ★ **STUDENTS MAY NOT POSSESS, PLAY, OR TRANSPORT BACKPACK BLUE TOOTH SPEAKERS OR IT WILL BE CONFISCATED AT THE SCANNER.**

Attendance/Absentee Policy

We expect every healthy student to be at school over 95% of the time. You are expected to attend school every day with the following exceptions: religious holiday, serious illness, death in the family. Requests to excuse absences of any other type should be referred to the Principal.

An excuse note including contact information should be presented to the Possi leader and given to the Secretary when returning from absence. Excuse notes must be submitted within THREE days of return from the absence, otherwise they will be designated unexcused.

If students know that they will be missing a class due to an unavoidable absence, they need to let their teachers know one day ahead of time. Students are responsible for making up any work from classes missed. If students know that they will be missing a class due to an unavoidable absence, they need to let their teachers know one day ahead of time. Students are responsible for making up any work from classes missed.

If your student has missed 3 or more unexcused days, the school will support your child with interventions and assist your family in removing any barriers related to attendance. The school will use the **Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Framework**. This is a prevention framework that organizes building-level resources to address each individual student's academic, attendance and/or behavioral health needs within intervention tiers that vary in intensity. MTSS allows for the early identification of students who are at risk for poor learning outcomes. The increasingly intense tiers (e.g. Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3) sometimes referred to as levels of prevention represent a continuum of supports.

Tier 1: Universal Support (0-2 unexcused absences)

Tier 2: Targeted Support (3-9 unexcused absences)

Tier 3: Intensive Support (10 or more unexcused absences)

If your child's attendance does not improve after the school has put interventions in place at Tier 1 and Tier 2 then a referral to either The Department of Human Services (DHS) or The Philadelphia Family Court is required by state law. At that time, the family will be contacted by a Truancy Provider from DHS to provide support/services in the home.

Excuse Notes

Students must submit their absence note to the absence note Google Form OR THEIR POSSI LEADER. An absence note must have a signature from the parent. If a student does not have a cell phone, they may ask their Possi Leader to take a picture of the note and submit it on their behalf.

Form: bit.ly/uschoolabsence (case sensitive)

Leaving the Building

A student seeking permission to leave the campus during the school day must have their parent/guardian speak to an Administrator. The student's parent/guardian must provide verbal consent and verification of parent/guardian's identity. **Siblings and non-guardians are not permitted to sign students out unless the parent/guardian has verified permission with an Administrator.**

In case of an emergency, a student will only be released to a parent, an approved person from the student's emergency contact list or in special cases with the permission of a parent when called by a staff member (nurse, secretary, principal.).

Early dismissals will not be issued during the first (not before 10:00a) or last (not after 3:00p) hours of the school day **unless there is an emergency.**

Only parents/guardians and approved emergency contacts are allowed to enter the school and pick up a student for early dismissal. The approved adult must present a valid identification to the School Police Officer upon entry into the building, then to the secretary in the Main Office. Once approved, the parent will complete the "Early Dismissal Sign-Out Form" prior to release of any student in the main office of the U School.

Safety Protocols

- **Students may not leave the building to go into the community and return to the building unless they are with an adult for an approved class trip.**
- **Students may not open any doors to allow anyone into the building or receive food deliveries.**
 - **Students may not order food.** *Parents are not permitted to order food to be delivered to their child; however, parents/guardians may physically bring food to the building and leave it in the Main Office for their child during their assigned lunch time.*
- **Students may not enter the building through any other door besides the Main Entrance on 7th Street.**

OPENING DOORS OR LETTING SOMEONE IN THE BUILDING THROUGH AN UNAUTHORIZED ENTRANCE IS UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY AND/OR RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT. BOTH VIOLATIONS WARRANT A SUSPENSION.

Early Dismissals

It is the responsibility of the student to present the need for Early Dismissal to their Possi Leader during Morning

Meeting. Students who arrive at school after Morning Meeting must speak to their Possi Leader. In order to participate in sports, internships and any other extracurriculars students **must be on-track in all classes** and not have more than **one reflection** to leave the building.

- ☐ **One-time Early Dismissal (Main Office manages)**
 - ☐ Students must complete the early dismissal Google Form in the main office as they leave, so the school has a backup record of the dismissal
- ☐ **Recurring Early Dismissals (Possi Leader manages eligibility)**
 - ☐ Therapy/ Health Appointments:
 - ☐ Sports
 - ☐ Extracurricular Program (example: Mural Arts, Village of Arts & Humanities, Philadelphia Futures)

Work Rosters / Early Dismissal for Extracurriculars

Only on-track seniors are immediately eligible for early release rosters!

Work Roster Criteria

- ☐ To receive a work roster you must meet the following criteria:
 - ☐ A 4th year student (If you are a 3rd year student, you must schedule a conference with your parent, Possi Leader and the Principal to get permission for early dismissal)
 - ☐ Be on track in ALL classes (defined as 75% or more of assigned performances complete)
 - ☐ Possess an Attendance score of +90%
 - ☐ Possess a Productivity score of +90%
 - ☐ Possess an Culture score of +90%
 - ☐ Signed Letter of Understanding by student and parent/guardian
 - ☐ Monthly submission of paystubs from place of employment

ORGANIZATION & MEDICAL	
Schedule	
LINK TO VIRTUAL TIME FRAME HERE	
Calendar	
The U School Calendar can be viewed here: https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=uschool.org_u03lhbjmjbe53iqdqpqa0bb8o%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America%2FNew_York	

August 29, 2022

First Day for Grades K-12– Student Attendance

September 5, 2022	Labor Day– Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed
September 16, 2022	Full Day Professional Development – Schools Closed for Students
September 26, 2022	Rosh Hashanah – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed
October 5, 2022	Yom Kippur – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed
October 7, 2022	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Dismissal
October 10, 2022	Indigenous People Day – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed
October 12 - 14, 2022	Interim Reports
November 4, 2022	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Dismissal
November 8, 2020	Election Day – Schools Closed for Staff and Students
November 11, 2022	Veterans' Day - School Closed and Administrative Offices Closed
November 15, 2022	Term 1 Ends – Grades Due
November 21, 2022	Report Card Conferences – 3 Hour Early Dismissal
November 24-25, 2022	Thanksgiving Holiday – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed
December 2, 2022	Full Day Professional Development – Schools Closed for Students
December 16, 2022	Professional Development Half Day– 3 Hour Early Dismissal
December 21-22, 2022	Interim Reports
December 26, 2022	Christmas (Observed) – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed
December 27 - 30, 2022	Winter Recess
January 2, 2023	New Year's Day (Observed) – Schools and

	Administrative Offices Closed	
January 3, 2023	Full Day Professional Development – Schools Closed for Students	
January 16, 2023	Dr. Martin Luther King Day – Schools and Administrative Offices Closed	
January 20, 2023	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal	
January 25, 2023	Term 2 Ends – Grades Due	
February 1-3, 2023	Report Card Conferences – 3 Hour Early Dismissal	
February 17, 2023	Professional Development Half Day– 3 Hour Early Dismissal	
February 20, 2023	Presidents’ Day – Schools and Administrative Offices Closed	
February 27 - March 1, 2023	Interim Reports	
March 3, 2023	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal	
March 17, 2023	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal	
March 24, 2023	Term 3 Ends – Grades Due	
March 29 - 31, 2023	Report Card Conferences – 3 Hour Early Dismissal	
April 3 - 6, 2023	Spring Recess – Schools Closed	
April 7, 2023	Good Friday – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed	
April 14, 2023	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal	
April 21, 2023	Eid al-Fitr – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices <i>Closed</i>	
May 5, 2023	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal	
May 8 - 10, 2023	Interim Reports	

May 16, 2023	Election Day (Tentative) – Schools Closed for Staff and Students
May 19, 2023	Professional Development Half Day – 3 Hour Early Dismissal
May 29, 2023	Memorial Day – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed
June 9 - 13, 2023	Graduation Window
June 13, 2023	Last Day for Students / Term 4 Ends
June 14, 2023	Last Day for Staff/ Full Day Professional Development
June 19, 2023	Juneteenth (Observed) – Schools Closed and Administrative Offices Closed

Transportation

Currently, transportation will be available from SEPTA for students who live at least 1.5 miles away from the school ([School District of Philadelphia's transportation policies](#)). The U School is best served by the 47 bus (which goes north on 7th Street and south on 8th Street) and the 3 bus (which runs along Cecil B. Moore, so a student can walk from 7th and Cecil B Moore to the school).

Students taking Regional Rail can upgrade their student key card at [specific SEPTA locations](#) for \$4.00. The Temple University stop is 1.5 blocks from our entrance.

KEY CARDS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED ON A SCHOOL BASED LEVEL. If a student loses their Key Card, they must let Mrs. Esposito or Ms. Rivera know so that the lost card can be canceled and replaced. Replacement Key Cards are \$5 and can be paid with Cash, CashApp or Venmo.

Weather & Emergencies

The U School is a School District of Philadelphia school and operates the same as other Philadelphia public and charter schools do. Please listen to your local news stations, or go online to philadelphia.cbslocal.com, myfoxphilly.com or www.philasd.org to check for school closings due to inclement weather or weather emergencies. The U School's school code is 5620.

Records

Student records will be released to schools, parents, and students with appropriate parental request/release.

24 hours notice is required for students records if made by outside agency and only when accompanied by required parental release form.

Medication

Students may not carry and/or distribute medication (over the counter or prescriptions) to him/herself or to any other person. Medication such as over the counter and prescriptions can only be distributed by the nurse or an administrator with supporting documentation.

Students may carry asthma medication with the submission of an MED-1.

Appendix

Competency-to-Grade Conversion

Grade 9 CCA	Grade 10 CCA	Grade 11 CCA	Grade 12 CCA	Percent	SDP Grade Conversion	SDP GPA Conversion
7	8	9	10	60	D	0.7
7.05	8.05	9.05	10.05	61	D	0.8
7.1	8.1	9.1	10.1	62	D	0.9
7.15	8.15	9.15	10.15	63	D	1
7.2	8.2	9.2	10.2	64	D	1.1
7.25	8.25	9.25	10.25	65	D	1.2
7.3	8.3	9.3	10.3	66	D	1.3
7.35	8.35	9.35	10.35	67	D	1.4
7.4	8.4	9.4	10.4	68	D	1.5
7.45	8.45	9.45	10.45	69	D	1.6
7.5	8.5	9.5	10.5	70	C	1.7
7.55	8.55	9.55	10.55	71	C	1.8
7.6	8.6	9.6	10.6	72	C	1.9
7.65	8.65	9.65	10.65	73	C	2
7.7	8.7	9.7	10.7	74	C	2.1
7.75	8.75	9.75	10.75	75	C	2.2
7.8	8.8	9.8	10.8	76	C	2.3
7.85	8.85	9.85	10.85	77	C	2.4
7.9	8.9	9.9	10.9	78	C	2.5
7.95	8.95	9.95	10.95	79	C	2.6
8	9	10	11	80	B	2.7
8.05	9.05	10.05	11.05	81	B	2.8
8.1	9.1	10.1	11.1	82	B	2.9
8.15	9.15	10.15	11.15	83	B	3
8.2	9.2	10.2	11.2	84	B	3.1
8.25	9.25	10.25	11.25	85	B	3.2
8.3	9.3	10.3	11.3	86	B	3.3
8.35	9.35	10.35	11.35	87	B	3.4
8.4	9.4	10.4	11.4	88	B	3.5
8.45	9.45	10.45	11.45	89	B	3.6
8.5	9.5	10.5	11.5	90	A	3.7
8.55	9.55	10.55	11.55	91	A	3.73
8.6	9.6	10.6	11.6	92	A	3.76
8.65	9.65	10.65	11.65	93	A	3.79
8.7	9.7	10.7	11.7	94	A	3.82
8.75	9.75	10.75	11.75	95	A	3.85
8.8	9.8	10.8	11.8	96	A	3.88
8.85	9.85	10.85	11.85	97	A	3.91
8.9	9.9	10.9	11.9	98	A	3.94
8.95	9.95	10.95	11.95	99	A	3.97
9	10	11	12	100	A	4

