



# UTOPIAN

ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS

## **Middle School Student/Parent Handbook 2024 – 2025 School Year**

2750 Forest Parkway  
Ellenwood, GA 30294

470-446-1070

**“We Are Unique. We Are Utopian.”**

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## **ABOUT US**

Utopian Academy for the Arts is a state-approved charter school open to all middle school students throughout Clayton County, GA.

The rationale for the enrollment plan for Utopian Academy for the Arts is to provide a significant educational benefit of having a gender-based classroom environment, longer school day, longer school year, Saturday school, and classes in the dramatic, media, and culinary arts, as well as broadcast media.

Our school will remain small enough to operate in a fiscally sound manner, while offering the requisite programming for students to complete middle school prepared to perform very well in high school. We seek to address the challenges facing our students by establishing a school driven by high expectations; using additional time to focus on academics, acceleration, and remediation; and creating a culture that values hard work, achievement, and preparation for upper grades such that young boys and girls will be ready for a range of public and private high school options upon entering 9th grade.

## **MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT**

Through a structured and supportive environment, the Utopian Academy for the Arts will develop academic and artistic students to enter and to succeed in the global society with proficiency to enroll in a college, university or specialty school of their choice.

Utopian Academy for the Arts shall be a community-nurturing academic excellence for all students and demonstrating leadership in character development. The vision statement is intended to serve as both the blueprint for improvement and the benchmark by which we will evaluate our progress.

## **HISTORY**

The idea for this school was the result of matching a need with a solution. Utopian Academy for the Arts was founded on the premise of serving one of the most historically underrepresented, and underserved communities in the metropolitan Atlanta area: Clayton County, GA.

The Utopian Academy for the Arts is a charter school network offering a comprehensive educational program in the dramatic, media, and culinary arts. The Utopian Academy was founded to serve one of the most underrepresented and underserved communities in the metropolitan Atlanta area: Clayton County.

The network currently serves about 800 students each year on its 68,000 square-foot campus in Ellenwood, Georgia. In 2018, Utopian Academy's middle school's overall performance was higher than 78% of Georgia public schools and its students' academic growth outpaced 99% of the state's schools, according to the Governor's Office of Student Achievement. With the strong success of the middle school program, the Utopian Academy for the Arts was approved to expand to add a second school in Clayton County. The elementary school opened in 2021 and has continued to add a grade each year. This success led to the opening of a third school, Utopian Academy for the Arts HS.

## **UTOPIAN ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS**

Dr. Artesius Miller **Founder and Founding Board Chair**

Anthony Bryant **Founding Board Treasurer**

Jacqueline Heard-Fields **Founding Board Secretary**

George Bandy **Founding Board Member**

Jai Gilyard **Founding Board Member**

Linda Stevenson **Founding Board Member**  
*(Deceased)*

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## ARTS INTEGRATION

Utopian Academy for the Arts sees the arts not as a peripheral part of the curriculum, but as an essential part of the knowledge all children should cultivate. Early instruction in the arts should be noncompetitive, and provide many opportunities to sing, dance, listen to music, act, read and write poetry, draw, paint, make objects, and explore nutrition through academics. Equally important, children should be exposed to journalism, video production, fine paintings, great music, and other inspiring examples of art. As children progress in their knowledge and competencies, they can begin to learn more about the methods and terminology of the different arts and become familiar with an even wider range of great artists and acknowledged masterworks. Through attaining a basic knowledge of the arts, children are not only better prepared to understand and appreciate works of art, but also to communicate their ideas, feelings, and judgments to others.

Utopian Academy for the Arts will offer classes in the dramatic arts, media arts, and culinary arts for students as a supplement to the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

### **Dramatic Arts:**

- Theatre
- Dramatic Writing
- Acting
- Dance
- Music Appreciation
- Chorus
- Piano
- Song Writing

### **Media Arts:**

- Visual Arts
- Digital Arts
- Media Arts
- Film and Television
- Coding
- Computer Science
- Animation



# **SINGLE GENDER EDUCATION**

Students enrolled at Utopian Academy for the Arts will take core academic classes with peers of the same gender. The rationale for the enrollment plan for Utopian Academy for the Arts is to provide a significant educational benefit for students being in a gender-based classroom environment.

In the last few years, the creation of single-gender schools have been embraced in various parts of the U.S. as a strategy for ameliorating the risks and hardships commonly associated with the academic performance and social development of Black and Latino students. Many theories have been offered as a reason that single gender learning environments work better for some students. In single gender schools, preoccupation with students of the opposite gender is eliminated, allowing for a more single-minded focus on academics. Our school design has been strategically informed by research on the efficacy of a gender-based educational model for our student population.

## **STAFF DIRECTORY**

### **GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

<b>Board Chair</b>	Mr. Joshua Meniffee
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Mr. Reginald Colbert
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mr. Steven Garner
<b>Member</b>	Mr. Terance Madden
<b>Member</b>	Mr. Jamil Jude
<b>CFO Emeritus (<i>ex-officio</i>)</b>	Mr. Anthony Bryant
<b>Recording Secretary (<i>ex-officio</i>)</b>	Dr. Artesius Miller
<b>Member</b>	Mr. Christopher Copeland
<b>Member</b>	Mrs. Stephany Walls

### **UTOPIAN ACADEMY LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Founder/CEO	Dr. Artesius Miller
Executive Director	Ms. Pamela Dingle
School Principal	Mr. Travis Joshua
Chief Financial Officer	Mr. Dale Smith
Director of Network Operations	Mr. Greg Leaphart
Director of Strategic Initiatives	Mrs. Elisha Byers
Director of Arts	Mrs. Ebonne Craft
Dean of Students	Mr. Damion Miller
Executive Assistance to the CEO	Ms. Judy Richmond
Executive Assistant to the Executive Director	Ms. Jasmine Hart

<b>Classroom Teachers:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Content Area</b>
Ms. Imani Favors	6 <sup>th</sup>	Math
Mr. Ayodele Harrison	7 <sup>th</sup>	Math
Mr. Dashawn Watkins	8 <sup>th</sup>	Math
Ms. Camilya Tappin	6 <sup>th</sup>	ELA
Mrs. Yolanda Blackshear	7 <sup>th</sup>	ELA
Ms. Diane Brown	8 <sup>th</sup>	ELA
Mr. Sheldon Holloway	6 <sup>th</sup>	Social Studies
Mrs. Arlethia Almond	7 <sup>th</sup>	Social Studies
Mr. Paul Johnson	8 <sup>th</sup>	Social Studies
Mrs. Doris Warren	6 <sup>th</sup>	Science
Mrs. Sharana Horton	7 <sup>th</sup>	Science
Mr. Christopher Starks	8 <sup>th</sup>	Science
Mr. Niquevious Smith	All	Paraprofessional
Mr. Roger Morris	All	Special Education
Ms. Breonna Walker	All	Special Education
Mr. Khalil Ladler	All	Health/PE
Mr. Byron Horne	All	Media Arts/TV/Film
Mr. Jerel Jefferson	All	Music, Chorus, Piano
Ms. Kira Buckner	All	Dance
Ms. Casey Jordan	All	Theatre Arts
Ms. Shitterria Harris	All	Visual Arts
Mr. Richard Walls	All	Coding/Animation

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Position</b>
Mrs. India Hendrix	Front Office Manager
Ms. Angelic Fox	Registrar
Mr. Juan Smith	Prin. Asst/PFE Liaison
Ms. Jamelle Boyer	Director Nutrition Services
Mrs. Avis Pitts	Speech Language Pathologist
Mrs. Zinta Perkins	Federal Programs Director
Mr. Albert Thomas	Data Collections Coordinator
Ms. Janine Slater	School Nurse
Mr. Raymond Alexander	IT Director
Mrs. Glynis Terrell	ESOL Instructor
Mr. Charles Hall	Facilities Director
Mrs. Cynthia Jones	School Counselor

## PRINCIPAL WELCOME LETTER

August 1, 2024

Dear Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s):

Greetings, Utopian Family!! We are so excited about this school year! Our staff is enthused about what we will be offering our scholars. We are dedicated to infusing the arts into the core classes as we develop the whole child academically, socially, and emotionally.

At Utopian, students will engage in a highly structured, innovative, and productive environment with many opportunities to showcase their gifts and talents. Additionally, parental involvement will be a major component for us this year. We invite parents to be a major part of students' academic and social endeavors by participating in monthly engagements with our stakeholders.

Our theme for the year is *"Unique Standard"*. We are all responsible for scholars' academic improvement and success and we will be dedicated, committed, and unswerving to ensure that every child succeeds.

With the village of stakeholders working together fervently, we are destined for even greater student academic achievement and success while building foundational skills necessary for students to meet the demands of their future. We will seize every opportunity to show the world that ... We are unique! We are Utopian!!

Powerfully,

*Travis Joshua*

Travis Joshua  
Principal

## Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals: *English, Spanish, Vietnamese*



UTOPIAN  
ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS

### Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

July 29, 2024

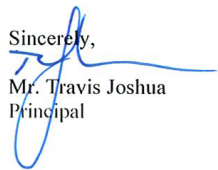
Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of Every Student Succeeds Act, **Utopian Academy for the Arts** would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher –
  - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
  - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
  - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/ or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact Mr. Travis Joshua at (470) 446-1070.

Sincerely,

  
Mr. Travis Joshua  
Principal



# UTOPIAN

## ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS

### Derecho a conocer las calificaciones profesionales de los maestros y paraprofesionales

29 de julio de 2024

Estimados padres:

Conforme a los requisitos de la Ley para que todos los alumnos tengan éxito, a la **Academia Utopica de las Artes** le gustaría comunicarle que puede solicitar información sobre las calificaciones profesionales del (de los) maestro(s) y/o paraprofesional(es) de su hijo/a. Puede solicitarse la siguiente información:

- Si el maestro del alumno:
  - o ha cumplido con la calificación y los requisitos para la licencia del Estado para los niveles del grado y las asignaturas en las que el maestro enseña;
  - o está enseñando en carácter provisional o de emergencia a través del cual no se exigen los requisitos para la licencia ni la calificación del Estado y
  - o está enseñando en el campo de la disciplina de la certificación del maestro.
- Si son paraprofesionales los que le brindan servicios al alumno y, de ser así, sus calificaciones.

Si desea solicitar información acerca de las calificaciones del maestro y/o paraprofesional de su hijo/a, comuníquese con Sr. Travis Joshua al (470) 446-1070.

Saludos cordiales,

Sr. Travis Joshua

Principal



# UTOPIAN

## ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS

**Quyền được biết trình độ chuyên môn của giáo viên và nhân viên bán chuyên nghiệp**

**Tháng Bảy 29, 2024**


Kính gửi Quý phụ huynh,

Tuân thủ các yêu cầu của Đạo luật Mỗi Học sinh Thành công, Học viện Nghệ thuật Utopian muốn thông báo cho bạn rằng bạn có thể yêu cầu thông tin về trình độ chuyên môn của (các) giáo viên và / hoặc (các) chuyên gia bán chuyên nghiệp của học sinh của bạn. Các thông tin sau đây có thể được yêu cầu:

- Cho dù giáo viên của học sinh -
  - đã đáp ứng các tiêu chí cấp phép và trình độ chuyên môn của Nhà nước cho các cấp lớp và lĩnh vực môn học mà giáo viên cung cấp hướng dẫn.
  - đang giảng dạy trong tình trạng khẩn cấp hoặc tạm thời khác mà qua đó các tiêu chí cấp bằng hoặc cấp phép của Nhà nước đã được miễn; và
  - đang giảng dạy trong lĩnh vực kỹ luật của chứng chỉ của giáo viên.
- Cho dù đưa trẻ là Dịch vụ cung cấp bởi các chuyên gia bán chuyên nghiệp và nếu Vì vậy, của họ trình độ chuyên môn.

Nếu bạn muốn yêu cầu thông tin liên quan đến trình độ của giáo viên và / hoặc nhân viên bán chuyên nghiệp của con bạn, vui lòng liên hệ với ông Joshua Travis theo số (470) 446-1070.

Trân trọng,



Ông Travis Joshua  
Chính

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

MORNING/BREAKFAST/ARRIVAL	7:30 AM
SCHOOL BEGINS	7:45 AM
SCHOOL DISMISSAL	3:45 PM – 12:55 PM

## **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM**

Utopian Academy for the Arts offers school-wide breakfast and lunch through the National School Lunch Program. All Utopian Academy for the Arts students receive meals free of charge through Utopian’s engagement in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program with the Nutrition Division of the Georgia Department of Education.

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

### **Student Admissions Policies and Procedures**

As a free public school, Utopian Academy for the Arts shall admit all students who wish to attend the school. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the school. Students will be considered for admissions without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability.

The application process at UAFA is comprised of the following:

- Completion of a Student Registration and Application document
- Attendance of a New Parent Orientation Meeting
- Parent signature on school contract
- Proof of Immunizations and proof of minimum age requirements, e.g., birth certificate
- Home Language Survey
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form

### **UAFA Lottery**

Following the open enrollment period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event this happens, UAFA will hold a public random drawing to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students (2<sup>nd</sup> year forward) who





public random drawing shall be allowed each school year. Enrollment preferences in this case of a

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list according to their draw in the lottery. The wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the school year in accordance with UAFA's enrollment policies and procedures.

## **UNIFORM POLICY**

All Utopian Academy students are required to be in uniform **every day**. Students are required to be in uniform during field trips and other school related activities as well.

The Utopian Academy for the Arts uniform standards are as follows:

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Shirts – All Shirts Will Be Tucked In**

Girls: Black Utopian Oxford / Polo Shirts

Boys: Black Utopian Oxford/ Polo Shirts

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Shirts - All Shirts Will Be Tucked In**

Girls: Gray Utopian Oxford / Polo Shirts

Boys: Gray Utopian Oxford / Polo Shirts

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Shirts - All Shirts Will Be Tucked In**

Girls: Burgundy Utopian Oxford / Polo Shirts

Boys: Burgundy Utopian Oxford / Polo Shirts

### **6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Bottoms**

Any khaki pants, black pants, or black jeans (Skirts, Shorts, Pants). Pants may not be distressed, and no holes of any type should be present.

SKIRTS, SHORTS, AND SKORTS: Fall two inches below the knee, loose fitting.

(No joggers, sweatpants, or leggings, jeggings, jeans)

### **Shoes/Boots**

**All footwear must be closed-toe and no sling-backs. Flip flops and crocs are not permitted.**

### **Outerwear (Boys & Girls)**

Solid Black, Grey, or Maroon Sweaters/Jackets/Hoodies. All outerwear including sweaters, jackets, and hoodies must be in the before mentioned solid colors. Writing on sweaters, jackets, hoodies shall not be allowed.

### **Female Dress Code:**

BELTS – *Any color belt is acceptable.*

JEWELRY - Conservative jewelry is permitted. No tongue rings or facial piercings other than ears or nose. Nose rings must be limited to studs; no hoops allowed.

TATTOOS - Fake or Real – Are considered inappropriate and are unacceptable.

HAIR - The style is a parenting decision but the inclusion of items into the hair will meet the following restrictions: the items may not be removed for any length of time during the day. The item will be very secure and if the beads or other small items begin to fall the student will be asked to remove the rest, place them in a bag and take them home. Any items or symbols in the hair that can be interpreted as advocating for or against anything or may be disruptive to the educational environment must be removed. Students may not groom themselves at school. Hairbrushes, combs and other items used outside of the restroom will be confiscated. All students' hair must be a natural color.

HEADWEAR – No disruptive headwear; No hats, scarves, or bandanas of any color.

KEYCHAINS - The keychain should be under the shirt, in the pocket completely, or put in a purse.

UNDERWEAR - No underclothing (panties, bra, slip, or any other item) should ever be visible through any method whether on purpose or accident.

### **Male Dress Code:**

BELTS – *Any color is acceptable.*

JEWELRY - Conservative jewelry is permitted. No tongue rings permitted or facial piercings other than ears or nose. Nose rings must be limited to studs; no hoops allowed.

TATTOOS - Fake or Real – Are considered inappropriate and are unacceptable.

HAIR- The style is a parenting decision but the inclusion of items into the hair will meet the following restrictions: the items may not be removed for any length of time during the day. The item will be very secure and if the beads or other small items begin to fall the student will be asked to remove the rest, place them in a bag and take them home. Any items or symbols that can be interpreted as advocating for or against anything or may be disruptive to the educational environment must be removed.

Students may not groom themselves at school. Hairbrushes, combs and other items used outside of the restroom will be confiscated. All students' hair must be a natural color.

KEYCHAINS - The keychain should be under the shirt, in the pocket completely. The keys or chain should never be visible at school.

UNDERCLOTHES - No underclothing, including but not limited to boxers, brief, or undershirts should be visible, whether on purpose or accident

### **Uniform Schedule**

The following uniform schedule should be observed by all students:

- **Monday – Friday: Normal dress code.**
- **Dress Down Days** will be scheduled and announced. On Dress Down Days, students may wear sweatshirts, hoodies, and other gear that represent UAFA. If students opt out of Dress Down Day, they must abide by the normal dress code.

**Our uniform policy will be enforced on a daily basis. Students coming to school out of uniform will be required to call a parent/guardian to bring the missing/improperly worn item.**

**At no time should any aspect of student dress disrupt the learning environment.**

Parents or students who have specific questions about a garment's appropriateness, financial assistance, or would like to request an exemption from the dress code for religious reasons should contact the principal.

### **BEING OUT OF UNIFORM**

In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students will wear a uniform to school every day except when given written permission that it is a "non-uniform day." All elements of our school uniform are listed in the Student Handbook. Students that arrive to school out of uniform will be required to call a parent/guardian to bring the missing item. **If a parent is unable to bring this item, the student will report to the Dean of Students. However, based on the discretion of School Leadership, an additional consequence may be assigned.**

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

School doors open at **7:30 am** every day. Unless you have a scheduled appointment with individual teachers or other staff beforehand, scholars are not to be dropped off at school before **7:30 a.m.** unless they are enrolled in the Before Care Program.

The school day officially ends at **3:45 pm** Monday-Friday, unless otherwise noted via school calendar. *As your scholar's safety is our top priority at Utopian Academy for the Arts, scholars will not be allowed to leave school grounds with any adult other than their parents/guardians or other designees specified in advance on the scholar's transportation plan.*

- Any adults, including parents/guardians, picking up their scholar will be asked to show ID each day until that adult is recognized on-sight by a member of Utopian Academy for the Arts staff.
- Anyone picking up a scholar will be 18 years of age or older.
- Parents/Guardians may make changes and additions to a scholar's transportation plan by filling out a form in the front office with the Office Manager.

### Arrival

As stated above, all scholars will remain in the care of the adult dropping-off at the school until the official door opening at **7:30 a.m.**, unless enrolled in the before care program. No scholars should be released from their car on any given morning until a member of School Leadership has officially started the car arrival procedure in the drop-off area. Car rider arrival will run from **7:30 am-8:15 am** each day. For the safety of all scholars during this time, all cars are required to remain in park until officially dismissed by a member of School Leadership. Scholars entering the building after **8:15 am** will be considered tardy and will report to the main office to receive a tardy slip to be permitted inside of the cafeteria. Unless there is a scheduled meeting, parents are not to be in the hallways during arrival time, including tardy drop-offs, as instruction has begun.

### Dismissal

Dismissal will begin at **3:45 pm** Monday-Friday, unless otherwise noted via the school calendar. For the safety of all scholars and staff, adults picking-up scholars are required to remain in their cars and are not permitted to come to the doors where scholars are released. Scholars will be released by grade level. For the safety of our scholars, all drivers are required to remain in park during the dismissal procedure. Once scholars are released to their cars a member of School Leadership will signal that the group of cars may circulate out of the parking line. The dismissal line will end at **4:00 pm**.

Each/every scholar **not picked up by 4:00 p.m.** (according to the school's clock) will be charged a late fee/after school care drop-in charge of \$10 for every 15- minute portion/increment (i.e., 4:00 pm-4:15 pm= \$10. 4:16pm-4:30 pm=\$20). **Failure to pick up a child by 4:30 pm,** (with no communication from a parent or guardian) will be considered an emergency and could result in a call to local law enforcement on behalf of the scholar. All parents are encouraged to have an emergency backup person to avoid these types of situations.

### **LATE PICK-UP**

Students will be picked up within 30 minutes after the completion of the school day. Students who are serving detention or attending an after-school program, will be picked up from the school within 15 minutes after the completion of the detention or school program. If the students are not picked up from school within 15 minutes as described above, parents will be assessed a \$10 late fee/after school care drop-in charge. Additionally, if such late pick-ups become a habit, then a school staff member may take the student to the local police station and may contact children services.

**EXAMPLE 1: STUDENTS NOT PICKED UP BY 4:00 pm WILL BE TAKEN TO AFTER-CARE, AND THE PARENT WILL BE ASSESSED A \$10 LATE FEE/ AFTER SCHOOL CARE DROP IN CHARGE.**

**EXAMPLE 2: STUDENTS SERVING DETENTION, THAT ARE NOT PICKED UP BY THE DESIGNATED DETENTION TIME WILL BE TAKEN TO AFTER-CARE, AND THE PARENT WILL BE ASSESSED A \$10 LATE FEE/ AFTER SCHOOL CARE DROP IN CHARGE.**

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

Utopian Academy for the Arts is committed to nurturing the growth and development of scholars by providing intentional and rigorous academic programming that prepares them for life in college and beyond.

Utopian Academy for the Arts curriculum is aligned to the Standards of Excellence. Education “standards” define expectations for student learning by stating what scholars should know at the conclusion of a course of study. Standards define learning expectations. Standards do not dictate curriculum (i.e. textbooks and reading lists) or prescribe a method of instruction. The Georgia Standards of Excellence are meant to provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. Instructional practice of Utopian Academy for the Arts includes, but is not limited to:

- Ongoing, informal assessment
- Emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving
- Individualized educational plans
- Guided practice and spiraled review
- Integrated language arts
- Academic skills taught within context
- Professional life skills and training
- Active versus passive learning
- Hands-on activities
- Emphasis on independent functioning
- Writing across all content areas
- Regular, formal assessment
- Standardized state assessments
- Cultural awareness through the arts

### **HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS**

The goal of homework is to instill a sense of accountability, motivation, and self-confidence. Research shows that homework is good for children; it boosts overall academic performance and teaches students responsibility. Young children must understand that their schoolwork is important; they get that message when families make homework a priority. More importantly, making homework a priority gives children increased opportunities to learn. Utopian Academy for The Arts wants children to continue learning beyond the school day; homework is a powerful way to extend learning.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to insist that homework be taken seriously and done carefully. Please make it a habit of checking your child’s homework each night. An average of one hour, per night.

Homework will be assigned at teachers’ discretion. Occasionally, classes may assign projects to be completed in lieu or in addition to nightly homework. All homework is expected to be

completed nightly and submitted complete the next day unless otherwise stipulated by the teacher.

Make-up assignments and extensions may be granted at the sole discretion of the teacher.

When projects are issued, the teacher will review the expectations, grading, and deadlines with students in class. Students will receive a rubric that they will sign indicating they understand the project. Students will be required to bring this document home in order to be signed by the parent/guardian to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the project components, expectations, and deadlines.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Communication between the home and school helps bind the student, parents, guardians, teacher, and administration into a team working toward a common goal. At any time, parents may call teachers or administrators to schedule a time to meet and discuss their child's progress.

Report Cards are designed to inform parents/guardians of their scholar's academic growth as well as any potential academic problems their scholar may be experiencing. Report Cards may also be used to acknowledge students who are doing outstanding work, or a student who is making significant academic progress due to exceptional effort.

Students in 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade will receive letter grades. Utopian Academy for the Arts follows a semester grading schedule. Each student in grades 6 – 8 will receive 4 progress reports and 4 report cards.

Your child's report card may be held in the office if your child has outstanding account balances, including but not limited to, textbook replacement costs, unpaid meal fees (breakfast/lunch) and/or balances for before/after school care. Any student that loses or damages a textbook will pay for that textbook within two weeks of the initial notice being sent to the parent.

### **Core Content Grade Weights**

Within each content area, the grade weights are as follows:

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Inclusions</b>	<b>Weights</b>
Classwork	Class Paper to Pencil Small Group Work In Class Projects <i>Arts/PE (Participation)</i>	40%
Homework		10%
Tests	Unit Assessments Summative Assessments <i>Arts/PE (Performances)</i>	20%
Quizzes	Formative Assessments	15%
Projects		15%

### **Arts Department Grade Weights**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Inclusions</b>	<b>Weights</b>
Classwork	Class Paper to Pencil Small Group Work In Class Projects	20%
Homework		10%
Tests	Unit Assessments/Projects Summative Assessments/Projects	40%
Performance-Based Tasks	Quizzes (Performance Based/Written)  Exit Tickets (Performance Based/Written)	30%



## **TESTING**

All student's 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> will participate in the Georgia Milestones Assessment each spring. Students' scores will be shared with parents and kept on file at the school. In addition, Utopian Academy for the Arts uses many different forms of assessment during the school year to measure students' academic progress. The different forms of assessment include, but are not limited to teacher generated tests, curriculum-based unit tests and quizzes, student portfolios, presentations, projects and nationally norm-referenced assessments.

## **PROMOTION TO THE NEXT GRADE**

At Utopian Academy for the Arts, promotion to the next grade level is based on mastering the standards in the scholar's current grade level. Promotions will be based on scholars' grades, standardized test scores, attendance, homework completion record, and other assessment measures taken during the year. Decisions to promote or retain are administrative decisions based on the student's progress, achievement, attendance, and Milestones Assessment. Students who receive supplemental assignments during the summer, must complete these requirements to be considered for placement as necessary. Special consideration will be given to students who have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) when making grade promotion and retention decisions. However, decisions regarding promotion or retentions are administrative decisions and are not dictated by a scholar's IEP. Students with IEP's who have significant attendance, academic, or behavioral problems unrelated to their IEP's may be at risk of retention for these reasons.

For additional information regarding promotion and retention, please refer to the "Promotion and Retention Policy" Addendum.

## **FIELD TRIP POLICY**

Field trips are a privilege and not a right, thus we reserve the right to deem students ineligible to attend when students have not exhibited behavior consistent with the student code of conduct. However, we will provide those students unable to attend with classwork congruent with the experience when the field trip is directly related to an academic content area and standard.

## **FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT POLICY**

Every student in the school of the arts program is required to meet specific academic and behavior guidelines. Upon participating in a production/event, parents and scholars must sign a Fine Arts contract stating that, to remain in the production/event, the guidelines below must be met.

- A. Scholars cannot receive two or more discipline referrals.
- B. Scholars cannot receive grades of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory for behavior.
- C. Scholars must attend all rehearsals and meet required deadlines. Students may submit in writing one excused absence notice to Dean of Arts.

*Academic Failure to meet the standards below in any grading period will result in academic probation from the Utopian Academy for the Arts: Fine Arts Department production/event.*

- A. Scholars will be responsible to submit weekly grades to the Dean of Arts.
- B. Scholars who fail within two weeks consecutively of grade check period

*Failure to meet the standards below in any grading period will result in dismissal from the Utopian Academy for the Arts: Fine Arts Department production/event.*

- A. Scholars who fail to abide by the Student Code of Conduct as outlined in the Utopian Academy for the Arts Parent/Student Handbook.
- B. Scholars who fail to maintain a "C" average in all of their classes.
- C. Scholars receive any disciplinary infraction that has been referred to administration, resulting in detention, ISS or OSS.
- D. The student/parent will be required to provide an excuse for all subsequent tardiness or absences according to the Georgia State Board Rule 160-5-1-10. Students who fail to meet this expectation will be dismissed from the Utopian Academy for the Arts: Fine Arts Department production/event.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students at Utopian Academy for the Arts (UAFA) are expected to abide by the UAFA Student Code of Conduct. For students who choose not to follow the tenants of this agreement, there will be consequences in place to redirect student behavior in a more positive direction. See the UAFA Student Code of Conduct for additional information on behavioral expectations for all students.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The school recognizes that the privacy of students may not be violated by unreasonable search and seizure and directs that no student be searched without reason or in an unreasonable manner.

School authorities are charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, school authorities may search the person or property including vehicles of a student, with or without the student's consent, whenever they reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of school rules.

School lockers, desks, and property are on loan to the students and remain the property of the school. They may be inspected and reclaimed at any time.

Students will not keep prohibited items, including drugs, drug paraphernalia, firearms, explosives, and property belonging to others within their lockers, backpacks or desks.

Students will open their lockers at the request of School officials.

When on school grounds, students and their personal property may be searched if a school official has grounds to believe the search may turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or school rules.

A student will have the opportunity to be present during the search of his or her locker, desk, or other property unless the student is absent from School or the safety or welfare of the school or an individual necessitates a search during the student's absence.

The search of a student's person or intimate personal belongings shall be conducted by the School Leadership. This person should be of the student's gender and conduct the search in the presence of another staff member of the same gender. However, no strip searches may be conducted by school personnel.

This authorization to search shall also apply to all situations in which the student is under the jurisdiction of the school.

The School Leadership shall be responsible for the prompt recording in writing of each student search, including the reasons for the search; information received that established the need for the search and the name of informant, if any; the persons present when the search was conducted; any substances or objects found; and the disposition made of them.

### **BEHAVIOR CATEGORIES**

UAFA has adopted policies regarding specific prohibited behaviors. This list is not an inclusive list of all violations. UAFA cannot anticipate every instance that may arise that will require disciplinary action, as such, this Code of Conduct is intended to serve as a guide for behavior expectations for UAFA students. The principal or designee has the discretion to discipline behaviors not listed that interfere with the educational process and operations of the school provided that no long-term suspensions or expulsions shall be implemented without following the due process procedures.

### **SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS**

The Executive Director or designee has the authority to suspend students for up to ten days without requiring a due process grievance hearing. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the Executive Director may impose a short-term suspension of between one to ten days. A parent-administrator conference will be required before the student is readmitted to class. The principal or designee may request the parent to observe a full day of class with the student upon return. A parent's failure/refusal to comply will not restrict the student's readmission to school but may result in additional intervention efforts such as a school social work referral. To the extent required by OCGA §20-2-742, students in grades K – 3 will receive multi-tiered system of supports prior to being suspended for 5 or more days or being expelled.

In addition to the categories provided below, expulsion from the school may be recommended for the following violations:

- Carrying, bringing, using, or possessing a dangerous weapon;
- Sale or distribution of a drug or controlled substance; and/or the commission of an act which, if committed by an adult, would be robbery or assault; and
- Any other violation(s) that, seriously adversely affects the educational process or endangers the health, safety or wellbeing of other students, teachers, administrators, or other persons.

Successive or repeated acts of misconduct may also result in additional suspensions or expulsion.

### **PROGRESSION OF CONSEQUENCES**

The Code of Conduct divides student behavior into three categories of conduct based on the severity of the initial infraction. The Executive Director may escalate the initial punishment beyond those specified in the Code of Conduct if, in his/her opinion, the specific situation necessitates such an action.

## **CATEGORY I**

### **STUDENT BEHAVIORS JUSTIFYING A ONE-DAY SUSPENSION (MAY INCLUDE IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION, AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP)**

The following behaviors generally will result in a one-day suspension. Although teachers determine the consequences for misbehavior in class, the School Leadership will determine the appropriate consequences for repetitive behaviors in this category based on each student's discipline record.

#### **UNRULY CONDUCT**

All students will obey all adults in the school: administrators, teachers, educational assistants, secretaries, custodians, lunchroom helpers, security guards, and other adults in a position of authority. Students will do what these adults ask of them. Examples of unruly conduct include but are not limited to: Students talking back to an adult; intentionally refusing to obey the instructions and/or directions a teacher gives; refusing to open a particular book, to write an assignment, to work with another student, to work in a group, to take a test, or to do any other class-related activity when directed by a teacher.

#### **UNIFORM & DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS**

Students who are required to wear a uniform are expected to be in uniform every day unless given written permission that it is a "non-uniform day." All elements of our school uniform are listed in the appropriate Student Handbook. Students that arrive to school out of uniform will be required to call a parent/guardian to bring the missing item. If a parent is unable to bring this item, the student will report to In-School Suspension. However, based on the discretion of School Leadership, a student may be required to serve an out of school suspension due to the frequency of the infraction. The same standard shall apply to dress code violations for students who are not required to wear a uniform.

#### **DISORDERLY CONDUCT**

Students will not break classroom or school rules. They will not keep teachers from teaching and students from learning. Students who cause a disruption in the classroom by talking, making noises, throwing objects, or otherwise distracting one or more of their classmates are engaging in disorderly conduct. Examples of disorderly conduct include but are not limited to: engaging in behavior that prevents the teacher from starting an activity or lesson; engaging in behavior that requires the teacher to stop what s/he is doing to try to stop the distracting behavior; leaving the classroom without permission; and inappropriate displays of affection.

#### **FAILURE TO COOPERATE**

Students are expected to cooperate fully with school administrators or other school personnel when their participation or statement is deemed necessary to investigate possible violations of the Code of Conduct or other building rules. Examples of infractions of this requirement may include, but are not limited to, refusing to cooperate with school administrators and/or teaching staff conducting an investigation; making false statements or giving false evidence; refusing to testify or otherwise cooperate with school personnel in any disciplinary proceeding.

## **SMOKING/VAPES**

It is illegal to possess or use tobacco products if under the age of 18. Tobacco products shall include, but not be limited to, any lighted or unlighted cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, cigarillo, hookah, blunts, chewing tobacco, snuff, snus, orbs, strips, sticks, electronic cigars and cigarettes, vape pens, vape solutions, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products regardless of whether it contains tobacco. Students shall be prohibited from possessing or using any kind of tobacco or vape products at school, on school property, and any school-related activity.

## **FALSIFICATION OF RECORDS**

Students will not use the name of another person or falsify times, dates, grades, addresses, or other data on school forms or records, nor shall they provide false, misleading, or inaccurate statements or information to School staff or on school forms or records.

## **SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY**

Students will not engage in scholastic dishonesty, which may include but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, or unlawful use of copyrighted materials. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the actual giving or receiving of any unauthorized aid or the actual giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work. Students will not engage in plagiarism, which includes the copying of language, structure, idea and/or thought of another and represent it as one's own original work. A student will not unlawfully duplicate, reproduce, retain, or use copyrighted material.

## **TRESPASSING**

Students will not be on school property or in a school building except to participate in the educational process and/or the specific enrolled activity of the school. Nor will students loiter in building hallways, classrooms, bathrooms, etc. Students who are suspended or expelled will not return to school without the School Leadership's specific, written permission. Students who do return to school without permission will be suspended or expelled depending upon the circumstances.

## **GAMBLING**

Students will not play games of cards, chance, or dice for money or other items of value unless these games are played as part of a special school activity.

## **ELECTRONIC/COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Students may bring radios, headsets, CD players, handhelds, cellular phones, mp3 players, IPODs, or other electronic communication devices for receiving and/or transmitting messages to school; however, they are NEVER allowed in class during instruction, unless noted otherwise by the teacher. Not only will this behavior lead to the appropriate consequences, but the items will also be confiscated and held until a parent comes to school and retrieves the items.

No cell phones or electronic devices will be permitted in the classrooms at any time. If a scholar brings one to school, the following will take place:

6<sup>th</sup> grade: Upon arrival to school, students will place cell phones / electronic devices in caddies during homeroom, or the first period attended if student is tardy. Cell phones will be returned to students during the last 15 minutes of the last period of the day.

7<sup>th</sup> / 8<sup>th</sup> grade: Upon arrival to school, students will place cell phones / electronic devices in their assigned lockers. Students will only be able to access lockers during their designated locker time.

If a student has an emergency and needs to call a parent, they will be instructed to use a school phone. If a parent needs to contact their child for any reason during school hours, they must call the school.

If a student violates the above policy and has a cell phone or electronic device in the classroom, it will be confiscated immediately and returned only to a parent or guardian on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday between the hours of 2 – 4 pm.

## **CATEGORY II**

STUDENT BEHAVIORS JUSTIFYING MULTIPLE DAYS OF SUSPENSION OR POSSIBLE EXPULSION DEPENDING ON THE SEVERITY OF THE INFRACTION.

The following behaviors may, with no warning required, lead to immediate suspension. The length of the suspension will be determined by the School Leadership and will be based on the student's discipline record and the seriousness of the offense(s). The School Leadership will investigate major breaches of student code of conduct on a case-by-case basis and make decisions accordingly. Repetitive violations, as well as violations deemed physically or mentally harmful or those requiring emergency removal will lead to a recommendation for expulsion at the discretion of the School Leadership.

### **FIGHTING**

NO PHYSICAL CONTACT. Students will not fight. They will not push, shove, or hit another individual with any part of their body or with any object, regardless of whether it results in an injury. This offense may be grounds for expulsion.

### **PROFANITY OR OBSCENITY**

Students will not use inappropriate words or make obscene signs. Student will not draw or show sexually explicit pictures to anyone at school. Students will not bring sexually related items (i.e. condoms) to school. Students will never curse or swear. Such use includes, but is not limited to, profane, vulgar, obscene words or sending obscene material via the Internet, email, cell phones (e.g. sexting") or other electronic means; profane, vulgar, obscene, harassing, or insulting comments or actions.

## **REPEATED UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS**

Students who are repeatedly out of uniform or violate the dress code when not required to be in a uniform, may be suspended for more than one school day.

## **STEALING**

Students will not take anything that does not belong to them. Students will not have in their possession anything that has been stolen. This includes but is not limited to property that belongs to the school, school personnel, or other students.

## **VIOLENT DISORDERLY CONDUCT**

Students will not, by any type of conduct (violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear passive resistance, etc.) that causes the disruption, disturbance, or obstruction of any school function, activity, or event, nor shall they engage in any such conduct if such disruption or obstruction is reasonably likely to result. Students will not urge other students to engage in such conduct for the purpose of causing such disruption or obstruction. This offense may be grounds for expulsion.

## **GANG ACTIVITY**

Gang activity is defined as “any assembly of individuals who gather together, whose purpose, the school reasonably believes is to commit or attempt to commit anti-social behavior or a violation of school policy or to solicit, coerce, or intimidate others to do the same.” Students will not wear or display any clothing, jewelry, colors, or insignia that may be reasonably perceived by a teacher or administrator as evidence of membership in or affiliation with a gang or otherwise symbolizes support of a gang. Students will not use any words, phrases, written symbol, or gesture, which intentionally identifies them as a member of a gang or otherwise symbolizes support of a gang. Students will not try to recruit others for gangs.

## **DEFACEMENT OF PROPERTY**

Students will not mark on, damage, break, or destroy school property or anything that belongs to someone else. Defacement of property includes but is not limited to actions such as writing in school textbooks or library books; writing on desks or walls; carving into woodwork, desk, or tables; and painting surfaces. In addition to disciplinary action removing the student from school, students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. This offense may be grounds for expulsion.

## **DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY**

Students will not damage, break, or destroy school property or anything that belongs to someone else. Actions that impair the use of something are destructive. Examples of property destructions include but are not limited to, ruining bulletin boards, intentionally clogging the system, breaking light bulbs or fixtures, and damaging school equipment to the point where repair is necessary. In addition to disciplinary action removing the student from school, students who engage in destruction of school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. This



offense may be grounds for expulsion.

### **SEXUAL OR BODILY MISCONDUCT**

Students will not act or use any body parts or those of another in an unacceptable way. Unacceptable will be defined using a “reasonable person” standard.

### **HARASSMENT**

Harassment of any type, including but not limited to hazing and discriminatory harassment and sexual harassment, is prohibited. Students will also not engage verbal or physical conduct relating to a person’s sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, marital status, or disability (e.g. sexual or racial comments, threat or insults, unwanted touching, etc.). Sexual harassment in education is any unwelcome sexual advances, lewd gestures or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, requests for sexual favors, possession of sexually explicit images; gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment and interferes with a student’s ability to learn, study, work or participate in school activities.

Harassment, which includes any form of consistent or isolated behavior that would contribute to or cause psychological harm to someone else and/or urges students to engage in such conduct, shall also be prohibited at the school. Examples are verbal, written, or physical taunts, insults, or challenges, which are likely to intimidate and/or provoke a negative response from the student being treated in this manner. Additional examples of bullying/harassment behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Physical: hitting, grabbing, spitting, etc.
- Verbal: name calling, racist remarks, put-downs, extortion, etc.
- Indirect: spreading rumors, wearing, or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice, exclusion from peer group, taking and hiding/destroying other’s possessions, etc.
- Written/electronic: email/blogs or other similar means, notes, and/or graffiti, containing harassing or bullying messages, etc.

### **LOOK-ALIKE WEAPONS**

Students will not possess, handle, or transmit any object or instrument that is a “look-alike” weapon or instrument (e.g. rubber knife, toy gun, etc.).

### **CATEGORY III**

#### **STUDENT BEHAVIORS JUSTIFYING MANDATORY SUSPENSION WITH PROBABLE RECOMMENDATION FOR EXPULSION**

Students who engage in any of the behaviors in this category, may be suspended for up to ten (10) school days with a recommendation for suspension or expulsion by the School’s Leadership team.

## **ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

Students will not intentionally bring alcohol or drugs to school. This includes any controlled substance, or alcohol, prescription or non-prescription drug, or any substances represented to or believed to be a drug, regardless of its actual content. They will not manufacture, sell, handle, possess, use, deliver, transmit or be under any influence (legal intoxication is NOT required) of any alcoholic beverage, intoxicant, or drug. Students will not inhale any chemical substance for the purpose of becoming intoxicated or under the influence. Students are permitted to bring prescribed medication to school with the permission of parent(s) and the authorization of a physician. They will not sell or give a prescribed medication to anyone at school. Unless a student is allowed to retain a prescribed medication at school under state law, such as auto-injectable epinephrine, all prescribed medication will be submitted to the Main Office before the student goes to class. All prescribed medication, including those retained by students, must have an accompanying physician's note for dispensing and recording purposes.

Students may also be subject to prosecution under the Official Code of Georgia §16-13-32.4 which states:

“It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, dispense, or possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance or marijuana in, on, or possesses with intent to distribute a controlled substance or marijuana in, on, or within 1000 feet of any real property owned by or leased to any public or private elementary or secondary education. Any person violates or conspires to violate subsection (a) of this Code section shall be guilty of felony and upon conviction shall receive the following punishment: (1) Upon a first conviction, imprisonment for not more than 20 years or a fine of not more than \$20,000.00, or both; or (2) Upon a second or subsequent conviction, imprisonment for not less than five years or more than 40 years or a fine of not more than \$40,000.00, or both.

It shall be mandatory for the court to impose a minimum sentence of five years nor more than \$40,000.00, or both. It shall be mandatory for the court to impose a minimum sentence of five years which may not be suspended unless otherwise provided by law.”

## **ASSAULT & BATTERY**

Students will not engage in the assault or battery of another person. Assault is defined as a verbal threat or an attempt to physically harm someone without touching him/her that causes reasonably apprehension of receiving harm. Battery is defined as intentionally touching or striking of another person to intentionally cause bodily harm.

## **DANGEROUS WEAPONS**

Students will not possess, handle, transmit, or use as a dangerous weapon any instrument capable of harming another person. Dangerous weapons include, but are not limited to:

- A **FIREARM** is defined as 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, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any firearm muffler or silencer, or any destructive device. A destructive device includes but is not limited to, 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 other similar device.

- A **KNIFE** is defined as any cutting instrument consisting of at least one sharp blade.
- **DEFENSIVE WEAPONS:** Chemical Mace, pepper gas, or like substances; stun gun; brass knuckles; blackjack; nun chucks.
- **ITEMS NOT DESIGNED AS A WEAPON, BUT COULD BE PERCEIVED OR USED AS A WEAPON,** such as: razors, box cutters, hammers, baseball bats, metal combs of any length with a sharpened handle are strictly prohibited from school grounds.
- A weapon may also include any ordinary item not usually considered as a weapon if that item is used in a manner that could potentially cause bodily harm.

### **FALSE FIRE ALARMS OR BOMB REPORTS**

Students will not break or pull the fire alarm at any time unless there is an emergency or make bomb threats. Additionally, students will not make false reports of emergencies to school personnel or law enforcement.

### **SEXUAL ASSAULT**

Students will not sexually assault or attack another person, which is defined as consensual or nonconsensual intentional sexual contact of a harmful or offensive manner or unlawful sexual behavior, sexual contact without force or threat of force.

### **ROBBERY**

Students will not force or threaten someone to give them something that does not belong to them.

### **BULLYING**

Students will not engage in acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, or encourage other students to engage in such acts. See the UAFA policy on bullying for additional information on bullying and the disciplinary consequences.

### **STARTING A FIRE**

Students will not start or attempt to start a fire at school; they will not take part in any activity of burning property.

### **FIREWORKS AND EXPLOSIVES**

Students will not intentionally handle, possess, or transmit any substance or prepared chemical that can explode or is capable of inflicting bodily injury or is reasonably likely to cause physical discomfort to another person. Students may not bring any fireworks or firecrackers to school.

In addition, the Official Code of Georgia Annotated §16-11-127.1 states that “it shall be unlawful for any person to carry to or possess or have under such person’s control while within a School Safety Zone or at a school building, school function, or school property or on a school

bus or other transportation furnished by the school any weapon or explosive compound. Any person who violates this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, by imprisonment for not less than two nor more than ten years, or both. A juvenile who violates this subsection shall be subject to the provisions of Code Section §15-111-37.”

### **BREAKING AND ENTERING**

Students will not force their way into any school building or engage in unauthorized entry into a school building with the intent of committing a felony when the building is closed to the students a public.

### **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

All UAFA students are expected to follow all rules and policies regarding appropriate behavior at school. UAFA will comply with all legal requirements when considering disciplinary action for students with a disability.

### **DISCIPLINARY HEARING PROCESS**

When required, UAFA will convene a disciplinary hearing to determine whether a particular punishment is appropriate for particular instances. See the Student Handbook for additional information on the USFA Disciplinary Hearing Process.

### **UAFA POLICY ON BULLYING**

In accordance with OCGA §20-2-751.4, UAFA strictly prohibits all types of bullying by and against students, employees, parents/guardians, or members of the community.

As used in this policy, the term 'bullying' means an act, including an act through the use of electronic communication, that is:

- (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
- (2) Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
- (3) Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1;
  - b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
  - c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
  - d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system.

The term also applies to acts of “cyberbullying” which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic equipment

- (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel,
- (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and

- (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

For purposes of this policy, electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system. Students found to have committed an act of bullying or cyberbullying shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the UAFA Student Code of Conduct. In accordance with state law, any student in grades 6 -12 who has been found by a disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal of school officials to have committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year shall be assigned to an alternative education program. Students who encourage bullying behavior or participate in bullying incidents may also be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Response to Bullying**

Utopian Academy for the Arts is committed to equitable and swift resolution of bullying issues. Any student who believes they have been a victim of bullying or who believes another student has been bullied is encouraged to do the following:

- (1) If you feel comfortable, let the offender know you want the behavior to stop. Be clear and direct. Don't apologize.
- (2) Pay attention to when, where and how you were mistreated; try to remember who else may have witness the incident.
- (3) Notify the Dean of Students, school administrator, or teacher. If uncomfortable doing so, a student should speak with a parent or another adult (who should notify school personnel).

After the initial report is made, an investigation will take place by the Dean of Students at his/her discretion. If a student has been found to have committed an act of bullying or been a victim or bullying, the Dean of Students will notify his or her parents in writing or by phone. Any student who is suspected of bullying will be reminded of the school's prohibition against bullying and of the possible penalties for engaging in bullying behavior.

Reports of bullying also may be made by using the school's complaint procedures or by calling the Georgia Department of Education's School Safety Hotline at 1-877-SAY-STOP (1-877-729-7867).

The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited, to the following:

- All staff, students and their parents will receive a summary of this policy prohibiting bullying at the beginning of the school year as part of the student code of conduct.
- The school shall keep a report of bullying and the results of an investigation confidential.
- Staff are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur or upon receipt of any report of bullying.
- People witnessing or experiencing bullying are encouraged to report the incident to the school principal designee.

The following actions will be taken when bullying is reported:

#### **1. Investigate**

Upon receipt of any report of bullying, the Dean of Students will direct an immediate investigation involving appropriate personnel. The investigation should begin no later than the following school day. The investigation shall include interviewing the alleged perpetrator(s) and victim(s), identified witnesses, teacher(s) and staff members, and reviewing video surveillance if

available. School police, school counselors, school social workers and/or other support staff should be utilized for their expertise as determined by the circumstances of the matter.

## **2. Notification**

At an appropriate time during or after the investigation, parents/guardians of the accused and the victim must be notified. If the incident involves an injury or similar situation, appropriate medical attention should be provided, and the parent/guardian should be notified immediately.

## **3. Discipline**

Upon confirming that bullying has occurred, the accused student should be charged with bullying and given an age-appropriate consequence which shall include, at minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling as appropriate under the circumstances. Disciplinary action will be taken after each incident of bullying and upon a finding of guilt.

Students in grades six through twelve found to have committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year shall be assigned to an alternative education program following the appropriate due process by disciplinary hearing officers, panels, or tribunals.

School personnel should clearly communicate to all parties that retaliation following a report of bullying is strictly prohibited and may result in further disciplinary action.

## **4. Follow Up**

Follow up is important to the accused and the victim. After a decision is rendered, the school will implement a planned method to provide after-care and follow up and reiterate to all the previously stated prohibition on retaliation.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

We acknowledge that we have received a copy of the Utopian Academy for the Arts Student Code of Conduct and have had a chance to review its contents and ask questions of UAFA leadership. We understand that the Code of Conduct sets forth the behavioral expectations for all UAFA students and that students may be subject to disciplinary action for failing to abide by UAFA policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Code of Conduct.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students will attend school to learn. They will come to school daily, and they will be on time. State law is clear: No parent, guardian, or person having care of a child of school age shall violate any provision of those laws which govern school attendance.

### Attendance Guidelines

Regular attendance is compulsory and mandated by Georgia law. We *strongly recommend* that all vacations and discretionary trips be scheduled during school vacation days and not during scheduled school days.

If the need should arise that an absence is due to a non-school vacation, the absence will be considered unexcused, and the student will be expected to make-up their missed assignments upon return. If a student is absent due to illness, his/her homework may be picked up after the school day is completed.

- Ten days absenteeism during a school year may constitute reasonable cause for retention. This may also be interpreted as 5 days per semester. When work has been made up, report cards may be distributed.
- In order to meet requirements for promotions, class work missed because of absenteeism (or its equivalent substituted by the teacher) will be completed satisfactorily) Please refer to classroom teacher to make arrangements.
- State Law requires a written excuse whenever a child is **ABSENT** or **TARDY**. A child is marked tardy when he/she arrives after 8:15 am.
- Students leaving campus early for any reason will be signed out in the office by an adult specified on the student's emergency card. **Sign-outs will not be allowed after 2:30pm.**

### TARDIES

Getting to school on time each and every day is of the utmost importance for our scholars. Utopian Academy for the Arts scholars begin learning the minute they walk in the door.

- Our doors open at 7:30 am for breakfast
- Scholars arriving after 8:15 am are considered tardy and will be signed in the office to receive a tardy pass prior to entering cafeteria/class.
- *Three tardies in any quarter equal one unexcused absence. Please see attendance policies above for consequences of excessive absences.*

### EXCUSED ABSENCES

The following are considered excused absences:

- Personal illness;
- A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family;
- Due to court order or order by a government agency;
- Observation of a religious holiday;
- Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety;



- Due to deployment or leave of a student’s parent or guardian who is in the armed forces, for up to five days in a school year;
- To attend military-sponsored events for a parent or guardian in the armed forces, up to five days per school year;
- Registering or voting in a public election, but absences may not exceed one day;
- Other absences deemed to have merit under the circumstance and approved in advance by the principal.

When appropriate, the student may be required to provide documentation to verify the absence as excused.

In accordance with state law, if a student is away from school during the school day for any of the following reasons, he/she will be counted as present, rather than excused or unexcused absent:

- Serving as a page for the Georgia General Assembly;
- Participating in an activity or program sponsored by 4-H;
- A foster care student attending court proceedings relating to the student’s foster care; or
- Successfully participating in the Student Teen Election Participant (STEP) program, but present participation may not exceed two school days per year.

Where appropriate, UAFA may require documentation of participation in these events.

#### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES (AWOL)**

Unexcused absences are defined as days scholars are not present for reasons that do not meet the conditions above. All types of absences will be tracked by the school administration.

*All Utopian Academy for the Arts families will be held to the following policy for unexcused absences.*

- **2nd Unexcused Absence:** If a scholar has two unexcused absences within an academic year, it is considered a serious issue. An official letter documenting the unexcused absence will be sent home by a member of the School Leadership Team. The student will also serve one day of lunch detention.
- **4th Unexcused Absence:** If a scholar has four unexcused absences within an academic year, the parent/guardian will be written and called in to school to meet with a member of the School Leadership Team. At the meeting the problem will be discussed, and a formal binding attendance plan will be developed. In addition, the student will serve two days of after school detention.
- **6th Unexcused Absence:** If a scholar has six unexcused absences within an academic year, the scholar will be considered habitually truant, and risks not being promoted to the next grade. The parent/guardian will be called and an official letter documenting the unexcused absences, and the risk of grade retention will be sent home.
- **10<sup>th</sup> Unexcused Absence:** If a scholar has 10 or more consecutive unexcused absences within an academic year, the scholar may be dropped from enrollment at Utopian Academy and the parent/guardian may be reported to the proper authorities.

*Violation of the attendance policy affects a scholar's performance both behaviorally and academically. Therefore, all violations will be treated seriously by School Leadership and legal measures against the parent/guardian will be taken when necessary.*

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY**

Requirements of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282 and SBOE rule 160-4-2-.11  
PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 1-8.

### **(1) DEFINITIONS.**

(a) Accelerated instruction – challenging instructional activities that are intensely focused on student academic deficiencies in reading and/or mathematics. This accelerated instruction is designed to enable a student who has not achieved grade level, as defined by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, to meet grade level standards in the shortest possible time.

(b) Additional instruction – academic instruction beyond regularly scheduled academic classes that is designed to bring students not performing on grade level, as defined by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, to grade level performance. It may include more instructional time allocated during the school day, instruction before and after the school day, Saturday instruction, and/or summer/inter-session instruction.

(c) Differentiated instruction – instructional strategies designed to meet individual student learning needs.

(d) Grade level – standard of performance, as defined by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments.

(e) Placement – the assignment of a student to a specific grade level based on the determination that such placement will most likely provide the student with instruction and other services needed to succeed and progress to the next higher level of academic achievement.

(f) Placement committee – the committee established by the local school principal or designee to make placement decisions concerning a student who does not achieve proficiency on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments. This committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parent or guardian, and the teacher(s) in the content area(s) in which the student did not achieve grade level on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments.

(g) Promotion – the assignment of a student to a higher grade level based on the student's achievement of established criteria in the current grade.

(h) Retention – the re-assignment of a student to the current grade level during the next school year.

### **(2) PROMOTION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR GRADES 6-8**

All of part of the following indicators shall be considered:

#### **PROMOTION**

##### **a. Grades 6-8**

1. Number of failing grades (failing 2 or more subjects for the year).
2. Standardized test scores (including state and/or district adopted assessments in reading and math).

3. Math and reading performance
4. Previous interventions (including RtI)
5. Previous retentions
6. Age and maturity of student
7. Excessive absences
8. Teacher recommendation

#### PLACEMENT/RETENTION

1. The principal or designee shall implement a process to:
  - a. Determine whether each student shall be retained or placed based on a review of the overall academic achievement and any reasons for suggesting a good cause exemption;
  - b. Develop an accelerated, differentiated, and/or additional instructional plan for each student who does not achieve grade level
  - c. Develop a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the student's academic progress
2. The principal or designee shall annually notify parent(s)/guardian(s) that promotion, placement, or retention of a student into a grade, class, or program will be based on the student's academic achievement.
3. Placement decisions will be made on an individual basis. If a student is retained, written documentation of evidence supporting the decision will be filed in the student's permanent record.
4. If placement or retention is recommended, the Principal or designee will consult with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). The Principal will have the final authority regarding placement and retention decisions. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of the final decision.
5. Students who spend a second year in any grade will be provided accelerated, differentiated and/or additional instruction.
6. In general, no student should be retained without being a part of an intervention process, which may include: identification, assessment, analysis or results, intervention strategies, parental notification and progress monitoring.

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 3, 5, AND 8.

##### (a) Promotion of a student shall be determined as follows.

1. No third grade student shall be promoted to the fourth grade if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.
2. No fifth grade student shall be promoted to the sixth grade if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and attain an achievement level of "Developing Learner", "Proficient Learner", or "Distinguished Learner" on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.
3. No eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not receive a grade level reading determination of "On/Above Grade Level" on the Georgia

Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and attain an achievement level of “Developing Learner”, “Proficient Learner”, or “Distinguished Learner” on the mathematics section of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment and meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends.

4. The school principal or designee may retain a student who performs satisfactorily on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments but who does not meet promotion standards and criteria established in this policy.

(b) When a student does not perform at grade level in grade 8 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments specified in section (a) above, then the following shall occur:

1. Within ten calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, of receipt of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments individual student scores, the school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student regarding the following:

- (i) The student’s below-grade-level reading designation and/or the mathematics achievement level on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments;
- (ii) The specific retest(s) to be given the student and testing date(s);
- (iii) The opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction based on the student’s performance on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments; and
- (iv) The possibility that the student might be retained at the same grade level for the next school year.

2. The student shall be given an opportunity for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction in the applicable subject(s) prior to the retesting opportunity; and

3. The student shall be retested with appropriate section(s) of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student’s grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board.

4. The student will not participate in 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion activities if they do not perform at grade level on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments specified in section (a) above during the first administration of the test.

(c) When a student does not perform at grade level on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in grade s 3, 5, and 8, and also does not perform at grade level on a second opportunity to take the assessment, then the following shall occur:

1. The school principal or designee shall retain the student for the next school year except as otherwise provided for in this policy.

2. The school principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian of the student and the teacher(s) regarding the decision to retain the student.

- (i) The notice shall describe the option of the parent or guardian or teacher to appeal the decision to retain the student;
- (ii) The notice shall describe the composition and functions of the placement committee; it shall describe the option of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), or principal to invite individuals who can provide information or facilitate understanding of the issues to be discussed to attend the placement committee meeting (note that this is sample verbiage and is not mandated for inclusion in the policy); and
- (iii) The notice shall include the requirement that the decision to promote the student must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee comprised of the parent or guardian, teacher(s), and principal or designee.

3. If the parent or guardian or teacher(s) appeals the decision to retain the student, then the school principal or designee shall establish a placement committee to consider the appeal.

(i) The placement committee shall be comprised of the principal or designee, the student's parent or guardian, the executive director, and the teacher(s) of the subject(s) of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or the alternative assessment instrument on which the student failed to perform at grade level.

(ii) The principal or designee shall notify in writing by first-class mail the parent or guardian and teacher(s) of the time and place for convening the placement committee.

(iii) The placement committee shall review the overall academic achievement of the student in light of the performance on the Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments or the alternative assessment instrument and promotion standards and criteria established in this policy for the school that the student attends, and make a determination to promote or retain.

(iv) The decision to promote must be the unanimous decision of the placement committee and must determine that if promoted and given accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction during the next year, the student is likely to perform at grade level by the conclusion of the school year.

(v) The placement committee shall prescribe such additional assessments as may be appropriate in addition to assessments administered to other students at the grade level during the year.

(vi) The placement committee shall provide for a plan of continuous assessment during the subsequent school year in order to monitor the progress of the student.

4. A plan for accelerated, differentiated, or additional instruction must be developed for each student who does not achieve grade level performance in grade 8 on the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments specified in section (a) above whether the student is retained, placed, or promoted for the subsequent year.

5. A student who is absent or otherwise unable to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in language arts and/or mathematics on the first administration or its designated make-up day(s) shall take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in language arts and/or mathematics on the retest administration day(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board. Placement or promotion of these students shall follow the same procedures as students who do not achieve grade level on the first administration of the assessment.

6. A student's failure to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments in grades 3, 5, and 8 in language arts and/or mathematics on any of the designated testing date(s) or an alternative assessment instrument that is appropriate for the student's grade level as provided for by the State Board of Education and this board shall result in the student being retained. The option of the parent or guardian or teacher(s) to appeal the decision to retain the student shall follow the procedure set forth in this rule.

7. For students receiving special education or related services, the Individualized Education Plan Committee shall serve as the placement committee. The IEP Committee will consider the following:

- a. absences
- b. progress on IEP goals and objectives
- c. teacher reports

- d. Standardized test scores
8. The decision of the placement committee may be appealed as follows: (If applicable, place your district's local appeals policy here.)

## **DISCIPLINARY HEARING PROCESS**

In any case in which long-term suspension or expulsion is being recommended, the student will be entitled to a Disciplinary Hearing for a disciplinary hearing officer to determine whether the student committed the alleged violation, and which disciplinary action is appropriate, if any. A long-term suspension is considered any denial to a student of the right to attend school and school-related activities for a period of more than ten (10) school days. Expulsion shall mean removal of the student from enrollment at UAFA for the remainder of the semester, school year, or longer.

A disciplinary hearing will also be held in any case when a student is alleged to have committed assault or battery of a school employee or when a student in grades 6-8 is alleged to have committed an act of bullying for a third time in a school year.

### Notice:

The School shall provide written notice of the relevant procedures to the student's parent/guardian. The notification shall include the following:

1. A brief statement of the act(s) student is alleged to have committed, along with the portion of the Code of Conduct allegedly violated.
2. The maximum penalty which may be administered for the alleged misconduct, and a recommendation for discipline.
3. A copy of this Student Disciplinary Hearing Process.
4. The date, time and place of the hearing.
5. The names of witnesses expected to be called at the hearing and a short summary of evidence that may be presented.
6. A statement that a hearing is required unless the student/parent/guardian waives the hearing.
7. A statement that at the hearing the student is entitled to be represented by an advocate (spokesperson) of his/her choice, including an attorney if so desired; and that the student may subpoena witnesses and utilize other compulsory process upon request.
8. A statement that all parties are afforded an opportunity to present and respond to evidence and to examine and cross-examine witnesses.

The notice of hearing shall be delivered to the student's parent/guardian either in person or by first class mail, certified mail return receipt requested, and/or delivery confirmation, to the last known address of the parent/guardian. If notice is delivered in person, a written confirmation of delivery should be obtained by the person delivering the notice. Service shall be deemed to be perfected when the notice is deposited in the United States mail with sufficient postage addressed to the last known address of the student/parent/guardian.

### Continuance:



If good and sufficient cause exists, the school administrator may request to the Hearing Officer that the hearing be rescheduled, but in no instance shall the hearing be delayed more than ten school days after the beginning of the suspension unless the School and the parent/guardian mutually agree to an extension in writing. If the extension is not agreed to by the parent/guardian, the hearing will move forward as scheduled or the charges will be dismissed.

Upon rescheduling, written notice of the rescheduled date and time of the hearing will be sent to the student's parent/guardian/representative/attorney either in person or by first class mail, certified mail return receipt requested, and/or delivery confirmation.

The student's parent/guardian/representative may request a continuance of the hearing from the school administrator. Continuances should be requested no later than 24 hours in advance of the scheduled hearing date and time. Extenuating circumstances should be presented for approval. If a continuance is requested or caused by the parent/guardian/student's representative, the student will continue to serve his/her recommended School level discipline (In-School or Out-of-School Suspension) during the time of the continuance and until the hearing is conducted and the Hearing Officer has rendered a decision. In the event that a continuance has not been requested and the student and parent/guardian do not attend the originally scheduled hearing, the hearing will move forward as planned with or without the student and their parent/guardian.

#### Waiver of Hearing:

The parties may agree, in writing, to waive the 10-day requirement to conduct the hearing or to waive the right to a hearing. An agreement to waive the right to a hearing shall constitute an admission of guilt and acceptance of the punishment recommended by school administration.

Such an agreement must be reduced to writing in a formal Tribunal Waiver Agreement that clearly states that the parent/guardian and student waive the right to a hearing, the student admits guilt to the charges, and that all parties agree to the recommended consequences. A signed Tribunal Waiver Agreement will be presented to the Hearing Officer to determine if the Hearing Officer is willing to accept the agreement as its decision. If the tribunal adopts the agreement as its decision, the decision becomes final and cannot be appealed by School or the student's parent/guardian. If the agreement is not adopted as the decision of the tribunal, the Tribunal Waiver Agreement will become null and void, all rights will be restored, and a new hearing date and time will be established.

#### Record of Proceedings:

A written or electronic record of the hearing shall be made and shall be available to all parties upon request. The cost of recording shall be borne by the School. The student's parent/guardian/representative may request a copy of the recording.

A written transcript may be prepared by the school if the Board so requests. If a written transcript is not prepared by the School, the student's parent/guardian/representative may obtain a written transcript at their own expense.

#### Burden of Proof:

The burden of proof is a preponderance of the evidence (more likely than not) and shall be on the School.

#### Legal Representation at the Disciplinary Hearing:

If the student is represented by an attorney, the School's attorney will be present. The student's parent/guardian will notify the School not less than 48 hours prior to the hearing if the student may be represented by an attorney. Failure to give such notice can result in the hearing being continued so the School's attorney may be present.

#### Hearing Officers:

Disciplinary Hearings will be conducted by an independent Hearing Officer, who shall be selected by the School. To qualify for service as a Hearing Officer, an individual will (1) be in good standing with the State Bar of Georgia, (2) have experience as a teacher, counselor, or administrator in a public school system, or (3) be actively serving as a hearing officer under an existing contract/agreement with a Georgia school system. Before selecting a Hearing Officer, the school administrator shall also confirm that the selected individual has no prior involvement in the matter and no conflict of interest.

The Hearing Officer will serve as the presiding officer and may rule on issues of procedure and admissibility of evidence presented during the tribunal. The Hearing Officer will determine if the student violated the Code of Conduct; and if the Code was violated, imposing appropriate disciplinary action. The maximum penalty that can be imposed by a Hearing Officer is permanent expulsion.

#### Procedural Objections:

Objection to the sufficiency of the notice and/or other procedural objections shall be waived unless written notice thereof is filed with the Hearing Officer no less than 24 hours prior to the time the hearing is scheduled to begin. The hearing may be postponed until such defects have been removed or remedied.

#### Disciplinary Hearing:

Within ten school days after the beginning of the suspension, the Hearing Officer(s) will meet at the appointed time and place to review the case. As this time, the school administrator or his/her designee will present the facts of the case against the student as well as the reason for the recommendation. The student, parent or guardian, or other appointed representative present for the hearing will be able to ask questions and present arguments against the recommendation. Each side will be allowed to call and question witnesses about any matters relevant to the charges against the student or the appropriate discipline. The Hearing Officer has the authority to limit unproductively long or irrelevant questioning.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Hearing Officer(s) will determine if the student has committed the alleged violation(s) of UAFA's Student Code of Conduct. The Hearing Officer's decision will be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. If the Hearing Officer determines that a student has committed a disciplinary violation, s/he may impose a range of sanctions that include reinstatement into school to permanent expulsion, as long as the sanction complies with the school's established policies.

The Disciplinary Hearing is a closed and confidential proceeding. Friends or relatives of the students or other members of the public who are not witnesses will not be allowed in the hearing room. Any representative(s) of the family other than the student and parent or guardian will be



approved by the principal in advance. If a family wishes to bring a lawyer, they will notify the principal in advance so that the school can ensure its legal counsel is present.

Appeal:

Once the Hearing Officer has issued his/her decision, the school administration will immediately inform the family and mail a letter of decision to the family.

Once a decision has been rendered, either party may appeal directly to UAFA Board of Directors within ten calendar days of receipt of the hearing officer's decision. A written appeal must be addressed to the Chair of the Governing Board and delivered to the Executive Director. The school administrator will supply all records from the previous hearing including, if available, written statements, minutes and audio recordings of the Disciplinary Hearing. The Board will evaluate all information and will make a decision solely on the facts presented in the record from the hearing. The student and the school administrator may provide a written statement identifying any reasons why they believe the Hearing Officer' decision was valid or invalid based on the evidence presented at the Disciplinary Hearing. There will not be an opportunity for additional testimony or argument.

The Board will render a written decision within 20 working days of receiving the appeal. The Board may take any action it deems appropriate, and any decision of the Board is final. If the Board imposes a punishment that is harsher than that imposed by the Hearing Officer, it must provide a written explanation for the harsher punishment. Once the Board renders a decision on the appeal, the school administration will immediately inform the family and mail a letter of decision to the family.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

The school expects parents of students to be actively involved in the student's education. In order for our faculty and staff to effectively educate our children, we welcome our parents as partners. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in a variety of activities and forums that will support our students academically and add to the vitality of our school. Parents will be expected to participate and sign an agreement with the school. Additionally, at Utopian Academy for the Arts, all parents are required complete 10 – 12 hours of volunteer service per school year, as referenced in our charter contract.

A parent conference is a formally scheduled conversation between faculty and parents in order to discuss the student's development and progress. Parents will be required to confer with faculty about their child's/children's social and academic achievement on a regular basis as scheduled by the school. Parents should attend parent conferences in order to receive written report cards. As well, the school encourages parents to initiate these conferences about their questions and concerns with School Leadership.

### **Parent Teacher Association/Parent Teacher Organization**

To promote and increase parental involvement and leadership, the Utopian Academy for the Arts Governance Board has developed the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Contact Claudine Peart for additional information on these organizations.

## **PARENT PORTAL PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS**

Here is the link: <https://uafa.revtrak.net/>

1. Create account (if you haven't done so already)
2. Select Academies
3. Select Middle Schools
4. Select Forest Pkwy MS
5. Select the respective category for item for payment
6. Add to cart then make payment

**NOTE:** There is a \$0.25 fee in addition to the event cost.

## UTOPIAN STUDENT ACADEMIC CONTRACT

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

This contract is between the Utopian Academy of the Arts and the student named above to outline specific conditions and/or terms, which are expected of all Utopian Students. Areas for the contract include: academic and behavior expectations.

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As a Utopian Student, I will:

- Be considerate and respectful to staff and classmates
- Follow all class and school rules
- Leave my phone at home
- Be prepared for class every day.
- Be on time for all classes
- Hand in all assignments on time
- Complete all i-Ready assignments on time
- Be where I am supposed to be at the appropriate times
- Use technology appropriately
- Maintain accountability of all books and materials assigned to me
- Act appropriately on the school bus
- Stay on campus until am I properly dismissed to an adult or school bus
- Report all unsafe incidents to a staff member
- Serve as a good example for my other classmates

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_



# UTOPIAN

ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

This contract is between the Utopian Academy of the Arts and the parent/guardian for the student named above.

---

As a Utopian Parent, I will:

- Join with Utopian as a partner in education for the benefit of my child
- Ensure that my child attends school regularly and on time
- Provide a home environment that encourages my child to learn
- Verify that all homework assignments are completed
- Communicate regularly with the teacher (conferences, phone calls, notes) with questions
- Support the school in developing positive behavior
- Attend the first hour of Saturday Detention, if my child ever receives this consequence
- Ensure that my child leaves his/her phone at home
- Attend two parent/teacher/student conferences in the fall and the spring
- Attend 4 Academic Nights per school year
- Complete 12 hours as a volunteer at Utopian Academy
- Show respect and support for my child, the teacher and the school
- Provide my child with the necessary school supplies
- Send my child to school every day in the required uniform

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_



UTOPIAN  
ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS

**As a Teacher, I will do my part by:**

- ❖ Believing that each student can learn;
- ❖ Showing respect for each child and his/her family;
- ❖ Coming to class prepared to teach;
- ❖ Creating an environment conducive to learning;
- ❖ Helping each child grow to his/her fullest potential;
- ❖ Providing meaningful and appropriate homework activities;
- ❖ Enforcing school and classroom rules fairly and consistently;
- ❖ Maintaining open lines of communication with students and parents; and
- ❖ Seeking ways to involve parents in the school program.

Teacher Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## PARENT/STUDENT HOMEWORK CONTRACT

This homework contract is an agreement between:

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

For the week of/month of/term of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Section:

I promise to complete my homework every day and return it to my teacher on time.

(Student checks all the steps s/he will take to make sure his/her homework gets finished.)

- √ I will write down homework assignments in my notebook, or on my homework planner form, every day.
- √ I will call a friend if I am missing any of my assignments.
- √ I will bring all of my homework assignments, and materials needed to do the homework from school.
- √ I will try to solve all homework problems on my own. I will ask my parents or other adults for help only when I have tried everything to figure out the answer.
- √ If I do not have any homework, I will spend the time studying or reviewing material.
- √ I will remember to pack my completed homework in my backpack every night.

Parent Section:

I (we) promise to work with our child to make sure his/her homework assignments are completed and returned to the teacher on time. (Parents circle all that they will do to help their child.)

- √ I will make sure that my child has a well-lit, quiet area in the home to do his/homework.
- √ I will make sure my child has a block of time available each day for doing homework.
- √ I will check my child's assignment book, or homework planner, every day.
- √ I will contact my child's teacher if I questions or concerns about my child's homework.
- √ I will make sure my child has all the supplies needed to do homework.
- √ I will not do my child's homework for him/her, but I will offer guidance and encouragement. I will encourage my child to check over his/her homework.
- √ I will be consistent and reward my child for completing his/her homework.
- √ I will follow through with consequences if my child breaks his/her promises in this homework contract.

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## IMMUNIZATION APPENDIX

### GA. Rules & Regs Ch. 511-2-2-.07 Religious Objections to Required Immunizations

(1) Except as provided in subsection (2) below, a child shall be exempt from the required immunizations if the parent or legal guardian has filed with the school or childcare facility a completed affidavit on DPH Form 2208.

(2) When the Department of Public Health (the “Department”) or a County Board of Health determines that an epidemic or the threat of an epidemic exists, the Department or Board shall immediately notify the governing authorities of all schools and childcare facilities within the affected area. Under those circumstances, the Department or Board may require immunization for those who object on the grounds of religious beliefs and may prohibit attendance at schools or childcare facilities within the area by unimmunized children.

(3) Persons who wish to register a religious objection to the vaccination of their child shall do so using the following DPH Form 2208:

#### AFFIDAVIT OF RELIGIOUS OBJECTION TO IMMUNIZATION

\_\_\_\_\_ [Name of parent or legal guardian]  
personally appeared before the undersigned notary public and swore or affirmed as follows:

1. I am the parent or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ [name of minor child]  
born on \_\_\_\_\_ [date of birth].

2. I understand that the Department requires children to obtain the following vaccinations before being admitted to a childcare facility or school: diphtheria; haemophiles influenza type B (not required on or after the fifth birthday); hepatitis A; hepatitis B; measles; meningitis; mumps; pertussis (whooping cough); pneumococcal (not required on or after the fifth birthday); poliomyelitis; rubella (German measles); tetanus; and varicella (chickenpox).

3. I understand that the Department has determined that these vaccinations are necessary to prevent the spread of dangerous diseases among the children and people of this State; that the required vaccinations are safe; that a child who does not receive these vaccinations is at risk of contracting those diseases; and that a child who does not receive those vaccinations is at risk of spreading those diseases to me, to other children in the childcare facility or school, and to other persons.

4. I sincerely affirm that vaccination is contrary to my religious beliefs, and that my objections to vaccination are not based solely on grounds of personal philosophy or inconvenience.



5. I understand that, notwithstanding my religious objections, my child may be excluded from childcare facilities or schools during an epidemic or threatened epidemic of any disease preventable by a vaccination required by the Department, and that my child may be required to receive a vaccination in the event that such a disease is in epidemic stages, as provided by OCGA §31-12-3 and DPH Rule 511-9-1-.03(2)(d).

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Parent or Legal Guardian

Sworn and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Notary Public

My commission expires \_\_\_\_\_



## **MEDIA RELEASE APPENDIX**

### **UTOPIAN ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS SCHOOLS STUDENT MEDIA RELEASE OPT-OUT FORM**

#### STUDENT INFORMATION

<b>Legal Last Name</b>	<b>Legal First Name</b>	<b>Legal Middle Name</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Birthdate</b>

NOTE: If this form is not completed, it will be considered that **you are allowing** your student to participate in publicity-related activities and news media opportunities as described below. THE GUARDIAN WILL NOTIFY THE PRINCIPAL OF THE SCHOOL IN WRITING WITHIN 10 DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THE STUDENT HANDBOOK OR BY AUGUST 31 OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, WHICHEVER IS LATER.

Completion of this form advises UAFTA of your choice to not have your child's name, image, voice or likeness appear in any form of media communication (Internet, photography, publishing, recording or videotaping) generated by UAFTA or newsgathering organizations (news media).

Additionally, you are expressing that you do not wish for your child to participate in any UAFTA approved media or publicity interviews or discussions that may be used for promotional or newsgathering purposes unless you direct otherwise.

**IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD'S NAME, IMAGE, VOICE OR LIKENESS USED, PLEASE CHECK THE BOX AND SIGN BELOW.**

I do not authorize staff and/or news gathering organizations to interview, record, photograph, videotape or use my child's likeness and name in publicity or newsgathering purposes.

---

**Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date**

Each school is to keep this form in the student's permanent record folder.

# **STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

## **General Regulations**

The Internet and other on-line resources provided by UAFTA are intended to be used to support the instructional program and further student learning. The network facilities are to be used in a responsible, efficient, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of Utopian Academy for the Arts.

## **Acceptable Use Agreement**

Because the Internet contains an unregulated collection of resources, the school cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information or the appropriateness of any material that a student may encounter. Therefore, before using the school's on-line resources, each student and his/her parent/guardian shall sign and return an UAFA Acceptable Use Agreement. This agreement shall specify user obligations and responsibilities and shall indemnify the school for any damages. The parent/guardian shall agree to not hold the school responsible for materials acquired by the student on the system, for violations of copyright restrictions, user's mistakes or negligence or any costs incurred by users.

## **Supervision**

**Staff** shall supervise students while using on-line services at the school site and may ask instructional assistants and students to assist in this supervision. The principal or designee shall oversee the maintenance of each school's technological resources and may establish guidelines and limits on their use.

## **User Obligations and Responsibilities**

Students are authorized to use the school's on-line services in accordance with user obligations and responsibilities.

The principal or designee shall make all decisions regarding whether a user has violated these regulations and may deny, revoke or suspend a user's access at any time. The decision of the principal or designee shall be final.

1. The student in whose name and on-line services account is issued is responsible for its proper use at all times. Users shall keep personal account numbers, user logins, passwords, home addresses, and telephone numbers private. They shall use the system only under their own account number.
2. The school system shall be used only for purposes related to education. Commercial, political and/or personal use unrelated to an educational purpose is strictly prohibited.
3. The school reserves the right to monitor any on-line communications for improper use. Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account, may be monitored or read by the school officials.

4. The use of the school's system is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of these privileges.
5. Students are prohibited from accessing, posting, submitting, publishing or displaying harmful matter or material that is threatening obscene, disruptive, sexually explicit, or that could be construed as harassment or disparagement of other based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or political beliefs. Harmful matter includes matter, taken as a whole, which to the average person, applying contemporary statewide standards, and appeals to the prurient interest and is matter which depicts or describes in a patently offensive way sexual conduct and which lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for minors.
6. Users shall not use the system to encourage the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, nor shall they promote unethical practices, or any activity prohibited by law or school policy.
7. Copyrighted material may not be placed on the system without the author's permission. Users may download copyrighted material for their own use.
8. Vandalism will result in the cancellation of user privileges. Vandalism includes the intentional uploading, downloading or creating computer viruses and/or any malicious attempt to harm or destroy school equipment or materials or the data of any other user.
9. Users shall not read other users' email or files; they shall not attempt to delete, copy, modify or forge other users' mail.
10. Users shall report any security problems or misuse of the services to the teacher or principal. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance will be viewed as criminal activity under state and federal law.
11. Both students and parent or guardian will sign the acceptable Use Policy before a student can use the technology of UAFA.
12. Students who fail to abide by the rules shall be subject to disciplinary action, revocation of the user account and legal action as appropriate.

## STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT FOR INTERNET ACCESS

I, \_\_\_\_\_ the parent of \_\_\_\_\_

agree to allow my child to have access to the Internet through UAFA. I have read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy for Internet Access, and to be responsible for the behavior of my child. I understand that the school cannot guarantee the accuracy or appropriateness of information or material that my child may encounter on the Internet.

I shall hold the school harmless for materials acquired by my child on the system, for violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence or any costs incurred by my child.

I understand that the following is a non-exhaustive list of activities that will not be tolerated, and that violations may result in the loss of account privileges, as well as other disciplinary and or legal action:

- Sending or displaying offensive pictures or graphics
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, insulting, threatening or abusing other network users
- Violating copyright laws
- Using another user's account and password
- Damaging computers, personal or network files
- Trespassing in another user's private files
- Attempting to circumvent network security
- Using the technology for commercial purposes or individual financial gain

Parent or Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## FINE ARTS PRODUCTION/EVENT CONTRACT

While involved in this production/event, I, \_\_\_\_\_ commit to performing at my absolute best behavior during school and rehearsal, as well as achieve at my highest standard academically. I will respect all Utopian faculty, staff, students, buildings, and equipment. I will maintain a passing grade in all my classes. I will not behave in any way that would warrant receiving a detention nor suspension. I understand that unruly behavior that results in the consequences could potentially hurt the production. Therefore, I understand that if I earn any of the previously stated consequences, the Dean of Arts or designee may dismiss me from the show.

I, also, commit to attending rehearsals and all related performances/shows. I understand that rehearsal requires attendance to perform, and one unexcused absence may result in dismissal from the show if written notice is not presented to Dean of Arts. I understand that Tech Rehearsals, Dress Rehearsals, and Shows/Performances are MANDATORY. My parents understand that I must be picked up from rehearsals on time, if I am picked up late two times, I will be withdrawn from the production.

Finally, I commit to performing at my best ability. I will give 100% at every rehearsal and show day. I am dedicated to doing my part to making this production the best it can be.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Contact Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

# NOTICE ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS

## DIVISIVE CONCEPTS POLICY

Charter School Policy on Protect Students First Act – Divisive Concepts

This policy is adopted in accordance with the state Protect Students First Act, OCGA §20-1-11 et al. This school strictly prohibits harassment or discrimination by or against students and employees on the basis of race and all other characteristics protected by state or federal law.

### I. Divisive Concepts

It is the policy of the Utopian Academy for the Arts Governance Board that all curricula and training programs encourage employees and students to practice tolerance and mutual respect and to refrain from judging others based on their race. Any curricula or training programs provided by the school to foster learning and workplace environments where all students, employees, or community members are respected shall not advocate for divisive concepts. This includes any curriculum, classroom instruction, or mandatory training programs delivered or facilitated by school personnel, or a third party engaged by the school.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed or applied to:

1. Inhibit or violate the rights protected by the Constitutions of Georgia or the United States of America or undermine intellectual freedom and free expression;
2. Infringe on the intellectual vitality of students and employees of this school or other local boards, school systems, or schools;
3. Prohibit the promotion of concepts such as tolerance, mutual respect, cultural sensitivity, or cultural competency, so long as it does not conflict with state or federal law;
4. Prohibit administrators, teachers, school personnel, or individuals facilitating a training program from responding in a professionally or academically appropriate manner and without espousing personal political beliefs to questions regarding specific divisive concepts raised by students, school community members, or training program participants;
5. Prohibit the discussion of divisive concepts, as part of a larger course of instruction, in a professionally and academically appropriate manner and without espousing personal political beliefs;
6. Prohibit the full and rigorous implementation of curricula, or elements of locally approved curriculum, that are required as part of the Georgia Standards of Excellence, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment coursework, or elements of such curricula; so long as the implementation is done in a professionally and academically appropriate manner and without espousing personal political beliefs;
7. Prohibit the use of curricula that addresses the topics of slavery, racial oppression, racial segregation, or racial discrimination, including topics related to the enactment and enforcement of laws resulting in racial oppression, segregation, and discrimination in a professionally and academically appropriate manner and without espousing personal political beliefs;
8. Create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, against the Utopian Academy for the Arts Charter School Network and its board members, departments, agencies, entities, officers, employees, agents, or any other personnel affiliated with this school; or
9. Prohibit a state or federal court with competent jurisdiction from ordering training or other remedial action that discusses divisive concepts due to a finding of discrimination, including discrimination based on race.

Complaint Process & Procedures for Alleged Violations



An eligible individual who believes that this section has been violated may file a written complaint with the principal in accordance with the process detailed herein.

Individuals eligible to file a complaint under this section include:

- The parent of a student enrolled at this school;
- Students enrolled in this school who have reached the age of majority or have been declared a lawfully emancipated minor; or
- Administrators, teachers, or other personnel employed at this school.

A written complaint under this section must include the following:

- Name of Complainant
- Child's Name, if applicable
- Date filed
- Reasonably detailed description of the alleged violation

#### Investigation & Conference

Within five (5) school days of receiving a complaint, the principal or his/her designee must review the complaint and take reasonable steps to investigate the alleged violation(s). Within ten (10) school days of receiving the complaint, the principal or his/her designee shall confer to review the investigation findings. The principal and the complainant can mutually agree to a longer timeline.

#### Initial Determination

During the conference, the principal or his/her designee will notify the complainant whether a violation was found to have occurred, in whole or in part. If a violation was found to have occurred, the principal or his/her designee must inform the complainant of what remedial steps have been or will be taken in response to the violation.

If requested, the principal or his/her designee will provide complainant with a written summary of the investigation findings and the remedial measures, if any, within three (3) school days of the request.

#### Appeal to Governing Board

The complainant may submit a written appeal of the initial determination to the Chair of the UAFA Governance Board. The Governance Board shall review the initial determination within ten (10) school days of receiving the written request for appeal. To the extent practicable, the Board shall provide a decision on its review of the initial determination within ten (10) schools' days of completing its review.

#### Review by the State Charter Schools Commission

The decision of the Governance Board may be reviewed by the State Charter Schools Commission in accordance with the policies and procedures adopted by the Commission.

#### Confidential Student and Employee Information

No confidential student or employee information shall be disclosed during any meeting or as part of any written response or appeal under this policy. Confidential student or personnel matters shall not be subject to review or appeal.

## II. Request to Review Records

At any time, including prior to filing a complaint, an eligible individual may request, in writing, to review any nonconfidential records that he/she reasonably believes may substantiate a complaint under this policy.

### Access to Records

Within three (3) business days of receipt, the principal shall make the requested records available for inspection. In any instance where some but not all of the requested records are unavailable within three (3) business days, the principal shall provide a written description of the responsive records in existence and a timeline for when the records will be available for review. All remaining responsive records must be provided for review as soon as practicable but no later than thirty (30) business days after receipt of the records request.

### Appeal of Records Request to Governing Board

Under this Section, if the principal denies a parent's properly submitted request for records review or does not produce existing records for inspection within thirty (30) business days, the parent may appeal the denial or failure to the Governance Board. To the extent practicable, the Board must place the appeal on the agenda for its next public meeting. If it is too late to appear on the next meeting's agenda, it shall be placed on the agenda for the subsequent Board meeting.

### Cause of Action

Nothing in this Section shall be construed to prohibit any cause of action available at law or in equity to a parent who is aggrieved by a decision of the Governance Board.

## III. Definitions

As used in this policy the following definitions apply:

1. "Divisive Concepts" means any of the following concepts, including views espousing such concepts:
  - a. One race is inherently superior to another race;
  - b. The United States of America is fundamentally racist;
  - c. An individual, by virtue of his or her race, is inherently or consciously racist or oppressive towards individuals of other races;
  - d. An individual should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatments solely or partly because of his or her race;
  - e. An individual's moral character is inherently determined by his or her race;
  - f. An individual, solely by virtue of his or her race, bears individual responsibility for actions committed in the past by other individuals of the same race;
  - g. An individual, solely by virtue of his or her race, should feel anguish, guilt, or any other form of psychological distress;
  - h. Performance-based advancement or the recognition and appreciation of character traits such as hard work ethic are racist or have been advocated for by individuals of a particular race to oppress individuals of another race; or
  - i. Any other form of race scapegoating or race stereotyping.
2. "Espousing personal political beliefs" means an individual, while performing official duties as part of his or her employment or engagement with a school or local school system, intentionally encouraging or attempting to persuade or indoctrinate a student, school community member, or other school personnel to agree with or advocate for such individual's personal beliefs concerning divisive concepts.

3. “Race Scapegoating” means assigning fault or blame to a race, or to an individual of a particular race because of his or her race. This term includes, but is not limited to, any claim that an individual of a particular race, consciously and by virtue of his or her race, is inherently racist or is inherently inclined to oppress individuals of other races;
4. “Race Stereotyping” means ascribing character traits, values, morals or ethical codes, status, or beliefs to an individual because of his or her race.

#### IV. Implementation

The Principal shall develop procedures, as necessary, to implement this policy.

Authority:

OCGA §20-1-11

## STUDENT RECORDS

### CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Utopian Academy for the Arts’ Student Record Policy is to assure that parents and eligible students have the right to access information contained in the student’s records and parents and eligible students can limit disclosure of certain information from these records. An eligible student is a student who is 18 years old or a legally emancipated minor, in which case the rights described in this notification are transferred from the parent to the student. The Superintendent notifies annually students and parents/guardians, including non-English-speaking parents/guardians, of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act through the student handbook distributed annually to each student.

The Utopian Academy for the Arts Governing Board policy requires that accurate and complete student academic and discipline records are maintained for each student enrolled at Utopian Academy for the Arts. Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day a request for access is made. Requests may be made by any parent or legal guardian whose parental rights have not been revoked by court order and any persons authorized in writing by the parent or legal guardian to the Principal of the school the student currently attends, and the Principal will make arrangements for inspection at a specific time and place.

Education records for current students that exist in paper format are maintained at the school where the student is enrolled and are in the custody of the principal or his/her designee. Education records for former students that exist in paper format are maintained by Student Records-Office of the Registrar located at 2750 Forest Parkway, Ellenwood, GA 30294, (470) 446-1070. A parent/guardian or eligible student will be permitted to obtain a copy of the education records upon reasonable notice and payment of copying costs of \$0.10 per page.

**It is the responsibility of the custodial parent/legal guardian to inform the school and to provide a copy of any legal action revoking educational rights from an individual to his/her child.**

Please refer to the FERPA Annual Notice and Notice of Directory Information in this Handbook for additional information on your rights and disclosure of your student’s personal information by the school.

# **PARENT'S RIGHTS**

## **CHARTER SCHOOL PARENTS' RIGHTS POLICY**

This policy is adopted in accordance with the requirements of HB 1178 enacted by the Georgia General Assembly during the 2022 legislative session.

### **Review of Student's Records**

In accordance with OCGA §20-2-786, parents shall be allowed to review all records relating to their minor child, including but not limited to current grade reports and attendance records.

Parents wishing to review their child's records should submit a written request to the Principal or his/her designee, identifying the specific records being requested for review. Upon receipt of a request under this policy, the Principal or his/her designee shall locate the identified records in existence and notify the parent of the time and place where the records may be reviewed.

To the extent practicable, identified records shall be produced for review within three (3) business days of receiving a written request. In any instance where some or all of the requested records are not available within three (3) business days, the School shall make available within that period the records that are available. For all other records, the Principal or his/her designee shall, within three (3) business days, provide a description of the identified records in existence and a timeline for when the information will be available for inspection. All remaining identified records shall be produced for review as soon as practicable but in no case more than thirty (30) days after receipt of the request.

Records produced for review under this policy may not be altered or removed from the location identified for reviewing records, and in no case shall records be removed from school property.

Pursuant to this policy, a parent may file an appeal, if the Principal or his/her designee fails to provide existing responsive information within thirty (30) days from the date of the request.

### **Review of Instructional Materials**

Pursuant to OCGA §20-2-786, parents have a right to review all instructional materials intended for use in the classroom of their minor child. In accordance with state law, parents may exercise this right during the review period(s) each year.

Under this policy, the Principal shall ensure that all instructional materials intended for use in the school's classrooms in each grading period are made available for parent review during the review period. During this time, instructional materials may be made available for review on the School's website or at the School upon written request by a parent.

### **Objection to Instructional Material**

The Principal shall appoint at least one person to receive parent objections to instructional materials under this policy. All objections must be in writing and submitted during the review period. A properly filed objection must include the following information:

- Student's name
- Parent's name and contact information
- Teacher's name
- Clearly identify the instructional material to which the parent is objecting

- Briefly describe the nature of the objection

Upon receipt of an objection, the Principal shall review the objection and provide a response, in writing, within five (5) business days.

Only objections filed, in writing, by the parent of a student in the identified classroom will be reviewed and receive a response. Pursuant to this policy, a parent may file an appeal of the Principal's decision to a properly submitted objection or if a response has not been provided within five (5) business days.

### **Sex Education**

During the review period, a parent may submit a written request to the Principal to exclude their child from the portion of any class in which sex education or AIDS prevention education is taught as part of a comprehensive health program pursuant to state law.

### **Appeals**

#### Level I

An appeal under this policy may be filed, in writing, with the Chair of the Governing Board. To the extent practicable, the Chair must place the appeal on the agenda of the next public meeting. If it is too late to add to the next meeting's agenda, it must be included on the agenda for the subsequent meeting.

#### Level II

A parent aggrieved by the decision of the Governing Board may appeal to the State Board of Education.

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply.

“Instructional Material” means instructional materials and content identified by the State Board of Education that constitutes the principal source of study for a state funded course to be used in the various grades in the public schools of this state, including the elementary grades and high school grades, which includes but is not limited to systematically designed material in any medium, including digital instructional materials and content and any computer hardware, software, and technical equipment necessary to support such instructional materials and content. The term includes locally approved instructional materials and content that constitute the principal source of study for a state funded course, not including supplementary or ancillary material, which is adopted by a local board of education or used by a local school system. Supplementary or ancillary material includes, but is not limited to, articles, online simulations, worksheets, novels, biographies, speeches, videos, music, and similar resources in any medium, including both physical and digital.

“Review Period” means the first two weeks of each grading period of the school year.

“Sex education/AIDS education” shall have the same meaning as defined in State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.12.

The Principal shall develop procedures to implement this policy. A copy of this policy shall be posted on the school's website.

Nothing in this policy shall affect the rights provided under federal law, including but not limited to the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

Authority: OCGA §20-2-143, §20-2-768, §20-2-1010, §20-2-2017; BOE Rule 160-4-2-.12

## THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- *CONSENT* before students is required to submit to a survey concerning one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. ED):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- *RECEIVE NOTICE AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO OPT A STUDENT OUT OF:*

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

- *INSPECT*, upon request and before administration or use –

1. Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

All rights under PPRA transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Utopian Academy for the Arts has developed policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing,

sales, or other distribution purposes. Utopian will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Utopian will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parents to opt their child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. This notification to parents will be made at the beginning of the school year if the School has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. The following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by U.S. ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights under PPRA have been violated may file a complaint with:  
Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

## **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

UAFA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. UAFA also provides equal access or a fair opportunity to meet to any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society) that wishes to conduct a meeting within the open or limited public forum offered by the school.

The following person has been designated as the middle school Title IX Coordinator to handle inquiries regarding these non-discrimination policies and Title IX questions and/or concerns:

Mr. Travis Joshua, Principal  
2750 Forest Parkway, Ellenwood, GA 30294  
Utopian Academy for the Arts  
[travis.joshua@utopianacademy.com](mailto:travis.joshua@utopianacademy.com)  
(470) 446-1070

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, please contact the Office for Civil Rights:  
U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Civil Rights  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605



1-800-421-3481

## **CHILD FIND**

UAFA, in order to fulfill the obligations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is required to inform and provide full educational opportunities to all individuals with disabilities ages birth through twenty-one.

UAFA needs your assistance to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities. This public awareness notice is to inform parents and other individuals/agencies of the availability of educational services and related services to all individuals who reside within the jurisdiction of the UAFA and who are between the ages of birth through twenty-one, regardless of the severity of their disability. This includes individuals in all public and private agencies and institutions and highly mobile children with disabilities, such as migrant and homeless children, who reside within the legal boundaries of Clayton County.

Anyone aware of an individual who may benefit from educational services and related services is encouraged to call UAFA, at (470) 446-1070.

### **Interventions Prior to Referral**

The screening of children by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation shall not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services.

Prior to referring a student for consideration for eligibility for special education and related services, a student must have received scientific, research or evidence-based interventions selected to reduce the academic, social or behavioral problem(s) the student is having.

Student referrals must be accompanied by documentation of scientific, research or evidence based academic and/or behavioral interventions that have been implemented as designed for the appropriate period of time to show effect or lack of effect that demonstrates the child is not making sufficient rate of progress to meet age or State approved grade-level standards within a reasonable time frame.

Exceptions may be made in circumstances where immediate evaluation and/or placement is required due to a significant disability that precludes access to instruction. This exception should be an infrequent and rare occurrence and the evidence for the need clearly documented in the eligibility decision.

If a parent or teacher requests an evaluation and interventions have not been provided prior to referral, interventions may be provided while the student is being evaluated if the school agrees that evaluation is necessary at that time. Additionally, the lack of interventions shall not be a reason for delaying an evaluation or determining that a child is not eligible for special education services.

In the event that a parental request for evaluation is denied by the School on the grounds that it does not suspect the child has a disability, then a written notice will be provided explaining the reasons for this denial and the information used as the basis for these decisions.

## Public Information

UAFA has the following documents available for review by parents of children with disabilities and to the general public:

1. Comprehensive Plan for Special Education.
2. IDEA Federal Applications for Funds.
3. Special Education Accountability/Monitoring Final Report.
4. Applications, evaluations, periodic program plan or reports relating to federal programs including auditor's reports, statements of assurance, budget, and grant materials

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

### **I. PURPOSE**

When a parent or student has a complaint or grievance about a matter of school policy or procedure, the following procedures are to be followed in order to resolve the conflict. The purpose of this policy is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to complaints that may arise. The Board shall have the discretion to elevate a grievance directly to Level III, if appropriate or necessary. The Board may also send any complaint back down to Level I or Level II to follow the proper process if the initial complaint was filed with the Board.

### **II. GRIEVANCES**

#### **1. Definitions**

Grievance – A complaint from a parent or student must include the following: (1) Set forth the allegation that there has been a violation of any policy, accepted practices, or state or federal law; (2) specifically identify the policy, practice, or statute violated; (3) provide all relevant details and involved parties known to the grievant at the time of filing; and (4) identify the requested relief.

Grievant – Any individual or group of individuals aggrieved by a decision or condition falling under policy, accepted practices, or state or federal law.

#### **2. Procedures**

##### Level I

Any individual alleging a grievance is encouraged to resolve the problem, if possible, through an informal discussion with the person or persons suspected of violation, beginning at the earliest level of organizational structure. For example, parents and guardians should discuss classroom concerns first with classroom teachers. When school officials hear complaints or receive formal grievances, they should first make sure that grievant or potential grievant have first attempted in good faith to resolve problems directly with involved persons; however, **a student's parent or guardian may never**

**approach another student for these purposes.** Upon receipt of an informal complaint, the principal or immediate supervisor shall initiate action to resolve the issue within five (5) working days.

#### Level II

If the response in Level I does not resolve the problem, the grievant may, within ten (10) working days after the informal complaint decision has been rendered, file the complaint in writing with the principal to initiate Level II. The principal shall investigate the complaint within fifteen (15) working days of the grievance filing date. The Principal shall decide who will conduct the investigation based on the nature of the complaint and the individuals involved.

Within five (5) working days of completing the investigation, the principal shall render a decision and issue a written report setting forth the Principal's findings and recommendations for the resolution of the grievance.

If no written report is issued within the time limits set forth, or if the grievant rejects the recommendations of the principal, the grievant shall have the right to appeal to the Board for review of the grievance.

#### Level III

A written request for the Board's review of the grievance must be submitted to the Board Chairperson within ten (10) days of the date of the principal's report or the expiration of the time limits set forth in Level II. The request shall include the nature of the complaint, the reason(s) for the appeal and the requested outcome.

The Board shall review the grievance and the report of the investigation and may hold a hearing. The grievant may be accompanied by a representative of grievant choice.

The Board may affirm the principal's recommendations, amend the recommendations, or affirm the recommendations in part and amend in part.

The Board's written decision shall be issued within 30 working days of receipt of the grievant written appeal.

If no written decision is issued within the time limit set forth or if the grievant shall reject the decision of the Board, the grievant shall be free to pursue such statutory or administrative remedies as the law may provide.

### **III. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

If either party in a grievance wishes to change the timeline set forth in this policy, the party will request the modification(s) from the other party and both parties will be required to agree to the modification(s), in writing.

No person shall suffer recrimination or discrimination because of participation in this grievance procedure. Confidentiality will be observed pending resolution of the grievance.

## **SAFE SCHOOLS ACT**

The Safe Schools Act, as defined by House Bill 147, introduces measures to enhance school safety and prevent gang-related activities within educational environments. This legislation mandates the collaboration between the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) and the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA) to establish a comprehensive school safety and anti-gang endorsement. This endorsement will be made available to eligible certificated professional personnel who successfully complete the required training.

### **1. Purpose and Scope**

The Safe Schools Act, in alignment with House Bill 147, recognizes the importance of maintaining secure and gang-free school environments. By creating the school safety and anti-gang endorsement, this legislation seeks to equip educators with the knowledge and skills necessary to identify, prevent, and address safety concerns and gang-related issues within their schools.

### **2. School Safety and Anti-Gang Endorsement**

The school safety and anti-gang endorsement is a specialized credential offered to eligible certificated professional personnel in Georgia. This endorsement signifies the holder's commitment to fostering a safe learning environment and their ability to effectively address and mitigate threats associated with gang activity.

### **3. Training Requirements**

To qualify for the school safety and anti-gang endorsement, eligible certificated professional personnel are required to complete the designated training program approved by the GaPSC in consultation with GEMA. This training will cover a range of topics related to school safety, gang identification, prevention strategies, conflict resolution, and communication skills.

### **4. Application Process**

Upon successful completion of the required training program, certificated professional personnel can apply for the school safety and anti-gang endorsement through the GaPSC. The application process will include providing proof of training completion and meeting any additional requirements set forth by the GaPSC.

### **5. Endorsement Benefits**

Holders of the school safety and anti-gang endorsement will gain valuable insights and skills to enhance the safety and security of their school communities. This endorsement demonstrates a commitment to proactive safety measures and the ability to contribute to a positive and secure learning environment.

### **6. Compliance**

The Safe Schools Act and House Bill 147 emphasize the importance of continuous efforts to ensure the safety of students and staff members. All eligible certificated professional personnel are encouraged to take advantage of the training opportunities and attain the school safety and anti-gang endorsement to contribute to a safer school environment.

By adhering to the provisions of the Safe Schools Act and obtaining the school safety and anti-gang endorsement, our school community reaffirms its commitment to fostering a secure and nurturing educational environment for all.

*Effective Date: July 1, 2023*

## **EDNA MAE MCGOVERN ACT**

The Edna Mae McGovern Act, as defined by House Bill 402, introduces measures to enhance water safety education and awareness within public schools. This legislation mandates that public schools annually provide water safety education information to parents and guardians of students under 18 years of age. Additionally, students who are 18 years or older will receive this information directly from the school.

### **1. Purpose and Scope**

The Edna Mae McGovern Act, in alignment with House Bill 402, recognizes the importance of promoting water safety awareness among students and their families. By requiring the provision of water safety education information, this legislation aims to empower individuals to make informed decisions and take appropriate precautions when engaging in water-related activities.

### **2. Water Safety Education Information**

Public schools are required to provide water safety education information annually. This information will cover essential topics related to water safety, including but not limited to:

- Drowning prevention strategies.
- Recognizing and responding to water-related emergencies.
- Importance of swimming skills and supervised water activities.
- Basic water rescue techniques.
- Understanding the dangers of various water environments.

### **3. Distribution to Parents and Guardians**

Public schools will ensure that parents and guardians of students under 18 years of age receive the water safety education information on an annual basis. This distribution can occur through various means, such as school newsletters, emails, or informational pamphlets.

### **4. Direct Provision to Students 18 and Older**

Students who are 18 years of age or older will receive the water safety education information directly from the school. This ensures that all students, regardless of age, are equipped with the knowledge needed to stay safe in water environments.

### **5. Implementation and Compliance**

In accordance with the Edna Mae McGovern Act (House Bill 402), our school is committed to providing comprehensive water safety education to our students and their families. By adhering to the provisions of this legislation, we aim to enhance awareness and promote responsible water-related behavior among our school community.

We encourage parents, guardians, and students to take this water safety education seriously and apply the knowledge gained to ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals during water-related activities.

*Effective Date: July 1, 2023*

## **SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a nondiscrimination statute enacted to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact UAFA's Section 504 Coordinator:

Glynis Terrell  
2750 Forest Parkway,  
Ellenwood, GA 30294  
Phone: 470-446-1070 ext.3016  
Email: [glynis.terrell@utopianacademy.com](mailto:glynis.terrell@utopianacademy.com)

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provides parents and/or students with the following rights:

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the School's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the School will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34 CFR 104.35.
9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.
10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.
11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the School regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.
12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.
13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the School actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity to parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.
14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the School's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.

15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer, you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.
16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Section 504 Procedural Safeguards Overview:

Any student or parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing due to the School's actions or inactions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing will be in writing to the Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the School's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the Section 504 Coordinator. The Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.

1. Hearing Request: The Request for the Hearing will include the following:
  - a. The name of the student.
  - b. The address of the residence of the student.
  - c. The name of the school the student is attending.
  - d. The decision that is the subject of the hearing.
  - e. The requested reasons for review.
  - f. The proposed remedy sought by the grievant.
  - g. The name and contact information of the grievant.

Within 10 business days from receiving the grievant Request for Hearing, the Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request for Hearing does not contain the necessary information noted above, the Section 504 Coordinator will inform the grievant of the specific information needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will be stayed until the Request for Hearing contains the necessary information noted above.

2. Mediation:

The school may offer mediation to resolve the issues detailed by the grievant in his or her Request for Hearing. Mediation is voluntary and both the grievant and the school will agree to participate. The grievant may terminate the mediation at any time. If the mediation is terminated without an agreement, the school will follow the procedures for conducting an impartial hearing without an additional Request for Hearing.

3. Hearing Procedures:

- a. The Section 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official who will conduct a hearing within 45 calendar days from the receipt of the grievant Request for Hearing unless agreed to otherwise by the grievant or a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.
- b. Upon a showing of good cause by the grievant or school, the impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may grant a continuance and set a new hearing date. The request for a continuance will be in writing and copied to the other party.
- c. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.



- d. The grievant will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel at his or her own expense at the hearing and participate, speak, examine witnesses and present information at the hearing. If the grievant is to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, he or she will inform the Section 504 Coordinator of that fact in writing at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify the Section 504 Coordinator in writing of representation by legal counsel shall constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.
- e. The grievant will have the burden of proving any claims he or she may assert. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the recipient to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A recipient shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the recipient unless it is demonstrated by the recipient that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R.104.34. One or more representatives of the school, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.
- f. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.
- g. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence based on its reliability and probative value.
- h. The hearing shall be closed to the public.
- i. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.
- j. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.
- k. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the recipient. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the recipient.
- l. Unless otherwise required by law, the impartial review official shall uphold the action of school unless the grievant can prove that a preponderance of the evidence supports his or her claim.
- m. Failure of the grievant to appear at a scheduled hearing unless prior notification of absence was provided and approved by the impartial review official, or just cause is shown, shall constitute a waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the impartial review official.

4. Decision:

The impartial review official shall issue a written determination within 20 calendar days of the date the hearing concluded. The determination of the impartial review official shall not include any monetary damages or the award of any attorney's fees.

5. Review:

If not satisfied with the decision of the impartial review official, any party may pursue any right of review, appeal, cause of action or claim available to them under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) ANNUAL NOTICE**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days after the day UAFA receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask UAFA to amend a record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student’s enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations require the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) – (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA).
  - Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))

- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
  - Information the school has designated as “directory information” under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student’s case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

### **FERPA NOTICE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that UAFA, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, UAFA may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised UAFA to the contrary in accordance with UAFA procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow UAFA to include information from your child’s education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, showing weight and height of team members

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

If you do not want UAFA to disclose any or all the types of information designated below as directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you will notify UAFA in writing **by September 30**. UAFA has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student’s name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level

- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user
- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors

## **SUIDICIDE PREVENTION POLICY**

Utopian Academy for the Arts (UAFA) recognizes the importance of the health and welfare of students and staff. Therefore, UAFA shall provide to all certified personnel, annual training in suicide awareness and prevention in accordance with state law and rules established by the Georgia Department of Education.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures to address at a minimum, suicide prevention efforts, intervention, and postvention. Such procedures shall be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts.

In accordance with state law, no person shall have a cause of action for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission resulting from the implementation of this policy or its implementing procedures or resulting from any training, or lack thereof, required by state law or this policy. The training, or lack thereof, required by the provisions of state law shall not be construed to impose any specific duty of care. Neither the training nor the procedures are designed to impose ministerial duties but to provide a framework in which educators can exercise their professional judgment in the best interest of students.

It shall be the policy of all faculty and staff to monitor student behavior in a manner that allows for notification to be given to the proper school or external authorities should we suspect that a student is contemplating or has contemplated suicide. For the purpose of this policy, the Crisis Team shall consist of the Dean of Students, the Special Education Director, and the Principal.

Markers for students at high risk for suicide include those who:

- Have previously threatened suicide.
- Look for access to means to harm themselves.
- Talk or write about death, dying, or suicide.
- Have made previous suicide attempts serious enough to require hospitalization.
- Talking about suicide
- Frequently talking about death
- Talking about feeling hopeless, helpless, or worthless - saying things like "it would be better if I wasn't here" or "I want out"
- Individual exhibits signs of depression, including deep sadness, loss of interest, trouble sleeping and eating
- Abrupt change of mood, from extreme sadness to happiness or calm
- Risk-taking behavior, (e.g. driving too fast)
- Person exhibits loss of interest in things that he/she used to care about

## **UAFA VOLUNTEER POLICY**

### **VOLUNTEERS**

The Governing Board of Utopian Academy for the Arts adopts the following policy, effective on the date of adoption by the Board. If applicable, once adopted this policy replaces any previously approved school policy currently in place that provided direction on the items in this policy.

#### SECTION 1. Volunteer Hours

At least 10 hours for parents and guardians of students enrolled in UAFA is expected

#### SECTION 2. A two-tiered level system will be used.

##### Tier I

- o No direct interaction with students. Volunteer when school is not in session such as assisting in the office, making photocopies, bulletin board design, etc.
- o Requirements: Volunteer Release Form, completed Mandated Reporter training, completed FERPA training and copy of government ID

##### Tier II

- o Interaction with students shall be under the supervision of an UAFA employee. Most volunteer activities would include classroom volunteer, field trip chaperones, cafeteria support and carpool duty.
- o Requirements: Background check, Volunteer Release Form, copy of government ID, completed Mandated Reporter Training (Please print and submit certification of completion which is displayed at the end of the 60-minute course.), and completed FERPA training.

##### Tier III

School officials shall implement procedures to assure that compliance is met regarding the Volunteer policy.

## **SCHOLAR REPORTING OF ALLEGED SEXUALLY INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

### **Governance Board Policy**

Scholar Reporting of Alleged Sexually Inappropriate Behavior:

- (a) Any scholar (or parent or friend of a scholar) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other school system employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at Utopian Academy for the Arts
- (b) Any teacher, counselor or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of a scholar by a teacher, administrator or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school principal or principal's designee and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school principal or principal's designee within 24 hours. If the school principal is the person

accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee.

- (c) Any school designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The report should be made by telephone and followed by a written report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a scholar by a teacher, administrator or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 or 20-2-1184 shall be investigated immediately by school. To protect the integrity of the process and to limit repeated interviews with the student, the designated system personnel is required to take a written statement from the student prior to any other person. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the school principal or principal's designee shall make an immediate written report to the Executive Director, Chief Officer of Public Safety, and Coordinator of School Social Work. The Executive Director shall also notify the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division of any validated acts of sexual misconduct.



## **EQUAL ACCESS TO SCHOOL FACILITIES**

In accordance with the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, 20 USC §7905, UAFA does not discriminate against or prohibit equal access or a fair opportunity to any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society or organization, that wishes to meet at the school, that wishes to meet at the School.

Any group that wishes to meet at UAFA should contact the front office for additional information on reserving meeting space.

## **AWARENESS OF SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST**

In accordance with OCGA §20-2-324.5, UAFA will conduct at least two sessions during the school year to provide information to parents on the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest syndrome. UAFA will notify parents of the date of these sessions. Attendance is voluntary but parents are encouraged to attend. If you are unable to attend one of these sessions, you may contact the principal to request a copy of the informational materials at any time throughout the school year.

## **A.J.'S LAW**

In accordance with A.J.'s Law (Senate Bill 45), parents or legal guardians of students with epilepsy or a seizure disorder are required to complete and submit a seizure action plan to the school. This plan is essential to ensure the provision of necessary support and services for the students while they are on school premises or participating in school-related events.

### **1. Purpose and Scope**

A.J.'s Law aims to safeguard the well-being and educational experience of students with epilepsy or a seizure disorder by establishing a structured process for collaboration between parents or legal guardians and the school. The law mandates the creation and submission of a seizure action plan to facilitate appropriate care, understanding, and responsiveness to the unique needs of the student.

### **2. Seizure Action Plan**

The seizure action plan is a comprehensive document developed by the parents or legal guardians in collaboration with the student's healthcare provider. This plan outlines the specific protocols, procedures, and information necessary to effectively manage the student's condition in the school environment. The plan should address the following aspects:

- a. **Student Information:** Provide essential details about the student, including their medical history, diagnosis, and emergency contact information.
- b. **Seizure Description:** Describe the types of seizures the student experiences, including any aura, duration, and potential triggers.
- c. **Medication and Treatment:** Detail any prescribed medications, dosages, and administration instructions, along with potential side effects and how to respond in case of adverse reactions.
- d. **Emergency Contact:** Provide contact information for the student's healthcare provider and an emergency contact person.
- e. **Seizure Response Protocol:** Outline step-by-step instructions on how to respond during and after a seizure, including ensuring the student's safety, monitoring, and when to seek medical assistance.
- f. **Post-Seizure Support:** Describe any post-seizure care requirements, including recovery time, reintegration into the classroom, and additional support needed.

### **3. Submission and Review Process**



Parents or legal guardians are required to complete the seizure action plan and submit it to the school administration. The plan will be reviewed by appropriate school personnel, including the school nurse and designated staff members. This review process will ensure that all staff members are aware of and trained in the specific procedures outlined in the plan.

#### **4. Confidentiality and Accessibility**

All information provided in the seizure action plan is confidential and will be shared only with school personnel who require access to effectively support the student. The plan will be stored securely and accessed on a need-to-know basis.

#### **5. Training**

School staff members will receive appropriate training on how to implement the seizure action plan, recognize different types of seizures, and respond effectively. Regular training updates will be conducted to ensure that staff members are well-prepared to handle emergency situations.

#### **6. Compliance**

Failure to comply with A.J.'s Law and submit a seizure action plan may result in a delay in providing necessary support and services for the student. Parents or legal guardians are urged to complete and submit the plan promptly to ensure the safety and well-being of their child while at school or attending school-related events.

By adhering to the provisions of A.J.'s Law (SB 45), our school community demonstrates its commitment to creating a safe and inclusive environment that caters to the diverse needs of all students. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in this matter.

*Effective Date: July 1, 2023*

### **MCKINNEY-VENTO POLICY (FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS):**

Legal Reference: 42 USC §11431 et seq.

It is the policy of UAFA to ensure that homeless children and youth are provided with equal access to its educational programs, have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state of Georgia academic standards, are not segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and to establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness.

#### **Notification**

Families shall be notified of their rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §11434a et seq. (the Act) and directed to contact the Homeless Education Liaison at Utopian Academy for the Arts to request additional information or assistance. Notification of these rights shall be included in the Parent/Student Handbook and in any other manner deemed appropriate by the school.

#### **Identification**

In accordance with the Act, the term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence due to economic hardship. This includes:

- a) Children and youth who are forced to share the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; live in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;

- b) Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
- c) Children and youth who live in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or,
- d) Migratory children who are living in circumstances set forth in items a, b, and c.

Unaccompanied youth are students who are not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian and may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition. Homeless status is determined in cooperation with the parents/guardians, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the Homeless Education Liaison.

In collaboration with school personnel and community organizations, the Homeless Education Liaison will identify children and youth in transition, both in and out of school. Additionally, ELL and Homeless students will also be identified in a school-wide screening under IDEA Child Find Query (CFQ) during enrollment.

### **School Selection**

Homeless children and unaccompanied youth have the right to attend school with other children or youths who are not homeless. A student identified as homeless may select to attend school at their school of origin or in the attendance area where the family currently resides, if it is in their best interest.

The student may continue to attend the “school of origin”, which is the school he or she attended when permanently housed; the school in which he or she was last enrolled; or the designated receiving school at the next grade level if he or she has completed the grade levels at the school of origin. If attending their school of origin, he or she may continue attending for the duration of homelessness or for the remainder of the current academic year if they become permanently housed during the academic year.

If not attending school of origin, they may enroll in any public school that a non-homeless student who lives in the attendance area where he or she is living is eligible to attend.

### **Enrollment**

Identified students shall immediately be enrolled in school to attend classes and participate fully in school activities including if the child or youth is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment, including but not limited to previous academic records, immunization or other health records, proof of residency, or other documents.

The School shall immediately contact the student’s previous school to obtain available school records. Records ordinarily kept by the School will be maintained so that they are available in a timely fashion when the student enters a new school or school district.

If (a) the grade level for which a homeless child or youth has applied has more applicants than spaces available and results in a lottery during the designated time on an annual basis, or (b) if a homeless student applies for admission after the time of the annual lottery, the student will be designated as residing within the school attendance zone and will be immediately enrolled pending, if necessary, the outcome of the Enrollment Dispute Resolution Process discussed below.

### **Comparable Services**

Homeless children and youth shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other students at this School, including but not limited to transportation, educational services, meals through school meal programs, special education services, career and technical education, and gifted education.

### **Transportation**

Where feasible, applicable, and requested by the parent/guardian, homeless students shall be provided transportation if it is determined to be in the best interest of the child.

The Homeless Education Liaison is authorized use a portion of Title I funds for this purpose. Transportation strategies may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Develop formal or informal agreements with school districts where homeless children cross district lines
- Use public transit where feasible
- Use approved carpools,<sup>1</sup> van or taxi services, including Uber and Lyft
- Reimburse parents and youth for gas<sup>2</sup>
- Pursue inter-agency solutions

### **Homeless Education Liaison**

The School will appoint a homeless education liaison who shall ensure homeless children and youth, or their parent/guardian and unaccompanied youths are:

1. Identified by school personnel;
2. Enrolled, have an equal opportunity to succeed in school, and receive the educational services for which they are eligible;
3. Provided referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services;
4. Informed of the educational and related opportunities available and provided meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education;
5. Informed of all transportation services, including to the school of origin; and
6. Provided written notice of rights under the Act

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<sup>1</sup> The School will ensure that any staff member who provides transportation to a homeless student is offered liability insurance through the school at no cost to the staff member.

<sup>2</sup> Parents may be given prepaid gas cards for fuel in the amount calculated as necessary for the two round trips daily for school transportation. Cards must be tracked by the Homeless Liaison or Business Office and signed out by the parent and school staff. Pupil attendance must be tracked by the Homeless Liaison. Fuel may not be provided for days when students are not in attendance or school is not in session.

The Liaison's duties shall also include ensuring:

1. That public notices of the educational rights of homeless children and youth are disseminated in locations frequented by the parents/guardians or unaccompanied youths, including but not limited to schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens.
2. School personnel receive training on the possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity in identifying families and youth as in transition, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the Liaison.
3. Coordination of services with local service agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to homeless children and youths and their families, to minimize educational disruption for homeless children and youths who become homeless.
4. That a residency inquiry is included in the initial enrollment information and instruct the school registrar and secretary to inquire about possible homelessness upon the enrollment and withdrawal of every student and to forward information indicating homelessness to the Homeless Liaison.
5. Eligible students are appropriately reported to the Georgia Department of Education.

### **Dispute Resolution**

If there is a dispute under the Act over eligibility, school selection, or enrollment in UAFA, it shall be resolved using the following process.

#### **Step 1:**

The parent/guardian or unaccompanied minor must file a written request for dispute resolution with the Homeless Education Liaison to initiate the dispute resolution process. The homeless child or unaccompanied youth shall be immediately enrolled in the school until the dispute is resolved. The Liaison shall carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible for homeless children and unaccompanied youths.

Within five (5) business days of receipt of the letter, a written explanation shall be provided to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth for any enrollment decision along with a copy of their rights to appeal the decision.

#### **Step 2:**

A parent or unaccompanied youth must notify the Homeless Education Liaison of his or her intent to appeal the decision to the Governing Board within 10 school days of receiving the explanation of this School. The Liaison shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the Board. The Board will review the information and provide a written decision within fifteen (15) school days of receipt.

#### **Step 3:**

If the dispute remains unresolved or is appealed following the final decision by the Board, the Homeless Liaison will forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the

Georgia Department of Education's Homeless Program Consultant for charter schools for final disposition of this matter.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES**

### **Notification of Illness**

- Notify school of illness on the first day by 9:00 am.
- Notify school immediately if child has a communicable disease.
- ALWAYS KEEP A CHILD HOME WHO DISPLAYS SYMPTOMS OF SICKNESS OR WHO HAS A TEMPERATURE OF 100 DEGREES OR HIGHER. Students who exhibit a fever may not return to school until the student has been free of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- An absence note is required upon return to school.

### **Emergency Information**

Each child will have a completed emergency form on file in the school office. These forms will be kept up to date. Any changes in address or phone numbers will be reported to the office. This is important to your child in the event of an accident or illness. Please be sure to put your cell phone on the emergency form.

In case of illness, a child may not be sent home unless there is a parent or authorized individual to receive him/her. If you wish for another person to perform this duty for you, please indicate this on your emergency form. This information is to be kept accurate and up to date.

### **Communicable Diseases**

The school office will be notified immediately in the case of any communicable diseases including but not limited to the following:

#### **CHICKEN POX**

A child will stay home until 7 days or longer after the appearance of the first crop of vesicles (crusts are contagious). If new vesicles continue to appear, this may mean not returning to school until 24 hours after the last vesicle has made its appearance.

#### **CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE)**

A child may return to school 24 hours after a physician has been advised and the stated active treatment has been given.

#### **HEADLICE**

Infections with lice and mites are treatable with over-the-counter medication, please consult your child's physician or pharmacists for guidance. The student(s) may return to school after treatment and thorough combing has been administered, to remove lice and nits (eggs). Before going to class, a returning student must be checked for lice and/or nits by the appropriate school personnel. If nits are still present in the student's hair, the discretion of the nurse or trained staff will determine whether to

send the student home. To prevent an outbreak of head lice, parents are encouraged to examine the hair of their children weekly.

**IMPETIGO:** A common name for skin hypodermal or a bacterial infection of the skin that is most common in young children. The organisms most implicated as causing this disease are Streptococcus and Staphylococcus. Due to the highly contagious nature, no child shall be permitted to return to school until appropriate systematic antibiotic therapy has been started or until free of disease. The area should be covered if oozing.

**GERMAN MEASLES:** A child will stay home until clinical recovery at least four days from onset of catarrhal system or until rash is clear.

**MUMPS:** A child will stay at home until asymptomatic or released by a physician with a minimum of nine days exclusion.

**PINWORMS:** A student diagnosed with pinworms should not return to school until a physician has started appropriate treatment.

**RINGWORMS OF SCALP AND BODY:** Microsporium species is highly contagious spread by both direct and indirect contact. Children before the age of puberty are very susceptible. Any child diagnosed as having ringworm shall not be allowed to return to school unless he/she has been placed on an effective therapeutic regimen, or until he/she exhibits negative scabies until adequately treated.

**PERTUSSIS (WHOOPIING COUGH):** Whooping Cough is a highly contagious Bacterial illness spread by coughs and sneezes. People sick with pertussis have severe coughing attacks that can last for months.

In case of illness or accidents at school, the office personnel will contact the parent/guardian by phone. If a student has a temperature 99.6 or higher, the parent will be contacted.

**MEDICATIONS:** Medical treatment is the responsibility of the parent and the family health care provider. Medications are RARELY to be given at school. The parent is urged, with the help of the family health care provider, to work out a schedule of giving medication outside school hours. In the event that a special or serious problem requires an exception, the medication must be provided to the school in the original container marked with the child's name on it and accompanied by the original dosing instructions from the child's healthcare provider. NO member of the faculty is permitted to administer any medication without the following:

- A WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF THE CHILD.

- A WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM THE PHYSICIAN DETAILING THE METHOD, AMOUNT AND SCHEDULE BY WHICH THE CHILD WILL COME AT THE DESIGNATED TIME. Specific instructions should be included for the emergency treatment if an allergic reaction should occur, (i.e., localized, generalized, severe, mild)

In order for medication to be administered at school, both requirements listed above must be met. Unless authorized by state law, students are prohibited from possessing and/or administering prescription and non-prescription medication while at school.

### **MEDICATION FORMS**

The school office provides the appropriate medication forms that cover the above requirements upon request. These forms will be updated annually. NO medication will be kept over the summer months. Parents are required to pick up any unused medication before the end of the school year. Any medication that is not picked up will be properly disposed of by the school.

All medication will be brought to the office where it will be stored to which the child will come at the designated time to receive it. Medication shall be brought to the school **by the parent** in the **original container**. Parents are responsible for ensuring that the student has a sufficient amount of medication at the school. The school will not inform parents if the student requires a refill. No medication (prescription or non-prescription) may be transported by a student or be in the student's possession while at school.

### **MEDICINE LOG PROCEDURE**

1. Student will have a parent and physician signed form on file in the office for dispensing of medicine.
2. Please send medicine in original container.
3. Staff members log ALL medicine dispensed to students in a Medicine Logbook.

### **ENTRANCE REGULATIONS**

The Georgia School Immunization Law requires that children receive a series of immunizations before entry to schools, childcare centers, or family childcare homes. In addition, the Georgia School Immunization Law requires schools, childcare centers, and family childcare homes to enforce immunization requirements, to maintain immunization records for all children enrolled, and to submit reports to the health department.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS AND STUDENT MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS**

A child's health has an important effect on his or her performance. Georgia State Law requires all students to have satisfactory evidence on file of current immunization. The record submitted to the school will include at least the month and year received. Records of immunizations will be on file prior to the opening of school. Students in grades 6-8 will be excluded from attendance at Utopian Academy for the Arts if all records are not in by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Parents should refer to the Georgia Department of Public Health for additional information on required immunizations. (<https://dph.georgia.gov/immunization-section>)

Parents who are seeking an exemption to immunization requirements for religious reasons must submit the appropriate Affidavit of Religious Objection to Immunization (please refer to Immunization Appendix or the Georgia Department of Public Health)

**MEDICAL-DENTAL APPOINTMENTS**

Appointments during school hours are to be kept at a minimum. If it is unavoidable the child WILL be signed-out and signed-back in at the school office.