University of Houston Charter School
2017-2018
Student/Parent Handbook

Challenging Children to Construct Knowledge and Community
UH Charter School Mission

The Mission of the University of Houston Charter School is to provide a student-centered curriculum that enhances the intellectual development, technological fluency and leadership ability of students. The knowledge gained by students will allow them to transfer into the sixth grade at other schools and will give them strategic advantages.

UH Charter School Vision

University of Houston Charter School is a model constructivist school that empowers children, parents, and faculty in the global community to fulfill their potential through autonomy, wonder, and discovery.

UH Charter School Motto

Challenging children to construct knowledge and community.

UH Charter School Goals

To establish a commitment to learning on the part of students, parents, and educators through constructivist educational practice;

To develop the problem-solving and knowledge-building abilities of the students so that they will use mature judgement and scientific methodology in dealing with their environments;

To design and implement an educational program that applies the principles of human development and scientific technology as a motivational and curricular base;

To offer research opportunities that UH faculty and graduate students can use for testing and analyzing pedagogical theory and practice; and

To serve our students and community as one of the Houston schools exemplifying a clearly defined model of effective, appropriate practice.
University of Houston Charter School Board provides general oversight to the charter school.

They provide oversight of budgets and financial audits, approving broad education policies and handbooks, personnel matters, etc.

The Board members are:

- Robert H. McPherson, Ph.D., Chair, Dean, UH College of Education
- Jonathan Schwartz, Ph.D., Faculty member, UH College of Education
- Rebecca Sanford, Ph.D., Principal, Hambrick Middle School, Community Representative
- Eno Oregbesan, Parent Representative, UH Charter School
- Rozina Chowdry, Teacher Representative, UH Charter School
- Patricia Paquin, Principal, UH Charter School (ex officio/non-voting)

The board meetings will be held on the following dates for the 2017 – 2018 school year:

October 24, 2017
January 16, 2018
April 17, 2018
July 17, 2018

The school board meetings are held at 9:00 AM in the Board of Regents Conference room, 128E, Cullen Building on the main campus of the University of Houston.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT
In its efforts to promote nondiscrimination, UH Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, in providing educational services, activities, and programs in accordance with the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following district representatives have been designated to coordinate compliance with these legal requirements:
Title IX Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment:
Patricia Paquin, Principal, 713-743-9111, ppaquin@uh.edu
Alternate: Dr. Jaqueline Hawkins, Associate Professor, Special Education Program, College of Education, 713-743-9823, Jhawkins@uh.edu

ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, for concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of disability:
Marcia Cunningham, Special Education Case Manager 713-743-9111 mcunn2@central.uh.edu.
Liaison for Homeless Children and Youth: Ethel Monroy, UHCS School Administrator, 713-743-9111
# 2017-2018 School Calendar

**University of Houston Charter School**

3855 Holman St, Melcher Gym 100  
713-743-9111  (Fax) 713-743-9121  
Houston, TX 77204

---

**August 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**September 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**October 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**November 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**December 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**January 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**End of Grading Period**
- October 20th
- January 5th
- March 9th
- May 22nd

**Academic Reports Issued**
- September 29th
- October 26th
- January 12th
- March 23rd
- May 29th

**STAAR Testing**
- April 10th - Writing Grade 4
- Mathematics Grade 5
- April 11th - Reading Grade 5
- April 20th - STAAR ALT Window
- May 14th - Math Grades 3-5
- May 15th - Reading Grades 3-5
- May 18th - Science Grade 5

**TELPAS Window**
- February 26th - April 6th

**IOWA**
- April 18th - 20th - Grades K-2

---

**Professional Development**
- First & Last Day of School
- School Closed
- End of Six Weeks
- Parent-Teacher Conferences (N= school for students)

Approved by School Board July 18, 2017
**UH Charter School Main Number**  
713-743-9111

**Patricia Paquin – Principal**  
Phone Number: 713-743-8538 Email: ppaquin@central.uh.edu

**Etheh Monroy – School Administrator**  
Phone Number: 713-743-5456 Email: eamonroy@uh.edu

**Marcia Cunningham – Special Education Case Manager**  
Phone number: 713-743-1174 Email: mcunning2@central.uh.edu

**Jessica Aguilar – Program Coordinator**  
Phone Number: 713-743-9111 Email: jaguil4@central.uh.edu

**Mark Capper – Business Assistant**  
Phone Number: 713-743-4353 Email: mcapper@central.uh.edu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade/Role</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Darlen Wimberly</td>
<td>Navigator KG, Lead Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dwimberl@central.uh.edu">dwimberl@central.uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bianca Hall</td>
<td>Navigator KG, Assistant Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bhall3@uh.edu">bhall3@uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrienne Louden</td>
<td>Excavator 1st grade, Lead Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abrad@cfsenal.uh.edu">abrad@cfsenal.uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cynthia Jones</td>
<td>Excavator 1st grade, Assistant Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cjones7@central.uh.edu">cjones7@central.uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslie Jamail</td>
<td>Trailblazer 2nd grade, Lead Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:1stephe3@central.uH.EDU">1stephe3@central.uH.EDU</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley Dill</td>
<td>Trailblazer 2nd grade, Assistant Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:andill@uh.edu">andill@uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krista Curtis</td>
<td>Innovator 3rd grade, Lead Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kmcurtis@central.uh.edu">kmcurtis@central.uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel Williams</td>
<td>Innovators 3rd grade, Assistant Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:awill2@central.uh.edu">awill2@central.uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gail Paul</td>
<td>Sojourner 4th grade, Lead Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gpeal2@uh.edu">gpeal2@uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiara Henley</td>
<td>Sojourner 4th grade, Assistant Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:khenley@uh.edu">khenley@uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rozina Chowdry</td>
<td>Voyager 5th grade, Lead Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rchowdry@uh.edu">rchowdry@uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie Stewart</td>
<td>Voyager 5th grade, Assistant Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bstewart@central.uh.edu">bstewart@central.uh.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>K-5th grade</td>
<td>Special Education Teacher/Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Reed</td>
<td>Student Intern Counselor</td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to the University of Houston Charter School

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year! Education is a team effort and we know that students, parents, teachers and other staff members all working together can make this a wonderfully successful year for our students.

This handbook contains a great deal of required and useful information for our students and parents. The handbook is intended to communicate basic information concerning the operation of the school. The information provided should assist parents and students in learning about the school and knowing what the school expects of students.

In an effort to make it easier to use, this handbook is divided into two sections:

Section I – Parental Rights & Responsibility –

It contains information to assist you with school related issues. We encourage you to take some time to closely review this section of the handbook.

Section II – Other Important Information for Students and Parents –

Organized alphabetically by topic for quick access when searching for information on a specific issue.

Please be aware that the term “parent”, unless otherwise noted, is used to refer to the parent, legal guardian, or any other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for the student.

Both students and parents should become familiar with the Student Code of Conduct, which is a document adopted by the UH Charter School Board and is intended to promote school safety and a positive atmosphere for learning. Much of the information in this handbook is based on policies adopted by the board. Copies of the Student Code of Conduct and UH Charter School Policies are available on the school website at www.uh.edu/charter-school.

The student/parent handbook is a general reference guide only and is designed to be in harmony with board policy and Student Code of Conduct. Please be aware it is not a complete statement of all policies, procedures, or rules that may be applicable in a given circumstance.
UH Charter School
3855 Holman Street Melcher Gym 100
Houston, Texas 72044-6019
Phone: 713-743-9111 Fax: 713-743-9121

School hours for children are
Monday-Thursday 8:00 am-3:45 pm
and
Friday 8:00am- 12:30pm.

Students must be picked up for dismissal by 3:55pm Monday-Thursday and by 12:45pm on Friday. Students not picked up by the designated dismissal times will be placed at the UH Charter School after school program and a fee of $12.00 will be assessed for each child.

The office is open from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. You may leave a voice-mail message at any time.

The office phone number is 713-743-9111.
The Constructivist Difference
By choosing a charter school, parents choose a school that makes a difference. By choosing the University of Houston Charter School, you choose a constructivist difference. UHCS has a program that meets Texas standards by restructuring every domain of schooling by the principles of constructivist education, including the grouping of children, staffing of classrooms, curriculum, code of conduct, and evaluation of school and student.

Each class has two teachers—a lead and an assistant—both respected by students as "teacher."

Classroom space is organized in activity and meeting centers rather than rows of desks facing the teacher's desk. The school space reflects constructivist organization for activity and community. Following the educational philosophy of Piaget and Dewey, constructivist schooling aims to develop autonomy and respect for persons and the process of exchanging and evaluating reasons. It respects the power of the individual and the shared goals of the community. It makes competition a part of cooperation. It understands social collaboration and mutual respect as sources of the individual's intellectual and moral autonomy.

The goals of constructivist curriculum include development of the whole child, not just the child's ability to remember facts. In the long run, the quality of the process determines the quality of the product. Curriculum in each class covers the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, but teachers do much more than "cover" the content; they "discover" the strengths of each child to help the child, and the group "discovers" how the world works. Each person at school is equally valuable, and each one has different strengths and needs. The students access their world through activity that is interesting and authentic, including hands-on work and virtual access through minds-on math, reasoning, reading and internet access.

Each active child is learning to interact effectively with others and take as much responsibility as possible. Children do not sit still and raise their hands and wait to say they need a pencil sharpened. They learn to manage their own materials, to help other students but not to disturb their work. They learn in class to act on others with effective reasons and requests and positive relationships rather than with physical coercion.

Teachers monitor classroom activity in terms of TEKS, but they involve children in the planning and evaluation. Parents get pre-planned and current information from a range of sources, including the yearly and monthly calendar, the monthly newsletter, meetings and special events, lesson plans posted in the classroom, (sent home, & available on the website) and observation of the classes from observation rooms.

The end of each reporting period brings more than a report card. Instead of grades, A+ to F, parents find a comprehensive system of evaluation that includes them. The first six weeks ends with a conference for teacher and parent to review student's current progress and determine appropriate goals; the end of year conference focuses on how well the goals are being met. In addition, teachers and parents get information from a comprehensive system of evaluating student growth that includes observation, AIMSWeb benchmarks and interventions, DRA assignments, portfolios, student self-evaluations and increasing use of rubrics and formal testing across the grade-levels, including literacy screening, IWOA assessment for grades K-2 & 4, and the STARR testing for grades 3-5.

Parents who choose the University of Houston Charter School will see that it is not an unstructured program. Its structure is complex to fit its goals. It is structured differently to achieve a greater difference in the development of children.
Constructivist Terms

- Physical knowledge – the basis of science. The understandings the child constructs from acting and observing objects.

- Logico-mathematical knowledge – the basis of mathematics. The relationships created in the mind of the learner.

- Mutual respect – equal, reciprocal valuing between persons.

- Development – increase in, refinement of, and higher levels of abilities. Development is the aim of education.

- Cooperation – “coordinating a variety of perspectives” (DeVries, Kohlberg, p.30). Cooperation has a social and cognitive application.

- Experimentation – involves many efforts permitting rediscovery or reconstruction (DeVries, Kohlberg, p.29).

- Interest – “fuel” of the constructive process, “investment of energy in an object, person, or event” (DeVries, Kohlberg, p.25).

- Disequilibrium – When the learner cannot assimilate new information. The discomfort provides an impetus for the learner to construct new knowledge.

- Egocentrism – viewing from one perspective.

- Decenter – ability to see another person’s point or view or another solution.

- Construction of knowledge – developing more internally consistent logical systems.

- Reasoning – thinking, figuring out.

- Autonomy – the capacity to create rules, to self-govern, to self-regulate.

- Error – the incomplete or inaccurate understandings. Error is to be appreciated by parents and teachers. Error is a necessary part of the construction of knowledge. Errors provide adults with a view of a child’s current understandings.

**UH Charter School Curriculum**

The curriculum is designed to put our mission statement into practice: "The mission of UHCS is to provide a constructivist learning community for the 21st century that enhances the intellectual development, technological fluency and leadership ability of students."

Our students want to come to school today, but our eyes are on the success of their tomorrows as well as this year's attitudes and test scores.

We believe students must become responsible for their own success, and we set standards high because they tend to live up to our expectations. We target basic knowledge and skills through student confidence, challenge and mutual respect. We target higher thinking skills for life-long use.

Because students construct and re-construct their knowledge on the way to middle school, our teachers work to engage their drives and support their efforts. Covering grade-level content is only part of building knowledge or building good students. To challenge and support every student, teachers stretch concepts from foundations to higher-level thinking regardless of the grade level.

Learning is the job of each student and each teacher in each class. Students as well as teachers are responsible for the quality of their actions and decisions. Partners communicate to work toward shared goals. The goals include having a good day and a good future for all, which includes good reading, mathematics and science, today and always. Mutual respect makes such a classroom work.

Teachers plan for each part of the day to serve multiple purposes. A 40-minute class discussion of the budget for a field trip builds a wide range of abilities, including team work, responsibility, project management, arithmetic and discursive communication. Such relevant contexts make learning more powerful than 15 minutes of reading about discussion skills followed by 15 minutes of arithmetic and 10 minutes of generic problem-solving.

Teachers group students in a variety of ways to engage the interests and meet the needs of each one. The whole group acts together. Each student acts autonomously (responsibly). Students may work in pairs. One student may learn by teaching while another works one-on-one with a teacher. Thus a curriculum of high standards becomes flexible enough to fit all.

Texas spells out the essential outcomes for students. UHCS achieves the outcomes through action: the activity of teachers supports the activity of students. Assessment and evaluation judge the quality of what is being done as well as the quantity of what has been done.

Students learn to read and write by purposefully reading and writing. They write for themselves, and they interactively write reports, books, news articles and scripts for class productions. Following the approach of Marie Clay, the UHCS Literacy Collaborative includes reading that is alternately shared, guided, independent and read-aloud. Spelling follows the approach of Words Their Way.

UHCS students re-invent arithmetic. They are guided by the constructivist approach of Constance Kamii, Catherine Fosnot. Their classroom activity includes mental math, games, investigations and real-world problems from class projects and school-wide celebrations. Beyond arithmetic, they engage the other four areas of math targeted for all Texas students; numerical representation and relationships, computation and algebraic relationships, geometry and measurement and data analysis and personal financial literacy.

UHCS students do more than learn about science. They DO science, including projects, experiments and research. As they figure things out and share their knowledge, their science ties together their activities in literacy and art. Teachers use constructivist strategies from Eleanor Duckworth, Rheta DeVries and Constance Kamii, including physical knowledge, leadership, reflection, science dance, and Ramp & Pathways.
SECTION I

PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
This section of the UH Charter School Parent and Student Handbook includes information related to the rights and responsibilities of parents as specified in state or federal law and provides parental notices required by law.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
Working Together

Both experience and research tell us that a child’s education succeeds best when there is good communication and a strong partnership between home and school. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

• Encouraging your child to put a high priority on education and working with your child on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
• Ensuring that your child completes all homework assignments and special projects. See that your child comes to school each day prepared, rested, and ready to learn.
• Becoming familiar with all of your child’s school activities and with the academic programs, including special programs, offered in the school/District.
• Discussing with the teacher or principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your child.
• Monitoring your child’s academic progress and contact teachers as needed.
• Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed. To schedule a telephone or in-person conference with a teacher or principal, please call the school office for an appointment. The teacher will make every effort to return your call or meet with you during his or her conference period or before or after school. Email is always a good way to communicate and will be responded to within 24 hours.
• Becoming a school volunteer.
• Participating in campus events and attend students performances.
• Contacting school officials if you are concerned with your child’s emotional or mental well-being.

PARENTAL RIGHTS
Obtaining Information and Protecting Student Rights
Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—that concerns:
• Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent.
• Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family.
• Sexual behavior or attitudes.
• Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
• Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the student has a close family relationship.
• Relationships privileged under law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
• Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents.
• Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the student’s eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

You will be able to inspect the survey or other instrument and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation.
Accessing Student Records
You may review your child’s student records. These records include: attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary records, counseling records, psychological records, applications for admission, health and immunization information, other medical records, teacher and school counselor evaluations, reports of behavioral patterns, state assessment instruments that have been administered to your child and teaching materials and tests used in your child’s classroom.

Accommodations for Children of Military Families
Children of military families will be provided flexibility regarding certain school/district requirements, including:
- Immunization requirements.
- Grade level, course, or educational program placement.
- Eligibility requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.

In addition, absences related to a student visiting with his or her parent, including a stepparent or legal guardian, who has been called to active duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from a deployment of at least four months will be excused by the School/District. The school/District will permit no more than five excused absences per year for this purpose. For the absence to be excused, the absence must occur no earlier than the 60th day before deployment or no later than the 30th day after the parent’s return from deployment.

Additional information may be found at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=7995.

Directory Information
The law permits the school/District to designate certain personal information about students as “directory information.” This “directory information” will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it. Information designated as directory information is only the student’s name and address.

Displaying Student’s Artwork, Projects, Photos, and Other Original Work
Teachers may display students’ work in classrooms or elsewhere on campus as recognition of student achievement. However, the School/District will seek parental consent before displaying students’ artwork, special projects, photographs taken by students and other original works on the School/District’s Website, a website affiliated or sponsored by the School/District, such as a campus or classroom Website, and in School/District publications, which may include printed materials, videos, or other methods of mass communication.

Excusing a Student from Reciting the Pledges to the U.S. and Texas Flags
As a parent, you may request that your child be excused from participation in the daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. The request must be in writing. State law does not allow your child to be excused from participation in the required minute of silence or silent activity that follows.

Excusing a Student from Reciting a Portion of the Declaration of Independence
You may request that your child be excused from recitation of a portion of the Declaration of Independence. State law requires students in social studies classes in grades 3–12 to recite a portion of the text of the Declaration of Independence during Celebrate Freedom Week unless (1) you provide a written statement requesting that your child be excused, (2) the District determines that your child has a conscientious
objection to the recitation, or (3) you are a representative of a foreign government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic immunity.

**Granting Permission to Video or Audio Record a Student**
As a parent, you may grant or deny any written request from the School/District to make a video or voice recording of your child. State law, however, permits the school to make a videotape or voice recording without parental permission for the following circumstances: when it is to be used for school safety; when it relates to classroom instruction or a curricular or extracurricular activity; or when it relates to media coverage of the school.

**“Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities**
As a parent, you have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for your child’s participation in:

- Any survey concerning the private information listed above, regardless of funding.
- School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from your child for the purpose of marketing or selling, or otherwise disclosing that information.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered and scheduled by the school in advance and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student. Exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law.

**Parents of Students Who Speak a Primary Language Other than English**
A student may be eligible to receive specialized support if his or her primary language is not English, and the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. If the student qualifies for these extra services, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will determine the types of services the student needs, including accommodations or modifications related to classroom instruction, local assessments, and state-mandated assessments.

**Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education**
If a child is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the person listed below to learn about the school/District’s overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI). The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of the school/district to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services. Within a reasonable amount of time, the school/District must decide if the evaluation is needed. If the evaluation is needed, the parent will be notified and asked to provide informed written consent for the evaluation. The school/District must complete the evaluation and the report within the timeline prescribed by law once the school/District receives written consent. The school/District must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent.

If the school/District determines that the evaluation is not needed, the school/District will provide the parent with prior written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights if they disagree with the school/District. The school/District is required to give the parents the **Notice of Procedural Safeguards—Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities.**
Additional information regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is available from the school district in a companion document, A Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process.

The following Web sites provide information to those who are seeking information and resources specific to students with disabilities and their families:

• Texas Project First, at http://www.texasprojectfirst.org
• Partners Resource Network, at http://www.partnerstx.org

The designated person to contact regarding options for a child experiencing learning difficulties or a referral for evaluation for special education services is Marcia Cunningham at 713-743-9111.

**Students with Physical or Mental Impairments Protected under Section 504**

A child determined to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services, may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine if the child is in need of services and supports under Section 504 to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE), as this is defined in federal law.

The designated person to contact regarding a referral for evaluation applicable to Section 504 is Marcia Cunningham at 713-743-9111.

**Removing a Student from Class**

You may remove your child temporarily from the classroom, if an instructional activity in which your child is scheduled to participate conflicts with your religious or moral beliefs. The removal cannot be for the purpose of avoiding a test and may not extend for an entire semester. Further, your child must satisfy grade-level as determined by the school and state law.

**Removing a Student from Class for Tutoring or Test Preparation Purposes**

Based on informal observations, evaluative data such as levels of academics on assignments or tests, or results from diagnostic assessments, a teacher may determine that a student is in need of additional targeted assistance in order for the student to achieve mastery in state-developed essential knowledge and skills. The school always attempts to provide tutoring and strategies for test-taking in ways that prevent removal from other instruction as much as possible. In accordance with state law, the school will not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation for more than ten percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless the student’s parent consents to this removal.

The school may also offer tutorial services, for students who are not mastering the required curriculum objectives and the students will be required to attend.

You may contact your student’s teacher with questions about any tutoring programs provided by the school.

**Requesting Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Staff**

You may request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child’s teachers, including whether a teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction; whether the teacher has an emergency permit or other provisional...
status for which state requirements have been waived; and undergraduate and graduate degree majors, graduate certifications, and the field of study of the certification or degree. You also have the right to request information about the qualifications of any paraprofessional who may provide services to your child.

**Reviewing Instructional Materials**
As a parent, you have a right to review teaching materials, textbooks, and other teaching aids and instructional materials used in the curriculum, and to examine teacher made assessments that have been administered to your child.

**Student Records**
Both federal and state laws safeguard student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents and eligible students certain rights. For purposes of student records, an “eligible” student is one who is 18 or older or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

Virtually all information pertaining to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records, is considered confidential educational records. Release is restricted to:

- The parents—whether married, separated, or divorced—unless the school is given a copy of a court order terminating parental rights or the right to access a student’s education records. Federal law requires that, as soon as a student becomes 18 or is emancipated by a court, control of the records goes to the student. The parents may continue to have access to the records, however, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes.
- School/District staff members who have what federal law refers to as a “legitimate educational interest” in a student’s record. “Legitimate educational interest” in a student’s records includes working with the student; considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student’s case, or an individualized education program for a student with disabilities; compiling statistical data; or investigating or evaluating programs. Such persons would include school officials (such as board members, the superintendent, administrators, and principals); school staff members (such as teachers, school counselors, diagnosticians, and support staff), or a person or company with whom the school/ District has contracted to provide a particular service (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on school committee; or a parent or student assisting a school official or staff in the performance of his or her duties.
- Various governmental agencies, including juvenile service providers and Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers or other child welfare representatives, in certain cases.
- Individuals or entities granted access in response to a subpoena or court order.
- A school or institution of postsecondary education to which a student seeks or intends to enroll or in which he or she subsequently enrolls.

The Campus Program Coordinator is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students UH Charter School. The Campus Program Coordinator is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or completed their enrollment at UH Charter School.

Records may be inspected by a parent or eligible student during regular school hours. If circumstances prevent inspection during these hours, the School/District will either provide a copy of the records requested or make other arrangements for the parent or student to review these records. The records custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

If you are requesting copies of student records, allow 5 business days for the request to be completed.
SECTION II

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Topics in this section of the handbook contain important information on academics, school activities, and school operations and requirements. Take a moment to become familiar with the various issues addressed in this section. It is conveniently organized in alphabetical order to serve as a quick-reference when you have a question about a specific school-related issue. Should you be unable to find the information on a particular topic, please contact your child’s teacher or the principal.

ABSENCES / ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build on the previous day’s learning and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student’s mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Parent’s should call the school when their student is absent.

The office is open 7:30 am to 4:30 pm; you may leave a voice-mail message at any time. The office phone number is 713-743-9111.

Each morning all students are to be walked into the school. Between 7:45 am- 7:59 am, students shall be escorted into the school or the cafeteria area. At 8:00 am, the school wide morning gathering will take place in the common area. The gathering allows time for daily announcements, the reciting of the pledge to the United States flag and Texas flag, a moment of silence as required by state law and a calm start to the school day. Please minimize conversation that will interfere with a safe and orderly morning transition.

Please ensure your child’s arrival between 7:45 am and 7:59 am. Tardiness is disruptive; it undermines the daily routine. Children who are not in attendance at 8:00 am are tardy. If you arrive after 8:00 am, please complete the tardy notice that your child will take to their classroom.

Breakfast is served 7:25 am-7:55 am. At 7:55 am the kitchen is closed, and breakfast is no longer served.

Two state laws - one dealing with the required presence of school-aged children in school e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a child’s attendance effects the award of a student’s final grade - are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below:
Compulsory Attendance
State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction programs, extended year programs, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt.

Students enrolled in Kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled.

State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when Kindergarten, first grade or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of the diagnostic reading instrument.

A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and/or applicable subject area.

There are two types of absences: excused (verified) and unexcused (unverified) absences. Both excused and unexcused absences count towards the state mandated 90% compulsory attendance laws. Excused absences shall include: personal illness, medical or dental appointments, sickness or death in the immediate family, funeral services for relatives or close friends, quarantine, weather or road conditions making traveling dangerous, religious holidays, or any other unusual cause as determined by the school/district.

When a student is absent, he/she must bring a note to the Program Coordinator within three days of the absence. After three days, parent notes will not be accepted and the absences will be considered unexcused. All notes from parents, doctors, and slips from the office need to be turned in to the school each day. Students who leave school during the day must bring a note from their parent. If a student has an appointment with a health care professional during the school day, a note from the health care professional must be brought to the school on return for attendance credit.

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance
State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:
• Religious holy days;
• Required court appearances;
• Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
• Service as an election clerk;
• Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the healthcare provider must be submitted upon the student’s arrival or return to campus.

Family/individual vacations/visits scheduled during regular school days are not excusable absences or extenuating circumstances. These absences will be counted as an unexcused absence regardless of the number of days missed.

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance
School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional
special instruction, termed “accelerated instruction” by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. A referral may be sent to the court if a student is absent from school on ten (10) or more days within a six month period in the same school year. If a student is absent on three (3) or more days or parts of days within a four (4) week period or 5 total days or parts of days, he or she will receive a warning letter.

For a student violation of the State compulsory attendance law, the student’s parents could be charged with an offense based on the student’s failure to attend school.

**Truancy Enforcement**

UH Charter School will enforce the compulsory attendance law as follows:

- Phone call to parents or guardians notifying them when a student is marked absent.
- Students will be provided a warning letter warning and request for a conference when attendance records reflect that the student has absences without an excuse on three days in a four week period or 5 or more days in the same school year.
- At the conference, the parent will receive information as a preventative measure to intervene before a referral to truancy court, to educate the parent and student experiencing truancy problems of the consequences associated with unexcused absences, and to help the family develop a plan to address non-attendance and the importance of the student’s attendance.

**Attendance for Final Grade**

To receive credit or a final grade in a class, a student in kindergarten-grade 5 must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends at least 75 percent but fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may receive credit or a final grade for the class if he or she completes a plan, approved by the principal that allows the student to fulfill the instructional requirements. If a student attends less than 75 percent of the days a class is offered or has not completed the plan approved by the principal, then the student will be referred to the attendance review committee to determine whether there are extenuating circumstances for the absences and how the student can regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

In determining whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences, the attendance committee will use the following guidelines:

- All absences whether excused or unexcused, must be considered in determining whether a student has attended the required percentage of days. If makeup work is completed, absences for the reasons listed above at *Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance* will be considered days of attendance for this purpose.

- In reaching a decision about a student’s absences, the committee will attempt to ensure that it is in the best interest of the student.
- The committee will consider the acceptability and authenticity of documented reasons for the student’s absences.
- The committee will consider whether the absences were for reasons over which the student or the student’s parent could exercise any control.
- The committee will consider the extent to which the student has completed all assignments, mastered the essential knowledge and skills, and maintained passing grades in the course or subject.
• The student or parent will be given an opportunity to present any information to the committee about the absences and to talk about ways to earn or regain credit.

Students with excessive absences may be required to participate in attendance make-up activities, attend after-school or summer school sessions in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

**Official Attendance-Taking Time**
The District must submit attendance of its students to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) reflecting attendance at a specific time each day. Official attendance is taken every day at 10:00 AM. A student absent for any portion of the day, including at the official attendance-taking time, should follow the procedures below to provide documentation of the absence.

**Documentation after an Absence**
Within three days upon arrival or return to school after an absence, a student must bring a note, signed by the parent that describes the reason for the absence and give the note to the Program Coordinator. Parent notes do not necessarily excuse the absence. The School/District reserves the right to require a written note.

The campus will document in its attendance records for the student whether the absence is considered by the school/District to be excused or unexcused. Please note that, unless the absence is for a statutorily allowed reason under compulsory attendance laws, the School/District is not required to excuse any absence, even if the parent provides a note explaining the absence.

**Tardiness**
Students arriving at school after 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy must sign in at the main office and pick up a tardy slip before going to class. School hours for children are Monday-Thursday 8:00 am-3:45 pm and Friday 8:00 am-12:30 pm.

The office is open 7:30 am to 4:30 pm you may leave a voice-mail message at any time. The office phone number is 713-743-9111.

Students leaving the campus during the day must be signed out by a parent/guardian in the office and will be counted as a partial day absence.
Doctor's Note after an Absence for Illness

Appointments with doctors, dentists, orthodontists, and other healthcare professionals must be verified in writing by the doctor's office. In order to code an absence as a doctor's appointment, the student must bring a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that caused the student's extended absence from school. The note must be given to the Program coordinator within 3 days upon returning to school. Otherwise, the student's absence may be considered unexcused and, if so, would be considered to be in violation of compulsory attendance laws.

UH Charter School Cougar Excuse for Absence should only be filled out if you do not have a doctor's note. (See example below)

---

University of Houston Charter School

Attendance Notice: Please Circle One
Early Pick-Up  Late Arrival  Absent

Date: ____________________________
Child's Name: ____________________________
Time: ____________________________
Reason: __________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
Parent Signature: ____________________________

Should the student develop a questionable pattern of absences, the principal or attendance committee may require a statement from a doctor or health clinic verifying the illness or condition that cause the student's absence from school in order to determine whether the absence or absences will be excused or unexcused.
**Attendance Procedures**
When presenting a parent or doctor's note after an absence a student must:

- Present the note to the Program coordinator before school on the first day of his/her return.

A student who returns without a valid note within 3 days of the absence will receive an unverified absence.

**Extenuating Circumstances**

The following conditions will be considered for extenuating circumstances:

- personal illness;
- sickness or death in family (parent, grandparent & sibling);
- medical or dental appointment;
- quarantine;
- weather or road conditions making traveling dangerous
- extracurricular activities; and
- any other unusual cause acceptable to the principal.

The attendance office shall send a warning letter to parents of students advising them of the consequences of excessive absences. However, notification of absences will be done as a courtesy and shall not be considered a condition of students not receiving credit.

**Appeals Process**

After exceeding the allowable number of absences, a student may be granted course credit upon recommendation by the campus Appeals Committee. The student must complete all assignments required by the teacher and make up the time missed from classes according to the contract between the student and principal.

The Appeals Committee may be composed of one or more teachers, a counselor, and the principal. The committee will review the appeal request and determine whether the student would be eligible for credit. Some items the Appeals Committee may take into consideration are 1) doctor notes; 2) prior arrangements with the principal; 3) extenuating circumstances; and 4) completion of all assigned makeup work. After reviewing the case, the Appeals Committee will make their recommendation. Each Appeals Committee may 1) grant credit for the course(s); 2) grant credit with stipulations; or 3) deny credit for the course(s).
APPOINTMENTS
Parents are requested to schedule all appointments, including medical and dental after school hours. However, if an appointment must be scheduled during the school day, please return the student to school following the appointment. According to state law, a student will not be counted absent for attendance purposes if the student begins or returns to school on the same day that he/she has a doctor, dentist or other health care professional appointment. In order for the student not to be counted absent, written notice from the doctor, dentist or health care professional is required.

BULLYING
Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic methods, or physical conduct against another student on school property, at a school-sponsored or related activity, and the behavior:

- Results in harm to the student or the student’s property,
- Places a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or of damage to the student’s property, or
- Is so severe, persistent, and persuasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

This conduct is considered bullying if it exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator(s) and the student victim and if it interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited by the school/District and could include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name-calling, rumor-spreading, or ostracism. In some cases, bullying can occur through electronic methods, called "cyberbullying." If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying, or has witnessed bullying of another student, it is important for the student or parent to notify a teacher, principal, or another school employee as soon as possible to obtain assistance and intervention. The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying or other related misconduct.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying has occurred, the administrator will take appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. The school/District will also contact the parents of the victim and of the student who was found to have engaged in the bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to these individuals, as well as to any students who have been identified as witnesses to the bullying. If a person wishes to report an incident of bullying anonymously, a report may be made by using the MySafeCampus system online at http://www.mysafecampus.com or by calling 1-800-716-9007. The confidential report will be forwarded to the appropriate individual(s) for investigation.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited.

CAMP CONSTRUCT
Camp Construct is an optional before and after-school program in UHCS facilities for UHCS students. Informational flyers are available in the UHCS information rack; Camp Construct fees are $220 per month Monday-Friday before and after-school care or $100 per month for Friday only. Contracts are available in the front office or the school business office. Fees for Camp Construct must be paid by the 5th day of the month for students to attend each month.
CELL PHONE USE
Please complete all cell phone calls before entering the school and place phone on silent. If you are on the phone, no faculty member will be able to speak with you. If you are in the middle of an urgent call, you may use the hallway or ask to be directed to a room where you can speak in private.

CELEBRATIONS
Although a parent or grandparent is not prohibited from providing food for a school-designated function or for children in the child’s or grandchild’s classroom for his or her birthday and it will only be passed out during the last 30 minutes of school day. Please be aware that children in the school may have severe allergies to certain food products. Therefore, it is imperative to discuss this with the child’s teacher prior to bringing any food in this circumstance. Occasionally, the school or a class may host certain functions or celebrations tied to the curriculum that will involve food. The school or teacher will notify students and parents of any known food allergies when soliciting potential volunteers for bringing food products. All birthday celebrations must be scheduled with the classroom teacher at least a week in advance. Cupcakes are suggested if you are going to bring a birthday type of treat, but there are other options available such as fruit and yogurt, individual popcorn bags or vegetables and dip. No candy, gum, gift bags or balloons are allowed. Only store bought products may be distributed at a birthday celebration.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER
Students and parents are required to inform the Program Coordinator of any change in physical address or telephone number.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER MALTREATMENT OF CHILDREN
As a parent, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child’s mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. A person who compels or encourages a child to engage in sexual conduct commits abuse. It is illegal to make or possess child pornography or to display such material to a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to a law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Possible physical warning signs of sexual abuse could be difficulty sitting or walking, pain in the genital areas, and claims of stomachaches and headaches. Behavioral indicators may include verbal references or pretend games of sexual activity between adults and children, fear of being alone with adults of a particular gender, or sexually suggestive behavior. Emotional warning signs to be aware of include withdrawal, depression, sleeping and eating disorders, and problems in school.

A child who has experienced sexual abuse or any other type of abuse or neglect should be encouraged to seek out a trusted adult. Be aware as a parent or other trusted adult that disclosures of sexual abuse may be more indirect than disclosures of physical abuse and neglect, and it is important to be calm and comforting if your child, or another child, confides in you. Reassure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling you.

As a parent, if your child is a victim of sexual abuse or other maltreatment, the principal will provide information regarding counseling options for you and your child available in your area.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) also manage early intervention counseling programs.
To find out what services may be available in your county, see

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp.

The following Web sites might help you become more aware of child abuse and neglect:


http://www.taasa.org/member/materials2.php

http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse1.shtml

http://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/txts/childabuse2.shtml

If any school/District staff member suspects abuse or neglect they are mandated by law to report the abuse or neglect to CPS for investigation.

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (1-800-252-5400 or on the Web at http://www.txabusehotline.org).

**COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS**

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed by a phone call or a conference with the teacher or principal. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the school/District has adopted a standard complaint policy.

A copy of this policy may be obtained in the principal’s office or on the School District’s web site at http://www.uh.edu/charter-school/

In general, the student or parent should submit a written complaint and request a conference with the campus principal. If the concern is not resolved, a request for a conference should be sent to the superintendent or designee.

**CONDUCT**

**Applicability of School Rules**

As required by law, the board has adopted a *Student Code of Conduct* that prohibits certain behaviors and defines standards of acceptable behavior—both on and off campus—and consequences for violation of the standards. Students need to be familiar with the standards set out in the *Student Code of Conduct*, as well as campus and classroom rules. During any periods of instruction during the summer months, the Student Handbook and *Student Code of Conduct* in place for the year immediately preceding the summer period shall apply, unless the District amends either or both documents for the purposes of summer instruction.

To achieve the best possible learning environment for all students, the *Student Code of Conduct* and other campus rules will apply whenever the interest of the school/District is involved, on or off school grounds, in conjunction with classes and school-sponsored activities. The school/District has disciplinary...
authority over a student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

**Discrimination**
Discrimination is defined as any conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, that negatively affects the student.

**Dressing and Grooming**
Proper student dress and grooming is the responsibility of students and parents. A reasonable appearance code is one that will be pleasing and acceptable to the majority of the students, teachers, and parents. State law requires 2 1/2 hours of PE weekly. UHCS provides daily physical activity; therefore, children will be required to wear closed toe and closed heel running shoes to school each day. Cowboy boots, "Heelies", sandals, Crocs, and flip flops are not to be worn since they inhibit physical activity and can be a safety hazard.

The student’s name should be labeled on all outerwear (coats, sweaters, hats, lunchboxes, etc.).

**Electronic Devices, Games and Toys**
No electronic devices should be brought to school. Electronic devices include but are not limited to; cell phones. IPads, computers, tablets, iPods, MP3 players, cameras, etc. Electronic devices brought to school will be picked up by a staff member and return to the parent only.

Games, toys (Legos, trading cards, and matchbox toys) are not to be brought to school and will be picked up by a staff member and return to the parent only.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**
*Acceptable Use of District Technology Resources*
To prepare students for an increasingly technological society, the school/district has made an investment in the use of district-owned technology resources for instructional purposes; specific resources may be issued individually to students. Use of these technological resources, which include the district’s network systems and use of district equipment, is restricted to approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement (separate from this handbook) regarding use of these district resources. Violations of the user agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

**FEES**
Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state and local funds at no charge to a student. An annual school fee is assessed per child as follows:

The UH Charter School access a school fee for each enrolled student. A fee of $110.00 per year for students in grades K- 3rd and $135.00 for students in grades 4th and 5th. The increase in fees for grades 4 and 5 is because students in these grade levels participate in an overnight field trip which has increased costs as compared to the field trips for the other grade levels.

By collecting a school fee UHCS will eliminate the need for fund raising for many of the events. UHCS will still have the need to solicit parental support for the following events; the World Bazaar, Field Day, Family Dance, Art Show, Chili Cook-off and other class related events. The support will be in the form of donations for food, materials, and time.

The fees collected will be used to pay for the following school items and/or events:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item/ Event</th>
<th>Approximate Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Shirts</td>
<td>$1000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Agendas</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th grade Expedition</td>
<td>$5000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th grade San Antonio Historical Field Trip</td>
<td>$5000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-1 - 2 field trips</td>
<td>$1200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2 - 2 field trips</td>
<td>$1200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3 - 2 field trips</td>
<td>$1200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4 - 1 additional field trip</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5 - 1 additional field trip</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Field Day Tee Shirts</td>
<td>$1000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearbook</td>
<td>$1104.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fees can be paid in one lump sum, in two payments, or by payment plan developed with the UHCS business office. If paying in a lump sum UHCS requests the payment to be made by September 30, 2016. If paying in two payments UHCS requests that the first payment is received on or before September 30, 2016 and the final payment is received on or before January 31, 2017. UHCS will work with families individually if other payment options need to be arranged.

Any balance left, after paying for the above items, will be used to pay for the 5th grade celebration. Parents will be asked to pay $15.00 per ticket to attend the 5th grade celebration. This will cover the cost of the meal.

**Field Trips and Extracurricular Events**

School rules apply to field trips and extracurricular events to which a student attends. Field trips will be determined by grade level and with the approval of the principal. Parents or guardians may be asked to chaperone. **Chaperones will be required to ride the bus with the students and staff on any field trip they chaperone.** Chaperones will not be allowed to bring any siblings on the field trips. Chaperones are limited based on the numbers attending a scheduled field trip and will be selected by the teachers to attend.

Field trips are an earned privilege. A student may be excluded from extracurricular field trips if he/she has documented discipline issues or been suspended from school at any time during the school year.

**Grading and Reporting System**

Although UH Charter School does not distribute a traditional report card the reporting system used is to describe students’ learning progress, based on district and state expectations for each grade level. It is intended to inform parents about learning successes and to guide improvement efforts when needed.

Tools that may be included in this reporting system:

1. Progressive Student Report outlines student’s expectations for the 9 weeks.
2. Notes
3. Standardized Assessment Reports
4. Phone Calls to Parents
5. Weekly/Monthly Progress Reports
6. School Open Houses
7. Newsletters to Parents
8. Personal Letters to Parents
9. Evaluated Projects or Assignments
10. Portfolios or Exhibits of Students’ Work  
11. Homework Assignments  
12. Parent-Teacher Conferences  
13. Student-Teacher Conferences  
14. Student-Led Conferences

Student progress will be shared with parent at the end of the first 6 weeks of the school year for all students via scheduled parent/teacher conferences, at the end of the 12th week of school for all students via student portfolios presentations, at the end of the 18th week of the school year for students via parent/teacher conferences and at the end of the school year for all students via portfolios presentation and parent/teacher conferences. Student progress reports will be sent home each 9 weeks.

**HEALTH-RELATED MATTERS**

**Student Illness**

When your child is ill, please contact the school to let us know he or she won’t be attending that day. It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time as identified in state rules. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever free for 24 hours **without fever-reducing medications**. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea free **without diarrhea-suppressing** medications for at least 24 hours. A full list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the Program Coordinator.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student’s teacher along with school personnel will determine if the student should go home. The student’s teacher will contact the parent and complete an illness report which must be signed by the parent upon picking up the student.

The school/District is also required to report certain contagious (communicable) diseases or illnesses to the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) or our local/regional health authority.

Contact the Program Coordinator if you have questions or if you are concerned about whether or not your child should stay home.

If a student becomes ill or injured at school and needs to leave school, the parent will be called. In case a parent cannot be reached, the office must have the phone number of a responsible person who can be reached at all times who will assume temporary care of the child. In emergency situations, when parents or another responsible person cannot be reached, medical attention will be provided at a medical facility at the parent’s expense.
Bacterial Meningitis
State law requires the District to provide information about bacterial meningitis:

• What is meningitis?
Meningitis is an inflammation of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by viruses, parasites, fungi, and bacteria. Viral meningitis is common and most people recover fully. Parasitic and fungal meningitis are very rare. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical, surgical, pharmaceutical, and life support management.

• What are the symptoms?
Someone with meningitis will become very ill. The illness may develop over one or two days, but it can also rapidly progress in a matter of hours. Not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms. Children (over 2 years old) and adults with bacterial meningitis commonly have a severe headache, high fever and neck stiffness. Other symptoms might include nausea, vomiting, discomfort looking into bright lights, confusion, and sleepiness. In both children and adults, there may be a rash of tiny red-purple spots. These can occur anywhere on the body.

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of symptoms and laboratory results.

• How serious is bacterial meningitis?
If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. In some cases it can be fatal or a person may be left with a permanent disability.

• How is bacterial meningitis spread?
Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases like the common cold or the flu, and they are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. They are spread when people exchange respiratory or throat secretions (such as by kissing, coughing or sneezing).

The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks, or even months. The bacteria rarely overcome the body’s immune system and cause meningitis or another serious illness.

• How can bacterial meningitis be prevented?
Maintaining healthy habits, like getting plenty of rest, can help prevent infection. Use good health practices such as covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing. Washing your hands frequently with soap and water can also help stop the spread of the bacteria. It’s a good idea not to share food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes. Limit the number of persons you kiss.

There are vaccines available to offer protection from some of the bacteria that can cause bacterial meningitis. The vaccines are safe and effective (85-90 percent). They can cause mild side effects, such as redness and pain at the injection site lasting up to two days. Immunity develops within seven to ten days after the vaccine is given and can last for up to five years.

• What should you do if you think you or a friend might have bacterial meningitis?
You should seek medical attention.

• Where can you go for information?
Your school, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional health department office are excellent sources for information on all communicable diseases. You may also call your local health department or Regional Department of State Health Services office to ask about a meningococcal vaccine. Additional information may also be found at the Web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, http://www.cdc.gov, and the Department of State Health Services, http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/.

**Chronic Medical Problems/Food Allergies**
On-going medical problems and food allergies which require special attention and/or restrictions at school, require written notification from the student’s physician at the beginning of each school year, with updates provided as needed throughout the year. Medical problems will be shared on a “need to know” basis.

**Emergency Information**
All students are required to have an emergency information form on file with the main office. Please list at least two friends or nearby relatives who will assume temporary care of the child if a parent cannot be reached. If a change of address occurs or need to include another phone number arises, please contact the Program Coordinator to update the emergency form. Medical information will be shared on a “need to know” basis.

If a student has a medical emergency at school or during a school-related activity and the parent cannot be reached, the school may have to rely on written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment, and information about allergies to medications, foods, insect bites, etc. Therefore, parents are asked to complete an emergency care consent form and health history form each year. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date (name of doctor, emergency phone numbers, allergies, etc.). Please contact the Program Coordinator to update any information that the school or the teacher may need to know.

If student must be sent home from school or has not been picked up within 30 minutes of dismissal, the student will be supervised while the following procedures are implemented:

- All other contacts on emergency form will be contacted
- Attempt will be made to reach neighbors or former day care providers for assistance in reaching the student’s parents
- Police or CPS may be notified

**Excuse from Physical Education**
If a student is not to participate in physical education class for any reason, a note from the parent is required stating the reason and for how many days the student is not to participate. Student non-participation must not exceed three (3) days without a doctor’s written statement. The doctor’s note must include a release date for participation.

Written academic work shall be required from students who are unable to participate in physical activities for more than five (5) consecutive days. Academic work may be required as makeup work for non-participating students. The student will attend the physical education class and observe even when they are excused from participation. Any student not participating in PE shall not participate in recess activities.
**Food Allergies**

The school/District must be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly life-threatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the particular food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the Program Coordinator or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy. Documentation from the diagnosing physician is required.

**Head Lice**

Head lice, although not an illness or a disease, is very common among children and is spread very easily through head-to-head contact during play, sports, or nap time and when children share things like brushes, combs, hats, and headphones.

If careful observation indicates that a student has head lice, the school staff will contact the student's parent to determine whether the child will need to be picked up from school and to discuss a plan for treatment with an FDA-approved medicated shampoo or cream rinse that may be purchased from any drug or grocery store. After the student has undergone one treatment, the parent should check in with the school to discuss the treatment used. The school can also offer additional recommendations, including subsequent treatments and how best to get rid of lice and prevent their return.

More information on head lice can be obtained from the TDSHS Web site at [http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/lice.shtm).

**Medical Guidelines**

If any of the following symptoms exist, the child should **NOT** attend school:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or greater. (Please do not give aspirin, Tylenol, etc. prior to sending child to school)
2. Vomiting
3. Diarrhea
4. Rash of unknown origin

We want to encourage good school attendance, but at the same time, it is important to control the spread of illness among our students. Please inform the school if your child is being treated by a physician for any illness.

**Physical Activity for Students in Elementary**

In accordance state requirements, the school/District will ensure that students in full-day kindergarten through grade 5 engage in moderate or vigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes per day or 135 minutes per week.

**Physical Fitness Assessment**

Annually, the school/district will conduct a physical fitness assessment of students in grades 3–12 who are enrolled in a physical education course or a course for which physical education credit is awarded. At the end of the school year, a parent may submit a written request to the campus principal to obtain the results of his or her child's physical fitness assessment conducted during the school year.
HOMELESS STUDENTS
The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act defines homeless as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate, nighttime residence which can include:

• children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
• children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; and
• migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.

For more information on services for homeless students, contact the School/District Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths, UHCS School Administrator, at 713-743-9111.

IMMUNIZATION
A student must be fully immunized against certain diseases or must present a certificate or statement that, for medical reasons or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, the student will not be immunized.

For exemptions based on reasons of conscience, only official forms issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), Immunization Branch, can be honored by the District. This form may be obtained by writing the TDSHS Immunization Branch (MC 1946), P.O. Box 149347, Austin, Texas 78714-9347; or online at https://webds.dshs.state.tx.us/immoicofefault.aspx.

The form must be notarized and submitted to the principal or Program Coordinator within 90 days of notification. If the parent is seeking an exemption for more than one student in the family, a separate form must be provided for each student.

The immunizations required are: diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; measles, mumps, and rubella; polio, hepatitis A; hepatitis B; varicella (chicken pox), and meningococcal.

The Program Coordinator can provide information on age-appropriate doses or on an acceptable physician-validated history of illness required by the TDSHS. Proof of immunization may be established by personal records from a licensed physician or public health clinic with a signature or rubber-stamp validation. The month, day, and year that the vaccination was received must be recorded on all records created or updated after September 1, 1991. Also, a TB skin test is required for all students entering from a foreign country.

If a student should not be immunized for medical reasons, the student or parent must present a certificate signed by a U.S. licensed physician stating that, in the doctor's opinion, the immunization required poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or member of the student's family or household. This certificate must be renewed yearly unless the physician specifies a life-long condition.

(For the list of required immunizations refer to Requirements for Immunization Guide for 2017-2018 on our website: http://www.uh.edu/charter-school/)
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS
A student with limited English proficiency (LEP), sometimes referred to as an English Language Learner (ELL) in certain state statutes and state rule, is entitled to receive specialized services from the district. To determine whether the student qualifies for services, a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) will be formed, which will consist of both district personnel and at least one parent representative. The student's parent must consent to any services recommended by the LPAC for a LEP student. However, pending the receipt of parental consent or denial of services, an eligible student will receive the services to which the student is entitled and eligible.
In order to determine a student's level of proficiency in English, the LPAC will use information from a variety of assessments. If the student qualifies for services and once a level of proficiency has been established, the LPAC will then designate instructional accommodations or additional special programs the student will require to eventually become proficient at grade level work in English. Ongoing assessments will be conducted to determine a student's continued eligibility for the program.

The LPAC will also determine whether certain accommodations are necessary for any state-mandated assessments. The STAAR-L, as mentioned at Standardized Testing, may be administered to a LEP student, or, for a student up to grade 5, a Spanish version of STAAR. In limited circumstances, a student's LPAC may exempt the student from an otherwise required state-mandated assessment or may waive certain graduation requirements related to the English I and II end-of-course (EOC) assessments. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) will also be administered to LEP students who qualify for services.

If a student is considered LEP and receives special education services because of a qualifying disability, the student's ARD committee will make instructional and assessment decisions in conjunction with the LPAC.

LOCAL AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS
The School/District may utilize the following local and state assessments:, TEMA, TOMA, DRA Reading, IWOA AIMS, STAAR, required state assessments, locally developed curriculum-based assessments and released state assessments.

LOST AND FOUND
A "lost and found" collection box is located in the school office. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check the lost and found box. The school/District discourages students from bringing to school personal items of high monetary value, as the school/District is not responsible for lost or stolen items. The campus will dispose of lost and found items at the end of each semester.

MAKEUP WORK
Makeup Work Because of Absence
For any class missed, the teacher may assign the student makeup work based on the instructional objectives for the subject or course and the needs of the individual student in mastering the essential knowledge and skills or in meeting subject or course requirements.

A student will be responsible for obtaining and completing the makeup work in a satisfactory manner and within the time specified by the teacher.
A student is encouraged to speak with his or her teacher if the student knows of an absence ahead of time so that the teacher and student may plan any work that can be completed before or shortly after the absence. Please remember the importance of student attendance at school and that, even though absences may be excused or unexcused, all absences account for the 90 percent threshold in regards to the state laws surrounding “attendance for credit or final grades.”

**MEDICINE AT SCHOOL**
The District will not purchase medication to give to a student. All medicine must be FDA approved and kept in the principal's office. All medication must be delivered by the parent to the Program Coordinator or school principal. School employees will not give a student prescription medication, nonprescription medication, herbal substances, anabolic steroids, or dietary supplements without signed written request from the parent and physician. Medication forms are available in the main office. All medication orders must be renewed annually for the current school term. Permission to Administer Medication must be on file and renewed annually in order for the school to administer medications.

The following guidelines will apply:

- **Only authorized employees may administer medication to a student**

- **Prescription** medication must be provided by the parent and be in the original, properly labeled medicine container, along with a current written request from parent and a physician.

- **Nonprescription** medication will be administered only with a written physician request and with the parent's written permission. Medication must be in the original, properly labeled container, provided by the parent. Medication shall be administered according physician's direction. Parents are responsible for the quality of the medications and any potential interactions with other medications the child may be taking.

- **Herbal or dietary supplements** provided by the parent only if required by the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan for a student with disabilities and require a physician's written request for administration.

- **Sunscreen** for students whose schedules provide for regular time spent outdoors, including for recess and physical education classes, should apply sunscreen before coming to school.
Parking Instructions

Do Not Park in any space that is labeled reserved. The first 4 spots at the sidewalk are reserved 24/7 by the Health & Human Performance Department. Do Not Park in these spaces; your car will be ticketed and/or towed.

Morning Drop-Off
7:45-8:00 am
Turn off your cell phone.
Drive slowly into lot 15c by Hofheinz Pavilion.
Park in zone (Turn off engine for everyone’s safety). Remove child curbside. Lock your car.
Walk your child into the school. Do not send your child without adult supervision.
Drive slowly and exit lot by playground.

Students enrolled in Camp Construct may dropped off at 7:00 am and students participating in the school breakfast program may be dropped off at 7:25 am.

Afternoon Pickup
3:45-3:55 pm & Friday Pickup 12:30-12:40 pm
Turn off your cell phone.
Drive slowly into lot 15c by Hofheinz Pavilion.
Pull into pickup lane in marked zone (Do not park in lot. Children will not be allowed to cross traffic). Remain with your vehicle.
Your child will be walked to the curbside. Buckle child’s seatbelt.
Drive slowly and exit lot by playground.
If you choose to walk up, park at the end of the playground. *Noted on map.

For safety, do not walk across the car line.

When coming to the school at other times, please park along to the curb, and display the Cougar Paw Print from your review mirror at all times. Failure to do so will result in a ticket and/or towing. UHCS is not able to intervene or negotiate for you.

If you cannot arrive by 3:55, enroll your child in Camp Construct or make alternate arrangements.
Thank You!

*If your child is not picked up at dismissal by the designated time; your child will be placed in Camp Construct and a fee of $12.00 per child will be assessed.
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS / HEALTH SCREENINGS
As required by state law, all students will receive a vision and hearing screening administered by the school’s health services staff. Students may also be evaluated for physical “markers” associated with type 2 diabetes during routine vision, hearing and spinal screenings. In addition, all fifth students will receive a spinal screening administered by the district’s health services staff.

If any concerns are identified during the screening procedures, the parent/guardian will be notified by letter or by phone and referred to their healthcare provider for professional evaluation. If a parent does not want their child to receive a spinal screening by school personnel; the parent/guardian must contact the Program Coordinator and provide written proof of spinal screening by a healthcare provider or a written request of exemption as defined by the Texas Department of State Health and presented to the school nurse by the time of the scheduled screening date.

All students entering District schools from out of the country shall provide evidence of having received a tuberculosis (TB) skin test. Students with a TB skin test result of ten millimeters or more shall be referred to their healthcare provider for further assessment. A doctor’s note is required if there are any other symptoms or questions of communicability and the student must provide written documentation of evaluation results from a physician. This documentation must be presented to the school within 2 weeks from the initial positive screening result.

The school/ District may require and provide additional screenings as state, district and/or community resources mandate. Parents of students identified through any screening programs as needing treatment or further evaluation, shall be advised of the need and referred to appropriate health agencies.

PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE AND A MINUTE OF SILENCE
Each school day, students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to excuse their child from reciting a pledge.

State law requires that one minute of silence follow recitation of the pledges. Each student may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity during that time so long as the silent activity does not interfere with or distract others.

In addition, state law requires that each campus provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period when September 11 falls on a regular school day in remembrance of those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION
A student will be promoted only on the basis of academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level, the recommendation of the student's teacher, the score received on any criterion-referenced or state-mandated assessment, 70% proficiency of grade level sight words, and any other necessary academic information as determined by the district.

In addition to the above; in kindergarten promotion to the next grade level shall be based on student demonstration of satisfactory developmental growth as indicated on progress reported throughout the year and documented on the final academic report.
In grades K-5 students must also master 70% of the grade level sight word list.

In addition, at certain grade levels a student—with limited exceptions—will be required to pass the State of Texas Assessment Readiness (STARR), if the student is enrolled in a public Texas school on any day between January 1 and the date of the first administration of the STAAR. In order to be promoted to grade 6, students enrolled in grade 5 must have performed satisfactorily on the Mathematics and Reading sections of the grade 5 assessments in English or Spanish.

A student in grade 5 will have two additional opportunities to take a failed assessment. If a student fails a second time, a grade placement committee, consisting of the principal or designee, the teacher, and the student's parent, will determine the additional special instruction the student will receive. After a third failed attempt, the student will be retained; however, the parent can appeal this decision to the committee. In order for the student to be promoted, based on standards previously established by the school District, the decision of the committee must be unanimous. Whether the student is retained or promoted, an educational plan for the student will be designed to enable the student to perform at grade level by the end of the next school year.

Parents of a student at any grade level at or above grade 3 who does not perform satisfactorily on his or her state-mandated exams will be notified that their child will participate in special instructional programs designed to improve performance. The student may be required to participate in this instruction before or after normal school hours or outside of the normal school year. Failure of a student to attend these programs may result in violations of required school attendance as well as the student not being promoted to the next grade level.

**PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

*Conferences (K – 5)*

A parent conference must be conducted during the first semester to acquaint parents with curriculum and the instructional program and to report student progress. Additional individual conferences are to be scheduled to address student progress as needed.

A reading assessment must be administered to all students at the beginning of the fall semester, in the middle of the year and again at the end of the spring semester. Parents will be informed in writing of the student’s results and will be notified if the student appears to be at risk of reading difficulties. In the event the student appears to be at risk of reading difficulties, accelerated instruction in reading will be provided.

All students will receive universal screening in the fall, mid-year and at the end of the year. Universal screening helps in determining the instructional program for students and track student growth. The reports will be shared with parents.

Parents are invited and expected to attend all scheduled conferences during the year to review their child’s progress. Parents desiring additional conferences should contact the school to schedule a personal appointment or to conference by telephone. Unscheduled conferences interfere with student learning, teaching duties, and teacher attendance at meetings. Curriculum Night is scheduled in early Fall to introduce parents to the student expectations in each grade level.
SAFETY
Student safety on campus and at school-related events is a high priority of the school/District. Although the school/District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students and parents is essential to ensuring school safety. A student is expected to:

• Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.

• Follow the behavioral standards in this handbook and the Student Code of Conduct, as well as any additional rules for behavior and safety set by the principal, teachers, or other school personnel.

• Remain alert to and promptly report to a teacher or the principal any safety hazards, such as intruders on campus or threats made by any person toward a student or staff member.

• Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.

• Follow immediately the instructions of teachers, and other school/district employees who are overseeing the welfare of students.

The school doors will be locked at 8:10 AM and will remain locked for the remainder of the school day. All visitors must gain access by pressing the security button located outside the main doors. The front door is set up with a camera system, access is gained after the individual has been identified and it is determined they have business with the school.

Lost or Stolen
The school is not responsible for items a student may lose, misplace, or items stolen; therefore, students should make every effort to safeguard the items and have their belongings marked. If an article is found, it should be brought to the office. If a student has lost an article, he or she should check the lost and found. Articles in the lost and found will be disposed of after a reasonable time. Please label all students' items with the student's name (jackets, sweaters, lunch boxes, etc).

Preparedness Drills: Evacuation, Severe Weather, and Other Emergencies
Students will participate in Fire Drills monthly. Shelter in Place drills and Bus Evacuations are conducted during the year. Fire drills are conducted by the University's Fire Department and repeated annually to the state Fire Marshal. Shelter in Place and Bus Evacuation Drills are conducted by school personnel. Shelter in Place drills are conducted 4 times during the school year. Bus Evacuation drills are conducted prior to departing campus on a bus for the 1st trip of the year.

When the command is given or alarm is sounded, students and adults/visitors on campus need to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.
Emergency School-Closing Information
Each year, parents are asked to complete an emergency release form to provide contact information in the event that school is dismissed early or opening is delayed because of severe weather or another emergency, or if the campus must restrict access due to a security threat.

Should weather or other emergencies threaten the Houston area, please monitor major radio or television stations. If either the University of Houston or Houston Independent School District (HISD) closes, UHCS will be closed. Recorded messages will be left on the school's office phone to clarify situations.

Channel 8 KUHT TV and Radio Station KUHF 88.7 will give notification of UH closings along with other news channels.

UHCS website www.uh.edu/charter-school will post emergency information. Keep your information current so UHCS can contact you in an emergency.

Background Checks for Volunteers
Texas House Bill 6 requires anyone who is in charge of children to pass a criminal background check. Accompanying children on field trips has been interpreted as being in charge of children. Therefore, UHCS requires a criminal background check for anyone volunteering to work with our students, including attending fieldtrips. Background checks take up to 2 weeks to process.

Drop Off and Pick-up

Morning Drop Off
Parents are to enter the parking lot at the by the entrance closest to Cullen. Follow the arrows to the curb area or any open parking area except those designated as reserved. You may parking temporarily in these areas if you display your UH Charter School parking paw. If you parking paw is not displayed you may be ticketed. Parking information will be reviewed at the beginning of each school year.

Each morning all students are to be walked into the school. Students attending Camp Construct may be dropped off at 7:00am; students participating in the school's breakfast program may be dropped off at 7:25am. All other students may be dropped off between 7:45 am- 7:59 am; students shall be escorted into the school commons (Non-Camp Construct students) or the cafeteria area (for Camp Construct students). Parents are to sign in the student each morning.

Afternoon Pick-up
Students shall be escorted by faculty/staff to the driveway for departure at 3:45 pm– 3:55 pm Monday - Thursday, and 12:30 pm – 12:40 pm Friday.

If timely pickup is a problem, you will need to enroll your child in Camp Construct or arrange for alternate pickup. Students are released only to parents or other persons designated in writing by parents; thus, the designations must be kept current. Inform UHCS in writing when a person on your list is picking up your child. Identification will be requested, so notify any designated person of our safety practice.

Students enrolled in Camp Construct shall be escorted by UHCS staff to Camp Construct teachers. Do not walk into school to pick up carpool children. You block the line and delay departure of the other children. Children will not be release, unless it is for a doctors appoint, during the last 15 minutes of the school day.
If you have a doctor’s appointment please arrive before 3:30 pm on Monday-Thursday or 12:15 pm on Friday. Any student not picked up by 3:55pm Monday-Thursday will be charged $12.00 per day. Any student not picked up by 12:45pm on Friday will be placed in Camp Construct and a fee of $25 will be charged.

**Cafeteria Services**
UH Charter School participates in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. The school/District adheres to the USDA’s “All Foods Sold in Schools” nutrition standards to ensure all students are only offered tasty and nutritious meals and snack foods during the school day. School meals must meet federal meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards based on the latest *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The current meal pattern increases the availability of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in the school menu. The meal pattern’s dietary specifications set specific calorie limits to ensure age-appropriate meals for grades K-5. Other meal enhancements include gradual reductions in the sodium content of the meals (sodium targets must be reached by SY 2014-15, SY 2017-18 and SY 2022-23).

Breakfast is served beginning at 7:25 am daily and the cafeteria remains open until 7:55 am. Not breakfast will be served after 7:55 am.

Monthly menus are sent home with all children and are posted on the school website.

**Free and Reduced Meal Program & Benefits**
Free and reduced-price meals are based on income eligibility. Students receiving benefits from the prior year will qualify for the first 30 school days with the same eligibility. If a new application is not submitted and approved within the first 30 school days, student(s) will no longer qualify and will be charged full price of meal. Only one application is needed for each household, unless the application is for a run away, homeless or migrant student.

Meal Applications are available anytime during the school year. Applications may be obtained at through the school’s Business Assistant Office. The application is also available on the school’s website beginning August 1 of each school year.

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**
UH Charter School provides special programs for students with limited English proficiency, dyslexic students, and students with disabilities. The coordinator for each program can answer questions about eligibility requirements, as well as programs and services offered. A student or parent with questions about the programs should contact the principal or the coordinator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited English Proficiency</td>
<td>Ethel Monroy</td>
<td>713-743-9111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyslexia</td>
<td>Marcia Cunningham</td>
<td>713-743-9111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 504</td>
<td>Marcia Cunningham</td>
<td>713-743-9111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>Marcia Cunningham</td>
<td>713-743-9111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STANDARDIZED TESTING**

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness)

*Grades 3–5*
In addition to routine tests and other measures of achievement, students at certain grade levels will take state-mandated assessments, such as the STAAR, in the following subjects:
Mathematics, annually in grades 3–5
Reading, annually in grades 3–5
Writing, including spelling and grammar, in grade 4
Science in grade 5
Successful performance on the reading and math assessments in grade 5 is required by law in order for the student to be promoted to the next grade level.

STAAR Alternate, for students receiving special education services who meet certain state-established criteria, will be available for eligible students, as determined by the student’s ARD committee.

STAAR-L is a linguistically accommodated assessment that is available for certain limited English proficient (LEP) students, as determined by the student’s Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). A Spanish version of STAAR is also available to students through grade 5 who need this accommodation.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

General Visitors
Parents and others are welcome to visit the school. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors must first report to the main office and must comply with all applicable school/district policies and procedures, which may include the presentation of a photo ID. All visitors including parents must receive a visitor’s badge.

Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal and teacher and only so long as their duration or frequency does not interfere with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment. Even if the visit is approved prior to the visitor’s arrival, the individual must check in at the main office. The school has class observations rooms that may also be utilized for classroom observations.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

Volunteers
Parents are encouraged to volunteer. According to Texas Education Code §22.0835, school/districts are required to obtain criminal history information on volunteers. UH Charter School considers a volunteer to include any person who is not an employee of the school/District who will be working with students. Please contact the Program Coordinator for further information and a criminal history check form. Forms must be submitted annually.
WHERE TO GET SCHOOL INFORMATION

School Program Coordinator

- Attendance
- Medication and Forms
- Records Request
- Lost and Found
- Withdrawal Paperwork
- Absence Excuse
- Enrollment Paperwork
- Immunization Updates
- Background Check
- Release Designation Update
- Calendar and Newsletter Submissions
- Tardy Notices/ Early Release Notices
- Parent Information Update - New Address, Phone Number and Emails
- Student Teachers
- Class Observer/Interns

School Calendar

- STAAR and Standford10 Testing Dates
- Student Holidays
- Events
- Summer School Dates
- Teacher Work Days
- Inclement Weather Make-up Days
- First and Last Day of School
- New Student Enrollment Dates
- Lottery

Business Assistant

- All Payment or Financial Questions
- Payments (Camp Construct, Child Nutrition, School Fee)
- Child Care End of Year Payments for Income Tax Purposes
- Contracts for Camp Construct
- Credit Card Payments

Checks and Money Orders Black Box Reception Area

- Any Payments for Monthly Camp Construct and Meals Monthly Lunch/Breakfast
- Emergency Camp Construct Attendance Fee- Daily
- Camp Construct Late Fees
- School Fee Payments

Camp Construct Directors

Program Information

- Behavior
- Personnel
- Camp Construct Snack
- Activities
- Schedule
- Camp Construct Late Fees
- Camp Construct Questions and Concerns

**Lead Teachers Primary Contact for All Classroom Matters**
- Classroom Constructivist Curriculum, Lesson Plans
- Classroom Activities
- Classroom Behavior
- Homework
- Student Agendas Grades 3rd – 5th
- Portfolios
- Portfolio Celebrations
- Plans for Your Child’s Birthday Celebration
- Conferences 6 week, Midyear Title 1, End of Year, Called by Parent or Teacher
- 12 week Reports to Parents-Parent Response Form
- Appropriate Attire- Shoes and Clothing
- Student Assessment
- Illness
- Safety

**Assistant Teacher**
- Title I Tutoring
- Library
- Eye Glasses

**Principal**
- Curriculum
- Policies/Procedures
- Teacher/Assistant Teacher questions after primary contact
- School events
- Scheduling of events
- School Handbook
- Discipline

**Special Education**
- 504 program
- Special Education Program
- Qualifications
- Services
- Service Providers

**School Administrator**
- Camp Construct Enrollment
- Unresolved Camp Construct issues and Policies After Primary Contact
- Camp Construct Late Fee
- Camp Construct Staffing
- Camp Construct Behaviors
- Breakfast/ Lunch Program
- School contact in Principal's absence
- Facilities
- State Testing
- Unresolved Issues and Policies after Primary Contact
- Summer School
- Extended Absence Request

**Classroom Bulletin Boards (Outside the door to each classroom)**
- Lesson Plans
- Sign up List Contributions, Conferences (6 week, Midyear - Title 1, End of Year), and Field Trips

**Attendance Committee**
- Absence
- Tardies
- Early Departure

**Parent Student Handbook**
- Goals
- Constructivism
- Information, Procedures
- Code of Conduct
- Sample Forms
- Yearly Calendar
- Health and Safety Nutrition and Prevention
- General School Policies and Procedures
- Nutrition

**Monthly Newsletter and Calendar**
- Updates
- Events
- News
- Lunch/Breakfast Prices

**Parent Bulletin Board Reception Area**
- Breakfast/Lunch Prices
- Monthly Lunch/Breakfast Menus
- Snack Menus Schedules

**Parent Mailboxes**
- All Receipts
- School Notices
- Teacher Communications

**Camp Construct Bulletin Board (end of hall way)**
- Calendars
- Snack Menus
- State Documents
- Activities Calendar
WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

The school requests written notice from the parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. Only the enrolling parent or guardian can withdraw a student. The parent may contact the Program Coordinator to begin the withdrawal process.

On the student's last day, the withdrawal form must be processed. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the parent and a copy will be placed in the student's permanent record.
GLOSSARY

**Accelerated instruction** is an intensive supplemental program designed to address the needs of an individual student in acquiring the knowledge and skills required at his or her grade level and/or as a result of a student not meeting the passing standard on a state-mandated assessment.

**ARD** is the admission, review, and dismissal committee convened for each student who is identified as needing a full and individual evaluation for special education services. The eligible student and his or her parents are members of the committee.

**Attendance Review Committee** is responsible for reviewing a student’s absences when the student’s attendance drops below 90 percent, or in some cases 75 percent, of the days the class is offered. Under guidelines adopted by the board, the committee will determine whether there were extenuating circumstances for the absences and whether the student needs to complete certain conditions to master the course and regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences.

**DAEP** stands for disciplinary alternative education program, a placement for students who have violated certain provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

**FERPA** refers to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act that grants specific privacy protections to student records. The law contains certain exceptions, such as for directory information, unless a student’s parent or a student 18 or older directs the school not to release directory information.

**IEP** is the written record of the Individualized Education Program prepared by the ARD committee for a student with disabilities who is eligible for special education services. The IEP contains several parts, such as a statement of the student’s present educational performance; a statement of measurable annual goals, with short-term objectives; the special education and related services and supplemental aids and services to be provided, and program modifications or support by school personnel; a statement regarding how the student’s progress will be measured and how the parents will be kept informed; modifications to state or district wide tests; whether successful completion of state-mandated assessments is required for graduation, etc.

**NCLB Act** is the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. **Section 504** is the federal law that prohibits discrimination against a student with a disability, requiring schools to provide opportunities for equal services, programs, and participation in activities. Unless the student is determined by an ARD committee to be eligible for special education services, appropriate regular educational services will be provided.

**STAAR** is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, the state’s system of standardized academic achievement assessments, effective beginning with certain students for the 2011–2012 school year.

**STAAR Alternate** is an alternative state-mandated assessment designed for students with severe cognitive disabilities receiving special education services who meet the participation requirements, as determined by the student’s ARD committee.

**STAAR Linguistically Accommodated (STAAR L)** is an alternative state-mandated assessment with linguistic accommodations designed for certain recent immigrant English language learners.
State-mandated assessments are required of students at certain grade levels and in specified subjects. 

**Student Code of Conduct** is developed and adopted by the board and identifies the circumstances, consistent with law, when a student may be removed from a classroom, and or campus. It also sets out the conditions that authorize or require the principal or another administrator to place the student in a disciplinary alternative education program. It outlines conditions for out-of-school suspension and for expulsion. The **Student Code of Conduct** also addresses notice to the parent regarding a student's violation of one of its provisions.

**TELPAS** stands for the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System, which assesses the progress that English language learners make in learning the English language, and is administered for those who meet the participation requirements in kindergarten-grade 5.