



UNITY

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

K3- 5th HANDBOOK

2022-2023 Revision
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Unity Christian School K3-5 Handbook

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ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is necessary for success in school. Unity Christian School will abide by the State of Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law.

Attendance Procedures **The Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law** can be found at O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1. UCS adheres to the following procedures.

- After 5 unexcused absences, the attendance officer will notify the parent or guardian by mail of the number of unexcused absences and possible consequences of continued unexcused absences. The attendance officer may follow up with the parent/guardian by phone.
- At 6 or more unexcused absences, the attendance officer and or School Guidance Counselor must refer the student and or parent or guardian to any of the following: Truancy Treatment Team, Juvenile Court, Department of Family and Children's Services, Magistrate Court, and/or Superior Court for violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law.
- Excused absences are for the following: personal illness, death or illness in the immediate family (immediate family is interpreted to mean parents, siblings, children, grandparents, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or legal guardian), religious holidays, government-mandated absences, conditions which render attendance impossible or hazardous to health and safety, military service tests and physical examination, Georgia General Assembly page service, and participation in educational activities.
- Student attendance is **required** at regular school-day activities including Chapel.

UCS believes that class attendance is important for academic growth and the development of responsibility. Most subject materials are presented in a sequential manner. When a student is absent, a gap in learning can result, affecting mastery of future topics. As a result, the student may be at a disadvantage. Clarification, discussion and instruction are also lost when a student is not in class. Therefore, families are asked to thoughtfully consider the impact of any absence other than one of a medical or family emergency. Families are discouraged from taking students out of school prior to a school break, or for family vacations. UCS follows Georgia law regarding school attendance, and has purposefully built sufficient vacation time into its yearly calendar.

- A student may not miss more than 9 days per semester in order to get credit for a course or be promoted to the next grade.
- A student may not miss more than 18 days in a school year in order to get credit for a course or be promoted to the next grade.

Tardies and Early Dismissals:

- Carline ends at 7:50am
- Students not in the homeroom by **7:55** am are considered tardy.
- Students leaving school before **3:15 pm** constitutes an early dismissal (this counts as a tardy). If it is necessary for a student to leave school before the end of the school day, the parent/guardian with whom he/she lives must send a written request giving the reason or come in person to make the request.
- The person picking up the student must report to the front office.
- No students will be released early unless a member of the office staff calls for the student
- A photo ID is required when picking up a student.
- In cases where the right to custody is in doubt, the principal may require evidence that the person calling for the child is entitled to custody.
- It is requested that there be no checkouts after 2:45 pm, unless there is an emergency.
- Students that check out early are counted absent from the classes that they do not attend that day.
- Excused reasons for tardies and early dismissals are the same as those for absences.

Tardy Consequences:

- Five tardies in one semester equal one day absent.
- After a student has been tardy from school ten days in one semester, the parent/guardian will be notified by mail.
- Any student who is tardy or leaves school early more than 10 times during a school year shall not be eligible to receive a perfect attendance certificate.
- At 15 unexcused tardies, parents will be contacted by the administrator and a parent meeting scheduled.

CHECKING IN OR OUT OF SCHOOL

- Students are to check-in with the receptionist when arriving at school any time after 7:50.
- Except in cases of doctor's appointments or court appearances, late arrivals will be treated as a tardy.
- Students are to check out of school with the receptionist.
- Students who do not drive can only check out and leave campus after being properly signed out with the receptionist.
- If checking out for medical reasons, students are to bring a doctor's note when they return to school. Doctor's note is to be given to Mrs. Sottolare. (Excused tardy, no consequence)
- Altered or forged notes of any kind will result in disciplinary action.

- Teachers will verify check out times at the end of the day.
- Checking in or out for unexcused reasons will result in a grade of zero on all class work.

FAMILY TRIPS

Trips must meet the following five criteria:

- Student is to be accompanied by parent or guardian
- Limit of five days
- Students must make up all work missed.

Family trips DO count against the 10-day attendance rule. No educational absences are granted during the week of testing. Educational absence forms may be picked up in front office and must be submitted to the principal 10 days in advance of desired absence(s) date(s).

UCS POLICY FOR ABSENCES AND MISSED WORK

- Students who miss over 10 days per year are at risk of retention unless a physician’s statement is turned in to the receptionist within five days after an absence-preferably the first day a student returns to school so that teachers will have approval to assign make-up work.
- Students who have received a short-term in-school or out-of-school suspension the first time ever at UCS, the days absent due to the suspension will not count toward the 10-day limit.
- Students returning to school after an absence are to bring a written excuse signed by a parent/guardian telling why the student was absent. Notes will be verified by the principal. Mrs. Sottolare accepts excuses each morning beginning at 7:50. Students are to turn in excuses immediately upon arriving at school-before the tardy bell rings.
- At the elementary level it is the parent’s responsibility to communicate with each teacher about make-up work missed during an **excused** absence. Students who miss assignments due to **EXCUSED** absences have **a maximum of 3 days** to complete and turn in the missed graded assignments. Failure to turn in the assignments within the 3-day period results in a “0” recorded in the grade book. Students should be prepared to take any previously assigned tests on the day of return. Any previously assigned projects will also be due on the day of return. For extended consecutive absences over 5 days, the time allowed for making up work will be determined by the principal. A student will not be allowed to make up any work for an unexcused absence unless approved by the principal.

STUDENT PROGRESS AND GRADE REPORTING

- Grades are determined on the basis of achievement of stated learning objectives and performance in the subject. The criteria for evaluation includes, but is not limited to, written and oral classroom assignments, homework, tests, quizzes, and projects.

- Progress in academic subjects is indicated using a numeric grading system, whenever possible, based on a one hundred-point scale. Subjects that do not receive a numerical grade receive the following:
 - S – Satisfactory
 - N – Needs Improvement
 - U - Unsatisfactory
- In elementary grades, progress may be indicated using a checklist or rubric.
- In order for grades to reflect a student’s understanding, possible need for intervention, and not be inflated, we refrain from allowing students to retake a test for the purpose of solely raising their grade.
- Report Cards are sent home and emailed every nine weeks to show student progress. Progress reports are sent at the midpoint of each nine-week period. Grades can be checked and monitored by parents weekly by checking RenWeb. The numerical grading system is used whenever possible. The grading scale is as follows:

90 - 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
68 - 69	D
0 - 67	F

K3-K4 Report Cards

A skill set report card is sent home every nine weeks. Skill sets are assessed with **Launched**, **Progressing**, **Mastered**, and **Needs Improvement**.

Kindergarten Report Cards

Numerical grades are given for math and reading/phonics. All other subjects are graded using **Satisfactory** and **Needs Improvement**. Skill sets are assessed with **Launched**, **Progressing**, **Mastered**, and **Needs Improvement**.

First Grade Report Cards

Numerical grades are given for math, reading/phonics, language, and spelling. All other subjects are graded using **Satisfactory**, **Needs Improvement**, or **Unsatisfactory**.

Second Grade Report Cards

Numerical grades are given for math, reading/phonics, language, spelling, social studies, and science. All other subjects are graded using a **Satisfactory**, **Needs Improvement**, or **Unsatisfactory**.

Third – Fifth Grade Report Cards

Numerical grades are given for math, reading, language, spelling, social studies, science, and Bible. All other subjects are graded using a **Satisfactory**, **Needs Improvement**, or **Unsatisfactory**.

Achievement Tests

The Iowa Test is administered to all students in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade. We use this instrument so that we may measure our progress in relation to other schools. The Achievement Tests are administered to all students each academic year.

Promotion And Retention

Unity Christian School will consider a number of factors when deciding whether it is appropriate to retain a child: the number of years retained, chronological age, scholastic achievement, cognitive ability, and developmental and social maturity. Teachers are generally aware of failure in academic achievement long before the last marking period. Teachers will contact parents prior to the end of the first semester if a child is in danger of failing the first part of the year. If a child is in danger of failing second semester the parents will be contacted before the last grading period begins. If a pupil is in danger of failing a subject it must be discussed with the principal, and then a conference will be held with the parents, principal, and Headmaster.

Unity Christian School teachers will document and warn parents in writing during a conference if retention is being considered. The teacher will list ways the student will be given extra help to try to prevent the need for retention. This may also include referral to the LAUNCH program. If retention is still recommended, a second conference will be held with the teacher, parents, principal, and Headmaster. Parents will be asked to sign a form agreeing to retention or stating “we realize we’re putting our child at academic risk but agree to pass them on”. Retention will be based on the following conditions:

- Test scores 40% or lower
- Math chapter tests
- Reading level/ Assessments within classroom
- Homework completed/returned

Students will not be retained in our Pre-K (K3, K4) unless requested by a parent.

DRESS CODE POLICY

- School Uniforms must be worn Monday through Thursday unless it is that class’s P.E. day.
- Regular Wear for Girls:
 - Polo shirts with logo (navy, burgundy, or ash gray)

- Navy or khaki pants, capris, or shorts (no cargo pants) with polo shirt
- Navy or khaki jumper, skirt, or skort (no greater than 2 inches above the knee) with polo shirt
- Knit polo dress with logo (navy, burgundy, or ash gray) no greater than 2 in. above knee
- Navy leggings may be worn under skirts or skorts.
- Shorts should be worn under skirts or dresses.
- Boots must be covered by a pant leg or worn with leggings under skirt.
- All shoes must have a back strap or solid back (no sandals or flip flops) and must be closed toed for safety.
- Regular Wear for Boys:
 - Polo shirts with logo (navy, burgundy, and ash gray)
 - Navy or khaki pants or shorts (no cargo pants)
 - All shoes must have a back strap or solid back (no sandals or flip flops) and must be closed toed for safety.
 - Boots must be covered by pant legs.
- PE Uniforms:
 - Gray long or short-sleeved t-shirt or Dri-fit shirt with athletic logo
 - Gray hooded sweatshirt when needed with athletic logo
 - Navy shorts (no more than 2 inches above the knee), sweatpants, or athletic pants (not leggings)
 - Athletic shoes only
 - Old PE uniform acceptable for one year (2022-2023).
- Jackets, Sweaters, and Sweatshirts
 - All jackets and sweaters must be solid navy, burgundy, black, brown, white, or gray – logo optional
 - Non-UCS logos can be no bigger than 3X5 front or back.
 - All sweatshirts must be Unity Spirit wear.
- Jewelry (Any jewelry item that distracts from the educational process can be prohibited)
- Hair
 - Hair styles are to be non-distracting in color, cut, and length.
 - No mohawks or extreme color or dye.
 - Hair must be combed or brushed
 - All boy's hair must not be in the student's eyes.
- Spirit Day
 - Blue jeans (with no holes), PE uniform, or school uniform shorts may be worn with a school issued t-shirt or sweatshirt with school logo
- Free Dress
 - No tank tops, spaghetti straps, leggings, or clothing with holes or patches
 - Skirts and shorts length no greater than 2 in. above knee

- Dress Code Violations
 - On the first offense of a “Dress Code Violation,” a warning will be given. Parents will be notified through RenWeb.
 - On the second offense, the student will be asked to call a parent to bring the correct uniform item.

DISCIPLINE (General)

Although the punishment for some offenses is specific, no student or parent should automatically expect to receive the minimum or maximum disciplinary action when he/she is involved in a problem. Disciplinary action may be determined on an individual basis based on a wide range of variables such as, but not limited to, the age of the student, past record of behavior, student attitude, the severity of the infraction, and the severity of the problem as it exists in that particular setting. School administrators will exercise professional judgment in these decisions. Administrators retain the right to treat each occurrence on an individual basis without creating a precedent in any future case and to suspend any disciplinary action that they deem appropriate.

The types of consequences that will be used at UCS are, but not limited to:

- Loss of recess
- Visit to primary principal’s office
- Silent lunch
- Loss of extracurricular privileges
- ISS (In-school suspension)
- OSS (Out-of-school suspension)
- Police referral and/or arrest

Actions leading to possible suspension or expulsion include, but are not limited to:

- Viewing or showing inappropriate material
- Harassment/bullying/fighting
- Stealing
- Vandalism
- Possession of a knife/firearm

CONDUCT IN HALLS

- Students should WALK in the halls.
- No **running**; no **loud talking**; no pushing; no loitering between classes.
- Students should demonstrate respect and courtesy to others and themselves.
- Teachers and staff will assign disciplinary consequences for misconduct in the halls.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

- On the first offense of a “Dress Code Violation” a warning will be given. Parents will be notified through RenWeb and a violation letter sent home.

- On the second offense, the student will be asked to call a parent to bring the correct uniform item.

UCS will have one FREE DRESS DAY per month. Students with no dress code violations may participate in Free Dress Day. Any uniform violation in a month results in forfeiture of Free Dress Day given by the administration for that month. Students in free dress who have not earned free dress will be asked to call a parent to bring uniform clothing.

K3 – 5th GRADES CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Each teacher is responsible for a behavior/discipline plan that is implemented using our school-wide PBIS policy.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAM (ISS)

The purpose of the In-School Supervision Program is disciplinary. It serves to replace Out of School Suspension in less severe discipline situations. Only an administrator may assign ISS.

Students who are in ISS are not allowed to participate in or attend any school function during, or after school-on or off campus. Students in ISS are confined to one area; they do not change classes or eat lunch with the student body. Students report to ISS at 8:10 a.m. on days assigned. During penalty period, students in ISS cannot take part in or attend any school functions-this includes all athletic activities on or off campus, classes, club meetings, field trips, etc. Violation of this rule will result in additional days in ISS. All students in ISS remain at school for the entire day. Teachers send student's work to the ISS coordinator. ISS work is monitored, and assistance is available if requested. Students are to make up the work that is taking place in the regular classes; students must work the entire time they are in ISS; and they must have supplies and books each day in ISS. Days in attendance in ISS are not recorded as absences from school. Work is sent to the classroom teacher for evaluation.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS)

Students who are suspended out of school are not allowed to participate in or attend any school function during, or after school-on or off campus. Students suspended out of school must complete assigned work and will receive 50% credit. Parents will be notified when a student is suspended and will be required to come for a conference with the principal and Head of School before the suspension is served.

Although the punishment for some offenses is specific, no student or parent should automatically expect to receive the minimum or maximum disciplinary action when he/she is involved in a problem. Disciplinary action may be determined on an individual basis based on a wide range of variables such as, but not limited to, the age of the student, past record of behavior, student attitude, the severity of the infraction, and the severity of the problem as it exists in that particular setting. School administrators will exercise professional judgment in these decisions. Administrators retain the right to treat

each occurrence on an individual basis without creating a precedent in any future case and to suspend any disciplinary action that they deem appropriate.

The types of consequences used at UCS are, but not limited to:

- Loss of recess minutes
- Visit to the principal's office
- Silent lunch
- Classes only restriction
- Loss of extracurricular privileges
- ISS (In-school suspension)
- OSS (Out-of-school suspension)

Actions leading to possible suspension or expulsion include, but are not limited to:

- Viewing or showing inappropriate material
- Harassment/bullying/fighting
- Stealing
- Gambling
- Vandalism
- Possession of a knife/firearm
- Plagiarism/cheating

PARENT CONFLICT/GRIEVANCE POLICY

The objective of this policy is to establish biblical guidelines for the resolution of conflict and grievance in the partnership between parents and the school. These guidelines, based on Matthew 18:15-17, are to be followed as means for resolving all conflict and grievance. Confidentiality is essential for the Parent Conflict/Grievance Policy to be effective. UCS teachers and administration will in no way discriminate against any parent or student for following the biblically consistent methods of conflict/grievance resolution outlined in this policy.

Parents/Students to Teachers

Level One:

A Level 1 grievance is between a parent and teacher. All concerns involving your child's teacher or issues in the classroom (curriculum, discipline, homework, etc) must first be directed to the classroom teacher. If this does not resolve the issue, the parent may request an in person conference with the teacher.

Level Two:

A grievance is considered Level 2 upon the involvement of a school principal. The parent may request that the teacher organize a conference involving the teacher and the appropriate school principal. In the event that an acceptable resolution cannot be made as a result of a meeting between a parent, teacher, and principal, the parent may request a meeting with the Head of School.

Level Three:

A grievance is considered Level 3 upon the involvement of the Head of School. It is the expectation that all conflicts and grievances will be resolved as a result of this meeting. At the discretion of the Head of School, the chairman of the School Board may be included in the final decision rendered by the school.

UCS DISCIPLINE CODE GUIDELINES

Unity Christian School does not tolerate Aggressive Behavior in any form. A UCS student is called to a higher standard of conduct. UCS students are accountable for their behavior on and off campus.

Severe cases will be referred to the Head of School's office.

- **Rule 1: Fighting**

Fighting, physical attack, assault, taking part in arguments which lead to a fight, or doing bodily harm to another student are included in this policy. Students who do not stop immediately upon request subject themselves to a more severe school punishment.

- **Rule 2: Bullying - Harassing - Abusing – Taunting**

UCS defines bullying as the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse, intimidate, or aggressively dominate others. The behavior is repetitive and habitual. One essential prerequisite is the perception by the bully or others of an imbalance of social or physical power, which distinguishes bullying from conflict.

Aggressive Behavior is not tolerated at Unity Christian School. Some offenses are too dramatic or severe to be handled by this simple rubric.

- **1st Offense – verbal warning, student will offer apology, offense recorded in Renweb, Parents of both parties will be called.**
 - **2nd Offense – 1 day of in-school suspension, student will offer apology, offense will be recorded in Renweb, and Parents of Both parties will be called.**
 - **3rd Offense – 1 day out of school suspension, student will offer apology, offense will be recorded in Renweb, and Parents of both parties will be called.**
 - **4th Offense, 3-days out of school suspension and the student's enrollment status will be evaluated. Students who do not respond positively to redirection or correction are not profiting from the UCS environment and are subject to expulsion.**
- **Rule 3: Refusing to Follow Instructions**
Refusal to follow instructions of faculty or staff and all acts of insubordination are serious offenses at UCS.

- **Rule 4: Classroom Disturbances, Rude and Discourteous Behavior**
Any continuous student actions or inappropriate comments, disruptions, or disrespect that prevents a teacher from conducting class is not tolerated. UCS faculty who find it necessary to stop teaching to discipline a student who continues to be uncooperative will send him/her to the office immediately with a disciplinary referral.

- **Rule 5: School Disturbances**
Disturbances and loudness in the halls, classrooms, or other areas of the building and campus endanger the safety of others.

- **Rule 6: Drugs and Alcohol - Zero Tolerance Policy**
A student shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any illicit drug or inhalant, substance represented as a drug, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol. This rule is in effect on all UCS grounds, in route to and from school on school-related activities, on school buses, and at school activities away from school. The proper use of a drug authorized by a registered physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule-prescribed medication must be kept in the school's designated office.

- **Rule 7: Weapons - Zero Tolerance Policy**
Students cannot possess, supply, handle, use or transmit a knife of any size, razor blade, or other object that can be considered a weapon or represents a weapon including but not limited to toy guns. This rule is in effect on all UCS grounds, in route to and from school at school-related activities, on school buses, and at school activities away from school. **State Law O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1 prohibits any person from carrying, possessing or controlling any weapon at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school.** The term "weapon" means and includes any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of three or more inches, straight-edge razors, spring stick, metal knucks, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a way to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nunchuck, or chain, throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind. No mace, pepper spray, stink/smoke bombs, firecrackers, explosives, gasoline, etc. **State law provides for a fine of not more than \$5,000 and/or imprisonment for not more than five years for those found guilty of violation.**

- **Rule 8: Property**
Willful and malicious destruction or vandalism to school or private property while under school supervision is a violation of the code of conduct. Theft of any

property belonging to students or school personnel at any time or place is a violation of code of conduct.

- **Rule 9: Tobacco**

Students shall not possess, transmit, or use tobacco in any form on any UCS school grounds, in route to and from school, on school buses, or off the school grounds while in attendance at any school function. Students shall not be in possession of lighters, matches, or other smoking paraphernalia.

- **Rule 10: Extortion or Attempt to Extort, Intimidation**

Students shall not obtain anything from others through pressure, by force, or by undue or illegal power.

- **Rule 11: Gambling**

Students shall not gamble on school property or while attending an activity under school supervision. Students should not be in possession of playing cards, dice, or other gambling paraphernalia.

- **Rule 12: Off-Limits**

Students are to go only to sections of the building/campus where faculty/staff have given permission. Students are to remain on the UCS campus throughout the school day; students are not to go to cars in the parking lot during the day without prior permission. Students are not to be in the building at any time without supervision.

- **Rule 13: Truancy-Skipping any Portion of the School day and Leaving Campus**

Missing any class or homeroom time without written permission approved by an administrator or teacher constitutes truancy; failure to check in or check out properly will be considered truancy; leaving campus during the school day without permission is truancy. Students are considered to be on campus the moment they enter the parking lot and may not leave without checking out. Failing to report to homeroom is considered an issue of truancy. Students must have written permission to miss any class or extracurricular activity.

- **Rule 14: Forgery/False Statements**

Parent/guardian signatures are required on documents. School records or medical excuses are not to be altered. The **student** is responsible for **any** altered or forged document regardless of who actually changed the document. Making a false accusation against teachers and/or students is prohibited.

- **Rule 15: Dress Code Violations**

Students will be dressed appropriately. Please refer to the "Dress Code" in the UCS General Regulations section of this handbook for guidelines.

- **Rule 16: Tardy**
Students should be seated when the tardy bell rings. Please refer to attendance/tardy policy in handbook

- **Rule 17: Intimidation or Assault of a School Employee**
Physical threats, physical contact, or verbal threats to any school employee are not tolerated and may result in expulsion.

- **Rule 18: Cell Phone/Smart Watch Use**
For elementary these must be turned in to the teacher for the day or left in the student’s backpack at student’s own risk. These may not be kept with the student. Cell phones and/or Smart Watches may not be used during school hours between 7:55-3:10. Cell phones/smart watches are not permitted as an “electronic” on teacher granted electronic days, field trips, or after school care.
Consequences for offenses are as follows:
 - 1st offense: phone/smart watch is taken up and given to the principal for the parent to retrieve and a \$10.00 fine is collected.
 - 2nd offense: phone/smart watch is taken up and given to the principal. Phone is not allowed back at school for 2 weeks and a \$20.00 fine is collected.
 - 3rd offense: phone/smart watch is taken up and given to the principal. Phone is not permitted on campus for the remainder of the school year and a \$30.00 fee is collected.