

# Uplift Scholar Handbook



uplifteducation

2026-2027

## Purpose of This Handbook

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This Handbook contains information that both scholars and parents need for reference during the school year. It covers several significant topics designed to give scholars and parents an overview of Uplift policy and procedures.

Please be aware that not all topics related to your school or Uplift can or will be included in this Handbook; however, it is designed to cover those areas which we believe are most important to your child's success.

While this Handbook is updated annually, Uplift policy adoption or revision, as well as changes in the law, may occur throughout the year.

Changes in law, policy, program, or administrative regulation that affect Handbook provisions will be made available to scholars and parents through newsletters, the school website, and/or other communications. In case of conflict between Uplift policies, the policy that was most recently adopted by the Uplift Board will be followed.

It is important that you review this entire Handbook and keep it as a reference point during the school year. If you have any questions about the information in this Handbook, please contact your school's Academic Director.

This Handbook will also be available on the school website.

As used in this Handbook, "Uplift" or "the District" refers to Uplift Education. Uplift Education is the charter holder and legal entity governing all Uplift schools. The term "parent" also includes a legal guardian.

In addition to this Handbook, each school may have school-specific procedures that will be included in the Appendix. Questions regarding the procedures or requirements at your school should be directed to your school's Academic Director.



# Uplift Education Scholar Handbook 2026-2027

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## Uplift Pledge and Mission

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### Uplift Pledge

I pledge to do my best this day.  
To honor myself and others  
In everything I do.

To accept responsibility for my own learning and  
to encourage others, as I embrace my own opportunities to grow.

To exercise leadership  
and prepare myself for college at every opportunity!  
For me, mediocrity is not an option;  
Only excellence will do.

Who I am has value.  
What I think has value  
Who I will become is invaluable to the world.

### Uplift Mission

Uplift’s mission is to create and sustain public schools of excellence that empower scholars to reach their highest potential in college and the global marketplace and to inspire in scholars a life-long love of learning, achievement, and service in order to positively change their world.

### History of Uplift Education

Uplift Education (“Uplift”) was formed in 1996 as “The North Hills School” and was one of the first nonprofits to receive a charter from the State of Texas to operate an open-enrollment charter school and is known as a “Generation One Charter.” Uplift opened its first school in 1997 in Irving, Texas. Since that first charter school was opened, Uplift has expanded across the Dallas – Fort Worth region. Approximately 24,000 scholars will be enrolled in Uplift schools for the 2023-2024 school year. Uplift’s commitment to providing a high-quality college preparatory education is evident in its success to date. In the fall of 2021, Uplift graduated more than 80 seniors, 100% of whom were accepted into college. Uplift expects to continue to expand its network and to welcome more scholars and families into Uplift schools.



## Governance

Uplift is a Texas non-profit corporation and a tax-exempt organization under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Uplift is governed by a Board of Trustees which meets at identified dates and times throughout the year in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. If you have any questions about Uplift Education, generally, or the governance structure, please contact the Central Management Office at 469-621-8500.

## Public Charter Schools

The Texas Legislature passed the original charter school law in 1995, thereby creating the opportunity for charter schools to exist and flourish in Texas. The purposes of the law were to: (1) improve scholar learning; (2) increase the choice of learning opportunities within public schools; (3) encourage different and innovative learning methods; and (4) establish a new form of accountability for public schools. Accordingly, charter schools operate with more flexibility than traditional public schools. If you have questions about the differences between traditional public schools and public charter schools, please contact your school Academic Director or the Central Management Office.

## Equal Opportunity – Notice of Nondiscrimination

Uplift Education, as an equal opportunity educational provider and employer, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law in educational programs or activities that it operates or in employment decisions and provides equal access to the Scouting America and other designated youth groups. Uplift Education is required by Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; as well as Uplift policy, not to discriminate in such a manner.

For additional information regarding Uplift’s commitment to freedom from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, including the process for reporting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation within Uplift Education, please refer to **Exhibit B** of this Handbook.

## The International Baccalaureate (IB) ®

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All IB authorized schools at Uplift model the key elements of The International Baccalaureate (IB) ®. Uplift schools in the process of IB authorization are working towards modeling their academic programs using the same key elements.



The mission of the IB aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. The aim of the International Baccalaureate (IB) is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. This implies a commitment to educating the whole child in each of our IB programs: Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), and Diploma Programme (DP). Each of the IB programmes fosters a broad range of attributes that reflect the holistic nature of an IB education. These 10 attributes are known as the IB learner profile:

**Inquirers:** They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning, and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

**Knowledgeable:** They explore concepts, ideas, and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

**Thinkers:** They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators:** They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

**Principled:** They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and consequences that accompany them.

**Open-minded:** They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view and are willing to grow from experience.

**Caring:** They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

**Risk-takers:** They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

**Balanced:** They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

**Reflective:** They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

To learn more about the International Baccalaureate, please visit [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)  
(From *What is an IB Education*, 2019)



## Commitment To Excellence

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Uplift believes that for scholars to be fully successful, the school, families, and scholars must work together. The Commitment to Excellence Compact is an accountability statement which puts into words those commitments which reflect our organizational values. These commitments are the underpinnings of our collaboration and responsibility to each other.

Because we value parents as first educators, we explicitly share the expectations of Uplift Schools with families. Each member of our community – families, staff and scholars should uphold and model the commitments identified below to keep our community successful.

*This Compact is made between the parent/guardian, school staff, and the scholar, in the shared pursuit of a rigorous college preparatory education.*

## Family Commitment

### ■ Arrival + Dismissal

- I will drop off and pick my child up from school on time or accept the consequences or penalties.
- I will adhere to policies and procedures for arrival/dismissal including carline and walker expectations (if applicable)

### ■ Daily Attendance

- I will make sure our child arrives at school every day before the start of classes and is there until school is dismissed for the day every instructional day on the school calendar unless my child is sick or there is an emergency.
- I will notify the school if my child is unable to attend school by 9:30am each day. I understand that daily attendance is essential to scholar success.
- Any scholar who is absent for 10 or more days of school during the school year will be considered “promotion in doubt” and may possibly be retained the following year. For scholars who miss more than 10 days, child protective services may be notified.

### ■ Dress Code

- Scholars must be 100% compliant with the school dress code. Parents of scholars who are not in compliance will be contacted by the school.

### ■ Family Involvement

- I will attend all required meetings and events, monitor academic and social-emotional progress of my scholar(s), and respond promptly and respectfully when in contact with school personnel or other parents/families.
- I will support the school and my child by signing up for volunteer work and make a good faith effort to complete the recommended volunteer hours for each parent/guardian.

### ■ Partnership

- I will work proactively with school personnel and teachers to address concerns, needs, and resources necessary to ensure my child’s success.
- I will support the academic expectations and curricular programs of the school including allowing our child to go on school field trips, including out-of-town experiences.
- I will model Uplift’s values and expectations when on school grounds or at an Uplift-sponsored function.
- I will ensure my scholar attends any mandatory summer program, Saturday programs, after-school tutoring, and/or after-school detentions.

- **Safety**
- I will ensure that my child follows the school rules, codes, policies and procedures to protect the safety, interests and rights of all individuals in the school community.
- I will support the school as it administers consequences in response to scholar behavioral choices in accordance with the school policy.
- I will follow all safety guidelines and procedures as directed by school or other official personnel.

## School Staff Commitment

As part of the school faculty, I fully agree with and commit to the following:

- I will exhibit the rigor required to ensure actions are based on educational best practices and will do whatever it takes to meet individual scholar needs.
- I will attend and participate in all staff meetings and professional development to ensure best teaching practices become universal for continuous improvement.
- I will “go the extra mile” by being available to work with scholars and parents by addressing any concerns in an appropriate and professional manner.
- I will respond to communications from scholars and parents within forty-eight (48) hours during the school week.
- I will remain focused on standards and excellence leading to results that support and implement the mission of Uplift and the school.
- I will utilize data to support and measure curricular and academic achievement.
- I will protect the safety and well-being of all Uplift and the school Community members and further organizational goals by enforcing all rules, codes, policies, procedures and values of Uplift and the school.
- I will promote Uplift and the school, its staff, scholars, and community in a positive way always.
- I will contribute to the school by offering my suggestions in constructive ways.
- As a returning member of the Uplift and the school community, I will offer my support and guidance through modeling, chairing events, and helping out where I can, to support new staff and teachers. I will also actively seek leadership opportunities for myself and communicate these with the Academic Director.

## Scholar Commitment

As a Scholar, I fully agree with and commit to the following:

- I will arrive at school every day at the start of classes in order to guarantee a full



instructional day.

- I will strive to become a global citizen by acting as a thinker, risk-taker, and balanced scholar.
- I will approach my learning with creativity, curiosity and enthusiasm.
- I will attend tutoring, detention or any other support services that are needed as required by school officials.
- I will attend each day any mandatory summer program and/or Saturday programs.
- I will work, communicate and behave in accordance with the school’s honor code.
- I will complete all of my homework every night and attend each session of any required or assigned enrichment program.
- I will contact my teachers if I have a question or concern related to my academic or social well-being.
- I will be respectful and cooperative toward my parents and teachers.
- I will be principled in all my actions and accept responsibility for them.
- I will be knowledgeable of and follow all school rules, codes, policies and procedures.
- I will always behave in a caring manner that protects the safety, interests and rights of all individuals in the classroom and school community.
- I will conduct myself in an inquiring manner that is conducive for learning.
- I will be a reflective, open-minded member of my learning community who will show empathy, tolerance and respect.
- I will maintain academic integrity ensuring my work is my own.

**NOTE:** This Commitment to Excellence is reviewed regularly and parent input is sought in the review process. Notice of opportunities for parents to participate in the review will be provided by the Academic Director or the Title I Coordinator.

## Admission and Enrollment

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### Open Enrollment Charter Schools

Uplift operates a network of open-enrollment public charter schools. Charter schools are public schools of choice and part of the public education system in Texas. However, charter schools are not subject to all of the same laws that apply to traditional independent school districts.



One significant difference pertains to the admission process. Charter schools are required to limit the number of scholars admitted based on the maximum enrollment number allowed by the charter. Likewise, the number of scholars that can be admitted to a certain class or grade is dependent on the total number of seats available in that class or grade.

For more information about charter schools generally, view the Texas Education Agency website – charter schools and frequently asked questions. [www.tea.texas.gov](http://www.tea.texas.gov).

## Nondiscrimination in Admissions Policy

Uplift does not discriminate in admissions on the basis of gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic or athletic ability, sexual orientation or gender identity, or the district the child would otherwise attend.

## Exclusion of an Applicant for a Documented History of Misconduct

As authorized by Chapter 12 of the Texas Education Code, Uplift may provide for the exclusion of an applicant who:

1. Has engaged in conduct outlined in Section 37.006 related to placement in a disciplinary alternative education program or a juvenile justice alternative education program;
2. has engaged in conduct outlined in Section 37.007 related to expulsion; or
3. Has been convicted of a criminal offense or has a juvenile court adjudication.

## School Enrollment

Admission and enrollment of scholars is open to any person who resides within the geographic boundaries defined in the charter and who is eligible for admission based on the lawful criteria identified in the charter.

Enrolling in Uplift is a two-step process: (1) application for admission, followed by (2) enrollment.

1. **Application for Admission:** Application for admission is completed using the statewide common admission application, known as the Charter Scholar Admission Application (CSAA). The CSAA is used to gather basic information about the scholar applying for admission, including the scholar's name, date of birth, gender, grade applying for, parent/guardian address of the scholar, and a phone number.

Uplift schools have an established application period during which CSAAs are accepted. Any person who lives within the geographic boundaries of the charter is eligible to apply.



Parents must complete a CSAA and submit it to the school prior to the application deadline in order to participate in the lottery (or to be admitted to the school if there is no lottery). Any applications submitted after the deadline will be placed on the waitlist. The CSAA deadlines will be posted on the school and Uplift websites.

The number of available spaces in each grade will be determined prior to the lottery date. Certain applicants are exempt from the lottery to the extent spaces are available and provided an application is submitted prior to the application deadline.

**For more information, please see the Admissions and Enrollment Policy at Exhibit E.**

Kindergarten scholars must be 5 years of age on September 1<sup>st</sup> in order to enroll. A scholar may be enrolled in the first grade if the child is 6 as of September 1 OR has completed kindergarten in the public schools OR has already been enrolled in first grade.

2. **Enrollment:** After an applicant receives notice of being offered a seat, the enrollment process begins. If the applicant accepts the available position, Uplift may request additional information, such as the scholar's health records, birth certificate, and parent identification. Records pertaining to special education, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and dyslexia, academic records, verification of address, and in some instances, discipline records may also be requested but are not a part of required enrollment documentation.

These records, or any other additional information requested, should only be provided at the request of Uplift. Uplift will not consider any additional information before the enrollment phase. Uplift may deny enrollment to any scholar who fails to provide necessary documentation to the extent allowed by law.

**Applicants with a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or serious discipline problems may be denied admission. If this information is not disclosed in the registration and is later discovered by the school, the applicant's admission will be revoked.**

All applicants are expected to be truthful during the application and enrollment process. Uplift reserves the right to reconsider and/or deny enrollment in Uplift upon knowledge that an applicant falsified information during the application and/or enrollment process.

## Lottery Process

If more applications are received prior to the application deadline than spaces are available, the School will conduct a lottery or random drawing for the available spaces. Scholars who are admitted through the lottery will be notified and asked to submit notice of acceptance by a published deadline. Those scholars who accept admittance will continue the enrollment process. Scholars not admitted through the lottery will be placed on a waiting list. If a space becomes



available after the lottery is conducted, the space will be offered to the scholars on the waiting list in the order listed.

Applications received after the lottery deadlines are added to the waiting list in the order received.

## Currently Enrolled Scholars

Once scholars are admitted to the school, they are not required to participate in the lottery or admission process, but they will be asked to indicate their intent to return to the school by completing the re-enrollment process.

**A scholar who withdraws during the school year must reapply to be eligible for re-admission for the following school year.** Applications will be accepted prior to the application deadline, and the scholar must be selected in the lottery in order to be re-admitted. A scholar who withdraws during the school year and wishes to return during the same school year must reapply to be eligible for readmission. Readmission is dependent upon open seats available.

Note: If a scholar withdraws prior to a pending disciplinary action, additional requirements may apply. See Uplift Code of Character, Conduct, and Support. (Exhibit A)

Uplift reserves the right to require additional documentation for currently enrolled scholars when necessary to ensure the scholar is properly enrolled in Uplift.

## Attendance on the First Day of School

Uplift schools begin the school year earlier than traditional school districts. Scholars are expected to be present on the first day of school. If a scholar is not present, they will not be counted as enrolled in the school and may lose their space in the school. Absences due to emergencies or illness may be considered acceptable reasons for not attending the first day of school. See process outlined in the Admissions and Enrollment Policy (Exhibit E).

Additional Information about the admission process may be obtained from the Family Engagement Coordinator. Information about application deadlines and the enrollment process will also be posted on the school and Uplift websites.

## Transfers

Transfers may be permitted during the school year or for the subsequent school year on a discretionary basis. An Uplift scholar who is transferring to a different Uplift school shall not be required to re-enroll in the school being transferred to as the scholar is already enrolled in the Uplift network of schools.

Reasons for transfer may include, but are not limited to, legally mandated reasons, such as because



the school is identified by the Texas Education Agency as a “persistently dangerous” public elementary school or secondary school, or if a scholar who is a victim of a violent criminal offense while in or on the grounds of a school that the scholar attends requests the transfer.

## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

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Scholars and families are expected to comply with all policies and procedures related arrival and dismissal, whether such policies are contained in this Handbook or communicated by Uplift through other channels.

### Arrival at School

Scholars are not to arrive at school before the designated time for the school doors to be opened. Until such time as the school doors are opened, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure the health and safety of their scholars.

There is no adult supervision provided by Uplift before the opening of school, and Uplift does not assume responsibility for the safety, security, or care of a scholar on campus when school is not open. If at any time school administration is concerned about the health and safety of a scholar, appropriate State officials shall be notified. This may include law enforcement or Child Protective Services (CPS).



- Doors generally open for scholars at **7:30 a.m.**
- If a scholar arrives excessively early, a phone call will be made to the parents to remind them of the school’s procedure regarding arrival to school and our concern for the scholar’s safety.

- If the scholar continues to arrive before the designated time for the school doors to open, the school may impose consequences as determined appropriate by the school administration or notify State officials as addressed above.
- It is the responsibility of parents to ensure scholars do not loiter around local businesses or homes.

## Dismissal

**Scholars are prohibited from remaining on school grounds after dismissal unless they participate in a school sponsored after-school program. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure their scholars are not on school grounds after dismissal.**

**Outside of school-sponsored after-school programming, there is no adult supervision provided by Uplift after the dismissal of school, and Uplift does not assume responsibility for the safety, security, or care of a scholar on campus when school is not open.**

**If at any time school administration is concerned about the health and safety of a scholar, appropriate State officials shall be notified. This may include law enforcement or Child Protective Services (CPS).**

- Parents who pick up their child at dismissal must do so following carpool guidelines distributed by the school at the beginning of the year. These guidelines are implemented for the safety of all scholars.
- A parent who wishes to pick up his/her scholar before dismissal must go to the main office in person to sign the scholar out. (See section below about picking up scholars early.)
- It is the responsibility of parents and legal guardians to ensure scholars do not loiter around local businesses or homes.

## Scholar Walkers

Scholar Walkers are defined as scholars who walk home from school without the use of a vehicle and live within the designated walking distance from campus. Walkers are not scholars who are picked up by a vehicle off campus or outside school gates. If the campus allows for walkers, a signed consent form from a parent must be on file in the campus office in order for a scholar to leave campus by walking. Scholars who leave campus by walking shall be dismissed after car line is completed. Scholars are prohibited from remaining on school grounds after dismissal.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure the health and safety of scholars after dismissal from school and to ensure scholars are aware of any change in plan for their dismissal.

Only scholars in Middle School and High School will be allowed to leave campus by walking alone. Scholars in Primary School may only leave campus by walking so long as an older sibling picks them up first. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure scholars do not loiter around local businesses or homes.

**Outside of school sponsored after-school programming there is no adult supervision provided by Uplift after the dismissal of school. If at any time school administration is concerned about the health and safety of a scholar, appropriate State officials shall be notified. This may include law enforcement or Child Protective Services (CPS).**

## After School Procedures

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that their scholar is not on school grounds after dismissal unless participating in a school-sponsored activity. Parents must clearly communicate dismissal plans to their scholar, including how they will be picked up (e.g., car pick-up, walking, or after-school program participation). Any changes to a scholar's regular dismissal routine must also be communicated in advance.

If a scholar is being picked up at school by a parent, the scholar is responsible for going immediately to the parent's car when it arrives. For safety reasons, scholars may not arrange to be picked up by a vehicle outside of the designated dismissal area or beyond the school gates. All vehicle pickups must occur through the school's official car line.

**Outside of school-sponsored after-school programming, there is no adult supervision provided by Uplift after the dismissal of school.**

**If at any time school administration is concerned about the health and safety of a scholar, appropriate State officials shall be notified. This may include law enforcement or Child Protective Services (CPS).**

## After-School Activities – Scholar Pick-Up

Scholars must be picked up immediately at the end of an after-school activity (tutorials, sports, practice, etc.).

If a scholar is in a supervised after-school activity, the teacher/sponsor will wait with the scholars in front of the school or gymnasium for 15 minutes after that activity ends, to allow for pick-up. A parent consent form must be on file with the school if a scholar is to leave the campus by walking (please see above).

**After the 15-minute period, no adult supervision will be provided by Uplift. If at any time school administration is concerned about the health and safety of a scholar, appropriate State officials shall be notified. This may include law enforcement or Child Protective Services (CPS).**

## Early Pick-Up of Scholars

For early pick-up, parents must go to the front office/attendance office and sign their child out of school. If there is an emergency or special circumstance, please call the office ahead of time to make arrangements.

**Scholars will not be released to any non-parent who is not listed in the scholar's file as a person authorized to pick up the child.** Only after the parent or other authorized person signs the child out will the child be released to the parent or other authorized person.

Beginning 30 minutes prior to the start of the dismissal process and through the end of the dismissal process, scholars will not be allowed to leave early or sign out through the front office and the parent must follow the established dismissal procedures for the safety of all scholars.

## Designation of Parent/Guardian Pick-Up

As part of the enrollment process, the scholar's parent / guardian must designate the persons who are authorized to pick up the scholar from school.

Only a parent or those additional authorized persons will be allowed to pick up the scholar. If it is necessary for someone other than the designated person to pick up the child, the parent must notify the school in writing and specifically identify the person who will be picking up their child. School personnel will require proper identification of the person before releasing the child.

## Family Disputes or Custody Issues

The school will assume both parents have equal right of access to their child, including the right to pick up the child from school, unless the school has been provided with a court order which specifically limits the access of the parent to his or her child at the school.

A divorce decree identifying custody or visitation schedules is not sufficient to prohibit access from a parent unless the decree specifically so provides.

Parents involved in divorce or custody proceedings should make every effort to manage these issues without disruption to the scholar or school environment. Parents who fail to comply with this request may be removed from the school campus by police.

**The school will not be involved in decisions relating to custody or family disputes, including but not limited to, decisions relating to dropping off or picking up a child from school. It is the responsibility of parents, and not the school or Uplift Education, to ensure the correct parent is picking up the child from school. Uplift Education is not a police agency and does not have authority to enforce a court order or any other custody document, and is, therefore, not responsible for enforcing a custody order. If a parent is concerned about whether a custody**

**order is being adhered to, he or she is directed to contact law enforcement or a court of law.**

Uplift reserves the right to request documentation proving custody/guardianship as needed to ensure compliance with state and federal law.

## Closed Campus - Leaving Campus During School Hours

The school operates on the closed campus concept. Scholars are not allowed to leave campus during the school day, including during meal periods, without first obtaining permission from the Academic Director.

Scholars may not leave the campus without prior permission from parents and the Academic Director. Parent approval must be documented by either written note or by a school documented phone call.

If a scholar is authorized to leave early, the scholar must sign out in the main office or with the attendance clerk before leaving campus.

## Attendance Requirements

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At Uplift, we believe that attending school every day is critical. In order to set clear expectations for scholars and signal that instruction time is paramount, we expect all scholars to be present each and every day of school, beginning the first day of school. Please see the Minimum Attendance Requirement below.

- If an absence is unavoidable, a parent should **email** the campus designated attendance email before 9:30 a.m. on the date of the absence with the reason for the scholar's absence. Teachers are not responsible for communicating this information to the office.
- All absences will be verified by the school staff and if the school has not been notified of the absence, the absence will be recorded as “unexcused.”
- If the parent does not have access to email, it is important that the parent turns in a note or calls in and speaks directly to the campus attendance specialist. If the parent cannot reach the attendance specialist, a message may be left on the attendance specialist’s school voice mail. However, it is the parent’s responsibility to verify the message was received.

When the scholar returns to school, the scholar must provide the main office or attendance specialist with a note signed by a parent, explaining the reason for the absence. If a note is not provided within three school days of the scholar’s return, the absence will be marked “unexcused.” (Example: If a scholar is absent on Monday and returns to school on Tuesday, then

Tuesday would be considered day one; Wednesday, day two; and Thursday, day three.)

## Minimum Attendance Required

Unless otherwise stated in this policy or through administrative regulation, scholars in grades Pre-K through 12 must attend at least **90% of the days a class is offered** in order to receive credit or a final grade for that class, regardless of whether the scholar's absences are excused or unexcused

**A scholar who is in attendance less than 90 percent of the days a class is offered may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the scholar files a request and the school's Academic Director and/or designee(s) determines there are extenuating circumstances that warrant issuance of credit or a final grade to the scholar for the class.**

**In order to receive credit or a final grade for the class, the Academic Director and/or designee(s) may require the scholar to complete an Academic Plan that provides for the scholar to meet the instructional requirements of the class.**

**If a scholar is denied credit or a final grade for a class by the school's Academic Director and/or designee(s), the scholar may appeal the decision through the Parent Grievance Policy.**

**For questions regarding the Minimum Attendance Requirement, please contact your Academic Director.**

## Excused Absences

The following situations are excused absences if the required documentation is provided:

- **Personal Illness:** A note signed by a parent must be given to the main office when the scholar returns to school. If the personal illness exceeds three consecutive days, a statement from a physician or health clinic verifying the illness or other condition causing the scholar's extended absence from school is required.

If a scholar has excessive absences due to personal illness, the Academic Director, at the Academic Director's discretion, may require a physician's or clinic's statement of illness after a single day's absence to excuse the absence.

- **Medical appointments:** An appointment with a healthcare professional is excused if the scholar provides documentation of the visit. Parents are encouraged to schedule appointments outside school hours if possible or after the second period when attendance is taken. If unable to schedule a medical appointment outside of school hours, parents are encouraged to bring the scholar for the portion of the day they are not in the doctor's office.

- **Observance of religious holidays:** Scholars may be excused for the purpose of observing religious holy days. If it is necessary to travel for the purposes of observing the holiday, only one day of travel to and one day for travel from the site where the scholar will observe the religious holy day is excused. The Academic Director may require a letter from the religious leader documenting the need for travel or the basis of the religious holiday if the holiday is not an easily recognized or common religious holiday. Travel to attend a baptism or a wedding, for example, is not an excused absence under this category.
- **Extracurricular activities:** Participation in a school-approved and supervised extracurricular activity is excused.
- **College trips:** Junior and senior scholars may be excused for up to two days each year (a total of 4) to visit an accredited college or institution of higher education for the purpose of determining the scholar’s interest in attending the college or institution. The scholar must provide documentation of the visit when returning to school.
- **Attendance at required court appearances:** If a scholar is required to appear at court – including truancy court – the absence may be excused. A copy of the subpoena or court hearing notice requiring the scholar to appear should be presented upon return to the school.
- **Naturalization ceremonies:** Appearance at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the scholar’s application for U.S. citizenship or taking part in a U.S. naturalization oath ceremony is excused if documentation of the appearance is provided.
- **Death or serious illness in immediate family:** Attendance at a funeral for an immediate family member (parents, siblings, and grandparents) may be excused for up to three days if travel is required, unless a longer period is approved by the Academic Director. An absence due to the serious illness of immediate family members (as defined above) may be excused for up to three days (including travel). A note from the parent is required upon return.
- **Services as an Election Clerk:** Scholar must be at least 16 years of age. Absences of up to two days in a school year will also be considered an exemption for a scholar serving as an early voting clerk, provided the scholar notifies his or her teachers and receives approval from the principal prior to the absence.
- **Conservatorship of DFPS:** In the conservatorship (custody) of the state who need to attend: An activity required under a court-ordered service plan; or Any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the scholar’s participation in the activity outside of school hours. Travel days for which the scholar is considered in attendance are limited to not more than one day for travel to and one day for travel from the site where the scholar is participating in the activity, appointment, or visitation.

- **Serious or life-threatening illness:** Scholar is absent as the result of a serious or life-threatening illness or related treatment that makes the scholar’s attendance infeasible. Documentation from a health care professional licensed, certified, or registered to practice in Texas must be provided that specifies the scholar’s illness and the anticipated period of the scholar’s absence relating to the illness or related treatment.
- **Visiting a driver’s license office:** Scholar is 15 years old or older and misses school for the purpose of visiting a driver’s license office to obtain a driver’s license or learner permit.
- **Pursuing enlistment:** Scholar is 17 years of age or older and pursuing enlistment in a branch of the US uniformed services or the Texas Army National Guard and not to exceed four days per year.
- **Military deployment of parent:** Absence for the purpose of a scholar visiting with his or her parent prior to the parent’s leave or deployment, not to exceed three days per year, may be excused unless a longer period is approved by the Academic Director. A note from the parent is required upon return.
- **Other absences:** Notwithstanding the above, other absences may be excused at the discretion of Uplift Education. Uplift Education’s decision on whether to excuse an absence is final.

## Truancy/Non-Compliance with Attendance Law

A scholar is required to attend school under the law (TEC §25.085). A scholar who has unexcused absence(s) is considered truant and will be subject to disciplinary action and/or truancy proceedings.

Truancy action may be brought for failure to comply with the compulsory attendance law if a scholar is absent without excuse on ten or more days or parts of days within a six-month period or three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period.

Please check with the attendance coordinator at the school if you have any questions about these provisions.

## Withdrawal From School

A scholar under the age of 18 may be withdrawn from school only by a parent. The school requests notice from a parent at least three days in advance so that records and documents may be prepared. Parents may be asked to meet with an administrator before proceeding with the withdrawal process.

It is critical that Parents notify the Uplift school with the name of the school to which the scholar is



transferring so that records can be sent promptly.

## Communication With Parents

Communication with parents is especially important for a successful school experience. The school may use a variety of methods of communication, such as those listed below.

Do not hesitate to reach out to the teacher or Academic Director if you have any questions or concerns about your child or communication with or from the school. The following chart contains examples of common communication methods:

Method of Communication	Frequency	Purpose
<b>Weekly Folder</b>	Weekly	Send home school-wide events and documents (i.e., parent-forms, calendar of events, lunch menu, fundraisers, progress reports, etc.)
<b>Written Communication</b>	As Needed	Communicates a scholar's level of success and progress in their learning and behavior.
<b>ParentSquare</b>	Consistently	Campus employees will exclusively use this platform to communicate with families via app, email, voice note, or direct messages.
<b>Schoology</b>	As needed	Schoology is the Learning Management System that our teachers use to house classroom materials, grades, and assignments for scholars. Families can access their scholars' Schoology courses.
<b>PowerSchool</b>	As requested or Accessed	Scholar grade and attendance information can be accessed through PowerSchool Public Portal. Parents can also sign up for daily, weekly, or monthly emails with grade and attendance reports.
<b>SchoolMint</b>	During reenrollment and enrollment season	An online reenrollment and enrollment and communication platform used to make the enrollment process for parents easier and faster. SchoolMint offers different options, so parents can apply and register with a computer or mobile device.

## Academic Expectations and Requirements

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### Grade Placement and Retention

Uplift schools provide a rigorous academic program that is designed to prepare all scholars for success in college. As such, the graduation requirements and academic standards are higher than traditional public-school programs.

Uplift determines grade placement and/or retention based on guidelines that ensure a scholar is prepared for the grade in which they are enrolled. Placement decisions in primary and middle school are determined by several factors, including performance on standardized tests, internal assessments, emotional maturity and readiness for advancement, and school attendance, among others.

The recommendation for placement or retention is made by the school administration in consultation with the Managing Director for the school. Please contact the Academic Director if you have any questions or concerns about your child's performance or placement.

For high school scholars, the Uplift Education Credit Policy describes the credits required to graduate as well as credits necessary for grade placement, and procedures for credit recovery and transfer credits. Please contact the academic counselor if you have questions or concerns about this policy. (Policy is included in Exhibit F.)

Pursuant to Texas Education Code, §28.02124, Parental Option for Scholar Retention, if a parent or guardian would like for their child to retake a grade level or course, the parent or guardian must contact the Academic Director in writing. The Academic Director will then communicate with the parent or guardian about retention and the process therein.

Please note: The provisions of the law that permit parents to elect for scholars to be retained in the grade level or repeat a course in grades 4 and above expired on September 1, 2022. The provisions of the legislation that permit parents to elect scholars enrolled in prekindergarten through grade 3 to be retained at the grade level has no expiration date.

## Academic Honor Code

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### Uplift Education Honor Code

***“To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the school family, I pledge, on my Honor, not to lie, cheat, or steal in either my academic or personal life, or tolerate those who do.”***

Every scholar is expected to uphold the highest standards of honor with regard to academics, activities, and other related pursuits.

By means of the Honor Code, scholars practice responsible leadership, accept personal responsibility, and develop strong characters to create an atmosphere free from suspicion. Violation of the Honor Code includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and forgery, which are considered severe discipline problems and are subject to disciplinary action within the by-laws of the Honor Code.

We believe that scholars can and must take responsibility for establishing and maintaining standards for their own behavior. At its core, the Honor Code is based on mutual respect and trust. It serves as a written model for what is expected from scholars. It also serves as a pledge to uphold the school’s values while maintaining college preparation as the number one priority.

Taking responsibility for one’s actions is vital to the maturity of each individual. Trust among all scholars in the school builds confidence in the overall school community and enables each scholar to be grounded in the leadership core values of INTEGRITY, INQUIRY, CHOICES, and REFLECTION which guide the scholar’s every decision.

Teachers may require scholars to write the full honor code on major assignments. Actions or attempted actions that run counter to these perceptions are violations to the honor code.

- A scholar’s word is expected to be the complete truth; therefore, lying and forgery are violations of the honor code.
- A scholar’s work is expected to be his/her own, unless properly credited; therefore, plagiarism and cheating are violations of the honor code.
- The property of others is to be respected; therefore, stealing – no matter how minor – is a violation of the honor code.

In situations that seem unclear, it is each scholar’s responsibility to check with the teacher or Academic Director regarding the honor code. Ignorance of the honor code will not be an excuse for a violation.

Scholars who witness an honor code violation are required to report the action to the teacher who will notify the Academic Director. Witnessing an honor code violation and reporting it constitutes honorable behavior and is an expectation for all scholars.

Scholars may opt to report a violation through an anonymous referral. Working together, we can ALL create a community of learners that value hard work, creativity, and commitment to college success.

It is crucial that every member of the school community – scholars, parents, staff, and trustees – understands the importance of the school Honor Code and strives to maintain its integrity.

## Academic Integrity

Scholars are expected to act in a responsible manner when submitting assignments, tests, quizzes, essays, and other work resulting from their independent academic efforts. Forms of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism and cheating, which are further defined below:

**Plagiarism** includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Copying word for word and turning in as your own work information from books, magazines, essays, the Internet, etc.
- Rewording or rewriting text and information from documents not originally written by you and turning it in as your own work without proper citation. This includes the inappropriate use of artificial intelligence (AI) technology such as ChatGPT, which should be appropriately cited.
- Paraphrasing with minimal word changes (citing the source or not).
- Borrowing ideas and patterns of thought without proper citation.
- Printing an essay from the Internet and turning it in as your own work.
- Failing to give credit to used sources in all work submitted.

**Cheating** is dishonesty for one's own gain. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Using a "cheat sheet" or other unauthorized notes during a test or quiz.
- Looking at someone else's paper for an answer on a test or quiz and changing an answer.
- Having someone else do all or part of your homework or assignment for you.
- Failing to mark an answer wrong when self-grading.
- Telling others or asking others about the content of an exam or quiz.
- Giving a scholar or using an old test without teacher permission.
- Looking at an exam prior to taking it without teacher permission.
- Copying someone else's homework or other assignments.
- Splitting an assignment into parts and doing a section, sharing it with others and copying the rest from someone without teacher permission.

- Collaborating on any assignment unless the teacher has specifically designated it as a collaborative assignment.
- Using old assignments written by you or someone else instead of creating new work.
- Using an online translator or other translation in place of your own.

## Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

**If a scholar is suspected of plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty, the following procedure will be followed:**

- The teacher will confiscate the scholar’s exam, test, quiz, or assignment.
- The paper, exam, test, quiz, or assignment will be submitted to an administrator for consideration.
- The scholar will be required to meet with the teacher and the Academic Director for review of the scholar’s work and, if found in violation of this policy and Uplift Code of Character, Conduct, and Support receive appropriate consequences in line with the severity of the offense. These may include:
  - Grade reduction on plagiarized work;
  - Re-do of plagiarized work;
  - Counseling and attendance at Academic Integrity Roundtable with the campus administration;
  - Completion of community service hours;
  - Enrollment in academic probation;
  - Repeated instances of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may lead to suspension or expulsion in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct – Exhibit A.

**(See also Exhibit G – Uplift Grading Philosophy and Practices for Grades 6-12).**

## Physical Education Participation Requirements

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Scholars are required to earn 1 credit in Physical Education before graduation. A scholar may be excused from activity due to health reasons for a maximum of three days with a note from a parent given to the PE teacher. If it is necessary to be excused for a period longer than three days, a doctor’s note must be provided to the school.

The scholar is still responsible for attending class and learning the curriculum even if physical restrictions prevent the scholar from actively participating in the program. All scholars are expected to wear the appropriate uniform in order to participate in physical education activities.

## Off-Campus P.E.

Although we support many scholars who participate in a variety of athletic activities outside the school curriculum, approval for off-campus Physical Education will be at the school administration's discretion. Scholars interested in this option should contact the Academic Director.

## Athletics — Credit

Scholars who participate on an athletic team may receive Physical Education credit in lieu of PE class. Contact the athletic coordinator for information about this option. (In Scholar Athletic code)



## Athletic and Extracurricular Activities

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### Philosophy Statement

We believe that physical activity is an integral component of a scholar's intellectual and emotional development. The athletic program of the school is designed to complement and foster our academic goals. We offer every scholar the opportunity to participate in a variety of programs provided they are able to maintain a level of academic performance consistent with our school mission. Our goal is the development of our scholars who are able to meet and balance the demands of our rigorous curriculum as well as the challenges of our sports programs.

## Eligibility and Commitment Requirements

UIL forms required to participate in athletics can be found and submitted at:

<https://uplifteducation.rankonesport.com>

All scholars must have a physical, medical history, and all electronic forms completed prior to participating in an athletic tryout, practice, or event.

## Physicals

Any scholar that wishes to participate on an athletic team must have completed a physical with a physician, doctor, or clinic within the calendar year. Each physical remains valid for one calendar year from the date it was administered. The scholar may not practice, tryout, or compete in any capacity until a physical is completed for the scholar each year.

## Scholar-Athlete Academic Requirements

To be eligible to participate in competitions or performances for extracurricular activities, a scholar must have no grade below a 70 in any class at a nine-week marking period.

**Exception:** The first-grade check for eligibility will be at the end of the 6-week period at the beginning of each year. (Required by UIL). Grades in AP/IB/Honors courses will be included. Quality points will not be factored into the grade to determine eligibility. Scholars enrolled in AP/IB courses may have one grade per scholar per semester exempted from the “no grade below 70” rule. The grade may not be below 60 and must be in an AP/IB course. Grades in regular courses are not exempt.

The scholar must attend mandatory tutorials in the failed course until the grade is raised to passing. Only one grade per scholar, per semester may be exempted. Failure to attend all tutorials will result in loss of the exemption.

- After the first six-week report period, grades for eligibility will be taken every nine weeks.
- A scholar failing at any grading report period will lose eligibility to compete.
- Eligibility may be regained at any three-week progress period if the progress report in the failed class or classes indicates a passing grade. Three-week progress reports will not be used to withdraw a scholar’s eligibility, only to restore it. A scholar may not regain eligibility before a three-week progress report period.
- The calendar will note on which day the books close for a given marking period. From that date each scholar has a seven-calendar day grading period to compete or perform before any restriction to participation occurs. Any grace days taken at the beginning of the period of ineligibility will be added to the end of the period. The ineligibility period is in effect for

fifteen consecutive school days.

For additional information on eligibility, please see your campus Athletic Coordinator.

## Scholar Athletic Code

The opportunity to participate in the athletic program is a privilege available to all scholars. Because of the public nature of athletic programs sponsored by the district, scholars choosing to participate are expected to conduct themselves as leaders at all times, during their season of participation and between consecutive seasons in a manner that will reflect the high standards and ideals of Uplift and its community.

These high personal standards for conduct promote maximum achievement, safe performances, commitment to excellence in health and conditioning, and fulfill responsibilities as scholar leaders by setting a positive example for other scholars. Scholars who fail to maintain passing grades or receive an office referral may not be allowed to participate in events and practices and will be at the school administration's discretion.

Sportsmanship is not only expected but also mandated. Good sportsmanship eliminates problems and makes for a rewarding experience for those who witness and participate in athletic events. Scholars must abide by the following:

- Always maintain self-control.
- Show respect for opponents and officials.
- Play and work hard, commit yourself to working hard. Accept it. You develop good habits in practice. Make it a habit. Do not settle for being average.
- Play smart, understand the game. Think quickly on your feet. Make good decisions. Outsmart the opponent. Have poise and maintain composure under pressure.
- Play for the TEAM first, put the team before yourself. Support team members in practice and in competitions. Give to other people. Selfish teams self-destruct. Understand the fact that you need each other to be successful.
- Play with a winning attitude, Believe in yourself. You achieve what you believe. Do not let the fear of failures hold you back. Play with confidence. Avoid dwelling on mistakes. Talk positively.
- Parents who bring younger children to athletic events must ensure they sit or stand with their parents. Children should not be running around the gymnasium, hallway, or athletic field.

Scholars must meet the standards for interscholastic eligibility as outlined by the University Interscholastic League (UIL). Copies of these rules and regulations may be obtained from the school athletic coordinator upon request.

The expectations for being a participant in a school's athletic program, including specific eligibility requirements, training rules and team rules will be communicated to team members at the beginning of the season of participation. All program expectations and team rules will be in writing.

Any athlete in a District-sponsored athletic activity who willfully performs any act that interferes with or is detrimental to the orderly operation of Uplift's athletic programs shall be subject to discipline.

As participants in athletic programs, scholars are faced with choices. If a scholar's choices interfere, impede, hinder their personal or group/team performance or render the individual unfit to serve as a representative(s) of Uplift's schools, they forfeit the privilege to participate.

Misconduct by participants in the athletic program at any time, on or off campus, school related and/or non-school activities during the season of participation and between consecutive seasons of participation constitutes cause for discipline including denial of participation in and/or removal from the athletic program.

Scholars who have had their UIL eligibility suspended at a previous non-Uplift school may be ineligible to participate in UIL activities until their eligibility has been reestablished in accordance with the Texas Education Code.

## Other Qualifications

A scholar who is ineligible to compete or perform in extracurricular activities may continue to practice or rehearse with the team or troupe during the period of ineligibility. All ineligible scholars may be required to attend tutorials in failed classes and must be excused from rehearsal/practice without penalty.

A scholar who fails a course in the 4th Quarter yet passes the course for the year will be ineligible for competition or performance until the sixth week marking period of the next academic year. A scholar who fails a course for the year but makes up and passes the course in the summer will be eligible to compete and perform the next school year.

In the time period from 12:01 a.m. Monday through 4:00 p.m. on Friday, no team or other activity may practice, rehearse, or meet for more than 8 hours. This time limitation is exclusive of games or performances or other competition events. The Academic Director is responsible for ensuring that grades of scholars in extracurricular activities are monitored carefully and that scholars, coaches, and advisors are held accountable. In disputed cases, the decision of the Academic Director will be final.

## Athletic Participation Fee

Fees for participation in athletics vary by the sport or activity on each campus. Please contact the athletic coordinator on your campus for information on these fees.

District contact email: [Athletics@uplifteducation.org](mailto:Athletics@uplifteducation.org)

## Clubs and Organizations

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Participation in clubs and organizations is a privilege that allows scholars the opportunity to develop leadership skills, special talents, and new interests. Because participation is a privilege, scholars must meet all the requirements set forth in this Handbook. **Participation in all clubs and organizations require Parental consent.**

The school recognizes that the learning process is not confined to the classroom and that school life and social interchange are especially important aspects of the educational process. We endeavor to provide a well-balanced extracurricular program. To supplement the basic educational programs and to provide opportunities for scholars to learn in various school settings, a comprehensive extracurricular activity program is available.

Each school activity is organized to accomplish one or more of the following major goals:

- School service: perform various activities to enhance the school's academic function.
- Community service: support a community activity in line with the functions of the scholar group.
- Fundraising activities: raise money to carry out defined activities.
- Social activities: provide an opportunity for scholars to socialize through group activities.

Each extracurricular activity should complete at least one activity corresponding to the above stated goals each year. A list of available extracurricular activities will be provided at the beginning of the school year.

## Student Council

The scholar body elects the Scholar Council responsible for organizing social activities on behalf of the scholars and for determining scholars' needs and opinions on matters affecting them. The Scholar Council meets regularly and works closely with the scholar body and administration to build a stronger school community.

## Beyond the Classroom

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### Community Service

Scholars are expected to participate in age-appropriate community service work for grades 6 – 10. Scholars in grades 6-10 are provided opportunities to demonstrate their commitment to service to the community throughout their learning. Scholars in grades 11-12 are expected to either complete the program requirements for their IB Diploma Programme Community, Action, and Service (CAS) project, or 100 hours to meet the Uplift graduation requirement.

### Field Trips

Scheduled field trips are an important part of the school curriculum. Parents will be notified in writing when field trips are planned. Permission/Release forms must be signed by the parent and presented to the field trip organizer before a scholar is permitted to participate in a field trip activity.

### College Trips

Uplift grants scholars the unique opportunity to take part in college trips which allows scholars the opportunity to visit colleges within Texas and outside of Texas. In order to attend, scholars must meet academic and behavioral expectations of the school. (See the RTCC Dean of College Prep on campus for the requirements.)

## Homework and Testing Guidelines

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### Homework — Secondary

Diligent and consistent study is vital to academic success and college preparation at school. Homework is a critical extension and review of learning. Because Uplift schools are preparing scholars for college, the courses often mirror the content, rigor, and expectations of the coursework required of scholars in honors, advanced placement, and or IB classes; therefore, scholars should expect more preparation time. Experience has shown that this amount of homework is necessary for success in a college preparatory school. Even when a formal assignment is not given, a review of the material covered that day is still required. Scholars who fail to complete homework assignments may be required to attend study hall after regular school hours or at the teacher’s discretion.

### Homework — Primary

Homework in primary school is also important, and any assignment is to reinforce and practice

classroom instruction. Parents should review homework to ensure that the child has completed the homework. In addition to homework, scholars should spend 20 minutes reading for enrichment every evening.

## Late Work, Reassessments, and Grading

Uplift's Grading Policy for Grades 6-12, (see Exhibit G), sets out Uplift's expectations for grading, academic dishonesty, and reassessments. You can expect these guidelines to be discussed with your scholar and with you. If you have questions about these expectations, please review this policy or visit the Academic Director.

## STAAR Testing and Remediation

Uplift is committed to scholar success on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) and takes seriously its obligation to provide scholars with the support and assistance they need to succeed.

All scholars enrolled in STAAR tested grade levels (3 – 8) and STAAR EOC (End-of-course) tested subjects (Algebra 1, English 1, Biology, English 2, and US History) will be assessed quarterly to ensure that they are making appropriate progress through the required STAAR and STAAR EOC curriculum.

Scholars who are not making satisfactory progress will receive remedial help. Scholars who failed a STAAR or STAAR EOC test or refused to take the test in the previous year are required to attend academic support classes or tutorials when the school offers them in areas where the standard was not met. In some cases, this may be an ongoing, regularly scheduled class or may occur before/after school in small group tutoring sessions. In others, it may be an intense tutorial before June and December for EOC-tested courses.

## College Testing

**PSAT:** Typically, scholars in grade 11 will take the PSAT during the school day in October and must sign up with the College Counselor. The PSAT tests have a fee, but fee waiver forms are also available for qualifying scholars for this test.

**ACT and SAT:** All scholars in grade 11 will take an official ACT during the school day, free of charge. Scholars may work with their RTCC counselor to register for additional ACT or SAT exams during the 11th and 12th grades. Eligible scholars may receive fee waivers to cover the costs of additional exams.

**TSIA:** The TSI Assessment (TSIA) results from the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) mandated by the Texas State Legislature are designed to guide Texas public institutions of higher education in helping them determine whether scholars are ready for entry-level college coursework in English



Language Arts Reading and mathematics. TSIA scores and exemptions are valid for five years from the date an assessment was taken, documenting that benchmarks were met.

## Scholars With Exceptionalities or Special Circumstances

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### Service Assistance/Animal Use by Scholars

A parent of a scholar or adult scholar who uses a service/assistance animal because of the scholar's disability must submit a request in writing to the Academic Director before bringing the service/assistance animal on campus. Written requests will be reviewed and responded to in writing within ten school days.

Note: All service animals must meet the Service Animal Standards as outlined in the Section 504 Operating Guidelines and/or Special Education Policies and Procedures.

### Aiding Scholars Who Have Learning Difficulties or Who Need Special Education or Section 504 Services

For those scholars who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, Uplift must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all scholars, 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 districts and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling scholars.

If a scholar is experiencing learning difficulties, his or her parent may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links scholars to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a Special Education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the scholar needs specific aids, accommodations or services. A parent may request an evaluation for Special Education or Section 504 services at any time.

### Special Education Referrals

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for Special Education services to the Director of Special Education services or an administrative employee of Uplift, Uplift must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, Uplift must give the parent prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the scholar, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If Uplift agrees to evaluate the scholar, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Please note that a request for a Special Education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Uplift must still comply with all prior federal notices and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require Uplift to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If Uplift decides to evaluate the scholar, it must complete the scholar's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent to evaluate the scholar. However, if the scholar is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the scholar is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If Uplift receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the scholar is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30th due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, Uplift shall give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from Uplift in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

### **Contact Person for MTSS**

The designated person to contact regarding options for a scholar experiencing learning difficulties and the district or charter school's multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) is:

Contact Person: Kendra West Battles  
Phone Number: (469) 621-8500  
Email Address: [kwest@uplifteducation.org](mailto:kwest@uplifteducation.org)

**Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:** The designated person to contact regarding options for a scholar experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

Contact Person: Chelsie Lyday  
Phone Number: (469) 621-8500  
Email Address: [clyday@uplifteducation.org](mailto:clyday@uplifteducation.org)

**Section 504 Referrals:** Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of scholars in the district's or charter school's Section 504



program. Districts and charter schools must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

**Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals:** The designated person to contact regarding options for a scholar experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is:

Contact Person: Melissa Short, Director of Special Services

Phone Number: (469) 621-8500

Email Address: [mshort@uplifteducation.org](mailto:mshort@uplifteducation.org)

**Additional Information:** The following websites provide information and resources for scholars with disabilities and their families.

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [SpedTEX- Special Education Information Center](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)
- [Texas SpEd Support](#)

## Discipline

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Uplift schools create safe and supportive learning environments for all scholars. Refer to the Uplift Code of Character, Conduct, and Support (Exhibit A) to learn about all Uplift Education disciplinary processes.

[Code of Character, Conduct, and Support](#)

## Uniform and Dress Code

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All scholars must come to school in uniform every day (unless denoted by their campus for a special event). If a scholar arrives at school out of uniform, parents/guardians are notified and asked to bring in a uniform. If the school has extra uniforms on hand, staff may have the child change himself/herself into the borrowed clothing. If Uplift lends clothing, families are responsible for washing and returning the items within three business days.

Uniforms also provide a layer of security, making it more feasible to spot someone who should not



be on campus. Each scholar is responsible for his or her compliance with the dress and uniform code during school hours. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child complies with the dress code before their child comes to school. The specific dress and uniform requirements for the school will be provided to scholars and families prior to the start of the school year, and the Dress Code Policy is included in Exhibit I in this Handbook.

Campus leaders and families are responsible for ensuring dress code compliance and integrity in partnership. Repeated violation of the dress code will require a parent/guardian conference and possible consequences.



**Uplift adheres to a strict uniform policy for several reasons:**

- **Uniforms unite students as a community.** The consistent Uplift uniform serves as a powerful visual statement of community. When scholars are dressed in their uniforms, they make a commitment to model the school’s values.
- **Uniforms reduce distractions and clothing competition.** Often scholars spend more time discussing and evaluating what others are wearing or not wearing, than they spend focusing on learning. Wearing uniforms reduces this distraction.
- **Uniforms promote equality.** Whether families have high income or low income, the scholars come to school looking the same way. By wearing a uniform, no one is diminished for what he/she wears, and scholars are not able to compare what they do or do not have.
- **Uniforms look professional.** Scholars look neat when they arrive at school in accordance

with the dress code. Professional attire reinforces the idea that scholars come to school “dressed for work” and prepared to focus and learn. Studies have shown that professional, neat attire and high achievement are correlated.

## Financial Assistance

Any parent who needs financial assistance to purchase school uniforms should contact the Community Engagement and Enrollment Coordinator or Academic Director.

## Parent and Legal Information Notices

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### Scholar Records Access and Privacy and Annual FERPA Notice

**FERPA:** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and “eligible scholars,” defined as scholars over 18 years of age, certain rights with respect to the scholar’s educational records. These rights include the following:

- The right to inspect and review the scholar’s education records;
- The right to seek amendment of the scholar’s educational records that the parent or eligible scholar believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the scholar’s privacy rights;
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the scholar’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA and 34 C.F.R. 99.31 authorizes disclosure without consent;
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education under 34 C.F.R. 99.63 and 99.64 concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA and 34 C.F.R. part 99. To file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education a parent or eligible scholar should contact the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington D.C. 20202-5920.

**Custodian of Records:** A school’s Academic Director is the custodian of all records for currently enrolled scholars and former scholars for two years following their graduation or from the date of their withdrawal if the scholar has withdrawn. The Academic Director may designate a records custodian at the campus level for maintaining the records. The Superintendent (or designee) is the custodian of records for all subsequent years. The Uplift website, made available to all scholars and parents, shall contain a list of the addresses of all Uplift schools, as well as the business address for the Superintendent.

**Types of Education Records:** The records custodian shall be responsible for the education records of Uplift. These records may include:



- Admissions data, personal and family data, including certification of date of birth;
- Standardized test data, including intelligence, aptitude, interest, personality, and social adjustment ratings.
- All achievement records, as determined by tests, recorded grades, and teacher evaluations.
- All documentation regarding a scholar’s testing history and any accelerated instruction he or she has received, including any documentation of discussion or action by a grade placement or accelerated learning committee convened for the scholar.
- Health services record, including:
  - The results of any tuberculin tests required by Uplift.
  - The findings of screening or health appraisal programs Uplift conducts or provides.
  - Immunization records.
- Attendance records.
  - Scholar questionnaires.
  - Records of teacher, counselor, or administrative conferences with the scholar or pertaining to the scholar.
  - Verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns.
  - Copies of correspondence with parents and others concerned with the scholar.
  - Records transferred from other local education agencies in which the scholar was enrolled.
  - Records pertaining to participation in extracurricular activities.
  - Information relating to scholar participation in special programs.
  - Records of fees assessed and paid.
  - Records pertaining to scholar and parent complaints.
  - Other records that may contribute to an understanding of the scholar.

**Access by Parents:** Uplift shall make a scholar’s records available to the scholar’s parents, or eligible scholar, as permitted by law. The records custodian or designee shall use reasonable procedures to verify the requestor’s identity before disclosing scholar records containing personally identifiable information.

Records may be reviewed in person during regular school hours without charge upon written request to the records custodian. For in-person viewing, the records custodian or designee shall be available to explain the record and to answer questions. The confidential nature of the scholar’s records shall be maintained at all times, and records to be viewed shall be restricted to use only in a reasonably restricted area.

Copies of records are available at a per copy cost, payable in advance, pursuant to law. Copies of records must be requested in writing. Parents or eligible scholars may be denied copies if they fail to follow proper procedures or pay the copying charge. If the scholar qualifies for free or reduced-

price lunches and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon the written request of a parent, one copy of the record shall be provided at no charge. Records shall be provided within a reasonable time as allowed by law.

A parent may continue to have access to his or her scholar's records under specific circumstances after the scholar has attained 18 years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education.

**Access by School Officials:** A school official shall be allowed access to scholar records *if he or she has a legitimate educational interest in the records:*

For the purposes of this policy, "school officials" shall include:

- 1) An employee, Governing Board member, or agent of Uplift, including an attorney, a consultant, a contractor, a volunteer, a school resource officer (if any), and any outside provider used by Uplift to perform institutional services.
- 2) An employee of a cooperative of which Uplift is a member or of a facility with which Uplift contracts for placement of scholars with disabilities.
- 3) A contractor retained by a cooperative of which Uplift is a member or by a facility with which the Uplift contracts for placement of scholars.
- 4) A parent or scholar serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

All contractors provided with scholar records shall follow the same rules as employees concerning the privacy of the records and shall return the records upon completion of the assignment.

A school official has a "legitimate educational interest" to a scholar's records when he or she is:

- 1) Working with the scholar;
- 2) Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the scholar's case, or an individualized education program for a scholar with disabilities;
- 3) Compiling statistical data;
- 4) Reviewing an education record to fulfill the official's professional responsibility; or
- 5) Investigating or evaluating programs.

The scope of access to scholar records will be determined by the role of the school official and only by those records relevant to the official's interest.

**Transcripts and Transfers of Records:** Uplift may request transcripts from previously attended schools for scholars transferring or enrolling into Uplift schools; however, the ultimate responsibility for obtaining transcripts from sending schools rests with the parent or scholar, if 18 years of age or

older.

For purposes of a scholar's enrollment or transfer, Uplift shall promptly forward in accordance with the timeline provided in law education records upon request to officials of other schools or school systems in which the scholar intends to enroll or enrolls. Uplift may return an education record to the school identified as the source of the record.

**Records Responsibility for Scholars in Special Education:** The Senior Director of Special Populations, or designee, shall be responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information in records of scholars in special education.

A current listing of names and positions of persons who have access to records of scholars in special education is maintained at the office of the Director of Special Education or his/her designee. (See records and confidentiality procedure for special education – Uplift Education.)

**Parent's Right to Request Amendment of Records; Procedure to Amend Records:** Within fifteen (15) Uplift business days of the record custodian's receipt of a written request to amend records, Uplift shall notify the parents in writing of its decision on the request and, if the request is denied, of their right to a hearing. If a hearing is requested, it shall be held within ten (10) Uplift business days after the request is received.

Parents shall be notified in advance of the date, time, and place of the hearing. An administrator who is not responsible for the contested records and who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing shall conduct the hearing. The parents shall be given a full and fair opportunity to present evidence and, at their own expense, may be assisted or represented at the hearing.

The parents shall be notified of the decision in writing within ten (10) Uplift business days of the hearing. The decision shall be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing and shall include a summary of the evidence and reasons for the decision.

If the decision is to deny the request, the parents shall be informed that they have thirty (30) Uplift business days within which to exercise their right to place in the record a statement commenting on the contested information and/or stating any reason for disagreeing with Uplift's decision.

## Directory Information

FERPA requires Uplift to maintain confidential scholar identifying information, with limited exceptions. One such exception is for "Directory Information." Directory Information is scholar identifying information that may be released to the public without parent permission should a request for such information be requested.

Uplift has designated the following information as "Directory Information": scholar's name,



address, date of birth, grade level, photograph, dates of attendance, participation in recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams. Uplift may designate additional categories as directory information, as long as those categories fit within the general standard of not being harmful or an invasion of privacy.

Uplift shall only release directory information (1) to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, as required by law, (2) for limited school/Uplift-sponsored purposes, or (3) to certain agencies in connection with an investigation of an alleged crime or suspected child abuse or neglect.

“Limited school/Uplift-sponsored purposes” is defined to include all official Uplift and campus publications, including yearbooks, newsletters, directories, graduation-related documents, as well as announcements related to school/Uplift activities, honors, and awards.

“Certain agencies” include:

- Law enforcement agencies (federal, state, or local) presenting a lawful request in connection with an active criminal investigation;
- Child Protective Services (CPS) or equivalent state child welfare agencies investigating allegations of abuse, neglect, or endangerment;
- Courts pursuant to a lawfully issued subpoena or court order, provided the institution makes a reasonable effort to notify the student (or parent/guardian) in advance unless such notice is prohibited by the order itself;
- Other agencies expressly authorized by federal or state law to receive education records without consent in connection with health or safety emergencies, criminal investigations, or child welfare proceedings.

After the application for enrollment process has been completed and an applicant has entered the enrollment phase of the admissions process, parents and eligible scholars will have the opportunity to OPT-OUT of “Directory Information.” If OPT-OUT is elected, the scholar’s identifying information above will not be indicated as “Directory Information,” meaning the scholar’s information above WILL NOT be available to military recruiters or institutions of higher education and will not be available for limited school/District-sponsored purposes, such as directories, yearbooks, and the like. If OPT-OUT is not elected, a scholar’s information that qualifies as “Directory Information” will automatically be subject to disclosure.

Any parent or eligible scholar who elects OPT-IN may at any time revoke the election by notifying the school’s Operations Director in writing.

## Inappropriate Use of Technology

Uplift acknowledges that technology may be used to support learning, communication, creativity, and collaboration. All use must align with Uplift’s educational mission and community standards and comply with Uplift’s Acceptable Use Policy (see Exhibit C). This policy applies to all students using school-owned devices, networks, and accounts, personal devices when connected to Uplift’s network or when used for school activities, and digital platforms, apps, and tools required or approved by Uplift.

Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to, those uses that violate the law, that violate Uplift policy, or that hamper the integrity or security of this, or any networks connected to the Network/Internet.

Scholars may not:

- Access, create, store, or share content that is inappropriate, explicit, violent, harassing or threatening towards others, discriminatory, or otherwise intended to cause harm
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation of any kind
- Attempt to bypass filters, security settings, or monitoring systems
- Use another person’s account or share accounts
- Download or install unauthorized software, apps, or extensions
- Use technology to cheat, plagiarize, or engage in academic dishonesty
- Record, photograph, or share images/audio/video of any scholar or staff member without their knowledge and consent at any time during the school day or at Uplift-sponsored or authorized activities permission
- Use Artificial Intelligence in furtherance of a crime, including the use of Artificial Intelligence to create sexually explicit content
- Disrupt classroom instruction or school operations through misuse of devices
- Use school technology for illegal activities

This prohibition applies to conduct off school property and/or outside of a school-sponsored activity if it results or could result in a substantial disruption of the educational environment or otherwise constitutes a crime under state or federal law.

Any inappropriate technology use may result in revocation of the scholar’s access to the Network/Internet, regardless of the success or failure of the attempt. In addition, disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Character, Conduct, and Support and/or appropriate legal action, which may include restitution, may be taken. Uplift administrators will make the final determination as to what constitutes inappropriate use. With just cause, the system administrator or other administrator may deny, revoke, or suspend Network/Internet access as required, pending the outcome of an investigation. A scholar may also be reported to law enforcement

depending on the severity of the conduct.

The Technology Acceptable Use Policy is included in the online registration form, the school website and is attached to this Handbook as Exhibit C. Likewise, please see Uplift’s Internet Safety Policy, which is also attached to this Handbook as Exhibit D, for additional guidance with respect to use of technology.

## Pledge of Allegiance/Minute of Silence

Each school day, scholars 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 Academic Director to excuse their scholar from reciting a pledge.

One minute of silence will follow the recitation of the pledges. During the one-minute period, each scholar may choose to reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that will not interfere with or distract others.

## Equal Access – Free Speech

Uplift believes that it is important for scholars to learn the meaning of and practice of freedom of speech while in school. However, as permitted and authorized by law, school administration retains the right to make decisions about speech in the school to ensure an orderly and disciplined school environment conducive to learning.

## Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (“PPRA”)

Scholars who are 18 or are emancipated minors and parents are afforded certain rights under the PPRA with respect to surveys, collection and use of information. Specifically, the PPRA prohibits requiring students to provide the following information in any survey, analysis, or evaluation—funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education—without parental consent:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the scholar or the scholar’s parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the scholar or the scholar’s family;
- Sexual behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, antisocial, self-incrimination, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisal of individual with whom the scholar has a close family relationship;
- Relationships privileged under the law, such as relationships with lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the scholar or parents; or
- Income, except when the information is required by law and will be used to determine the scholar’s eligibility to participate in a special program or to receive financial assistance under such a program.

Parents have the right to inspect any survey or other instrument, and any instructional materials used in connection with such a survey, analysis, or evaluation, before they are administered.

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

### “Opting Out” of Surveys and Activities

Parents have a right to receive notice of and deny permission for their scholar’s participation in:

- 1) Any survey concerning confidential personal identifying information protected by FERPA or other law, regardless of funding;
- 2) School activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information gathered from their scholar for the purpose of marketing or selling that information;
- 3) 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 scholars (exceptions are hearing, vision, or scoliosis screen, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law).

### Media Release and Use of Photographs

Uplift recognizes the value of celebrating scholar achievement and documenting school activities through photographs, video, audio recordings, and other media. This policy outlines how such media may be created and used while protecting student privacy and complying with applicable laws. “Media” includes, but is not limited to, photographs, video recordings, audio recordings, digital images, live streams, and student work that may identify a scholar.

During the enrollment phase of the admissions process, parents/legal guardians and eligible scholars will either approve or deny consent to the release of photographs for media purposes. Any parent or eligible scholar who consents to the use of scholar identifying information for media purposes may at any time revoke that consent by notifying the Operations Director of their scholar’s school in writing.

### School Closings or Delayed Starts

Weather related cancellations or delayed starts will be communicated to families via email and phone through our automated communication system. When possible, we will communicate such information prior to 6 AM. Additionally, Uplift will post school closure or delayed start information to our local NBC station, Channel 5 and on our social media platforms.

## Emergency Preparedness

Uplift Education maintains an Emergency Operations Plan in line with state requirements set by the Texas School Safety Center. The plan is reviewed and updated annually by our School Safety and Security Committee. Each school site also has a campus specific document used to guide planning, prevention, and emergency response. Regular drills are conducted throughout the school year in line with state requirements. Questions about campus safety can be addressed by the Operations Director on site.

## Drug and Alcohol-Free School

Uplift Education is a drug-free and alcohol-free environment. All scholars are prohibited from the possession, use, sale, purchase, solicitation, or distribution or attempt to possess, use, sell, purchase, solicit, or distribute; or from being under the influence of a controlled substance or dangerous drug (as defined by law) or alcohol or any alcoholic beverage, or any abusable or volatile chemical substance, or any intoxicant or behavior-altering drug on school premises or off school premises at a school-related activity, function, or event. Scholars are also prohibited from possessing or using paraphernalia associated with prohibited substances and from misusing prescription or over-the-counter medications, including sharing medications with others.

Parents are expected to comply with this restriction whenever they are on the school campus. This policy also applies to student conduct that occurs off campus if it adversely affects the school environment or the safety and well-being of students or staff.

Scholars who violate this provision will be subject to discipline consequences as outlined in the Code of Character, Conduct, and Support and may also result in notice to the police.

Scholars and parents are encouraged to report suspected violations or safety concerns to their school's Academic Director. Reports will be handled promptly and, when possible, confidentially.

## No Tobacco Use

No tobacco use is allowed on school property, during school hours, and at any school-sponsored or school-related activity, whether on or off campus. This prohibition includes electronic or "vapor/vape" cigarettes. Scholars may be disciplined for violation of this prohibition according to the Code of Character, Conduct, and Support.

Parents are expected to comply with this restriction whenever they are on the school campus. This policy also applies to student conduct that occurs off campus if it adversely affects the school environment or the safety and well-being of students or staff.

## Teacher Qualifications — Parent’s Right to Know

All parents have the right to know the professional qualifications of their child’s teacher. Professional qualifications include whether the teacher is certified in the grade level or subject he or she is teaching, the baccalaureate and or graduate degree he or she holds, and the field of discipline of his or her degree or certification. Uplift prides itself in hiring qualified individuals to support our scholars. If you wish to know any of this information regarding your child’s teacher, please make a written request to the Academic Director.

## Career and Technology Nondiscrimination

Uplift Education offers support through career and technical education programs in Science, Technology, Engineering & Math; Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications; Health Science; and Information Technology. Admission to these programs is based on interest and aptitude, age appropriateness, academic achievement, state and local policy, class space available, and any course pre-requisites.

It is the policy of Uplift Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability in its CTE programs, services or activities in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Uplift will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all education and CTE programs. For information about your rights or grievance procedures, please see **Exhibits B and H** of this Handbook.

## Military Recruiter Access

Uplift is required to provide upon a request made by military recruiters, access to secondary school scholars’ names, addresses, and telephone listings.

A parent or eligible scholar may request on an annual basis that the scholar's name, address, and telephone listing not be released without prior written parental consent, or the consent of the eligible scholar, by OPTING OUT of “Directory Information,” described in the “Directory information” section above.

## Scholar or Parent Complaints and Concerns

The Uplift Education Board of Trustees has adopted the Parent Grievance Policy in order to provide parents an opportunity to be heard and in an effort to hear and resolve parent complaints and concerns in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible.

Parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the appropriate teacher or school leader, such as a Dean, Academic Director, or Head of School, who has the authority to address their concerns. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest administrative level.

Seeking an informal resolution shall not extend any deadline in the Parent Grievance Policy with respect to filing a formal grievance, except by written mutual consent.

If satisfactory informal resolution is not achieved, parents are welcome to file a formal grievance pursuant to the Parent Grievance Policy. (See Uplift Parent Grievance Policy – Exhibit H and posted on Uplift website.)

## Well-Being Team Supports

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Uplift’s Well-Being Team oversees services and prevention efforts that directly benefit Uplift scholars and families. These services include social-emotional learning opportunities, character education lessons, scholar restorative practices, Title IX supportive measures, guidance/psychoeducation lessons, prevention instruction and programming, professional mental health counseling (provided by the Social/Behavioral Counselor), case management, homeless/foster youth support, and crisis response efforts.

Please contact the Academic Director or the school’s Social/Behavioral Counselor if you have any questions about these services. Some Uplift campuses have a Character Specialist who can provide additional support for scholars’ character development and behavior as needed.

## Trauma-Informed Care and Mental Health Support

Uplift Education is committed to creating a trauma-informed learning environment. This means we understand that past trauma can impact a scholar's ability to learn and thrive. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where scholars feel valued and respected. We recognize that trauma can manifest in different ways and may impact a scholar's behavior and academic performance. We are committed to understanding and addressing the impact of trauma on our scholars, while providing resources and support within our scope to help them heal and thrive.

## Social/Behavioral Counseling Services

All scholars at Uplift Education have access to mental health counseling services provided by the Social/Behavioral Counselor assigned to their school. Uplift Education implements a school-based mental health program aligned with the Texas School Mental Health Framework that includes direct counseling services, prevention curriculum, and school-system support. Prevention lessons occur multiple times throughout the year across all grade levels and promote the development of positive mental health habits and skills.

Referrals for individual counseling may come from school leadership, staff, parents/guardians, or scholars may self-refer.

### Parental Consent for Counseling Services

In alignment with Texas law (including Senate Bill 12), Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, and Uplift Education's broader Parental Consent for School Health Services policy outlined later in this handbook, counseling is an implied service of the school. Parents/guardians receive notice of the counseling and mental health services available to their scholar through Uplift's enrollment documents and on the Uplift Education website. Through the enrollment process, all scholars are automatically opted in for access to counseling services. Being opted in does not mean a scholar will automatically receive counseling; it means counseling is available to them when needed, requested, or referred.

Parents/guardians may revoke consent for their scholar to receive ongoing or non-emergency counseling services at any time by submitting a written request to [Counseling@Uplifteducation.org](mailto:Counseling@Uplifteducation.org) or to the campus Social/Behavioral Counselor. Consent decisions will be documented and honored throughout the school year and may be updated by the parent at any time in writing.

### Mental Health Crisis Response and Safety Assessments

Revocation of consent for counseling services does not extend to situations involving a scholar's immediate safety. When signs of suicidal ideation, self-harm, or other acute mental health concerns are present or suspected, staff must conduct a safety assessment to determine the scholar's level of risk and appropriate response. These assessments are guided by evidence-based tools, including



the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale and the SOARS Non-Suicidal Self-Injury Assessment, and are conducted by trained personnel.

To support an accurate and thorough evaluation, initial safety assessments are conducted privately between the scholar and trained counseling staff. This standard practice allows scholars to speak openly about sensitive thoughts and feelings, which is essential to determining risks and identifying appropriate next steps. Parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as possible following the assessment to share relevant information, discuss the outcome, and collaborate on next steps and supports.

This safety assessment process is distinct from threat assessments involving threats of violence toward others (such as violent behavior, harassment, or hit lists), which are governed by separate Texas law provisions that may include parent/guardian participation. Suicide risk and self-harm assessments are guided by safety protocols that prioritize immediate, private evaluation of the scholar's well-being.

For scholars receiving special education services, the ARD committee may determine that modifications to standard assessment practices are necessary to ensure the scholar receives free, appropriate public education (FAPE), and may agree to amend this process accordingly. In situations involving imminent risk of harm to self or others, Uplift Education will contact emergency services as needed to protect the scholar's safety, regardless of consent status.

### Families In Transition Program (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance)

Uplift Education's Families In Transition Program provides additional services and support to scholars who qualify under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. McKinney-Vento eligibility is based on a scholar's current living situation, not on income, eviction status, or general housing concerns.

A scholar may qualify if they are currently:

- Sharing housing with others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes called "doubled-up");
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground due to lack of alternative adequate housing;
- Living in an emergency or transitional shelter;
- Living in a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, or similar setting; or
- Awaiting foster care placement, or living in housing that is substandard or unfit for

habitation.

Families experiencing eviction, financial hardship, or housing instability may or may not qualify depending on their specific circumstances. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis after reviewing the family's current living situation.

Residency questionnaires are distributed annually to help identify scholars who may qualify. Families who believe they may meet the criteria above, or who are uncertain about their eligibility, should contact the Wrap Around Services Coordinator or the Social/Behavioral Counselor assigned to their school. Even if a family does not qualify for McKinney-Vento services, school staff can connect them with other community resources and support.

## Services for Scholars in Foster Care

Families participating in foster care may be eligible to receive additional support and services through Uplift Education. Qualifying families should contact the Wrap Around Services Coordinator and/or the Social/Behavioral Counselor assigned to their campus for additional information.

## Prevention Instruction and Programming

Uplift Education strives to serve as an industry leader in prevention instruction and programming for all scholars. The goal of this instruction is to promote healthy, safe choices by providing spaces for students to discuss challenges they face at school and in their communities. Depending on their grade level, scholars receive annual prevention lessons on topics including bullying, substance use, sexual harassment, suicide, teen dating violence, child abuse, family violence, and sex trafficking.

Information about prevention programming and the topics covered at each grade level is provided to families through Uplift's enrollment documents and on the Uplift Education website, ensuring parents/guardians have clear notice of the instruction their scholar will receive.

As a parent/guardian, you also have the right to preview the instructional materials. If you would like to preview this content or revoke consent for one or more of the following prevention lessons: (1) child abuse, (2) family violence, (3) dating violence, and/or (4) sex trafficking lessons, please submit a request in writing to [Counseling@Uplifteducation.org](mailto:Counseling@Uplifteducation.org) or to the campus Social/Behavioral Counselor.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

**As educators and school staff, Uplift employees are required by law to report any observed or suspected abuse or neglect of a child. If a teacher or other staff member observes or suspects a scholar has been abused or neglected, the staff member is obligated by law to make a report to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) within 24 hours of first observing or suspecting it.** CPS is a division of the DFPS, so a report to CPS is a report to the DFPS. In appropriate circumstances, a report to local police should be made as needed.



*Child abuse* in the Texas Family Code is defined as any conduct harmful to a child’s mental, emotional, or physical welfare and a failure to reasonably prevent a child’s abuse.

*Neglect* is defined as an act or failure to act by a person responsible for a child’s care, custody, or welfare evidencing the person’s blatant disregard for the consequences of the act or failure to act that results in harm to the child or that creates an immediate danger to the child’s physical health or safety.

Uplift cooperates with child abuse or neglect investigators as required by law. The school may not interfere with an investigation of child abuse or neglect conducted by the DFPS. **The school will permit the investigator to conduct the required interview with the scholar at any reasonable time at the school and without prior notice to the parent.**

Uplift provides training to its teachers and staff in preventing and addressing incidents of abuse or neglect of scholars, including knowledge of possible warning signs indicating a scholar may be a victim of abuse or neglect.

### **Possible Warning Signs of Abuse or Neglect of Children**

Signs and/or symptoms of abuse and/or neglect may include the following:

- **Physical Abuse:** Frequent injuries such as bruises, cuts, black eyes, or burns without adequate explanations; frequent complaints of pain without apparent injury, burns or bruises in unusual patterns that may indicate the use of an instrument or human bite; cigarette burns on any part of the body; lack of reaction to pain; extreme fear of going home or seeing parents or caregivers; injuries that appear after a child has not been seen for several days; unreasonable clothing that may hide injuries to arms or legs
- **Neglect:** Obvious malnourishment; consistent concern for lack of personal hygiene that poses a health risk; stealing or begging for food; child unattended for long periods of time; unaddressed need for dental care or other medical attention
- **Sexual Abuse:** Physical signs of sexually transmitted diseases; evidence of injury to the genital area; pregnancy in a young girl; difficulty in sitting or walking; extreme fear of being alone with adults of a certain sex; sexual comments, behaviors, or play beyond what is considered age-appropriate behavior; knowledge of sexual relations beyond what is expected for a child’s age; sexual victimization of other children
- **Emotional Abuse:** Over-compliance or low self-esteem caused by scapegoating or verbal abuse by caregivers; severe depression, anxiety, or aggression; lagging in physical, emotional, and intellectual development; caregiver who belittles the child, withholds love and seems unconcerned about the child’s problems; significant changes to behavior, such as withdrawal or over-aggression; significant changes to weight, such as substantial weight gain or weight loss

## Allegations of Abuse by a School Employee

Uplift takes any allegation of abuse of scholars by school staff very seriously. Any knowledge or suspicion of abuse of a scholar by a school employee should be reported immediately to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Along with this report to DFPS, a report should immediately be made to the Academic Director, Social/Behavioral Counselor, and other administrative staff.

Examples of Staff Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate boundaries or communications with a student, including inappropriate relationships.
- Violating school or district communication policies, such as improper use of messaging apps or social media.
- Showing favoritism toward certain students in a way that compromises fairness or student wellbeing.
- Creating, using, or sharing inappropriate AI-generated images involving students or staff.
- Neglecting, abusing, or physically harming a student.
- Providing alcohol or drugs to a student.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on school property or during school activities.
- Possessing a weapon on school property or during school activities.
- Committing a felony.
- Engaging in fraudulent or deceptive practices involving the school system or SBEC.

**When there is evidence of staff misconduct, including certified and non-certified educators and serviced providers, involving a student, the school leader (either the Head of School or Academic Director, depending on who the school leader is) must report the misconduct within 48 hours of becoming aware to the superintendent and the superintendent must report to the TEA and SBEC within 48 hours via the Mandatory Reporting Portal.**

## Trafficking

As mandated reporters, teachers and all school personnel are required by law to report suspected trafficking. Reports must be made immediately, and no later than 24 hours after initial suspicion to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Child Abuse Hotline or law enforcement.

Child trafficking of any sort is prohibited by the Penal Code. Child sex trafficking could include forcing a person, including a child, into sexual abuse, assault, indecency, prostitution, or pornography. Labor trafficking involves forcing a person, including a child, to engage in forced labor or services. Traffickers are often trusted members of a child's community, such as friends, romantic partners, family members, mentors, and coaches, although traffickers frequently contact victims online. Possible warning signs of sex trafficking in children include:

- Changes in school attendance, habits, friend groups, vocabulary, demeanor, and attitude;
- Sudden appearance of expensive items (for example, manicures, designer clothes, purses, technology);
- Tattoos or branding;
- Refillable gift cards;
- Frequent runaway episodes;
- Multiple phones or social media accounts;
- Provocative pictures posted online or stored on the phone;
- Unexplained injuries;
- Isolation from family, friends, and community; and
- Older boyfriends or girlfriends.

Additional warning signs of labor trafficking in children include:

- Being unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips;
- Being employed but not having a school-authorized work permit;
- Being employed and having a work permit but clearly working outside the permitted hours for students;
- Owning a large debt and being unable to pay it off;
- Not being allowed breaks at work or being subjected to excessively long work hours;
- Being overly concerned with pleasing an employer and/or deferring personal or educational decisions to a boss;
- Not being in control of his or her own money;
- Living with an employer or having an employer listed as a student's caregiver; and
- A desire to quit a job but not being allowed to do so.

## Bullying

Uplift strives to provide a safe and caring environment for its scholars. Bullying of any kind is prohibited. Anyone with knowledge of or suspicion of bullying, including the alleged victim, should report such information to the Academic Director, Social/Behavioral Counselor, or other school or Uplift employee immediately. Investigations of bullying allegations will be conducted according to Uplift's Anti-Bullying Policy. See **Exhibit L**.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unlawful discrimination involving unwelcome sexual behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment, or affects a person's employment, education, or participation in an activity.

Sexual harassment of any kind is prohibited at Uplift. Scholars shall not engage in unwanted and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward another scholar or school employee. This prohibition applies whether the conduct is by word, gesture, physical contact, or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors. Common forms of sexual harassment include the following:

- Verbal: Sexual jokes, comments about someone’s body, or repeated requests for dates
- Non-verbal: Staring, gestures, displaying explicit images
- Physical: Unwanted touching, hugging, or assault
- Quid pro quo: When someone in authority demands sexual favors in exchange for benefits (e.g., grades, position in organization)

All scholars are expected to treat other scholars, school employees, volunteers, and community members with courtesy and respect. The purpose of these expectations is to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive, and to stop these behaviors when asked or told to stop. A substantiated complaint against a scholar will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the offense.

Reporting: Any scholar or staff member who observes or has knowledge of any allegations of sexual harassment, should report such information immediately to the Title IX Coordinator, Academic Director, Social/Behavioral Counselor, or other school or Uplift employee. Investigations of such allegations will be conducted by Uplift according to established procedures.

In connection with Title IX Rules and Regulations released by the Department of Education in 2020, Uplift will provide supportive measures to both complainants and respondents involved in Title IX Report. For additional information about Title IX, please refer to the Title IX Grievance Process Policy attached as **Exhibit J**.

## Child Nutrition Programs

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### School Meals

Uplift’s Child Nutrition Program (CNP) vision is to provide “excellence in food and service.” Uplift is committed to the responsibility and privilege of nutritiously educating our scholars. By offering an extensive variety of healthy menu choices, scholars learn and help establish the lifelong pattern of healthy eating. Uplift adheres to the standards of the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs.

Meals are created to provide a variety of healthy options including vegetables, fruits, whole-grain rich items, protein-rich entrées, and low-fat milk.

**Menus will be available to view at <https://uplifteducation.org/parents/meals/#>**

## Meal Pricing

Schools must charge school meals on the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) based on program eligibility.

Scholars' Breakfast - No Cost

Scholars' Lunch - \$ 3.05 for Paid; \$.00 Reduced

## CNP Charge Policy/Choice Meals

All Uplift Education Campuses will implement the CHOICE MEAL for any Uplift Education Scholar with a balance of **-\$9.15 for paid**. The choice meal is a reimbursable meal which consists of cold vegetables, fruit, cheese stick, graham crackers, and choice of milk in a black salad bowl with a transparent plastic lid. Choice meals are also served online as a reimbursable meal. Cashiers must let scholars know when they get low on their account balance.

## Free & Reduced-Price Meals

To receive meal benefits for the 2026-2027 school year, families are required to submit Free and Reduced-price meal applications. Completing an application takes less than 10 minutes, and application information remains private and confidential. Only one application per household is needed. If you are directly certified, you will receive a letter from Child Nutrition indicating that your household qualifies without applying. Applications will be available on July 15, 2026, on <https://lingconnect.com/main>

## Meal Prepayments

To make a prepayment please visit <https://lingconnect.com/main> to register. You can access and prepay for meals. Set up reminders and balance notifications. View nutritional and allergen information of our school menu items. Make one-time payments and schedule automatic payments.

## Lunch Visitations

Due to limited lunch periods, visitors are generally not permitted. Parents must obtain prior approval from the Academic Director for any lunch visitation. Scholars with pre-approved lunch visitors may be asked to eat in a designated area away from their normal lunch area. Parents may only bring lunch for their child. Scholars cannot receive DoorDash, GrubHub, UberEATS, etc. deliveries.

## Scholar Health Information

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Uplift has health services staff at each school location to serve the health needs of our scholars and meet state health requirements. All health services are under the direction of the Director of Health Services for Uplift. Any questions or concerns about the health needs of your child may be brought to the school health staff or to the Director of Health Services when necessary.

The following information applies generally to all scholars.

### Parental Consent for School Health Services (Opt-In / Opt-Out)

In accordance with Texas law (including Senate Bill 12) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidance, parents/guardians have the right to be informed of and provide consent for certain school-based health services provided to students during the school day.

School health services may include, but are not limited to, nursing assessments, first aid, management of chronic conditions, screenings, counseling supports, and other physical or mental health-related services.

Districts are required to provide parents with clear notice of available health services and offer the opportunity to **provide consent (opt-in) or decline participation (opt-out), depending on the type of service**, in accordance with TEA guidance. Consent decisions will be documented and honored throughout the school year and may be updated by the parent at any time in writing by emailing [Nurse@uplifteducation.org](mailto:Nurse@uplifteducation.org).

Emergency care will always be provided as needed to protect the health and safety of the student, including life-saving interventions.

Parents/guardians will be notified when a student receives health services that require consent or involve significant medical care.

This process ensures transparency, supports family choice, and upholds parental rights while maintaining student safety on campus.

### Medication Administration

Medications, nonprescription and prescription, may be administered at school by the health services staff or by a designated staff member who has been trained to administer medication. In general, medication should be administered at home whenever possible. For those medications which must be administered at school, the following procedures apply:

- 1) All medications: over the counter and prescription, must be in their original container,

properly labeled, with a written request from the parent or legal guardian to administer the medication at school.

- 2) All medications, over-the-counter and prescription, must include the scholar's first and last name, date of birth, medication name, the amount requested to be given, the route, and time requested to administer the medication to the scholar. Over the counter medication administration will not exceed the dosage on the container label without written authorization from a licensed healthcare provider.
- 3) Prescriptive and/or over-the-counter medication(s) will not be administered for more than 3 days unless there is written authorization from a licensed healthcare provider.
- 4) All medication must be checked into the health office/clinic upon arrival on campus. No scholar is allowed to carry or possess any medication at school (except rescue inhalers and Epi-pens once approved by the campus nurse). Any scholar found taking medication or giving medication to another scholar will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 5) No more than a 30-day supply of medication will be accepted at a time.
- 6) **Medication that has expired or is not picked up by the parent will be properly discarded after its expiration date or after the last day of school, whichever first occurs.**
- 7) Medication purchased in a foreign country will not be administered to scholars unless the pharmacy is a U.S. FDA approved pharmacy.
- 8) Medication packaged as a "sample" must be accompanied by a copy of the prescription written by a licensed healthcare provider and must include the scholar's first and last name, date of birth, medication name, the amount requested to be given, the route, and time requested to administer the medication to the scholar.
- 9) Aspirin or products containing aspirin will not be given without a physician's order.
- 10) Parents are responsible for advising the school clinic that a medication has been discontinued or if there are any changes to the medication(s).
- 11) Uplift does not provide any over-the-counter medications for scholars.
- 12) Authorized district employees may administer medication(s) when a nurse is not available.

## Asthma and Anaphylaxis Medication

Asthma and anaphylaxis are life-threatening conditions. Scholars with asthma and/or severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) are encouraged to provide an allergy action plan or asthma action

plan provided by a licensed healthcare provider. Please contact the health office/clinic if you have any questions about these conditions or your scholar's treatment at school.

Asthma Action Plans and Allergy Action Plans are available from the health office/clinic and will be available in online enrollment as well as at [www.uplifteducation.org](http://www.uplifteducation.org), under the Uplift Health Services tab. If your scholar has any activity restrictions due to weather or exertion, provide the health office/clinic with a physician's signed and dated note specifying the restrictions.

Scholars with asthma or anaphylaxis are entitled to possess and self-administer prescription medications for asthma or anaphylaxis conditions while on school property or a school-related event, if certain conditions are met. Check with the health office/clinic to see if your scholar meets criteria to self-carry and administer asthma or anaphylaxis medication(s).

Scholar possession and self-administration of asthma or anaphylaxis medication at school requires written authorization from the scholar's parent and physician or other licensed health care provider to be on file in the school office/health clinic indicating that the medication has been prescribed for the scholar who will be carrying the medication while at school.

The scholar must have demonstrated to the scholar's physician or other licensed health care provider and the school nurse, if available, the skill level necessary to self-administer the prescription medication, including the use of any device required to administer the medication. The scholar must be capable of independently administering his or her own asthma or emergency anaphylaxis medication and must be knowledgeable about the medication and how to administer it.

With these safeguards in place, the scholar may possess and self-administer his or her prescribed medication for asthma or anaphylaxis, in compliance with the prescription or written instructions from the scholar's physician or other licensed health care provider during school hours or at school related events. Written authorizations to self-administer asthma or anaphylaxis medication must be updated annually.

Medication in a scholar's possession must be in an original container with a prescription label. Please note that most pharmacies will place a label on the inhaler device upon request.

## Emergency Medication Administration

### **Unassigned Epinephrine, Albuterol, and Naloxone/Narcan**

In accordance with Texas law and TEA guidance, campuses maintain unassigned emergency medications including epinephrine, albuterol, and naloxone (Narcan) for use in life-threatening emergencies.

These medications may be administered by trained and authorized school personnel under a standing medical order when a student or individual experiences a severe allergic reaction, asthma-



related respiratory distress, or suspected opioid overdose.

Unassigned medications are used only when a prescribed medication is not available or when a life-threatening condition occurs without a known diagnosis. Emergency medical services (911) will be contacted immediately when these medications are used or a serious medical emergency is suspected.

Parents/guardians will be notified promptly following any administration. These medications are provided to support rapid emergency response and student safety on campus.

## Diabetes Management

Scholars with diabetes may possess equipment and medication used in the treatment of diabetes during the school day and at school-related events given certain conditions. According to the Texas Health and Safety Code, diabetes management and treatment plan must be developed and implemented by the scholar's parent(s) and the physician responsible for the scholar's diabetes treatment. This plan must evaluate the scholar's ability to manage diabetes and his or her level of understanding of diabetes and must be signed by the parent and physician responsible for the diabetes treatment.

An individual health plan ("IHP") must be implemented by the school and/or school nurse and incorporate components of the scholar's diabetes management and treatment plan. In accordance with the scholar's IHP, the school may permit a scholar to attend to the management of his or her diabetes, which may include performing blood glucose level checks, administering insulin, treating hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, possessing necessary monitoring and treatment equipment designed for diabetes care and attending to the management of his or her diabetes in the classroom, in any area of the school grounds, or at any school-related activity. The IHP must be updated annually.

## Illness during School Hours

A scholar who becomes ill during school hours must report to the teacher, who will then send them to the health clinic with a clinic pass. If the nurse or other health office provider determines that it is necessary for the scholar to go home, the parent will be contacted. No scholar is allowed to go home without the parent being notified. Scholars are not to call parents from cell phones asking to go home. Such calls are to be made from the school office or health office/clinic by school staff.

Scholars must stay home from school due to illness if any of the following are present:

- Fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher (Scholars must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, i.e., Tylenol, before returning to school);
- Diarrhea in the past 24 hours;
- Unknown rash;

- Ringworm of the scalp (remain home until cleared by a physician); or
- Tested positive for COVID-19
- And for any other illnesses per the School Communicable Disease Chart standard

To protect scholars at school, scholars assessed with any of the signs or symptoms listed above may be sent home, upon the recommendation of the health care staff.

## Immunizations Requirements

The State of Texas requires that every child in the state be immunized in accordance with an established immunization schedule, in order to attend public school. To determine the specific number of doses that are required for your scholar, please read “2026-2027 Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Scholars Grades K-12.” This document and more information about school vaccine requirements are available at the Texas Department of State Health Services (“DSHS”) Immunization Branch website: [www.immunizeTexas.com](http://www.immunizeTexas.com) (click on the school/childcare requirements link.) Information on immunization requirements will also be on the school website.

Validation of immunization records by a physician or public health clinic is required for entering school. All scholars enrolling must submit an immunization record to the health office/clinic for approval. Documents signed by a physician or public health clinic listing each immunization and month, day, and year in which it was given will be accepted.

If a scholar is not current on immunizations or has not provided a record showing the scholar is current, the scholar will be excluded from school until evidence of compliance is provided, unless the scholar meets the requirements for provisional enrollment, or the parent submits to the school an affidavit in the form prescribed by law (and as described in Section 38.001 (c) of the Texas Education Code) or has a contraindication, signed by a licensed health care provider, stating the scholar is medically exempt due to an allergy or a health condition.

**Provisional Enrollment:** Provisional enrollment allows a scholar who meets certain specific criteria to be admitted to school on a temporary basis for up to 30 days. During this 30-day period, the parent is responsible for ensuring the scholar receives the necessary vaccines as fast as is medically feasible and/or providing a complete and current immunization records to the school. Provisional enrollment allows a scholar to enroll in school in the following situations:

- A scholar is transferring from one Texas public school to another and is awaiting the transfer of the immunization record. The record must be received within the 30-day period, or the scholar will be excluded from school.
- A scholar has an immunization record that indicates the scholar has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate required vaccine. To remain enrolled, the scholar must complete the required subsequent dose in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school.

- Homeless scholars (as defined under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act of 2001) may be enrolled pending receipt of immunization record or, if not received within the 30-day period, to remain enrolled, the scholar begins receiving the required vaccines.
- A dependent of a person who is on active duty with the armed forces of the United States can be enrolled provisionally for no more than 30 days if he/she transfers from one school to another and is awaiting the transfer of the immunization record.

**Immunization Records Reporting:** The school’s record of a scholar’s immunization history, while private in most instances, may be inspected by the Texas Education Agency, local health departments, and the Texas department of state health services (DSHS) and transferred to other schools associated with the transfer of the scholar to those schools.

## Injuries/Accident Insurance

Pursuant to state law, Uplift Education is immune from all personal injury and other tort claims. Therefore, Uplift Education is not responsible or liable for the payment of medical bills or any other associated costs related to an injury sustained by a scholar or any other third-party except as required by state or federal law. Please note this same immunity applies to all other charter schools and traditional ISDs in the state.

The school does not carry insurance to cover medical treatment for scholar injuries at school, and the school is not responsible for medical costs associated with a scholar’s injury.

## State Mandated Health Screenings for Scholars

**Spinal Screening (scoliosis):** The annual, state-required, spinal screening will be conducted for all children, who are attending public or private schools, must be screened for abnormal spinal curvature in accordance with the following schedule:

- Girls will be screened two times, once at age 10 (or fall semester of grade 5) and again at age 12 (or fall semester of grade 7).
- Boys will be screened one time at age 13 or 14 (or fall semester of grade 8).

The purpose of this program is to identify scholars who may have spinal problems and to inform their parents, so the scholar may have a complete examination by their own physician. Scholars are checked individually by the school nurse or screening assistant.

Scholars must remove their shirts for this exam. For this reason, we request that girls wear a sports bra or two-piece swimsuit top underneath their shirt on exam day. Parents will be notified of the results of the screening only if professional follow-up is necessary.



A student may be exempt from scoliosis screening if:

- The scholar is already actively under medical care by an appropriately licensed professional for one or more of the spinal problems for which spinal screening is performed. To claim this exception, the scholar must submit signed and dated documentation from the licensed professional to the school. The documentation must state that the scholar is under active, ongoing medical care for specific spinal problems.
- A scholar's parent or legal guardian executes an affidavit stating that spinal screening will be conducted by an individual other than the screener used by the school. The school may admit the scholar on a provisional basis for up to 60 days. The school may deny admission until the screening record of the scholar is provided.
- The screening conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the individual is a member. The parent or legal guardian must submit to the school an affidavit in lieu of the screening record stating the conflict. The affidavit must be submitted on or before the date the spinal screening is scheduled.

**Acanthosis Nigricans Screening:** Acanthosis Nigricans (AN) is a skin condition that signals high insulin levels in the body. AN screening can help identify scholars who may run the risk of developing diabetes in the future. AN screening is done during the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grade vision and hearing screening. Parents will be notified if their child is found to have this skin marker for professional follow-up.

**Vision and Hearing Screening:** Vision and hearing screenings are conducted in PreK – 4 years, kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades and for any other first-time enrollees, for the purpose of identifying scholars with vision and hearing disorders. Parents will be notified of failed vision and/or hearing screenings for professional follow-up, as necessary.

## Updated Health Information

Parents are asked to keep the Health Services personnel and the Academic Director advised of any changes or concerns about their child's health or medical condition. The school will be best prepared to assist your child if you keep the school nurse aware of any changes or concerns. **It is also important to keep your contact information current so in an emergency there is no delay in contacting you.**

**Please contact the school nurse or the Director of Health Services at the Central Management Office (469-621-8500) if you have any questions or concerns about the child's health.**

## School-Based TeleHealth Program

The Children's Health School-Based TeleHealth Program, provided by Children's Health in partnership with Uplift, provides in-school virtual consultations with physicians, through the use of



mobile telehealth carts located in our Dallas County health clinics. The carts connect a Children’s Health Pediatric Group physician, or Pediatric Nurse Practitioner to a child who visits the school nurse’s office with a complaint that may need to be seen by a doctor. For our Tarrant County Schools, Uplift has partnered with BSW McLane Children’s Hospital for the School-Based TeleHealth Program.

During the school day, scholars can be evaluated for various complaints such as; skin rashes, respiratory issues, ear complaints, nose complaints, eye complaints, etc. Scholars who are present with flu and strep like symptoms can also be evaluated by a physician via the telehealth program. Once a scholar has been evaluated by a licensed health care provider, an electronic prescription can be sent to the family’s preferred pharmacy, when necessary. Currently, the School-Based Telehealth Program is in most Uplift schools. Please check with the health clinic staff at the school to determine if your school is a participant.

**Parents are required to register to take advantage of this program. Once registered, enrolled scholars can take advantage of the program throughout the school year. Registration forms must be updated each school year and can be found on our website [www.uplifteducation.org](http://www.uplifteducation.org) and in the health clinics currently participating in the program.**

## Engaging Families

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Uplift believes that parents are essential partners in the education of their children and research supports this belief. A parent is a child’s first and most important teacher, and parents are a valuable support to their learning after they begin school. We rely on the guidance parents provide for their children and the insights they provide to us as educators. The following information should be helpful for parents to engage with the school:

### Communication

A healthy school environment provides ample and appropriate communication between all members of the school community. Communication requires regularly scheduled progress conferences and reports, and timely responses to other issues that arise. If you feel this is not occurring, please contact your scholar’s teacher first, then the appropriate Academic Director. Appropriate communication is respectful of the time, opinion, and feelings of others. It is directed toward the person charged with solving the problem or knowing the answer to the question. To help you determine who the appropriate individual is to address an issue, please consult the school’s staff directory or contact the Family Engagement Coordinator at the school.

### Family Communication and Resources

We are committed to keeping families informed and connected every step of the way. Important



information, such as school supply lists, uniform guidelines, carline maps, and other family resources, are available on our website.

Find your school's Parent Resources web page by visiting [uplifteducation.org/parents](https://uplifteducation.org/parents) and clicking on your school's crest. Beginning in the 2026–27 school year, ParentSquare will serve as the official platform for announcements, emergency notifications, reminders, and two-way communication between families and schools. With ParentSquare, families can receive information via email, text, or through the app. We encourage all families to download the app and set up their accounts by visiting [uplifteducation.org/parent-square](https://uplifteducation.org/parent-square) to ensure you receive timely updates and can easily stay in touch with your child's campus.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parents will be actively involved in their child's education. They will have scheduled meetings with their child and teacher periodically during the year to review goals and progress. Methods in which the child can be supported outside of school to expand the learning occurring at school will be discussed. Parents will want to participate in the demonstration and presentation nights. They are encouraged to share their knowledge, talents, and interests/expertise with scholars in large and small groups or with scholars working on individual projects.

Translation Support: If you need a translator to facilitate communication with the school, please contact the Family Engagement Coordinator at the school.

## Parent Volunteers

Strong parental involvement is a key component of any successful school. Parents, as well as relatives and friends, are encouraged to participate in a wide variety of volunteer opportunities if they are able. All potential parent volunteer opportunities will be posted on VOMO, our online volunteer management tool. All Uplift parents are encouraged to visit the Uplift VOMO website and sign up for an account. Once an account is created and a background check is passed, parents are welcome to browse the volunteer directory in VOMO and find opportunities to sign up as a volunteer.

In addition to staying engaged through VOMO, parents are also encouraged to join Volunteers in Partnership (VIP), an organized group of parents at the school. The Volunteer in Partnership (VIP) aims to:

- maintain a spirit of cooperation and respect amongst all families, scholars and school staff.
- work within school policies and guidelines.
- get approval for all recommended support to the school to host events and activities along with getting all dates approved.
- schedule all meetings in advance and provide notice to school leadership.



- be inclusive of all families.
- complete background check
- work with the school FEC as their main and daily point of contact

Please contact the Family Engagement Coordinator at your school if you want more information about the VIP or volunteer opportunities.

## Advocacy

Parents are an important voice in the effort to improve public schools and public charter schools. Parents have the opportunity to participate in advocating for public schools and are encouraged to take an active part in the political process which affects our scholars and our schools. Please contact the Director of Government Affairs at the Central Management Office if you want to know more about Uplift's advocacy and how you can be a part of those efforts.

## Volunteer Background Checks

All volunteers who will be working at the school or will have contact with scholars must consent to a background check conducted by the school prior to serving as a volunteer. The background check is performed via our volunteer platform, VOMO. Please visit [uplift-education.vomo.org](http://uplift-education.vomo.org) and create a profile under your school or get in contact with your Family Engagement Coordinator for assistance.

## Visitors

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit the school campus. However, visitors must first obtain approval from the school office before entering the school building beyond the front lobby. Uplift uses Raptor Technologies V-Soft visitor program to screen and identify those individuals who are listed as registered sexual offenders. Upon entering the school, a visitor will be required to present a valid state or government issued photo identification card (usually a driver's license) to the front desk attendant and it will be scanned into the Raptor system. Once completed, a visitor's badge will be issued to the visitor and must be worn conspicuously during the visit. When the visitor leaves the building, the badge should be returned to the front desk so that an entry of departure can be made. If you have any questions about the screening system, please contact the Academic Director.

With few exceptions, the delivery of private services to Uplift scholars by providers who are not formally contracted or employed by Uplift is prohibited on Uplift property. Uplift reserves the right to deny entry or access to any visitor at its sole discretion and for any lawful reason deemed necessary to maintain the safety, security, and orderly operation of the campus, scholars, and staff.

## Classroom Visits

To protect scholar confidentiality and maintain the integrity of the classroom, all classroom visits must be purposeful and respectful of the learning environment. Visitors on campus are considered non-contracted employees of Uplift Education and must follow all expectations to support a positive and productive educational space. The following guidelines must be followed, in order to minimize outside distractions and interruptions:

- The Campus Academic Director, where the prospective visitors are requesting to observe, is the person who decides if the visit is approved.
- If the visit is approved, the Campus Academic Director of the school where the visitor is going to observe will designate the date, time, and length of the observation. Visitations should be no more than 45 minutes or a class period.
- All visitors must check in at the office.
- All visitors must be accompanied by an Uplift Education School employee at all times.
- Prospective visitors in the classroom must sign a “Confidentiality Form” indicating they will not discuss other scholars or circumstances that occurred within the classroom that did not involve their scholar.
- The visitor may not interrupt instruction during the classroom observation nor seek any individual time from the teacher. If a conference with the teacher is appropriate, that needs to be scheduled at a time convenient for both the teacher and the visitor.

Uplift Education does not permit private evaluation personnel or private related services providers including but not limited to, speech therapists, occupational therapists, behavior therapists or counselors to provide private services on Uplift campuses unless service providers contract directly with Uplift Education.

Uplift reserves the right to deny access to classroom visits at its sole discretion and for any lawful reason deemed necessary to maintain the safety, security, and orderly operation of the campus, scholars, and staff.

## Waiver of Fees

Any family needing financial assistance with authorized school fees should contact the school's Academic Director.

# Appendix

Exhibit A	<a href="#"><u>Code of Character, Conduct, and Support</u></a>
Exhibit B	Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar Policy
Exhibit C	Acceptable Use Policy (Technology)
Exhibit D	Updated Internet Safety Policy
Exhibit E	Admissions and Enrollment Policy
Exhibit F	Credit and Academic Policy
Exhibit G	Grading Philosophy and Practices for Grades 6-12
Exhibit H	Parent Grievance Policy
Exhibit I	Dress and Uniform Requirements
Exhibit J	Title IX Grievance Process
Exhibit K	Child Nutrition Program Change Policy
Exhibit L	Anti-Bullying Policy

## **EXHIBIT B**

### **Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar Policy**

Policy Effective Date: February 22, 2022

Uplift Education prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any scholar on the basis of gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. Uplift prohibits sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of Uplift policy and is prohibited.

**Discrimination.** Discrimination against a scholar is defined as conduct directed at a scholar on the basis of gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law, that adversely affects the scholar.

**Prohibited Conduct.** In this policy, the term “prohibited conduct” includes discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking and retaliation as defined by this policy, even if the behavior does not rise to the level of unlawful conduct.

**Prohibited Harassment.** Prohibited harassment of a scholar is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the scholar’s gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

1. Affects a scholar’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or  
creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the scholar’s academic performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects the scholar’s educational opportunities.

Prohibited harassment also includes conduct that meets the definition of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, as defined by this policy.

**Sex-Based Harassment.** As required by law, Uplift shall follow the procedures in Uplift’s Title IX Grievance Process upon a report of sex-based harassment, including sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, when such allegations, if proved, would meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX and/or this policy.

**Sexual Harassment.** Sexual harassment of a scholar by an Uplift employee includes both

welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

1. An Uplift employee causes the scholar to believe that the scholar must submit to the conduct to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the scholar submits to the conduct; or
2. The conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:
  - a. It affects the scholar's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the scholar's educational opportunities; or
  - b. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Romantic or other inappropriate social relationships between scholars and Uplift employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a scholar and an Uplift employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

Sexual harassment of a scholar, including harassment committed by another scholar, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:

1. Affects a scholar's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the scholar's academic performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects the scholar's educational opportunities.

Sexual harassment of a scholar also includes conduct that meets the definition of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, as defined by this policy.

**Gender Based Harassment.** Gender-based harassment includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the scholar's gender, the scholar's expression of characteristics perceived as stereotypical for the scholar's gender, or the scholar's failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. For purposes of this policy, gender-based harassment is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

1. Affects a scholar's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the scholar's academic performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects the scholar's educational opportunities.

Gender-based harassment of a scholar also includes conduct that meets the definition of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined by this policy.

**Sexual Assault.** Sexual assault includes all conduct meeting the definition of “sexual assault” in 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(6)(A)(v). In accordance with that definition, sexual assault means any sexual act directed at a person without their consent, including incidences where a person is incapable of giving consent. Any act of sexual assault may be considered prohibited harassment.

**Dating Violence.** Dating violence includes all conduct meeting the definition of “dating violence” in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(10). In accordance with that definition, dating violence means acts of violence committed by a person in a current or past social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the other person. Dating violence can include physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. Any act of dating violence may be considered prohibited harassment.

**Domestic Violence.** Domestic violence includes all conduct meeting the definition of “domestic violence” in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(8). In accordance with that definition, domestic violence means violence committed by a current or former spouse, intimate partner, co-parent of a child, or other similar relationship with the other person. Domestic violence can include physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other person in the relationship. Any act of domestic violence may be considered prohibited harassment.

**Stalking.** Stalking includes all conduct meeting the definition of “stalking” in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(30). In accordance with that definition, stalking means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person in that position to suffer substantial emotional distress or fear for their safety or the safety of others. Any act of stalking may be considered prohibited harassment.

**Retaliation.** Uplift prohibits retaliation by a scholar or Uplift employee against a scholar alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment, or another person who, in good faith, makes a report of harassment or discrimination, files a complaint of harassment or discrimination, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation. The definition of prohibited retaliation under this policy also includes retaliation against a scholar who refuses to participate in any manner in an investigation under the Title IX Grievance Process.

**False Claim.** A scholar who intentionally makes a false claim or offers false statements in an Uplift investigation regarding discrimination or harassment, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with policy and the law.

**Reporting.** Any scholar who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct or believes that another scholar has experienced prohibited conduct should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, academic director, other Uplift employee, or the appropriate Uplift official listed in this policy.

Any Uplift employee who suspects or receives direct or indirect notice that a scholar or group of scholars has or may have experienced prohibited conduct shall immediately notify the

employee's supervisor and the appropriate Uplift official listed in this policy and take any other steps required by this policy.

For the purposes of this policy, Uplift officials are the Title IX Coordinator, the Senior Director of Special Populations, and the Superintendent.

**Reports of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment as defined by this policy, may be directed to the designated Title IX coordinator for scholars. The Title IX Coordinator is Taylor Montgomery and can be reached by email at [titleix@uplifteducation.org](mailto:titleix@uplifteducation.org), by phone at 469-621-8500, or in person or by mail at 3000 Pegasus Park Drive, Suite 1100, Dallas, Texas 75247.**

**Reports of discrimination based on disability may be directed to the Senior Director of Special Populations, Annette Enright, by email at [aenright@uplifteducation.org](mailto:aenright@uplifteducation.org), by phone at 469-621-8500, or in person or by mail at 3000 Pegasus Park Drive, Suite 1100, Dallas, Texas 75247.**

**The Superintendent shall serve as coordinator for purposes of Uplift compliance with all other nondiscrimination laws. The Superintendent is Alexander Berk and can be reached by phone at 469-621-8500, or in person or by mail at 3000 Pegasus Park Drive, Suite 1100, Dallas, Texas 75247.**

A scholar or other individual shall not be required to report prohibited conduct to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports concerning prohibited conduct, including reports against the Title IX Coordinator or Senior Director of Special Populations, may be directed to the Superintendent.

A report against the Superintendent may be made directly to the Board. If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.

To ensure Uplift's prompt investigation, reports of prohibited conduct shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act.

The Uplift official or designee will promptly notify the parents of any scholar alleged to have experienced prohibited conduct by an Uplift employee or another adult.

### **Investigation of Reports Other Than Title IX**

The following procedures apply to all allegations of prohibited conduct other than allegations for harassment prohibited by Title IX. For allegations of sex-based harassment that, if proved, would meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, including sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, see the procedures at Uplift's Title IX Grievance Process. A report of sex-based harassment will be addressed in accordance with the Title IX Grievance Process.

Uplift may request, but shall not require, a written report of prohibited conduct. If a report is

made orally, the Uplift official shall reduce the report to written form.

Upon receipt or notice of a report, the Uplift official shall determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy. If so, Uplift shall immediately undertake an investigation, except as provided below at Criminal Investigation.

If a Title IX Formal Complaint is filed, an investigation will be conducted in accordance with the Title IX Grievance Process.

If the Uplift official determines that the allegations, if proven, would not constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy, the Uplift official shall refer the complaint for consideration under the Scholar Code of Conduct.

If appropriate, and regardless of whether a criminal or regulatory investigation regarding the alleged conduct is pending, Uplift shall promptly take interim action calculated to address prohibited conduct or bullying prior to the completion of Uplift's investigation.

The investigation may be conducted by an Uplift official or a designee, such as the academic director, or by a third party designated by Uplift, such as an attorney. When appropriate, the academic director shall be involved in or informed of the investigation.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person making the report, the person against whom the report is filed, and others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the allegations. The investigation may also include analysis of other information or documents related to the allegations.

If a law enforcement or regulatory agency notifies Uplift that a criminal or regulatory investigation has been initiated, Uplift shall confer with the agency to determine if Uplift's investigation would impede the criminal or regulatory investigation. Uplift shall proceed with its investigation only to the extent that it does not impede the ongoing criminal or regulatory investigation. After the law enforcement or regulatory agency has finished gathering its evidence, Uplift shall promptly resume its investigation.

Absent extenuating circumstances, such as a request by a law enforcement or regulatory agency for Uplift to delay its investigation, the investigation should be completed within ten Uplift business days from the date of the report; however, the investigator shall take additional time, if necessary, to complete a thorough investigation. For a Title IX investigation, Uplift will complete the investigation in a reasonably prompt manner in accordance with the Title IX Grievance Process.

The investigator shall prepare a written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether prohibited conduct or bullying occurred unless the Title IX Grievance Process requires otherwise. The report shall be filed with the Uplift official overseeing the investigation.

Notification of the outcome of the investigation shall be provided to both parties in compliance

with FERPA.

**Uplift Action.** If the results of an investigation indicate that prohibited conduct occurred, Uplift shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Scholar Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, as defined by the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Uplift official shall refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy for appropriate notice to parents and Uplift action.

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, Uplift may take disciplinary action in accordance with the Scholar Code of Conduct or other corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

**Confidentiality.** To the greatest extent possible, Uplift shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with applicable law.

**Appeal.** A scholar or parent who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the Parent Grievance Policy, beginning at the appropriate level. A scholar or parent shall be informed of his or her right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. Appeals regarding Determinations of Responsibility or Dismissal of a Formal Complaint in a Title IX investigation will be addressed in accordance with the Title IX Grievance Process.

**Records Retention.** Uplift shall retain copies of allegations, investigation reports, and related records regarding any prohibited conduct in accordance with Uplift's records retention schedules, but for no less than the minimum amount of time required by law.

**Access to Policies and Procedures.** Information regarding this policy and any accompanying procedures will be distributed annually in the Employee and Scholar Handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures will be posted on Uplift's website, to the extent practicable, and readily available at each campus and Uplift's administrative offices.

# **EXHIBIT C**

## **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)**

### **Introduction**

Uplift Education provides scholars and employees with extensive technology resources, including computing facilities, local area networks, Internet access, and e-mail addresses. Our goal is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication within our own community and the world.

As a member of the Uplift community, I agree to follow School rules and commit to the School's values. To maintain these values as related to technology, we must all agree to support the needs of the School community even if they may conflict with one's personal desires.

### **Uplift Education Technology Ownership**

- Uplift Education owns all systems, software, and e-mail addresses. Content created with the School's technology tools and saved on the School network is the property of the School.
- Computer resources at Uplift are a limited resource and are reserved for educational and school-related business.
- If I leave the School community, I may take copies of anything I have created. However, this content can continue to be used by the School for educational purposes.
- I am expected to return loaned-out school equipment in the same condition as it was given with the exception of normal wear and tear.
- I will be responsible for the reasonable cost of repair/replacement or its fair market value if I damage or lose loaned-out school equipment. Loss or theft of loaned-out school equipment must be reported to the school within 48 hours of occurrence. Please note that a parent or guardian may be held legally liable for the damage or loss of school equipment. If need be, Uplift Education may notify law enforcement in these situations. Incidents that happen off campus must be reported to the police and a copy of the report must be provided to the school.

### **My Use of School Computing Resources**

- I will help to create a positive atmosphere by allowing those engaged in academic work priority use of the computers.
- I will respect the work and privacy of others throughout the Uplift Education network.
- I will use my applications, e-mail accounts, and Uplift Education network space appropriately for school-related activities.
- I will not save or install files and/or software on School equipment without the authorization of a teacher or the network administrators.
- I will not use Uplift technology resources for commercial activity, for seeking monetary gain, or for political purposes.

- I will not destroy, delete or disable any Uplift installed software on any computer. This includes, but not limited to, any intentional alteration to the operating system, hardware formats, user account(s), network access, content filtering, administrative/support functions and user e-mail account(s).
- I will not intentionally waste finite resources.
- I will not disassemble any parts or attempt any repair on school equipment.
- I will not decorate, engrave, mark up, or otherwise alter the physical features of school equipment.
- I will not remove any Uplift applied labeling.

### **System Security**

- I will log on to the network only as myself.
- I am responsible for my individual account and will take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use my account.
- I will immediately notify a faculty or staff member if I have identified a possible security problem.
- I will not intentionally introduce a virus or other harmful code anywhere on the Uplift Education network, and I will make an effort to keep my home computer free from viruses and other destructive materials. If my files are accidentally infected, I will seek help from a member of the technology staff.
- I will not create, propagate, and/or use computer viruses.
- I will not vandalize and/or tamper with equipment, programs, files, software, system performance or other components of the network.
- I will not use or possess hacking software.
- I know that any electronic devices brought on this campus are subject to search without notice or warning. I will refrain from using any device or software that masks my use of the school resources. This includes but is not limited to anonymizers and any application or hardware device that circumvents network security, logging, or tracking procedures.

### **Use of Uplift Content or School Information on Non-Uplift Websites**

- Content about Uplift Education anywhere on the internet should observe all aspects of the School's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Official School files or documents are not to be posted on non-Uplift sites.
- Individuals who post content on internet sites away from Uplift should not present content as if it represents any official views of Uplift Education.
- The official Uplift Education website represents the School. No representation of Uplift should be made on any other website.

### **Intellectual Property and Privacy**

- I will not copy or transfer any copyrighted software to or from computers on the Uplift School network without the permission of the technology staff in my building.
- I will not plagiarize words or phrases that I find in books, on the Internet, on CD-ROMs, or on other online resources.
- I will respect the rights of copyright owners, including those who have created music,

images, video, software, etc.

- I should have no expectation of privacy when I use online resources since materials are owned by the site and can be redistributed without an author's permission. I should check each site's privacy and security policies carefully before posting or adding content I may not wish viewed by others presently or in the future.
- I will not repost a message sent to me privately without the permission of the person who sent the message.
- I will not post private or false information about another person.

### **Inappropriate Language and Harassment**

- I will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language on any and all uses of computers at Uplift, whether in public or private messages.
- I will not post information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.

### **I understand the following:**

- I continuously represent Uplift Education whenever and wherever I use school computing resources, even if I am using these resources away from or outside of the School's network.
- I may be held responsible for any online behavior or content that connects me to the School or implicates the School in that behavior.
- If I knowingly enable others to violate these rules, I may lose my School network, e-mail, or internet access.
- Uplift Education has software and systems in place that monitors and records all activities and traffic on the School computing resources. I should expect only limited privacy in the contents of my personal files on the School network.
- Tampering with Uplift technology tools or another person's work is unacceptable, and I could lose all rights to use computers at the School, including my user account and network access.
- Violations of the Uplift Education policy including social media policy and AUP are subject to disciplinary action ranging from loss of computing privileges up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.
- Uplift Education makes no guarantee that the services provided will be error-free or without defect. The School will not be responsible for any damage suffered including, but not limited to, loss of data or disruption of service.
- Any attempt to violate the provisions of this agreement may result in revocation of my privileges, regardless of the success or failure of the attempt.

Parents and scholars will be expected to sign and return this acknowledgement that they have read and understand the AUP. This form will be distributed and returned at the beginning of each school year.

**Parent Permission Form and User Agreement**

**I have read, understood, explained, and discussed the Acceptable Use Policy to my scholar.**

Name of Parent/Guardian (PLEASE PRINT ): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and discussed it with my parent(s)/guardian(s).**

Scholar's Name (PLEASE PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_

Scholar's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **EXHIBIT D**

### **Updated Internet Safety Policy**

Policy Effective Date: December 7, 2021

**Introduction.** To the extent practical, it is the policy of Uplift Education (“Uplift”) to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

**Definitions.** Any key terms are as defined in the Children’s Internet Protection Act.

**Access to Inappropriate Material.** To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or “Internet filters”) shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

**Inappropriate Network Usage.** To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Uplift online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called ‘hacking,’ and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

**Education, Supervision and Monitoring.** It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Uplift staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children’s Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children’s Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of the Senior Director of Information Technology or designated

representatives.

The Senior Director of Information Technology or designated representatives shall provide age-appropriate training for scholars who use Uplift Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote Uplift's commitment to safety and appropriate behavior while on online, provide education on cyberbullying, and comply with any relevant State and federal laws.

**Adoption.** This Internet Safety Policy was adopted by the Board of Uplift Education at a public meeting, following normal public notice, on December 7, 2021.

# **EXHIBIT E**

## **Admissions and Enrollment**

Policy Effective Date: November 16, 2020

**State and Federal Law.** Uplift Education (“Uplift”) shall comply with state and federal law as it pertains to admissions and enrollment in the context of charter schools.

**Non-Discrimination.** Uplift does not, and will not, discriminate in admissions based on gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic (see below for exception), or athletic ability, or the district the applicant would otherwise attend.

**Admissions and Enrollment.** Enrolling in Uplift is a two-step process: (1) application for admission, followed by (2) enrollment.

1. Application for Admission: Application for admission is completed using the statewide common admission application, known as the Charter Scholar Admission Application (CSAA). The CSAA is used to gather basic information about the scholar applying for admission, including the scholar’s name, date of birth, gender, grade applying for, parent/guardian, address of the scholar, and a phone number.
2. Enrollment: After an applicant receives notice of being offered a seat, the enrollment process begins. If the applicant accepts the available position, Uplift may request additional information, such as the scholar’s health records, records pertaining to special education, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and dyslexia, academic records, verification of address, and in some instances, discipline records. These records, or any other additional information requested, should only be provided at the request of Uplift, and only during the enrollment phase. Uplift will not consider any additional information before the enrollment phase.

### **Application and Acceptance.**

1. Acceptance to Uplift shall be on a “first-come, first served” basis by school unless Uplift receives more applications for admission at a school than available positions (See “Lottery and Wait List” below).
2. Documentation required for admission shall comply with law and policy.
3. Uplift accepts applications for admission from November 1<sup>st</sup> to February 1<sup>st</sup> (“Application Submission Window”). Applications for admission received during this Window shall be eligible for a lottery, should a lottery be necessary.
4. Applications for admission received after the Application Submission Window shall not be eligible for a lottery, but shall be accepted and processed on a “first-come, first served” basis. Should a wait list exist for the school being applied to, applicants will be added to the wait list, and subsequently offered admission, in the order received. If no wait list exists at the school being applied to, the applicant shall be offered a position.
5. Applicants for Kindergarten must be 5 years of age on September 1<sup>st</sup> in order to enroll.

6. Applicants for First grade must be 6 years of age on September 1<sup>st</sup> in order to enroll.

### **Lottery and Wait List.**

1. "Lottery," as used in this policy, is defined as a random selection process by which applicants for admission to an Uplift school are admitted to the school.
2. If Uplift Education receives more applications for admission at a school than available positions, Uplift Education shall fill the available positions by lottery, which occurs at the beginning of February each year.
3. Applicants who are not identified for admission through the lottery shall be added to a waitlist.

**Enrollment Exclusion.** Applicants with a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or a scholar with a history of discipline problems as described in subchapter A, Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code, that is, offenses for which public school district scholars must or may be expelled, suspended, or assigned to an Alternative Education Program, may be excluded from admission ("Discipline History"). This exclusion from admission is regardless of whether the Discipline History occurred before or after the application for admission to Uplift was submitted.

1. If Discipline History is not disclosed as required during enrollment and is later discovered by Uplift after the applicant is enrolled, the applicant shall be administratively withdrawn effective immediately.
2. A parent is required to, and shall, inform Uplift of any subsequent Discipline History occurring after the date Disciplinary History, if any, is provided during the enrollment process.
3. Any falsifications, misrepresentations, or omissions of information regarding an applicant's Discipline History shall disqualify the applicant from admission to Uplift.

**Enrollment Preferences.** Enrollment preferences include, and are applied in the order of, (1) Staff Preference, (2) Sibling Preference, and (3) Geographic Boundary (i.e., zip code) Preference. The CEO or designee shall determine how the preferences are defined and applied.

### **Reenrollment.**

1. Notice of reenrollment shall be provided to families pursuant to a timeline established by Uplift.
2. A parent or guardian of a current scholar(s) wanting to return for the following school year is required to complete and submit re-enrollment documentation in the spring of each school year.
3. Should a parent or guardian submit written notice of withdrawal during the reenrollment period and subsequently wish for his/her scholar to return to Uplift the subsequent school year, he/she is required to provide written notice to Uplift that such withdrawal is being retracted before the first day of school. If such notice or retraction is not received, the scholar shall be withdrawn from Uplift.
4. Scholars in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade who attend a campus without a 6<sup>th</sup> grade shall automatically matriculate to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade (middle school) as identified by Uplift.

**Scholar Transfers between Uplift Campuses.** Transfers may be permitted during the school year or for the subsequent school year on a discretionary basis. An Uplift scholar who is transferring to a different Uplift school shall not be required to re-enroll in the school being transferred to as the scholar is already enrolled in the Uplift network of schools. Reasons for

transfer may include, but are not limited to, legally mandated reasons, such as because the school is identified by the Texas Education Agency as a “persistently dangerous” public elementary school or secondary school, or if a scholar who is a victim of a violent criminal offense while in or on the grounds of a school that the scholar attends requests the transfer. The CEO or designee is authorized to issue administrative regulations necessary to implement this policy.

**First Day of School.** At Uplift, every school day is critical to scholar success. In order to develop a culture that sets clear expectations for scholars and that communicates, and signals instructional time is sacred and not wasted, all scholars are expected to be present on the first day of school. The provisions herein apply to all scholars, whether previously enrolled at an Uplift school or newly admitted.

**1. Absence on the First Day of School**

a. Enrollment not Withdrawn:

- i. If a scholar is going to be absent on the first day of the school year, the following must apply for the scholar’s enrollment to not be withdrawn:
  1. The scholar’s parent or guardian must notify the school by 10am of the first day of school that the scholar will be absent;
  2. The scholar’s absence is for a reason which would be excused pursuant to the Scholar Handbook.

b. Enrollment Withdrawn:

- i. If a scholar is not present, the scholar will not be counted as enrolled, and the scholar’s enrollment shall be forfeited.
- ii. No later than 4pm on the third of school, the scholar may re-enroll in the school and not have his/her enrollment forfeited so long as:
  1. The parent or guardian of the scholar submits in writing a reason for the absences that qualifies as excusable pursuant to the Scholar Handbook; and,
  2. Uplift Administration makes the determination to re-enroll the scholar.
- iii. If the scholar is absent on the third day of school, he/she shall be formally withdrawn from Uplift beginning at 4pm.

**Parent and Guardian Notification.** Parents and Guardians shall be notified of this policy in the following ways:

1. A letter or email will be sent to parents informing them of this policy at the time or enrollment, reenrollment or by June 1<sup>st</sup>, whichever date is later.
2. Parents of new scholars to Uplift will be provided a copy of the policy during their PAC

- meeting;
3. A summary of this policy will be posted on the home page of the Uplift website and on each campus website;
  4. Parents of currently enrolled scholars and newly admitted scholars (if information is available) will receive an electronic reminder the week before school starts.

**Custody Orders.**

1. The school will assume both parents have equal right to access to their child, including the right to pick up the child from school, unless the school has been provided with a court order which specifically limits the access of the parent to his or her child at the school. A divorce decree setting out custody or visitation schedules is not sufficient to prohibit access of a parent unless the decree specifically provides. Parents involved in divorce or custody proceedings should make every effort to manage these issues without disruption to the scholar or school environment. Parents who fail to comply with this request may be removed from the school campus by the police.
2. The school will not be involved in decisions relating to custody or family disputes, including but not limited to, decisions relating to picking up a child from school. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians, and not the school or Uplift, to ensure the correct parent or guardian is picking up the child from school. Uplift is not responsible for enforcing a custody order. If a parent or guardian is concerned about whether a custody order is being adhered to, he or she is directed to contact law enforcement or a court of law.

**Pre-Kindergarten.** Uplift shall provide pre-kindergarten programming in accordance with law, and, to the extent allowed by law, may elect to provide paid pre-kindergarten programming.

**Administrative Regulations.** The CEO or designee is authorized to issue administrative regulations necessary to implement this policy.

# EXHIBIT F

## **Uplift Credit and Academic Policy**

### **CREDIT POLICY**

- Health is no longer an Uplift requirement.
- All Uplift scholars are required to take a yearlong Professional Communications course as their Speech credit or to meet the Speech Proficiency requirements under the Foundation Graduation Plan.
- **Awarding Credit:** During the academic school year, a scholar will receive full credit for a yearlong course if the combined average of both semesters is 70 or higher (also subject to attendance guidelines)
- **Repeating a Course:** If a scholar repeats a course due to a previous failure, the grades recorded in the original course as well as in the repeated course are used in calculating the scholar's cumulative GPA. Courses with a passing grade may not be repeated for credit.
- **Credit Recovery:** All credit recovery attempts must first be approved by the Campus Director.
  - If a scholar fails a course for the year, they must obtain a 70 or higher for each semester failed to receive full credit.
    - If they fail both semesters, they must repeat both semesters to receive credit.
    - If they fail one semester, they must repeat the semester failed to receive credit.
    - *See the Credit Matrix in the appendix for details regarding credit recovery options.*
  - Scholars who are taking credit recovery classes can take courses from the following programs (subject to approval):
    - PLATO Credit Recovery online
    - UT K-16 Online Learning (full course or credit by exam)
    - Texas Tech K-16 Online Learning
    - Uplift Summer School Courses
    - Dual Credit course through Dallas County or Tarrant County Community Colleges can only be used as credit recovery for elective courses, Government and Economics
    - Other options require pre-approval from the Campus Director
- **Summer School policy:**
  - Scholars can take no more than 2 full year courses during summer school.
  - If a scholar fails a course during the academic year, they are required to attend summer school the following summer (pending course offering)
  - If a scholar fails the course and EOC exam for an Algebra I, Biology I, English I, English II, or US History content course they must retake the course during the following academic year and cannot complete the credit during summer school.
- **Incomplete Grades:**

- Scholars who experience unforeseen circumstances that prevent them from completing course requirements during the time provided may request an extension, in which case a temporary INCOMPLETE (I) will be awarded in lieu of a numeric grade.
- Awarding an Incomplete requires pre-approval from campus leadership.
- Specific criteria and deadlines for making up assignments and assessments will be determined by course instructor and campus leadership.
- The incomplete will be replaced with a final numeric grade once all requirements are met.
- Failure to adhere to the guidelines set by campus leadership will result in potential failure of the course and need for recovery of the credit during summer school or the following academic school year.

## TRANSFER CREDITS

Uplift accepts credits from other accredited schools. Credits will be evaluated in terms of (1) whether the credits meet Texas state requirements for graduation and (2) whether the credits meet Uplift requirements.

- **Accredited Schools:** All transfer grades earned in accredited schools will be converted to the Uplift grading scale and designated so that they are consistent with those established by Uplift Education.
- **Non-Accredited Schools:** Scholars from non-accredited schools or from home schooling programs must take a credit-by-exam (CBE) test approved by Uplift Education in order to receive credit for work completed. The scholar and/or the scholar's family will pay any applicable fees for these exams. Scholars must achieve a CBE score acceptable by Uplift standards in order to receive credit.

## PROMOTION & RETENTION POLICY

High school scholars are promoted/retained according to (1) semesters completed, (2) completion of state assessment requirements and (3) the number of state credits earned in grades 9-12.

- Classification is based on the following:
  - Grade 10 (sophomore)
    - Received a passing score on at least two of the following EOC exams: Algebra I, Biology I, and English I EOC exams.
    - Earned 5 or more credits (must include 1 credit in each of the following: Math, Science, ELA and humanities).
  - Grade 11 (Junior)
    - Received a passing score on each of the following EOC exams: Algebra I, Biology I, and English I EOC exams.
    - Earned 12 or more credits (must include 2 credits in each of the following: Math, Science, ELA and Humanities).
  - Grade 12 (Senior)

- Received a passing score on the following EOC exams: Algebra I, Biology I, English I and English II. Earned 19 or more credits (must include 3 credits in each of the following: Math, Science, ELA and Humanities).
- Scholars are not allowed to take the next level course in a core subject area if they do not receive credit for the previous level.
- Scholars must follow appropriate course sequence for ELA and Math
  - ELA Sequence: English I, English II, English III OR AP English Language and Composition OR IB English, English IV OR AP English Literature and Composition OR IB English.
  - Math Sequence: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, approved Advance Math Course OR IB Mathematics.
- EOCs are given in April/May, retakes occur during July and December.
- Classification is established at the beginning of each semester.
- Scholars transferring from a school that does not require state testing will need to attend Summer School for the EOC prep and take the appropriate EOC exams the summer before entering an Uplift School unless they qualify for an exemption.
- Exceptions require High School Campus Director recommendation and then Managing Director approval.

## **ACCELERATION**

The MYP and DP programs at the Middle and Upper School level are based on a balanced curriculum each year of the program. Required subjects are studied simultaneously and interdisciplinary teaching and learning between subjects promotes higher level thinking in scholars. Therefore, scholars will not be accelerated into courses past the most advanced level of study for their grade level as outlined on the graduation plan.

## **DUAL CREDIT**

**Dual Credit** is an opportunity for high school scholars to earn college credit.

- Qualifications based on requirements outlined by Dallas County Community College District and Tarrant County Community College District.
- Please consult the Road to College Office for more information about particular Dual Credit Courses approved for Uplift scholars.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR COMMENCEMENT**

To be eligible to participate in Commencement, the May graduation exercise, seniors must have met the following requirements:

- Completed all state graduation requirements, as per Chapter 74, Subchapter F (Class of 2017) or Subchapter B (Class of 2018+)
- Passed all STAAR EOC requirements or be eligible for approval through the Individual Graduation Committee (please refer to the Uplift Individual Graduation Committee Policy for details)
- Accepted to a 2- or 4-year college/university.

- Completed a minimum of 100 Community Service Hours or a CAS Project (for DP campuses) during High School.
- **The following exceptions apply:**
  - 5th Year scholars who have completed all graduation requirements by the end of the 1st Semester need not be enrolled for the 2nd Semester.
  - Scholars who experience unforeseen circumstances of an emergency nature may appeal to the Campus Director for permission to participate in graduation exercises.

## GPA POLICY

The grading system is as follows:

	<u>On 100 scale</u>	<u>On 4.0 Scale</u>
A+	100-97	4.0
A	96-93	4.0
A-	92-90	3.7
B+	89-87	3.3
B	86-83	3.0
B-	82-80	2.7
C+	79-77	2.3
C	76-73	2.0
C-	72-70	1.7
F	69 and Below	0.0

## CALCULATION OF GPA

- **Weighted GPA:** to weigh the GPA, the semester grade in each course is added to the course weight. All weighted courses are totaled and divided by the total number of courses to get to the weighted GPA.
  - Example: A scholar earns a grade of 4.0 in an AP English class for the fall semester. Since this course is an AP level course, the scholar earns an additional point. Therefore, the scholar's weighted GPA is a 5.0 ( $4.0 + 1.0 = 5.0$ ) for the semester class.
  - Weights are based on the following scale:
    - Advance placement/IB - 1
    - Dual Credit/Pre-AP/Honors - 0.5
    - All other courses – 0
  - **Quality Points:** Scholars transferring to an Uplift high school will only receive additional weighting for AP/Pre-AP/Honors/Dual Credit courses that were also offered by at the Uplift Campus for their original cohort.

- **Un-weighted GPA:** Un-weighted GPA is the sum of the un-weighted grades on a 4.0 scale divided by the total number of courses.
- **Communication on Transcript:** The scholar's transcript will show both (1) weighted GPA on a 5.0 scale and (2) un-weighted GPA on a 4.0 scale.

## RANKING POLICY

- Rank is calculated at the end of the first semester of the 9th grade. PowerSchool will automatically begin to rank scholars as soon as they have acquired credit in the 9th grade.
- Rank will be calculated all semester grades and will be based on weighted GPA. The
- The following courses are not included in the GPA:
  - Pass/Fail Courses do not receive GPA points. Without a numeric grade, no GPA points can be awarded.
  - HS credits earned in middle school do not count towards class ranking or GPA. Local credits earned do not count towards class ranking or GPA.
  - Credit by exam courses do not count toward class ranking or GPA. Credit by exam is only offered upon approval of the managing director.
  - If a scholar repeats a course where credit has already been earned, then the first course will have to be listed as a state credit and the second time will be local credit. For example: If a scholar took Art 1 in the 9th grade and took it again in the 10th grade, then the 10th grade Art 1 would count as a local credit.
- **Valedictorian & Salutatorian:** Graduating seniors with the highest and second highest cumulative weighted grade point average as determined at the end of the eighth semester senior year and carried out three decimal places will be eligible to serve as a valedictorian and salutatorian, respectfully.
  - In the event of a tie for valedictorian or salutatorian, the scholars will share the honor.
  - Valedictorian and salutatorian eligibility requires attendance at Uplift high school for 6 consecutive semesters preceding graduation.
  - A scholar who is in violation of school code of conduct, honor code, or has criminal charges pending may be deemed ineligible to represent school as the valedictorian or salutatorian.
- **Internal Communication of Rank:** Rank will be communicated to scholars and their families who are in the top 25% at the end of freshman year and at the end of every semester that follows. For those scholars below the top 25%, scholars and their families will be told what quartile they are in.
- **External Communication of Rank:** Each campus at Uplift will communicate rank by doing the following:
  - The Rank field on transcripts will read DNR (Do Not Rank)
  - Rank will only be communicated in the college and scholarship process when necessary for automatic acceptance or scholarship selection.
    - Communication of rank will be included in the Counselor Recommendation Letter or in the form of a standardized letter/report such as the Common Application secondary school report, mid-year report, and final year report.
    - For scholars in the top 25%, counselors will note scholar as Valedictorian,

Salutatorian, “Top 10%” or “Top 25%”.

- For the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University at College Station, we will adhere to their admissions requirements and communicate rank accordingly for those scholars meeting automatic admission requirements.
- Communication on individual campus profiles will communicate the following: rank policy, grade distribution for current seniors based on sixth semester grades, and weighting methodology.

# **EXHIBIT G**

## **Grading Philosophy and Practices for Grades 6-12**

### **Grading Philosophy**

Uplift Education is committed to ensuring equity and achievement for all of our scholars. To make sure that we are maximizing our intentional efforts to provide a holistic educational experience for all of our scholars, we understand that how we measure and represent scholar learning is critical to the success of our learning communities. Listed below are the five core tenets of our network-wide grading philosophy:

1. Grades reflect mastery of content and growth in skills;
2. Grades should be fair and reflective of rigorous curriculum and align with grade level promotion as well as exit level goals (STAAR, DP Assessment, ACT, College & Career);
3. Grading practices should be aligned to the IB standards and practices and required policies;
4. Grades should be more indicative of scholars' performance on future standardized assessments;
5. Grades across the network should be normative and reliable indicators of scholar ability and areas of opportunity;

### **Teacher Grading Practices**

Grades shall be a fair reflection of each scholar's skills and knowledge using a variety of assessment tools. Classroom grading procedures shall be directly related to clear criteria and standards that show evidence of scholar contribution to their development. Below is a list of guidelines that each campus grading policy must adhere to:

- a. Grading criteria shall be made available to scholars prior to attempting an assessment.
  - i. Teachers shall provide a written overview of course requirements and expectations to scholars and parents during the first week of classes in each course. This will include assessment measures and grading scale.
  - ii. Teachers shall provide scholars with a rubric before administering each summative assessment (i.e., end of unit exam, research papers, performance tasks, projects).
  - iii. Self-assessment and the monitoring of progress by scholars shall be a component of the overall assessment process.
- b. **Achievement of skills and knowledge shall be the primary basis for grades.** Grades should reflect a scholar's process of arriving at knowledge as much as it reflects a scholar's final product.

- c. If measurements beyond mastery are included within a grade, such as effort, participation, attitude, and other behaviors, these measurements should represent only a minor basis of any grade and be categorized in isolation from the assessments measuring mastery. Examples of these measures may include *IB Learner Profile*, *IB Approaches to Learning*, personal reflections of growth, and *Habits of Scholarship*.
- d. Late/Incomplete summative work (i.e., projects, essays, labs, etc.) will be handled as follows:
  - i. Teachers will set due dates and deadlines for all summative assessments that will be part of a scholar's grade. Due dates and deadlines must be clearly stated for scholars.
  - ii. Scholars are expected to complete all required summative assessments and will be given opportunities to do so. It is the scholars' responsibility to work with the instructor and identify missed summative assessments. In addition, teachers shall notify scholars and/or parents of missed work. Notice on major works and due dates should be provided at the beginning of the unit. Teachers are encouraged to provide scholars and parents with progress monitoring sheets indicating missing work.
  - iii. Summative assessments that are handed in late, if penalized, will not earn a grade higher than the maximum grade allowed under the reassessment policy. For example, if a school allows scholars to retake an assessment for a maximum grade of 80%, summative assessments that are handed in late will not earn a grade higher than an 80%.
  - iv. Campuses shall establish a timeline in which late work, if accepted, is given credit. For example, all late assignments must be reconciled by the end of each three-week Progress Report period.
  - v. Scholars may be exempt from penalties for extenuating circumstances.
  - vi. When a scholar does not turn in a summative assessment by the original deadline, teachers must do the following within two school days:
    - i. Notify scholar of late penalty policy and provide a date for submission.
    - ii. ii. Notify parents in writing and/or via phone.

## **Grade Reporting**

Uplift Education campuses report grades on a nine-week grading cycle. All Uplift Education campuses will provide Individual Progress Reports at the 3-week and 6-week mark (exceptions can be approved by Managing Director) of a grading cycle and Report Cards at the end of each 9-week grading cycle.

## **Gradebook Guidelines**

Grades shall be posted/recorded in a timely manner. Formative assessments shall be posted/recorded no later than within five instructional days. Summative assessments shall be posted/recorded no later than within ten instructional days. Grades shall be based on scholar mastery of standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) and the district curriculum. Grades should reflect a scholar's academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course.

Teachers should have a sufficient quantity and variety of assessments during the grading period to accurately reflect academic achievement. Teachers will record a minimum of one formative/summative grade per week. ICS will provide further specifications.

Grades of "0" assigned for work not completed may be changed upon the completion and submission of such assignments by the scholar. The teacher will have discretion over the grade assigned within the parameters of the campus or department grading procedures. Scholars with grades of "0" for missing work may be assigned mandatory tutorial session(s) until the assignments are completed. A system of interventions with the scholar should be such that receiving a "0" for work not completed will be a rare occurrence and involve a great deal of time and effort on the part of the scholar.

Furthermore, it is the position of Uplift Education that giving a grade of a zero for incomplete or late work is not a best practice and runs counter to our grading philosophy. The first tenet of our grading philosophy is that **"grades reflect mastery of content"**. Teachers shall deeply consider whether assigning a zero for an assignment based off of behavior (not turning in work, not attending class, etc.) results in an overall course grade that reflects mastery of content.

**Additionally, research has shown that a grade of zero for a short-term failure is a key contributing factor for long term failure in demotivating scholars.** A zero disproportionately skews the overall grade downward compared to failures for other reasons, such as not adequately grasping the concepts presented. Finally, it should be noted that the effectiveness of giving grades of zero as a disciplinary tool has been roundly rejected by academic research into the matter. A best practice is, if after every effort has been made to intervene with the scholar to complete the course work and the scholar still does not complete the work, that the scholar receives a minimum grade of 50%-60% to avoid sabotaging the scholar's overall chances at passing the course, thus maintaining an incentive to remain engaged in the classroom.

### **Extra Credit Policy**

The purpose of grading and reporting grades is to provide an accurate reflection of a scholar's knowledge of the most essential concepts in the stated curriculum. Given this purpose, teachers should not create extra credit activities or assignments. Extra credit assignments tend to be misaligned with the mission of grading by creating grades that are *not* achievement based, spending extra time on an objective that is already adequately tested, or giving assignments that do not cover the essential knowledge and skills. Instead of providing extra credit, teachers should adhere to the reassessment policies outlined in this Guideline and in their Individual Campus Supplement (ICS).

## Grading Scale and Grade Point Scale

The grade scale at Uplift Education campuses is as follows:

Raw Score	Letter Grade	Grade Points (for credit classes only)	Descriptor
97-100	A+	4.0	Excellent
93-96	A	4.0	Excellent
90-92	A-	3.7	Excellent
87-89	B+	3.3	Good
83-86	B	3.0	Good
80-82	B-	2.7	Good
77-79	C+	2.3	Satisfactory
73-76	C	2.0	Satisfactory
70-72	C-	1.7	Satisfactory
69 and Below	F	0	Unsatisfactory

For AP and IB courses, 1 additional grade point will be added to the grade point scale below. For example, a scholar who earns a B in an AP class will be awarded 4 grade points. In order to qualify for the 1-point addition, the course must be represented on a scholar's official transcript as an AP course. Dual Credit and Honors courses are given a weight of 0.5 extra points. Also, please note that all failing grades receive an F. Since anything below a 70 is considered a failure, a D is not included in the scale.

### Academic Dishonesty

#### Treatment of Academic Dishonesty

If a scholar is suspected of plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty, the following procedure will be followed:

- The scholar's paper, exam, test, quiz, or assignment will be confiscated by the teacher.

- The paper, exam, test, quiz, or assignment will be submitted to an administrator for consideration.
- The scholar will be required to meet with the teacher and a Campus administrator for review of the scholar's work and, if found in violation of this policy and the Uplift Scholar Code of Conduct, receive appropriate consequences in line with the severity of the offense. These may include:
  - o Formal Choice Management Referral write-up
  - o Grade reduction on plagiarized work or Re-do of plagiarized work
  - o Counseling and attendance at Academic Integrity Roundtable with the Dean of Scholar
  - o Completion of community service hours
  - o Enrollment in academic probation

Severe instances of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may lead to suspension or expulsion.

### **Reassessment Policy**

Across all Uplift campuses, scholars should be given access to reassessment. The intent of this policy is to provide scholars with additional opportunities to demonstrate mastery of the content.

### **Reassessment Expectations**

Scholars that score below mastery (80%) will have the opportunity to take reassessments at all Uplift campuses to improve their grade up to an 80%. Certain assessments may be excluded from the reassessment policy, through a joint decision of the teacher and his/her campus leadership team. The ICS should explain how teachers and campus leadership teams craft communications around assignments that are not eligible for reassessment or use a different reassessment policy. Final exams and Uplift common assessments do not have opportunities for reassessment.

For any given assessment, providing at least one reassessment is required. After that, it is up to the discretion of the teacher and administration.

### **Reassessment Timeline**

Campuses will determine when opportunities exist for scholars to retest. Scholars may be required to attend tutorials, complete test corrections, or perform other tasks prior to retesting, as expressed in the Individual Campus Supplement.

Quarter grades, *including* all reassessment grades, shall be finalized by the deadline for completing grade verification sheets.

### **Test Format**

The reassessment must cover the same material, or objectives, as the original assessment. However, the test or assignment may be in a different format or have new questions. The Individual Campus Supplement contains campus specific guidelines about the test format.

### **Communication to Scholars and Parents**

The reassessment policies in the individual campus supplement should be shared with scholars and parents at the beginning of each school year. Teachers should communicate and plan for the retest within a reasonable time period after the teacher notifies the scholar of a grade eligible for reassessment.

### **Additional Guidelines for Reassessment**

Campuses may determine additional guidelines to further specify the implementation of the reassessment policy.

# **EXHIBIT H**

## **Parent Grievance Policy**

Policy Effective Date: October 10, 2019

The Uplift Education (“Uplift”) Board of Trustees (“Board”) has adopted this grievance policy in order to provide parents an opportunity to be heard and in an effort to hear and resolve parent grievances in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible. “Parent” is defined as parent, guardian, a person with legal custody over a scholar, and scholars 18 years of age and older. For purposes of this policy, “grievance” and “complaint” have the same meaning.

Parent grievances shall be filed and addressed in accordance with this policy, except for complaints alleging one or more of the following:

1. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on gender, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law shall be filed and addressed pursuant to the “Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar” policy.
2. Complaints alleging dating violence shall be filed and addressed pursuant to the “Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar” policy.
3. Complaints concerning retaliation related to discrimination and harassment shall be filed and addressed pursuant to the “Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar” policy.
4. Complaints concerning expulsion shall be filed and addressed pursuant to the Scholar Code of Conduct.
5. Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, educational placement, or discipline of a scholar with a disability within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act shall be submitted in accordance with the procedural safeguards handbook provided to parents of all scholars referred to special education.
6. Complaints concerning identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a scholar with a disability within the scope of Section 504 shall be submitted in accordance with the procedural safeguards handbook.
7. Complaints concerning issues addressed by a specific policy.

### **Informal Process**

Parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the appropriate teacher, campus director, or

other campus administrator who has the authority to address the concerns. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest administrative level.

Seeking an informal resolution shall not extend any deadline in this policy with respect to filing a formal grievance, except by written mutual consent.

### **Formal Process**

While informal resolution is encouraged, a parent may initiate the formal grievance process by timely filing a written grievance.

The process described in this policy shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or Board policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or “mini-trial” at any level.

A parent whose grievance is resolved informally may withdraw a formal grievance at any time.

### **Freedom from Retaliation**

Neither the Board nor any Uplift employee shall unlawfully retaliate against a parent for bringing a concern or complaint, either informally or formally.

### **Notice to Parents**

All parents shall be given notice of this policy by Uplift. Receipt of the Scholar Handbook constitutes parent notification.

### **Filing**

All written grievances and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, by electronic communication, including email and fax, or by U.S. Mail.

Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Fax or email filings shall be timely filed if they are received on or before the deadline, as indicated by the time/date shown on the fax copy of the email receipt notice. Mail filings shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. mail on the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designee no more than three business days after the deadline.

### **Days**

“Days” shall mean Uplift business days, unless otherwise noted. The day a document is filed is “day zero.” The following day is “day one.”

## **Representative**

“Representative” means any person or organization designated by the parent to represent the parent in the grievance process. The parent may designate a representative through written notice to Uplift at any level of the process. If the parent designates a representative for the first time before a scheduled conference, Uplift may reschedule the conference to a later date, if desired, in order to include Uplift’s counsel or other representative.

## **Related Grievances**

Grievances arising out of an event or series of related events shall be addressed in one grievance. Parents shall not bring separate or serial grievances arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous grievance.

When two or more grievances are sufficiently similar in nature and remedy sought to permit their resolution through one proceeding, Uplift may consolidate the grievances.

## **Untimely Filings**

All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by written consent of both parties.

If a written grievance or appeal notice is not timely filed, the grievance may be dismissed, on written notice to the parent. The parent may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten business days of the dismissal date, starting at the level at which the grievance was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

## **Expenses Incurred**

Each party shall pay its own expenses incurred in the course of the grievance process.

## **Grievances, Appeal Notices and Submission of Documentation**

Grievances under this policy must be filed in writing.

Copies of any documents that support the grievance should be attached to grievance. If the parent does not have hard copies of the documents, they may be presented at the Level One conference. No documentation may be submitted by a parent after the Level One conference.

A written grievance that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be re-filed with all the requested information so long as the re-filing is within the designated time for filing a complaint.

## **Scheduling Hearing Conferences**

Uplift shall make reasonable attempts to schedule hearing conferences at a mutually agreeable time with the scholar or parent. If unsuccessful, Uplift will schedule the hearing and notify the parent. If the parent fails to appear at the scheduled conference, Uplift may hold the conference and issue a decision in the parent's absence.

### **Level One**

A written grievance must be filed within 10 business days of the date the parent first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the grievance with the appropriate administrator or designee.

The Level One administrator assigned to hear the grievance shall be the campus director for the school which the parent's child attends; however, the CEO reserves the right to appoint another administrator to serve as hearing officer.

The Level One administrator shall hold a conference with the parent within ten business days after the receipt of the grievance form. The parent shall bring copies of any documents the parent requests to be considered to the Level One conference. An audio recording shall be made of the Level One conference.

The Level One administrator shall have ten business days following the conference to issue the parent a written decision. The Level One administrator may attach any relevant documentation to the Level One decision that supports the decision.

### **Level Two**

If the parent did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a decision has expired, the scholar or parent may file a written appeal to the Managing Director of the School or designee.

The appeal notice must be filed within ten business days after receipt of a decision or, if no decision was received, within ten business days of the Level One decision deadline.

The Level Two administrator assigned to hear the grievance shall be the Managing Director for the school which the parent's child attends; however, the CEO reserves the right to appoint another administrator to serve as hearing officer.

The Level Two administrator shall hold a conference with the parent within ten business days after the receipt of the appeal notice. An audio recording shall be made of the Level Two conference. At the conference, the Level Two administrator shall consider only the issues and documents presented at Level One.

The Level Two administrator shall have ten business days following the conference to issue the

parent a written decision. The Level Two administrator may attach any relevant documentation to the Level Two decision that supports such a decision.

### **Level 3 – Final Appeal to the Uplift Board of Governors**

If the scholar or parent did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a decision has expired, the scholar or parent may file a written appeal to the Board of Governors.

The appeal notice must be filed within ten business days after receipt of a decision or, if no decision was received, within ten business days of the Level Two decision deadline.

The Board of Governors shall hear grievances at Level Three. The parent will be informed of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the grievance shall be heard. The date, time, and place of the Board meeting shall only be rescheduled if a quorum of the board is not present.

The Board shall consider only those issues and documents presented at the Level One, except that if at the Level Two hearing, the administration intends to rely on documentation not previously submitted, the administration shall provide the parent or scholar with notice of the nature of the documentation at least three business days before the Level Three hearing.

The presiding officer of the Board may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation, which may be in open or closed meeting as determined by the presiding officer in accordance with the Texas Open Meeting Act and other applicable law.

The Board shall consider the grievance and may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Board may attach relevant documentation to its decision that supports such decision. If for any reason the Board fails to reach a decision regarding the grievance by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of decision by the Board upholds the decision of the Level Two administrator.

The Decision of the Board is Final.

# **EXHIBIT I**

## **Dress and Uniform Requirements**

[INSERT CAMPUS LOGO HERE]

**2026-2027**

### **School Dress and Uniform Requirements**

**Purpose:** All scholars must come to school in uniform every day (unless denoted by their campus for a special event). If a scholar arrives at school out of uniform, parents/guardians are notified and asked to bring in a uniform. If the school has extra uniforms on hand, staff may have the child change himself/herself into the borrowed clothing. If Uplift lends clothing, families are responsible for washing and returning the items within three business days.

Uniforms also provide a layer of security, making it more feasible to spot someone who should not be on campus. Each scholar is responsible for his or her compliance with the dress and uniform code during school hours. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child complies with the dress code before their child comes to school. Violations of the dress code may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the school's behavior management plan.

<b>Tops (Shirts/Blouses etc.)</b>	<b>Bottoms (Pants/Skirts etc.)</b>
<b>Outerwear (Hoodies/Raincoats etc.)</b>	<b>Accessories (Jewelry/Headwear etc.)</b>

<b>Backpacks</b>	<b>Spirit Day Dress</b>
<b>Casual Day Dress</b>	<b>Other</b>

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# **EXHIBIT J**

## **Title IX Grievance Process**

Effective Date: August 14, 2020

### **Uplift Education’s Title IX Sex-Based Harassment Procedures**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (“sex-based discrimination”) in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. As required by Title IX, Uplift does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities. Retaliation against anyone for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or related Uplift policy is a violation of the law and Uplift policy and is prohibited.

Sex-based discrimination includes discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. Sex-based discrimination includes sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. The requirement not to discriminate on the basis of sex extends to the admission of scholars in Uplift’s education programs or activities and to applicants for employment. See Uplift’s Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar policy for definitions of terms, including discrimination, harassment, sex-based harassment, Title IX sex-based harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.

The following procedures are in addition to the procedures in Uplift’s Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar policy, which apply to all reports of discrimination, including harassment, and retaliation based on a protected class. Individuals are encouraged to review Uplift’s Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar policy carefully in addition to these procedures.

**Reporting.** Any person who becomes aware of sex-based discrimination or retaliation related to a Title IX matter by or against an Uplift scholar is encouraged to report it promptly to a teacher, school counselor, academic director, other Uplift employee, or the Title IX Coordinator. Any Uplift employee who becomes aware of information suggesting that sex-based discrimination or retaliation has, is, or may be occurring by or against an Uplift scholar must report it immediately to the employee’s academic director or other supervisor and the Title IX Coordinator identified in this document. Any report received by an academic director or other supervisor must be immediately reported to the Title IX Coordinator.

Any person may report sex-based discrimination or retaliation, regardless of whether the person is the individual who allegedly experienced the discrimination. If you wish to report or file a complaint of sex-based discrimination or retaliation, you may do so at any time, including during non-business hours, by mail, telephone, or electronic mail by contacting the Title IX Coordinator using the contact information provided in these procedures and Uplift’s Freedom from

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar policy. Reports or complaints may also be made in person to the Title IX Coordinator at the address provided.

**Grievance Process.** In accordance with Title IX rules issued by the U.S. Department of Education, Uplift follows the grievance process in this document upon receipt of a report, complaint, or other information suggesting conduct in its education program or activity and against a person in the United States that meets the definitions of “Title IX Sex-Based Harassment,” as defined in Uplift’s Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar policy.

For all other complaints of sex-based discrimination, including sex-based harassment that does not meet the definition of “Title IX Sex-Based Harassment,” Uplift follows the grievance process in Uplift’s Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar policy.

**Title IX Coordinator.** Uplift’s Title IX Coordinator is authorized to address concerns or inquiries regarding sex-based discrimination and retaliation for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or related Uplift policy. Uplift’s Title IX Coordinator is Taylor Montgomery. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached by email at [titleix@uplifteducation.org](mailto:titleix@uplifteducation.org), by phone at 469-621-8500, or in person or by mail at 3000 Pegasus Park Drive, Suite 1100, Dallas, Texas 75247.

#### *Title IX Sex-Based Harassment Grievance Process*

The following process applies to all allegations of “Title IX Sex-Based Harassment”:

**Complainant and Respondent.** In accordance with the Title IX Rules and Regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Education, throughout this Title IX Sex-Based Harassment Grievance Process, an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute Title IX sex-based harassment will be referred to as the “complainant” and the individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute Title IX sex-based harassment will be referred to as the “respondent.” While parents and guardians of minor parties do not become complainants or respondents in a matter, parents and guardians have the legal right to act on behalf of minor parties, including filing Formal Complaints, in Title IX matters.

**Presumption of Non-Responsibility.** A respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination is made at the conclusion of the Title IX Sex-Based Harassment Grievance Process.

**Initial Response to a Report of Title IX Sex-Based Harassment.** Promptly after receiving notice of an allegation of Title IX Sex-Based Harassment, the Title IX Coordinator or their designee will contact the complainant to discuss the availability of Supportive Measures, with or without the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint; consider the complainant’s wishes concerning Supportive Measures; and provide information about the option to and process for filing a Title IX Formal Complaint.

**Title IX “Formal Complaints.”** A Title IX Formal Complaint may only be filed by the complainant or the Title IX Coordinator. A Title IX Formal Complaint is required to initiate the

grievance process for Title IX Sex-Based Harassment. Uplift may not impose any punitive or disciplinary consequences that are not Supportive Measures unless a Formal Complaint has been filed and investigated with a finding of responsibility after completion of the Title IX Sex-Based Harassment grievance process. Nothing prohibits Uplift from processing any alleged conduct that does not meet the definition of Title IX Sex-Based Harassment through its other policies and procedures, including the Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation policy, the Employee Handbook, or the Scholar Code of Conduct.

**Impartial Process.** The Title IX Coordinator will identify any bias or conflict of interest that would prevent the Coordinator, their designee, an investigator, a decision-maker, or an informal resolution facilitator from serving impartially, including by avoiding bias against any particular complainant or respondent or complainants or respondents generally; avoiding conflicts of interest, either personal or institutional; and avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue. Any Title IX Coordinator designee, investigator, decision-maker, or informal resolution facilitator assigned to a matter must promptly notify the Title IX Coordinator of any known or suspected information that could lead to a perception of bias, conflict of interest, or prejudgment for their role. Any person whom the Title IX Coordinator determines has an impermissible bias, conflict of interest, or risk of prejudgment will be recused and replaced with an alternative.

**Supportive Measures.** Supportive Measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive, and individualized services that Uplift may put in place, without fee or charge and as reasonably available to both the complainant and respondent, after receiving notice of Title IX Sexual Harassment. Supportive Measures are designed to restore or preserve access to Uplift's Education Program and Activity, protect the safety of all parties and Uplift's educational environment, or deter Title IX Sexual Harassment, while not being punitive in nature or unreasonably burdening any party. Supportive Measures may include counseling, deadline extensions and other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual contact restrictions, increased security, and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures. The Title IX Coordinator will consider the complainant's wishes regarding the implementation of Supportive Measures. Supportive Measures will be available whether or not a Formal Complaint is filed, can be adjusted based on evolving needs, and will continue as necessary.

The Title IX Coordinator or designee will monitor Supportive Measures, which will be modified if necessary to prevent sexual harassment or provide a safe educational environment.

**Advisors.** Both the complainant and respondent may select an advisor of their choice (who may or may not be an attorney) to assist them throughout the Title IX Grievance Process. The advisor is in addition to a minor party's parent/guardian, who may also assist and participate in the process. For a minor party, Uplift will require parent/guardian consent for any non-parent advisor's participation. Each party is responsible for their own fees or charges associated with the services provided by the Advisor of their choice.

**Emergency Removal.** A respondent scholar may be immediately removed from their campus or any class, program, or activity of Uplift if it conducts an individualized safety and risk analysis and finds emergency removal necessary to protect a scholar or other individual from an immediate

threat to their physical health or safety arising from the allegations of sexual harassment. If Uplift decides to remove a respondent scholar from campus on this basis, Uplift will notify the respondent scholar and provide the respondent scholar an opportunity to challenge the emergency removal decision immediately following the removal. Emergency removal will not modify any rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Administrative Leave.** A respondent employee may be placed on administrative leave during the pendency of the Title IX Grievance Process.

**Formal Complaint.** A Formal Complaint may be filed by a complainant (or the parent/guardian of a minor complainant) or signed by the Title IX Coordinator. For a complainant-filed Formal Complaint, the complainant or their parent/guardian can submit a completed and signed Title IX Discrimination Complaint Form to the Title IX Coordinator.

**Consolidation.** The Title IX Coordinator may consolidate multiple Formal Complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances. If multiple Formal Complaints are consolidated, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of consolidation to the complainant(s) and respondent(s).

**Notice of Allegations.** Upon receipt of a Formal Complaint, Uplift will promptly provide written notice to the known parties of:

1. The Title IX Grievance Process;
2. The allegations of conduct potentially constituting sexual harassment;
3. Sufficient details, including the identities of the parties involved in the incident if known, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the incident if known, with sufficient time to prepare a response before an initial interview;
5. The presumption the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the Title IX Grievance Process;
6. The entitlement of the parties to (a) have an advisor of their choice (who may or may not be an attorney) and (b) inspect and review evidence; and
7. The prohibitions in Uplift policy that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during processes such as the Title IX Grievance Process.

Uplift will supplement the Notice of Allegations to all known parties if during the investigation it decides to investigate additional allegations not included in the previous Notice of Allegations.

**Formal Complaint Dismissal.** In accordance with the Department of Education's Title IX regulations, Uplift must dismiss a Formal Complaint under Title IX if the alleged conduct, even if provided, would not constitute "Title IX Sexual Harassment." Specifically, Uplift **must** dismiss a Formal Complaint if the alleged conduct, even if proved, would not be:

1. Employee quid pro quo, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, unwelcome sex-based conduct that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies equal access to Uplift's education program or activity
2. In Uplift's education program or activity, or
3. Against a person in the United States.

All relevant terms are defined in Uplift's Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar policy. Dismissal for one of these mandatory reasons does not preclude action under another provision of Uplift's Scholar Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook, or other policies and procedures.

Uplift **may** dismiss a Formal Complaint, or any allegation therein, at any time if it would not be unreasonable in light of the known circumstances and:

1. The complainant submits a written request to the Title IX Coordinator to withdraw the Formal Complaint or any allegation therein
2. The respondent is no longer enrolled with or employed by Uplift, or
3. Circumstances prevent Uplift from gathering sufficient evidence to reach a determination as to the Formal Complaint or the allegations therein.

Dismissal for one of these permissive reasons precludes action under another provision of Uplift's Scholar Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook, or other policies and procedures.

Uplift will continue to provide reasonable Supportive Measures to the parties after a dismissal.

Either a complainant or respondent may appeal the dismissal of a Formal Complaint by filing an appeal in accordance with the Appeal procedure described below.

**Investigation.** Any investigation of a Formal Complaint will be conducted in accordance with this Title IX Grievance Process and will treat complainants and respondents equitably, including but not limited to providing Supportive Measures to both complainants and respondents and not imposing any punitive or disciplinary consequences unless a determination of responsibility is made after an investigation and adjudication under this Grievance Process.

The Title IX Coordinator or designee will appoint one or more investigators to investigate the Formal Complaint. The Investigator will develop a reasonably prompt timeline in which the investigation will be conducted in accordance with the requirements herein. A temporary delay of the Title IX Grievance Process or the limited extension of time frames for good cause will be allowed upon written notice to the complainant and respondent describing the delay or extension and the reasons for the action.

The Investigator will locate, gather, and take control of relevant evidence; identify potential sources of evidence; and conduct interviews with relevant parties and witnesses. Written notice will be provided to the parties at least 24 hours in advance of interviews or meetings conducted as part of the investigation and will include the date, time, location, and purpose of the interview or

meeting. Uplift will not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

During an investigation, and throughout the Title IX Grievance Process, the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rest with Uplift and not the parties. Uplift cannot access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless Uplift obtains a party's voluntary, written consent to do so for a Title IX Formal Complaint. Parties will have an equal opportunity to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. No party will be restricted from discussing the allegations under investigation or gathering and presenting relevant evidence, although all parties are subject to the generally-applicable prohibition on retaliation regarding any information they choose to share.

Prior to completion of a final investigation report, the Investigator will provide both parties and their advisors access to any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations in the Formal Complaint. Each party will be provided 10 calendar days from receipt of the evidence to inspect and review the evidence and submit a written response to the evidence. The Investigator will consider any timely written responses received prior to completion of a final investigation report, which will fairly summarize all relevant evidence. The investigation report will be provided to both parties and their advisors, who may submit a written response to the investigation report within 10 calendar days.

**Decision-Making Process.** The Title IX Coordinator, or designee will appoint one or more Decision Makers to complete the decision-making process required herein. The final investigation report and any written responses submitted by the parties will be provided to the Title IX Decision-Maker(s). The Decision-Maker(s) will objectively evaluate all relevant evidence—inculpatory and exculpatory—to reach a decision, and may not make credibility determinations based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

The Decision-Maker(s) will notify each party of the right to submit written, relevant questions that the party wants asked of any party or witness to the Decision-Maker. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The Decision-Maker(s) will explain to the party proposing the questions, any decision to exclude a question as not relevant. The Decision-Maker(s) will provide each party with the answers to all questions and allow each party to submit limited, relevant follow-up questions.

After considering the investigation report, any responses to the investigation report, the relevant evidence in the record, and answers to questions submitted by the parties or the Decision-Maker,

the Decision-Maker will make a determination as to the respondent's responsibility. The Decision-Maker(s) will provide a copy of the Determination of Responsibility to each party and their advisors.

**Standard of Evidence.** The standard of evidence used to determine responsibility in the Title IX Grievance Process regarding sexual harassment will be a "preponderance of the evidence" standard. This means that an allegation is substantiated if it is deemed more likely to have occurred than not.

**Outcomes.** If the Decision-Maker(s) determine(s) a respondent scholar is responsible for the allegations made in the Formal Complaint, Uplift will promptly respond by implementing appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Scholar Code of Conduct and may take all corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The types of disciplinary action Uplift may implement following a Determination of Responsibility against a respondent scholar include:

1. Cooling off time or time out;
2. Seating change within classroom;
3. Various age-appropriate reflective assignments;
4. Check in and check out sheet;
5. Scholar conference with teacher or administrator
6. Parent phone call;
7. Parent conference;
8. Circle conference; or restorative action or assignment;
9. Verbal or written correction;
10. Education/training;
11. Emotional Intelligence classes or activities;
12. Participation in a book study;
13. Research assignment on related subject-matter;
14. Daily or weekly scholar improvement plan;
15. Behavioral contract
16. Safety plan;
17. Stay away agreement;
18. Counseling by teachers, School counselors or campus leaders;

19. Conflict Resolution or mediation
20. Referral to Student Support Team;
21. Community service or classroom service;
22. School-related assigned tasks or duties;
23. Loss or restriction of privileges (e.g., eligibility to hold special positions, exemption from exams, etc.);
24. Consequences related to scholar participation in extracurricular activities, including removal, suspension, or restriction of participation;
25. Removal from class to campus office;
26. Issuance of demerits;
27. Confiscation of items;
28. Referral to an outside agency or legal authority;
29. Reverse suspension;
30. Detention;
31. In-School Suspension;
32. Other alternative placement, if available;
33. Out-of-School Suspension; and
34. Expulsion.

If the Decision-Maker(s) determine(s) a respondent employee is responsible for the allegations made in the Formal Complaint, Uplift will promptly respond by implementing appropriate employee disciplinary action in accordance with the Employee Handbook and may take all corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The types of employee disciplinary action Uplift may implement following a Determination of Responsibility against a respondent employee include:

1. Counseling or verbal reprimands;
2. Written reprimands;
3. Suspension, with or without pay; and
4. Termination.

If a Determination of Responsibility is made against the respondent, Uplift will also provide appropriate remedies to the complainant, which may include the same individualized services provided as Supportive Measures, to ensure access to Uplift's education program and activities is

restored or preserved.

The foregoing lists are required by Federal law under Title IX, are not exclusive, and are purely for purposes of notice as to the possible range of remedies and disciplinary actions and do not reflect the probability that any particular outcome will occur.

**Appeals.** Either party may appeal either a Dismissal or Determination of Responsibility by submitting a completed Title IX Appeal form to the Title IX Coordinator within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the Notice of Dismissal or Determination of Responsibility.

Appeals may be brought only upon one or more of the following grounds:

1. A procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
2. New evidence is available that was not reasonably available at the time the Dismissal or Determination of Responsibility was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
3. The Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s), or Decision-Maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

An appeal must set forth the Dismissal or Determination of Responsibility being appealed, the specific grounds for the appeal, and facts supporting the identified appeal grounds.

If an appeal is timely filed, The Title IX Coordinator or designee will appoint an Appellate Decision-Maker to complete the appeal process required herein. The Appellate Decision-Maker will provide notice of any appeal to both parties and provide the parties an opportunity to submit a written statement in support of or challenging the appeal. The notice will provide a deadline and method for submission of written statements. The Appellate Decision-Maker will consider the appeal, the record, and any written statements submitted by the parties. The Appellate Decision-Maker will then either uphold or overturn the Dismissal or Determination of Responsibility. The Appellate Decision-Maker will issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and rationale for the result which will be provided to both parties within ten (10) calendar days of the appeal. The Appellate-Decision-Maker's decision concludes the Title IX Grievance Process.

**Retaliation.** Neither Uplift nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation proceeding, or hearing under Title IX. Retaliation includes intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for Code of Conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or Formal Complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Scholar policy and will be investigated using the Investigation of Reports Other Than Title IX Sexual Harassment in that policy.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation prohibited by Title IX. Charging an individual with a Code of Conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a Title IX Formal Complaint proceeding does not constitute retaliation prohibited by Title IX, provided, however, that a Determination of Responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

**Confidentiality.** Uplift must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) statute, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, or FERPA regulations, 34 C.F.R. part 99, or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of 34 C.F.R. part 106, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder. 34 C.F.R. 106.71(a)

**Access to Policies and Procedures.** Information regarding Uplift's Title IX Grievance Process will be distributed annually in the Employee and Scholar Handbooks. Copies of Uplift's Title IX Grievance Process will be posted on Uplift's website, to the extent practicable, and readily available at each campus and Uplift's administrative offices.

**Inquiries about Title IX.** Inquiries about Title IX and its application may be referred to Uplift's Title IX Coordinator or the Assistant Secretary in the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Education (DOE), or both. OCR can be reached using the following contact information:

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Dallas Office

1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620

Dallas, TX 75201-6810

Telephone: (214) 661-9600

Facsimile: (214) 661-9587

Email: [OCR.Dallas@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Dallas@ed.gov)

## **EXHIBIT L**

### **Child Nutrition Program Charge Policy**

Policy Effective Date: September 12, 2015

Uplift Education wants every scholar to eat a healthy breakfast and lunch each day. We regard it as the responsibility of the parent or guardian to complete the federal lunch application provided by Uplift. The lunch application is used to determine eligibility for Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL). Families that are not eligible for free meals are expected to pay either the reduced cost, or the full cost of the meals provided by Uplift's Child Nutrition Program. Parents may also provide their children with means from home. Instructions for establishing meal accounts are provided by the school.

The following restrictions apply to our Child Nutrition Program as it relates to scholars charging meals to their meal accounts (charging refers to receiving meals on credit):

- If an Uplift scholar's meal account balance has reached zero, the scholar will only be able to charge up to \$10 worth of reimbursable meals (a la carte items such as ice cream, chips, etc. are not reimbursable meals). Once a scholar has reached a negative balance of \$10 or more, that scholar will be served an alternate meal until the negative balance is brought current.
- A la carte items may never be charged or purchased at any campus when a scholar has a negative account balance.
- Parents or guardians of scholars with negative balances may work with the leadership of the school to agree to a payment plan on the negative balance and be given up to 60 calendar days to bring the meal account current.
- Applications for a new school year are available annually after July 1<sup>st</sup>; parents will receive multiple reminders to fill out an application during the first 2 weeks of July. Parents are strongly encouraged to fill out applications during the first 2 weeks of July to avoid the possibility of accrued charges on their scholar's meal account.
- Parents who qualify for FRL and fill out the application within the recommended timeframe will be eligible for FRL on the first day of school.
- While parents may fill out an application at any time during the school year, parents that apply after the recommended July timeframe are responsible for the accrued cost of meals until the application has been processed.
- Scholars are not allowed to charge meals during the last 3 weeks of school if they do not have funds in their account.

# **EXHIBIT L**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Policy Effective Date: August 29, 2017

**Bullying and Retaliation Prohibited.** Uplift Education (“Uplift”) prohibits bullying as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process, including but not limited to, a victim, witness, or another person, who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying, is a violation of Uplift policy.

**For purposes of this policy, “Bullying” is defined as the following:**

Bullying means a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more scholars directed at another scholar that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a scholar, damaging a scholar's property, or placing a scholar in reasonable fear of harm to the scholar's person or of damage to the scholar's property; is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a scholar; materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or infringes on the rights of the victim at school; and includes cyberbullying.

For purposes of this policy, “Cyberbullying is defined as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

Bullying applies to incidents that occur on, or that are, delivered to school property or to the site of a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property; bullying that occurs on a publicly or privately owned school bus or vehicle being used for transportation of scholars to or from school or a school-sponsored or school-related activity; and cyberbullying that occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity if the cyberbullying interferes with a scholar's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored or school-related activity.

**Examples of Bullying.** Bullying may include, but is not limited to, the following:

Bullying of a student may include, but is not limited to, discrimination, harassment, hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism. Bullying in the context of discrimination or harassment may include, but is not limited to, discrimination or harassment based on race, ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, socio-economic background, social/family background, linguistic preference, political beliefs, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability, difference, or impairment, or by any other distinguishing characteristic or because of one's

association with a particular person or group of persons.

**Examples of Retaliation.** Retaliation may include, but is not limited to, threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

### **Report of Bullying.**

Timely Reporting. Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair Uplift's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

Scholar Reporting. To obtain assistance and intervention, any scholar who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another scholar has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, director, or other Uplift employee. A scholar who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with an investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Staff Reporting. If any staff member recognizes or receives a report from a scholar, parent or guardian regarding suspected bullying, it must be immediately reported to the Campus Director or designee. Reports may be given orally by staff, but must be reduced to written form by the Campus Director or Designee.

Anonymous Reporting. Any scholar, parent or guardian may report an allegation of bullying anonymously through the Uplift website.

**Notice of Alleged Bullying.** After receiving a report of an allegation of bullying, a campus director or designee shall provide notice to (1) a parent or guardian of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the date the incident is reported, and (2) a parent or guardian of the alleged bully within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.

### **Investigating a Report of Bullying.**

The Campus Director or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The Campus Director or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the Campus Director or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The Campus Director or designee shall prepare a final, written report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. A copy of the report shall be sent to the campus Managing Director.

### **Uplift Action – Bullying Confirmed.**

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the campus director or designee shall promptly notify the

parent or guardian of the victim and of the scholar who engaged in bullying.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, Uplift shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct in accordance with the Uplift Scholar Code of Conduct.

A scholar may be removed from class and expelled if the scholar (1) engages in bullying that encourages a scholar to commit or attempt to commit suicide, (2) incites violence against a scholar through group bullying; or (3) releases or threatens to release intimate visual material, as defined by the Texas Civil Practices and Remedies Code, of a minor or a scholar who is 18 years of age or older without the scholar's consent.

The discipline of a scholar with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Scholar Code of Conduct.

**Uplift Action – Improper Conduct.** If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of bullying, Uplift may take action in accordance with the Scholar Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action

**Reasonable Self-Defense.** A scholar who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action. The discipline of a scholar with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Scholar Code of Conduct.

#### **Report to Local Law Enforcement.**

A Campus Director may make a report to the police department of the municipality in which the campus is located or, if the campus is not in a municipality, the sheriff of the county in which the campus is located if, after an investigation is completed, the Campus Director has reasonable grounds to believe that a scholar engaged in conduct that constitutes an offense under Section 22.01 (assault) or 42.07(a)(7) (harassment) of the Texas Penal Code.

The Campus Director may designate a campus employee, other than a school counselor, who is under the supervision of the Campus Director to make the report to the police department.

A person who makes a report under this section may include the name and address of each scholar the person believes may have participated in the conduct.

**Counseling Options.** The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the scholar who engaged in bullying, and any scholars who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options. Each campus shall have access to a Social/Behavioral Counselor to provide support.

**Confidentiality.** To the greatest extent possible, Uplift shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

**Appeal.** A parent, legal guardian, or adult scholar who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the

investigation or plan of action may appeal through the Uplift grievance process, beginning at the appropriate level.

**Access to Policy.** Information regarding this policy shall be distributed annually to Uplift employees and included in the scholar handbook. Copies of the policy shall be readily available at each campus and Uplift's administrative offices.

**Prevention and Training.** Uplift will implement research-based bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide training for Uplift scholars and staff for effectively responding to, intervening in, and reporting incidents of bullying.

