



# UPREP

COLLEGE STARTS IN  
KINDERGARTEN



## ECE FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025

UNIVERSITY PREP - **COMMERCE CITY**

**(720)610-1875**

Suncor Boys & Girls Club  
6201 Holly Street  
Commerce City, CO. 80022

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[\(https://uprepschool.org/prekforcommercecity/\)](https://uprepschool.org/prekforcommercecity/)

UNIVERSITY PREP

PRIDE | RESPONSIBILITY | ENTHUSIASM | PERSEVERANCE

## OUR MISSION

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University Prep opened the doors to its first elementary school campus in August of 2011 and since that time, the organization has held a singular mission - Building a foundation of skills, knowledge, and character, University Prep educates every child for a four-year college degree and a life of opportunity.

The mission of University Prep's PreK program, in alignment with the organization's larger focus, is **to prepare every child to thrive when they transition to kindergarten**. Preparation includes every child establishing critical academic skills and knowledge, building their social/emotional understanding and toolbelt, strengthening their sense of character and identity, and developing gross and fine motor physical capabilities.

## A BRIEF HISTORY

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Founded in August of 2011 with our first class of K and 1st grade scholars who will graduate from college in 2028 and 2027 respectively, University Prep (U Prep) was established to ensure all children develop an unbreakable educational foundation upon which they are positioned to pursue their unique dreams and aspirations. [This video](#) shares the voices of more than 20 of our original scholars, now 18-years-old, as they transition to their post-secondary education and pursue their career ambitions. (<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/822889841>)

Our two established K through 5th grade public charter schools in Northeast Denver (Arapahoe St. and Steele St.) serve more than 600 children annually and have more than 750 alumni currently in middle and high schools across the Denver Metro Area. Our newest campus, co-designed with incredible parent leaders from the core Commerce City community, will launch with PreK 4-year-old programming in the 2024-25 school year and grow one grade level at a time annually until becoming a full, PreK – 5<sup>th</sup> grade program.

## A DEGREE (AND OPPORTUNITY) IN EVERY CHILD'S FUTURE

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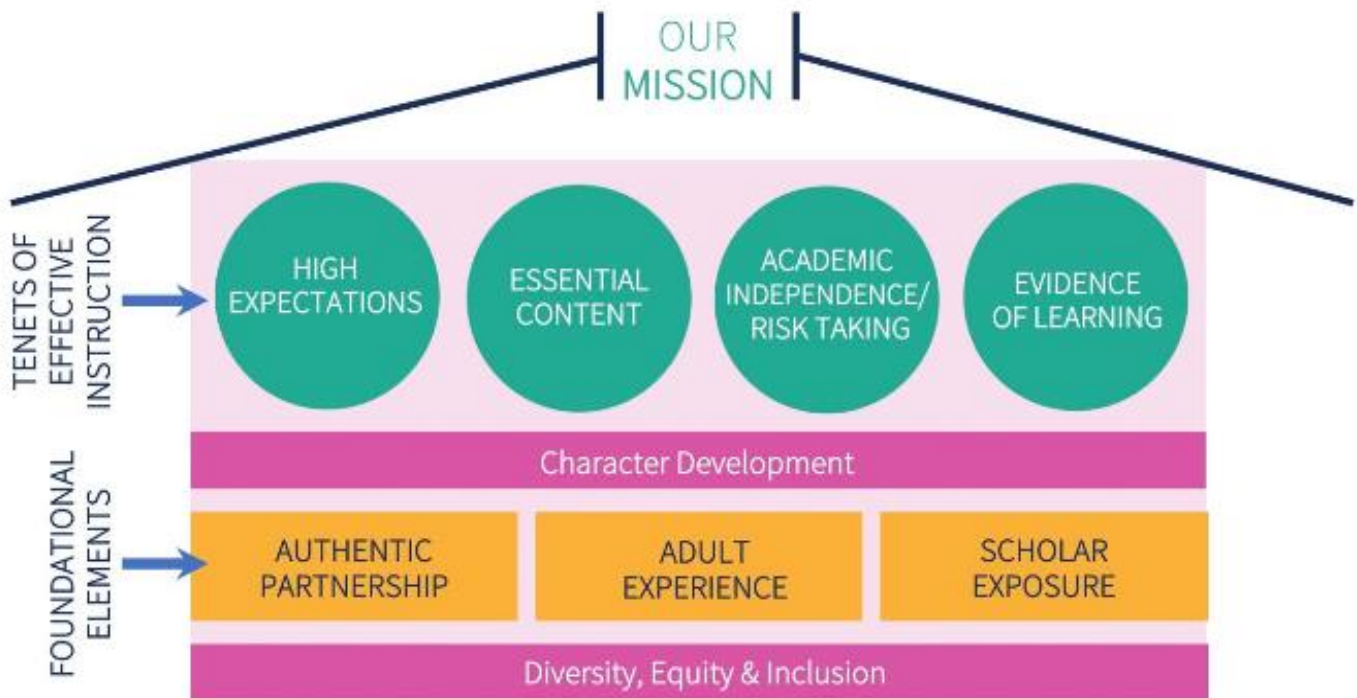
As of 2023, 94% of top tier jobs in the state of Colorado require educational attainment beyond high school (this can be a four-year degree or a number of other post-secondary pathways). Top tier jobs have the highest pay and they represent the greatest chance for upward, economic mobility. With this reality grounding us, we operate college preparatory elementary schools because opportunity in our state is incredibly limited without higher education. We believe every child has the right to pursue their dreams and know that doing so starts with high-quality early childhood education followed by a high-quality K – 12 pathway. In Colorado today, less than 60% of young adults are on track to earn a post-secondary credential, and when broken down by race, those figures are 25% for Latino children, 38% for Black children and 64% for white children. Both the gaps and the overall outcome are unacceptable. We believe 100% of children deserve access to limitless career pathways, and we know that our work at U Prep, alongside our families as partners, is what sets the stage for that belief to become reality.

## SUPPORTING AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL

University Prep is proud to support, honor and respect individuals from all backgrounds. We work thoughtfully and intentionally to establish and maintain an inclusive culture that is accepting of all identities. We believe the diversity of our school communities makes us more vibrant, stronger and ultimately, better. With this in mind, we ask families who are a part of our schools to speak respectfully with individuals and about individuals who may have different backgrounds from their own. To be explicit, this includes but is not limited to diversity tied to race, gender, the LGBTQ+ community, country of origin, immigration status and language. U Prep goes beyond being an anti-discrimination environment and commits to being a place where all adults (staff and families) and children are cared for, valued and respected.

## OUR SHARED VISION OF EXCELLENCE (What Makes a Great ECE Classroom?)

To bring our mission to life, we developed a “Vision of Excellence” (VoE) alongside current and alumni families, community partners, educators and leaders. Our VoE establishes four “**Tenets of Effective Instruction**” (what has to be true in our classrooms) and three “**Foundational Elements**” that are essential for our classrooms to be healthy and thriving with all children engaging in meaningful learning. The visual below illustrates our VoE and is followed by descriptors for each tenet of effective instruction and foundational element. You will also find descriptors tied to **Character Development**, which we believe is engrained within the heartbeat of our classrooms and our approach to **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**, which serves as the groundwater for everything that happens in our school buildings.



**4 Tenets of Effective Instruction** (*these descriptors of each tenet are adopted from our K – 5 schools and specific to our early childhood education programming*):

- **HIGH EXPECTATIONS:** There is an unwavering belief amongst educators that all children can and will achieve. That belief is demonstrated through the creation of warm, joyful and highly consistent learning environments where children feel safe and cared for. It is also demonstrated through the choices teachers make to maximize each learning opportunity students have, whether in the midst of a play-based activity, small group instruction, or a 1:1 interaction. Every word and action in the classroom carries a “we can do this” mindset with unbreakable conviction that kids really can do amazing things.
- **ESSENTIAL CONTENT:** Kids deserve a curriculum that jolts their curiosity and drives them to engage, ask questions and explore as well as indoor and outdoor spaces that further foster growth and development. They deserve stations that support their natural instinct to play and turn it into meaningful learning. And, they deserve educators who have been highly intentional in preparing lessons, choice activities and a learning environment that ensures they’re set up for success.
- **ACADEMIC INDEPENDENCE/RISK TAKING:** All learning happens through trying, making mistakes, and trying again. Everything about our PreK classrooms encourages children to take risks, try new things, learn from their experiences and grow. Teachers deliberately provide children with “stretch opportunities” whether that’s in exploring a new, play-based station they haven’t tried, engaging with a new physical activity outside, or pronouncing a new, unfamiliar word. Educators constantly remind children that they are capable and that making mistakes is a wonderful part of learning for all of us to embrace.
- **EVIDENCE OF LEARNING:** While we recognize that growth and development for each child is unique, following its own, non-linear path, we have established developmental milestones and end-of-year targets that every educator supports children in driving towards. Our teachers deliberately and regularly monitor children’s performance in all facets of their development – academic, social-emotional and physical – using that information to celebrate successes with children and families, and to develop plans for moving scholars forward in their learning trajectory.

**3 Foundational Elements:**

- **AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIPS:** True partnerships exist between home, school and the community at large. Families are valued as full, contributing partners in their child’s education and are positioned as the expert of their child and our community. School and home work in concert with each other to dream big on behalf of all children and do the necessary work to bring those dreams to life.
- **ADULT EXPERIENCE:** U Prep fosters a healthy and thriving adult culture while delivering equitable, high quality support that ensures all staff are learning and growing on their personal career trajectories. Combined with highly competitive compensation and benefits, staff are set up for long term engagement and success.
- **SCHOLAR EXPOSURE:** Scholars get consistent access to experiences and content that expands their world view, and furthers their understanding of future opportunities and possibilities for themselves and their communities.

**CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT:** U Prep’s mission has always been about achieving academic excellence AND ensuring our children grow into incredible adults. We see character development as something that should be infused into the DNA of our classrooms and every interaction between adults and children. Character development isn’t a “program” we run, it’s embedded in every minute of every day through each thoughtful and intentional experience our scholars have with us and with each other.

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI):** The entire “VOE House” sits on top of DEI because we need a house where diversity is desired, honored and celebrated... equity exists for every stakeholder and all individuals feel empowered by a genuinely inclusive setting that says “you matter” and “you are a valued members of our U Prep family.” We see DEI work as permeating everything we do, hence why it sits below the foundation of the entire house.

## OUR ECE BELIEFS

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We carry a set of shared beliefs across all of our team members when it comes to early childhood education and the growth & development of our youngest learners. We are hopeful that our families will join us in sharing and embracing these beliefs, or already carry them, given the critical nature of alignment between school and home to maximize each student’s learning potential.

- Children learn through play, exploration, questioning and experimentation.
- The classroom environment and outdoor playscape should be safe, nurturing, engaging and fun. All of it should be designed to support children’s natural motivation to engage in active learning while meeting the highest standards of excellence as defined by Colorado Shines, ECERS and Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines.
- Scholars in ECE programming should experience a highly intentional mix of large group, small group and 1:1 instruction designed to ensure they learn from both adults and their peers on their path to reaching all age appropriate developmental milestones.
- Daily programming should consist of meaningful experiences designed to foster independence and build core academic skills and knowledge along with critical thinking skills in developmentally appropriate ways.
- The social emotional development of a child along with their physical development, including gross and fine motor skills, are equally critical to being “kinder ready” as academic skills and knowledge.
- Play-based learning opportunities through curated learning spaces and choice-based activities are a key part of the classroom and critical for a child’s development given their natural instinct to play and discover.
- Teachers should act as facilitators of learning through deliberate questioning, the curation of thoughtful learning spaces and experiences, and with the goal of kindergarten readiness in mind.
- Educators should maximize each interaction with a child, supporting them in their use of robust language and ensuring they carry the “thinking load” in each exchange.
- Teachers and families work in partnership to support scholars in meeting goals. No one does the work of educating a child alone – school and home are a team.
- Assessments are an essential component of the learning cycle. A regular cadence of capturing information about a child’s progress is critical in determining whether or not they are meeting curricular objectives and developmental milestones. This allows teachers and families to celebrate successes and build plans for where more focused energy may be needed.
- Curriculum and programming are inclusive, designed to meet the needs of all scholars, regardless of background, home language, race, ethnicity or academic needs.

## CURRICULUM

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Our center uses [Creative Curriculum](#) as a foundation of our programming. This curriculum aids in supporting positive behavior, pro-social peer interaction, and overall social and emotional competence in young children. It also offers many resources for early learning experiences that foster a deep interest in a range of themes and opportunities for academic knowledge & skill building. Produced by Teaching Strategies, Creative Curriculum is the leading research-based, top-ranked whole child curriculum that supports over 250,000 classrooms annually.

Overall, the curriculum builds children’s confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills through hands-on, project-based investigations. Trusted for decades by early childhood educators, the program:

- Respects and nurtures individual skill progression for the whole child,
- Harnesses the power of play through studies that engage all young learners
- Seamlessly connects families to their children’s learning, and
- Provides intentional support for every teacher every day.

Associated with this curriculum is an assessment tool, called TS Gold that is described in detail below.

## ASSESSMENTS

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**Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS Gold)**, which U Prep uses as its core assessment platform for early childhood, is an authentic, ongoing observational system for assessing children from birth through kindergarten. For the purpose of our ECE program, U Prep leverages TS Gold for our Pre-K 4-year-olds. It helps teachers to observe children in the context of every day experiences, which is an effective way to learn what they know and can do. TS GOLD is based on 38 objectives for development and learning that include predictors of school success and are based on school readiness standards. We use this assessment in alignment with the end of year, developmental milestones that we’re striving to reach with each child on the path to kindergarten readiness.

The objectives are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, state early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. These objectives are at the heart of the system; teachers use them to focus their observations as they gather information to make classroom decisions.

**Why Ongoing Assessment?** Developmentally appropriate, ongoing, observation-based assessment occurs when teachers are observing children during regular, everyday activities on a continuous basis throughout the year. Unlike formal or standardized assessments, which offer a narrow picture of a child’s ability at a given moment, ongoing assessments offer a broad, more meaningful picture of development.

### Ongoing Assessment Is:

- Happening during regular, everyday activities
- Implemented on a continuous basis throughout the year
- Helping teachers meet children where they are
- Helping children meet challenging and achievable learning goals
- A broader and more meaningful picture of development

### Ongoing Assessment Is Not

- Formal or standardized
- A narrow picture of a child’s ability at a given moment
- A one-dimensional measure of ability
- Performed outside of everyday activities
- A screening tool

## PLAY PHILOSOPHY & OPPORUTNITIES

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Children learn through play, and it is therefore an integral and large part of our center’s programming. Access to items which will support growth and exploration at each stage of development are well stocked in each classroom, to ensure that our students have ample opportunities to learn. This can range from sensory exploration to using dramatic play house materials to interact with others, act out real life scenarios, and develop their imagination.

At University Prep, play is an instructional tool that is used intentionally in the following ways:

- Allows students independent time to think, take risks and problem solve
- Provides time for students to integrate skill work into real-life contexts
- Lets students practice skills in a low-risk environment
- Supports deep and lasting social and emotional development

Outdoor play is available and accessible to our children using the brand-new playscape on the side of the building (and children utilize the space two times per day). This areas are safely fenced to7 keep our scholars safe. In cases where weather is too inclement for outdoor play experiences, U Prep is fortunate to have full access to the gym at the Suncor Boys & Girls Club, which still allows for movement in the day outside of the classroom space.

## STAFFING & RATIOS

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All hired staff working with your child, whether the Center Director, Lead Teachers, or Teacher Assistants7 have credentials and meet the state requirements for childcare providers based on the CO Dept. of Early Childhood expectations.

To ensure children receive the support they need and deserve to grow and develop into their best selves, the PreK program maintains a minimum of a 12:1 ratio (aligned with state department standards) and always pushes for an 8:1 ratio of children to staff to maximize personalized attention with no more than 24 children in a classroom.

## FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

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Every family has a dream for their child. At U Prep we work hand in hand with families to ensure those dreams come true. We understand that achieving our shared mission of a high-quality education for every child that sets the stage for a genuine life of opportunity requires an authentic partnership between home and school. We strive to build relationships with each and every family member involved in a scholar’s education, recognizing everyone as a meaningful member of our school community and a critical contributor to scholar growth and development.

We respect and honor that families are the experts of their children and our community, and believe our work together, in collaboration, is what makes the future truly limitless. There are a variety of ways to engage with our U Prep school community should you want to become more involved in bringing the mission to life for your child and all children. Those opportunities are outlined below:

### FAMILIES FOR ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL (FAC):

Family involvement is not only welcomed, but is absolutely necessary for the success of the school community and our children. Families are encouraged to participate in Families for Achievement Council, which meets monthly throughout the year. The council may engage in the following efforts, as well additional work that it deems necessary for the success of the school.

- Connecting families to volunteer opportunities at the school
- Developing and implementing special programs for families that strengthen their connection with one another
- Sponsoring events for the school community (i.e. parent celebrations, teacher appreciation, etc.)
- Working with University Prep teachers and administrators to examine scholars' academic progress along with their social/emotional and physical development in alignment with end of year milestones, and discuss initiatives to improve outcomes for all children
- Engaging in initiatives to directly support scholar attendance

#### SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE (SAC):

The School Accountability Committee, which meets on a quarterly basis, is made up of a collection of school-based leadership, teachers, members of the Board of Trustees and parents (at least 3). This group has an opportunity to consistently examine the performance of the school against its mission and vision, to review recommendations for changes in program and to make recommendations based on areas of need. The SAC:

- Works with University Prep teachers and administrators to examine scholars' academic, social/emotional and physical progress and discuss initiatives to improve scholar outcomes
- Makes recommendations to the Principal on the school priorities for spending school moneys, including federal funds, where applicable
- Makes recommendations to the Principal of the school concerning preparation of a school Performance or Improvement plan, if either type of plan is required (tied to the State SPF)
  - *In the case of the PreK program, the SAC is focused on supporting plans and efforts that will further move the school's Colorado Shines rating forward*
- Discusses whether school leadership, personnel, and infrastructure are advancing or impeding implementation of the school's Performance, Improvement, Priority Improvement, or Turnaround plan, whichever is applicable, and other progress pertinent to the school's accreditation contract (and most importantly, the school's mission and vision)
- Publicizes opportunities to be a part of and to serve on the SAC

#### UNIVERSITY NIGHTS & CELEBRATIONS:

University Nights are held regularly throughout the year and provide opportunities for families, educators, and at times, outside experts, to come together and learn with one another. Covering such topics as the benefits of reading with your child, understanding and working with children's emotions, and learning about activities that can promote gross and fine motor skill development, these events build our collective knowledge of key topics that benefit the full school community. University Nights are particularly beneficial to parents' and the opportunity to grow their tool belt while sharing their experiences and expertise with their peers in a shared learning environment.

Celebrations, whether to honor the cultural heritage of our family's backgrounds, an end of year ceremony to share love for our scholars' hard work and achievements, or our weekly Community Circles that uplift the school community, are always open to families with a deep encouragement to attend and engage whenever you're able to do so.

We strongly encourage you to attend our Weekly Community Circle, which brings all of our scholars and staff together each Friday morning (8:30 – 9:00 AM). Not only is it a great way to show up in support of your children, but our FAC & SAC meetings along with "Coffee with the Director" often occur directly following the celebrations. These regular meetings are great ways to stay deeply connected with your child's educators and ensure your voice is heard.

## CONTRACT OF COMMITMENT:

In further recognition of the partnership between home and school, and the fundamental importance of everyone doing their part to ensure the highest quality education possible for every child, all stakeholders sign a “Contract of Commitment” prior to the start of the school year. The contract outlines expectations for our teachers, school leaders and parents. Reviewing and signing that contract also recognizes a commitment to all aspects of school programming and policies outlined within this Family Handbook.

## ENGAGING FAMILIES IN TRANSITION PLANNING

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**Transitions and Early Childhood:** Transitions refer to the process of a child moving from one program or setting to another, for example, the transition from home care to formal care, to a new classroom within a program, or from one program to another.

At University Prep’s ECE program, we recognize that stability and consistency are important for a child’s development, and acknowledge that young children accomplish different developmental milestones at different rates. Smooth transitions support children’s academic and social/emotional success and contribute to the well-being of the child and their family. At University Prep, we support intentional and thoughtful transition practices for children and their families. Prior to your child’s first day, you will have an opportunity to meet with teachers and the Center Director to learn about our program. Children are welcome, and encouraged to attend with families! This allows a child to become comfortable in their new learning environment prior to their first full day.

We will also be asking the family to complete the “Learning About Your Child & Family” questionnaire so the teachers can learn about your child and family – launching the year with knowledge of your child along with their likes, dislikes and unique personality.

## COMMUNICATION

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A strong and trusting connection between families and caregivers is an important part of developing a high-quality early care and learning environment and at University Prep, we place a high value on establishing and maintaining open lines of communication between the program and families. We believe that all children can benefit from open and frequent dialogue between families and caregivers/educators because it helps both families and teachers to be aware of the child’s interests, concerns, and developmental needs which can support teachers and families to more effectively support the child’s growth. Also, open communication between families and teachers can provide children with a model of positive and healthy communication which will help them in their own social development.

We encourage families and teachers to visit and converse with both teachers and each other briefly during drop off and pick-up. In sum, when families communicate with a program openly and directly, teachers can have better understanding of what is happening at home, as well as what goals, hopes and dreams families have for their child, and the reverse is true for families. Families can better understand what is happening at school and the goals of the teacher. When teachers and families communicate regularly and effectively, children benefit.

When your child first starts the program, you will be asked to complete an “Learning about Your Child and Your Family questionnaire” form which will help us collect important information about your child and family such as priorities, interests, home routines, cultural and social practices, and/or goals. Understanding this information can enhance teacher interactions and instruction. Just as you will be asked to share information about your child with us, we will also be sharing information with you.

While your child is in our care, we have an opportunity to consistently observe and learn about the child’s social/emotional, intellectual and physical development. Program staff make careful observations and notes, as well as assess children, to support our guidance. Sharing these observations with you is critical to the process of creating supportive interactions and experiences for your child both at home and at school. We share these insights and information during family conferences which take place twice a year, in Fall and Spring (described below). However, we also believe that daily communication between teachers and families both in person and through our parent app – Brightwheel - is critical.

You can also connect with program staff<sup>10</sup> during regular business hours by phone, email, and text, and teachers will respond as they are able. Important contact info individualized for you will be provided by your child’s teacher. You can also request a meeting with a teacher and/or Director at any time.

Our priority is caring for your child and your family. If at any point, you are in need of support, please let our team know.

## **POLICY REGARDING DUAL-LANGUAGE FAMILIES & CHILDREN**

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At University Prep, we are dedicated to providing our families with quality care. While we are highly intentional about hiring bilingual staff whenever possible, in some circumstances, communication creates a barrier between family and University Prep staff,<sup>10</sup> which can impact the quality of services we provide. In those cases, we will provide translation services to ensure that all families have clear and supportive communication. If your family would like translation for events such as conferences, let the classroom teacher or Director know at least a week in advance.

Additionally, if there is a predominant language in a classroom, in addition to English, it is the policy of this program that we will do our best to provide a teacher or aide in the classroom who is bilingual in that language. Research has shown that bilingual teachers and staff can help build strong relationships and communication between families and a program and can support the development of the young learner. To that end, we will also ensure that there are materials in the classroom which help a child feel represented and will also support the language development of the young dual-language learner.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

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University Prep’s PreK program in Commerce City, located at the Suncor Boys & Girls Club, is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with extended, after-care available through 5:00 PM. Families may start the arrival process as early as 7:30 a.m. with the expectation that all children are dropped off by 7:40 a.m. so we may formally start our day together.

Families come in to the building to check their children in, parking in the lot and walking their children to their class where a member of the U Prep team is present to receive them. Once inside the building, parents log-in with the brightwheel app, formally checking their children in before walking them to the classroom and engaging in a short exchange with the teaching staff while saying goodbye to their child.

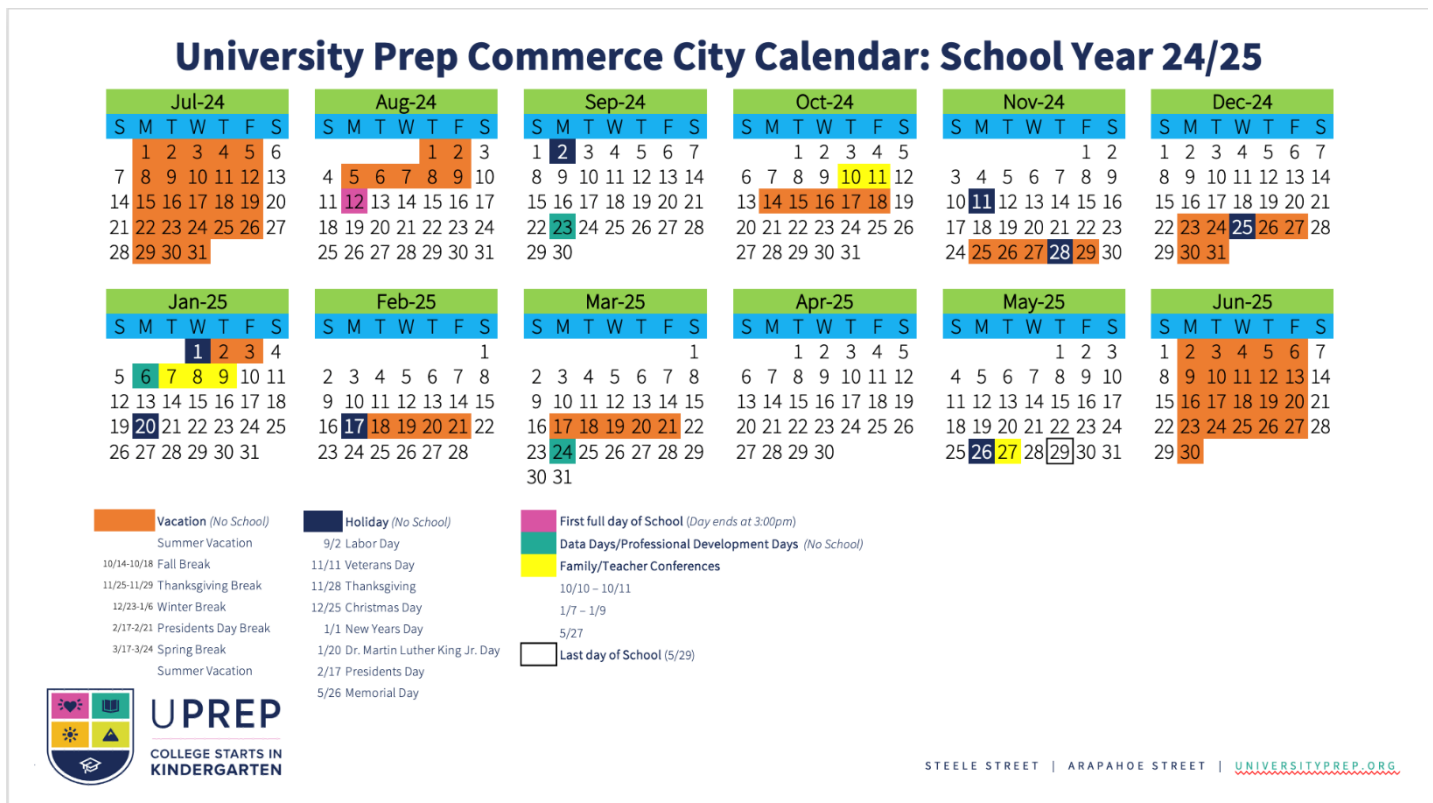
The day begins with breakfast for all scholars, and morning “bright work” to get their brains moving, which consists of choice-based, center play. Shortly after 8:00 a.m., once all children have arrived, morning “circle time” begins, which is a community meeting that builds team identity and energizes children for the day ahead while going through a series of consistent routines.

## ARRIVAL AND START TIMES

Please ensure your child arrives between 7:30 – 7:40 AM for breakfast, morning choice time, and community building (*all of which helps get their day off with a warm, joyful and connected start*). Punctuality is key to the success of our scholars as they launch their school day together and build effective habits for their future K – 5 elementary school experience.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

While operating independently of the local school district, University Prep will be closed on the same holidays/breaks that the Adams 14 School District is closed. The school will also follow all weather delays & closures in alignment with the school district.



## INCLEMENT WEATHER

In accordance with our commitment to the safety and well-being of our scholars, the school administration maintains a vigilant approach to monitoring outdoor conditions during inclement weather. If the school administrator determines that the outdoor weather is excessively extreme whether it be due to excessive heat, cold (below 20 degrees or above 90 degrees Fahrenheit), or other unfavorable conditions such as diminished air quality, children will not go outside for play time.

We are deeply fortunate to have access to a full, indoor gym with multiple, age-appropriate stimuli (i.e. tricycles, balls, etc.) where we can engage in physical activity while remaining indoors on days where weather is not suitable for

outdoor play. It should be noted that scholars are expected to come to school with necessary clothing for weather such as snow since outdoor time is always preferred when possible.

### **CLOSING DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER:**

University Prep will only close the school in cases of extreme weather conditions and in alignment with the decisions of the local school district (Adams 14 School District). We recognize that many of our families have children at U Prep and at other schools in the community, thus making it incredibly challenging should U Prep make different decisions than the larger school district in which we physically operate. Please listen to the local radio and television stations, check online or review our website for potential closures.

### **DELAYED START:**

University Prep will announce a delayed start in alignment with the local school district, Adams 14.

At the discretion of the Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership, any classroom days lost to closure due to inclement weather or other reasons may be made up by adding an equal number of days during or at the end of the school year.

## **AGES OF CHILDREN ACCEPTED**

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University Prep welcomes all children who turn 4 years-old on or before October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 into our full-day, tuition-free program. The PreK program is currently established for 4-year-olds only, although it may expand to serve 3-year-olds as well in the future depending on funding opportunities provided by the state's UPK program (universal preschool).

## **ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT**

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Starting with PreK 4-year-old programming, we will be implementing a slow growth model, adding a new grade level each year. In the upcoming school year (2024-25), we are thrilled to offer PreK 4, and we plan to expand to Kinder in 2025-26, Kinder, and 1st Grade in 2026-27, and so forth until reaching all grade levels from PreK – 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT:**

To ensure a smooth enrollment process, families are required to submit the following documents along with the Intent to Enroll form and UPK Family Application:

1. **PROOF OF AGE:**
  - a. Birth certificate
  - b. Passport/I-94
  - c. Baptism record
2. **PROOF OF ADDRESS (IF NOT IN THE GUARDIAN NAME, MUST PROVIDE LANDLORD LETTER):**
  - a. Current utility bill with service address
  - b. Valid rental/lease agreement
  - c. Warranty deed
  - d. Current mortgage statement/property tax notice

### 3. PROOF OF INCOME:

*\*This information is crucial for determining eligibility for UPK funding and additional CCCAP support.*

- a. 2023 W-2 or 2023 taxes
- b. 30 consecutive days of paycheck stubs
- c. letter from employer on company letterhead that states hours worked and pay rate
- d. If applicable, proof of non-work income (TANF, food stamps, child support, etc.)

### 4. IMMUNIZATION RECORDS:

Colorado law requires all scholars attending Colorado schools and licensed child care to be vaccinated against certain diseases unless a medical or non-medical exemption is filed. For more information about vaccine requirements, resources and exemptions, please visit the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's [School Immunization](#) page.

- a. Up-to-date records of the child's vaccinations, as required by state regulations. Ensuring all vaccinations are current helps maintain a safe and healthy learning environment.
- b. [Vaccine exemption forms](#) from the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

Please gather and prepare these documents to expedite the enrollment process. Incomplete submissions may result in delays, so we appreciate your attention to detail in providing the necessary information.

To streamline the enrollment process and ensure your family stays well-informed, we encourage you to take the following steps:

1. **COMPLETE University Prep's INTENT TO ENROLL FORM:** Kickstart your journey with us by filling out our Intent to Enroll form. This serves as the initial step in expressing your interest in U Prep's PreK program.
2. **SUBMIT THE UPK FAMILY APPLICATION:** Simultaneously, [complete the UPK Family Application](#) to ensure you are positioned to receive UPK funding, which is a valuable resource to support your child's education.
3. **SUBMIT YOUR CCAP APPLICATION:** Each county has unique, income-eligible funding. You can get the processes started by [applying here](#), and you can learn more about CCCAP and Adams County by [visiting their website here](#).

While we anticipate becoming an official UPK Colorado Program provider well before the 2024-25 school year, we understand the timeline may not align with the availability of the UPK Family Application (meaning, when you submit your online information you may not yet be able to select University Prep – Commerce City as your PreK choice). Hence, we encourage families to engage in a parallel process by completing our Intent to Enroll Form, the UPK application and the CCCAP application all at the same time.

By providing us with your Intent to Enrollment Form, you ensure consistent communication between us and your family. Moreover, it positions you to receive support in completing all UPK paperwork and facilitating access to additional CCCAP funding, if eligible.

As we prioritize building a sense of community, it's important to note that families already served by U Prep, those with another child already in our care, or individuals employed by U Prep will be granted preference in attending our program. This preference assumes that U Prep is their first choice for preschool, further strengthening our commitment to creating a familial and supportive environment for our scholars.

At U Prep, we are dedicated to creating a seamless and family-friendly enrollment experience. We look forward to partnering with you on this exciting educational journey for your child.

## TUITION & FEES

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For families who qualify for 30 hours through the Universal Preschool Program (*see details below in “UPK Acknowledgement”*), there will be no tuition associated with enrollment in our full-day program. For families who only qualify for half-day or 15 hours, U Prep may charge tuition to cover the difference between the funding being received and the actual cost of the programming. In other words, if full-day funding received from UPK is equivalent to \$10,500, but a family only receives 15 hours based on their “qualifying factors” (equivalent to \$6,000), U Prep may charge the difference through a monthly tuition fee. In this scenario, for example, the difference is \$4,500, which over the 10-month window of the annual program (August through May) equates to \$450 per month.

It should be noted that a family may qualify for further financial supports through the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP), which is also detailed below. Additional funds received as a result of CCCAP may reduce or remove a need for any tuition. Ultimately, tuition, if needed, will be determined with each family and will be done so with full transparency and direct communication.

Any tuition payments, should they be necessary, will be made through the Brightwheel application.

University Prep is a non-profit, 501c3 organization, and so any tuition collected is simply to ensure U Prep has the revenue necessary to not only run full-day programming, but provide robust staffing and services that ensures a world class experience for all children.

Families can access the up to date tuition costs at:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YQAn3kDJMwkJlhOqrF3ckFOp-3lU6oJRgxZlOuNHAA/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

Local Coordinating Organization	10 hours/week UPK Award		15 hours/week UPK Award		30 hours/week UPK Award	
	Monthly Payment	School Year Total	Monthly Payment	School Year Total	Monthly Payment	School Year Total
Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council	\$474.29	\$4,742.88	\$592.67	\$5,926.69	\$1,054.45	\$10,544.48
Bright Futures	\$491.66	\$4,916.60	\$614.38	\$6,143.77	\$1,072.35	\$10,723.48
Broomfield Early Childhood Council	\$468.05	\$4,680.51	\$584.88	\$5,848.75	\$1,047.41	\$10,474.13
Chaffee County Early Childhood Council	\$481.61	\$4,816.14	\$601.82	\$6,018.24	\$1,060.08	\$10,600.78
Cheyenne, Kiowa & Lincoln Counties ECC	\$484.77	\$4,847.65	\$605.76	\$6,057.62	\$1,058.15	\$10,581.52
Children First Department of Pueblo Community College/ Pueblo Early Childhood Council	\$504.21	\$5,042.11	\$630.06	\$6,300.61	\$1,087.36	\$10,873.61
Connections4Kids & Moffat County School District	\$507.29	\$5,072.89	\$633.91	\$6,339.07	\$1,105.51	\$11,055.08
Custer County School District & Custer County Kids Council	\$473.58	\$4,735.83	\$591.79	\$5,917.88	\$1,047.43	\$10,474.33
Denver Preschool Program	\$488.32	\$4,883.22	\$610.21	\$6,102.06	\$1,074.89	\$10,748.93
Douglas County Early Childhood Council	\$466.22	\$4,662.16	\$582.58	\$5,825.82	\$1,044.92	\$10,449.21
Eagle County School District & Early Childhood Partners	\$485.12	\$4,851.20	\$606.21	\$6,062.05	\$1,076.27	\$10,762.67
Early Childhood Council for Yuma, Washington and Kit Carson	\$477.90	\$4,779.01	\$597.18	\$5,971.83	\$1,055.32	\$10,553.20
Early Childhood Council of Boulder County	\$484.22	\$4,842.16	\$605.08	\$6,050.75	\$1,071.67	\$10,716.69
Early Childhood Council of Larimer County	\$475.74	\$4,757.44	\$594.49	\$5,944.89	\$1,051.13	\$10,511.26
Early Childhood Council of Logan, Phillips and Sedgwick	\$480.63	\$4,806.31	\$600.60	\$6,005.95	\$1,052.72	\$10,527.24
Early Childhood Council of the San Luis Valley	\$506.02	\$5,060.23	\$632.33	\$6,323.25	\$1,084.15	\$10,841.52
Early Childhood Options & Summit County Government	\$489.53	\$4,895.25	\$611.71	\$6,117.09	\$1,087.29	\$10,872.90
Early Learning Ventures	\$479.22	\$4,792.23	\$598.84	\$5,988.36	\$1,050.81	\$10,508.05
ECHO & Family Center ECC	\$488.59	\$4,885.88	\$610.54	\$6,105.38	\$1,067.46	\$10,674.55
Elbert County Early Childhood Council	\$472.48	\$4,724.82	\$590.41	\$5,904.13	\$1,057.02	\$10,570.18
First Impressions of Routt County	\$489.92	\$4,899.16	\$612.20	\$6,121.98	\$1,086.41	\$10,864.11
Grand Beginnings	\$492.10	\$4,921.04	\$614.93	\$6,149.32	\$1,088.59	\$10,885.94
Gunnison-Hinsdale Early Childhood Council	\$485.63	\$4,856.34	\$606.85	\$6,068.47	\$1,066.97	\$10,669.68
Huerfano-Las Animas Counties Early Childhood Council	\$501.62	\$5,016.18	\$626.82	\$6,268.21	\$1,081.55	\$10,815.48
Joint Initiatives for Youth and Families	\$473.54	\$4,735.40	\$591.74	\$5,917.35	\$1,046.99	\$10,469.89
Mesa County Partnership for Children and Families & Mesa County Dept of Human Services	\$475.90	\$4,759.02	\$594.69	\$5,946.85	\$1,042.87	\$10,428.72
Rocky Mountain ECC & Mountain Valley Development Services	\$487.74	\$4,877.41	\$609.48	\$6,094.80	\$1,083.03	\$10,830.27
San Juan BOCES	\$487.00	\$4,870.04	\$608.56	\$6,085.59	\$1,068.13	\$10,681.32
Teller Park Early Childhood Council	\$479.43	\$4,794.32	\$599.10	\$5,990.97	\$1,064.98	\$10,649.80
Triad Bright Futures	\$471.39	\$4,713.94	\$589.05	\$5,890.53	\$1,051.33	\$10,513.26
United Way of Weld County	\$473.29	\$4,732.93	\$591.43	\$5,914.25	\$1,045.91	\$10,459.08
<b>Westminster Public Schools on Behalf of a County Collaborative</b>	<b>\$482.84</b>	<b>\$4,828.39</b>	<b>\$601.73</b>	<b>\$6,017.28</b>	<b>\$1,064.30</b>	<b>\$10,642.96</b>

## ENROLLMENT POLICY

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**PURPOSE & SCOPE:** The University Prep – Commerce City Enrollment Policy specific for PreK is intended to provide a documented overview for the allocation of available seats at the school’s PreK program. The purpose of this policy is to outline the enrollment process specific for 4-year-olds in their year prior to Kindergarten (children turning 4-years-old on or before October 1, 2024). The policy includes a review of U Prep’s efforts to work with the state-wide Universal Preschool program (UPK) along with the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program for Families (CCCAP). The policy also includes a description of the processes that families need to engage with (outside of U Prep, but with our support) in order to ensure there is funding made available for their seat in the program.

### UPK Acknowledgement:

As a soon to be Universal Preschool (UPK) Colorado Program provider, U Prep adheres to all statutory and regulatory requirements governing UPK programs, including those further agreed to in the Universal Preschools (UPK) Colorado Program Service Agreement.

By partnering with UPK as a provider, U Prep has the opportunity to work with families in Colorado who may receive up to 30 hours per week of free, voluntary preschool for 4-year-olds. Eligibility for full-day programming (30 hours) is dependent on a child demonstrating at least two “qualifying factors.” Qualifying factors are child or family circumstances identified as having the potential to impact a child’s learning. Qualifying factors established during the UPK application process include when a:

- Child is identified as low-income (270% of 2023 Federal Poverty Guidelines).
- Child is a dual-language learner and the native language spoken in the child’s home is a language other than English, or the child’s native language is not English.
- Child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Child is currently in the custody of a state supervised and county administered foster care home or in non-certified kinship care.
- Child is identified as homeless.

Should a child experience none or only one of the risk factors described above and turn 4 on or before October 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year they’re enrolling in, the family is eligible for 15 hours of programming. This means that roughly half of their full-day tuition will be covered through UPK.

When applying for UPK (<https://upk.colorado.gov>), families are prompted to identify whether the child has any of the qualifying factors. The UPK application process is unlike our K-5 application process, where U Prep is permitted to collect only basic information about students such as name, grade level entering, parent name and contact information (it should be noted that the sharing of information by a family related to “qualifying factors” has no bearing on a child’s enrollment into U Prep’s PreK program – it simply used as part of the UPK process to determine funding eligibility).

### CCCAP Acknowledgement:

The Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) helps families that are homeless, working, searching for work or in school find low-income child care assistance. Families that are enrolled in the Colorado Works Program can also use CCCAP services.

Each county's Department of Social/Human Services and the Colorado Department of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Learning manage the CCCAP program. Each county sets [eligibility requirements](#) for families, but must help families that have an income of 185% or less of the federal poverty guideline. Counties will not serve families that have

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an income over 85% of the state median income. As of July 1, 2023, cooperation with Child Support Services is no longer required to be eligible for CCCAP in any county.

U Prep works directly with families who qualify (further eligibility guidelines may be [found here](#)) to support them in accessing additional dollars from CCCAP so that their children may receive funding to support full-day PreK programming (especially in situations where a child qualifies for 1, but not 2 of the risk factors identified within the UPK system, which only provides them with 15 hours of weekly programming).

### **Non-Discrimination Statement:**

U Prep welcomes all children and strives to create and maintain a diverse student population representative of the community we serve. Enrollment in U Prep is open to all students residing in the state. Student recruitment and enrollment decisions shall be made in a nondiscriminatory manner as outlined in 22-30.5-507(3), C.R.S. In all cases, student recruitment and enrollment decisions shall be made without regard to disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, language, religion, ancestry, need for special education services, or any other protected class.

### **Enrollment Eligibility:**

U Prep – Commerce City, at full build out, will serve students in grades PreK through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. (Only PreK is available to start in the 2024-25 school year with the new school operating a slow growth model in which each year a new grade level will be added (i.e. PreK in 2024-25, PreK & K in 2025-26, PreK, K and 1<sup>st</sup> Gr. in 2026-27, etc.)). Our PreK program is part of UPK Colorado and uses a cutoff date of October 1. A child who turns four before this date in the year they wish to enroll in preschool will be eligible for UPK Colorado and admission at U Prep. At this time, U Prep is only operating a PreK program for 4-year-olds, but in the future, there may be the addition of 3-year-old programming (depending on funding availability made possible by UPK).

### **Admission Process and Timeline:**

U Prep will officially be a Universal Preschool (UPK) Colorado Program provider prior to the start of the 2024-25 school year. However, that timeline will likely not occur prior to the UPK Family Application being available for parents wishing to enroll their children. As such, U Prep encourages families to engage in a parallel process in preparation for their children being enrolled at U Prep's PreK program.

Families should complete U Prep's Intent to Enroll form as the first step in the process. Then, at the same time, they should complete the [UPK Family Application](#). This will ensure U Prep is in consistent communication with the family who is interested in sending their child to our PreK program and that the family is positioned to receive UPK funding to support their child. This will also support U Prep's team in their efforts to work with families directly on accessing CCCAP funding as an additional support should a family be eligible to receive it (see above).

The matching process for UPK and timeline are determined by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood, and information (including applicant deadlines) is available in the CDEC website. U Prep will work in coordination with the CO Dept. of Early Childhood Education, our Local Coordinating Organization (LCO), and support them in receiving the seat they want for their child (in our PreK program) and to make sure they receive the funding their child is eligible for.

Families who are already served by U Prep, have another child in U Prep's care, or are employed by U Prep will be given preference to attend U Prep's PreK 4-year-old program assuming it is their first choice for preschool.

### **Selection Process:**

UPK placement decisions depend on the availability of a participating provider to meet the child's needs, and available funding. UPK applications are processed in rounds and families will be notified of placement via email. The enrollment process at U Prep will commence following a family's acceptance of the enrollment offer. At that time, U Prep will work diligently with the family to ensure their onboarding process supports them in being fully prepared to start with our PreK program, building a strong relationship between the educators and staff who will work directly with their child as they begin their PreK through 5<sup>th</sup> grade education.

Through transparent and structured procedures, we ensure fairness and efficiency in our application processing rounds.

- **PLACEMENT DECISIONS:**
  - UPK placement decisions are based on two key factors - the availability of a participating provider capable of meeting the child's needs and the availability of funding.
- **APPLICATION PROCESSING:**
  - UPK applications are processed in rounds, ensuring a fair and systematic approach to enrollment.
- **NOTIFICATION:**
  - Families will receive notifications of their child's placement via email, keeping them informed about the next steps.
- **ENROLLMENT OFFER ACCEPTANCE:**
  - Once a family receives a placement offer, they need to accept the enrollment offer to proceed with the next steps.
- **ENROLLMENT PROCESS COMMENCEMENT:**
  - After the family accepts the offer, the formal enrollment process at U Prep will begin.
- **COLLABORATIVE ONBOARDING:**
  - U Prep will work closely with the family during the onboarding process to ensure they are fully prepared for their child to start in the PreK program.
- **PREPARATION FOR PRE K PROGRAM:**
  - This stage aims to equip the family with all the necessary information and resources to facilitate a smooth transition for their child into the PreK program.
- **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS:**
  - U Prep emphasizes building strong relationships between educators, staff, and the child, fostering a positive foundation for their education journey from PreK through 5th grade.

## **VISITORS**

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We are excited to have you as part of our family! At any time, you are more than welcome to come to school and sit in on your child's class, observe your child in action, and engage alongside them in their learning experience. Please note that if you do plan to volunteer in the classroom, which we'd love for you to do, you have to pass licensing guidelines in alignment with the CO Dept. of Early Childhood Education and a background check.

To ensure the safety and well-being of our little learners, we have established visitor protocols. These guidelines are in place to maintain a safe, secure and positive environment for our students and staff.

**1. ENTERING THE SCHOOL:**

- All visitors are kindly requested to check in at the school office upon arrival.
- During the check-in process, personal information is shared including photo identification
- Authorization is required before exploring other areas within the building.

**2. CLASSROOM VISITS:**

- For visits to your child's classroom, please sign in with your name, date, and purpose of the visit.
- If you are unknown to our staff, we may request at least one form of identification for security purposes.

**3. ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL:**

- Access is limited to:
  - Parents/guardians of current preschoolers.
  - Other family members with approval from the child's parent/guardian.
  - Invited guests for educational or official business purposes.
  - Volunteers who have passed background checks and whom meet all licensing guidelines.

**4. SECURITY MEASURES:**

- Authorized visitors are required to sign in and out.
- Name-tags will be provided for identification during your visit and must be worn for the duration of your time in the building.
- A staff member may accompany you during part or all of your visit.

**5. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS:**

- School administrators may introduce additional procedures to ensure the safety of our preschoolers.
- Please understand that visiting our preschool is a privilege, not a right. Access may be limited, denied, or revoked based on safety, operational efficiency, maintaining an appropriate learning environment, or non-compliance with U Prep policies.

## **ATTENDANCE & TIMELINESS (NO MORE THAN 5 TO THRIVE)**

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Attendance is the first step to ensuring children reach their maximum learning potential (academically, social-emotionally and physically). Further, attendance and timeliness in the youngest grades, including PreK, establishes critical, foundational habits that translate to a child's future. Establishing the notion that being on time, to school, each and every day, is a healthy behavior will translate to the remainder of your child's K – 12 journey. With all this in mind, we must work together (school and home) to ensure children are consistently present and on time.



### NO MORE THAN 5 TO THRIVE CAMPAIGN:

To ensure children in our PreK program develop into their best selves and are fully prepared to thrive when they transition to kindergarten, we have initiated the “NO MORE THAN 5 TO THRIVE” campaign across all of our schools and grade levels. We establish the universal goal that each family should ensure their children miss no more than 5 days in a semester, representing a better than 94% attendance rate for the year. All families, in addition to our **Contract of Commitment**, sign an **Attendance Contract** that outlines the incentives along with the escalation protocols outlined below, and further punctuates the school and family’s commitment to daily attendance.

### INCENTIVES:

#### WEEKLY APPRECIATION INCENTIVE:

Every Monday, we celebrate children who have been at school, on time, each day for the week. Your little one may receive a special appreciation incentive, ranging from a small toy to a new book or even a treat like a McDonald’s Happy Meal. This is our way of expressing gratitude for their responsibility and commitment to their education, instilling the importance of building good habits at a young age. We typically share the incentive as part of a Monday routine based on perfect attendance from the week prior.

- This weekly appreciation incentive resets each week so scholars who didn’t earn it one week have a full opportunity to earn it during each subsequent week.

#### MONTHLY PERFECT ATTENDANCE CELEBRATION:

For those children with perfect attendance each month, we honor them at our Community Circle with recognition and a special celebration. The rewards could be anything from a pizza party to root beer floats or an extra recess. We want to recognize and celebrate the positive habits our little scholars are forming – coming to school every day, on time for their education.

#### SEMESTER-BASED FAMILY APPRECIATION BREAKFAST:

In recognition of the role families play in supporting their children’s attendance, at the end of each semester we host an appreciation breakfast where we honor and celebrate every family who has achieved the “No More Than 5 To Thrive” goal. As part of the catered meal, family members receive a special t-shirt with our “No More Than 5 To Thrive” imagery.

It's essential for you to play your part in ensuring your child arrives on time each day to enjoy these incentives and rewards. And, as described below, please know that we will always work alongside of you to resolve any attendance challenges and the issues that might be getting in the way from consistent presence at school.

### CONSEQUENCES WITH CARE:

In the event that attendance becomes a concern, we have a series of carefully outlined escalations to address the issue. Our goal is to work collaboratively with you to support your child's consistent attendance. The volume of effort put forth by our staff and who gets involved all increases in volume and severity as absences accumulate, demonstrating our level of commitment when it comes to solving attendance challenges with you while being incredibly serious about achieving attendance success.

- **AFTER ANY ABSENCE:**
  - A member of our Operations team and/or your child's teacher will make a phone call home to check in and provide support.
- **3 ABSENCES:**
  - A call from a member of campus leadership, including a reminder of the attendance contract, details about our 'No more than 5 to thrive' campaign, and collaborative problem-solving.
- **5 ABSENCES:**
  - you will receive a phone call from a school leader to further explore the challenges you're experiencing and to escalate any problem solving that the school can support with to get your scholar to school.
- **7 ABSENCES:**
  - you will receive a home visit from campus leadership further working to address the attendance problem.
- **9 ABSENCES:**
  - You will receive a warning letter outlining the next steps, including the potential for removal from the program. Seats are incredibly limited and they cannot be used for children who are not in attendance (given that 9 absences in a semester places a child on track for nearly 20 absences in a school year (equating to more than a month of school)).
- **15 ABSENCES:**
  - At this point, U Prep will engage in a formal discussion regarding program fit and family commitment to early childhood education with University Prep. Either there will be a transition process or a family and the school will commit to a new plan with limited to no room for further absences. Along these lines, should a family miss **10 consecutive days** without a significant and communicated reason (i.e., medical need for child, family emergency, etc.), a scholar will be automatically unenrolled so that another child may have access to their seat.

### EXCUSED VS. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

#### Unexcused Absences:

Unexcused absences occur when a student is absent from school without a valid and verifiable excuse provided by the parent/guardian or when the student leaves school or a class without the permission of authorized school staff. It is crucial for parents and guardians to communicate any absence and provide a legitimate reason.

#### Excused Absences:

Excused absences are considered in the following circumstances:

- **Temporary Illness or Injury:** Absences due to temporary illness or injury are excused when approved by an administrator. Parents are encouraged to notify the school as soon as possible in such cases.

- **Physical, Mental, or Emotional Disability:** Absences related to a physical, mental, or emotional disability may be considered excused, and we may request a doctor's note for documentation.
- **Suspension, Expulsion, or Denial of Admission:** Absences resulting from suspension, expulsion, or denial of admission in accordance with school policies are deemed excused.
- **Custody of Court or Law Enforcement Authorities:** A student who is in the custody of a court or law enforcement authorities is excused from attendance.

#### **Additional Potential Excused Absences:**

This list is not exhaustive, and we will take into consideration other valid reasons for excused absences, including but not limited to:

- Funerals
- Legal Obligations
- Medical Procedures
- Religious Observations

#### **Verification of Excused Absences:**

The school may require advance notice and appropriate documentation to verify excused absences. Parents and guardians are encouraged to communicate openly with the school administration to ensure proper documentation and understanding of the circumstances surrounding any absence.

Our goal is to promote regular attendance while recognizing that certain situations may warrant excused absences. By working together, we can create a supportive environment that prioritizes both the well-being and education of our children.

#### **TARDIES:**

Please be aware that we take punctuality seriously, and 3 tardies represent an absence. We emphasize not only being present at school, but being on time to ensure a positive learning experience for all. The launch of the day, which is described earlier and includes breakfast, "brightwork" to get children's brains moving, and community building time via 'Circle' are all key to a successful start to the day. Timeliness allows all children to settle in for what's to come and experience that daily routine, which is a cornerstone to their comfort and engagement.

We understand that circumstances may arise, and while we differentiate between excused and unexcused absences, any absence is recognized as such – an absence. Your cooperation and communication are vital in maintaining a supportive learning environment for our little scholars.

#### **EARLY PICKUPS:**

We understand that scheduling appointments for your child can be challenging, and we appreciate your efforts to minimize the impact on instructional time. Here are some guidelines to ensure a positive learning experience for your child that maximizes their daily experience in school:

##### **1. MINIMIZING LOST INSTRUCTIONAL TIME:**

- While we recognize the necessity of appointments, we kindly request that you do your best to minimize the amount of instructional time missed by your child. If appointments are scheduled in the morning, for example, we encourage you to bring your child back to school, reducing the volume of missed learning.

##### **2. STRATEGIC SCHEDULING USING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR:**

- Utilize our "Academic Calendar" for the year to identify windows of time when school might not be in session for pre-scheduled appointments. Planning in advance can help minimize disruptions to your child's education.

### 3. COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS:

- If your child needs to miss a portion of the day due to an appointment, please communicate directly with your child's teachers (you can do this simply and swiftly with our Brightwheel application). This allows you to receive any missed work and ensures your scholar continues to have access to their learning.

### 4. UNEXPECTED EARLY PICKUPS:

- In situations where unexpected circumstances require you to pick up your child during the school day, please contact the front office. They will be ready to support and expedite the pickup process without disrupting the classroom environment.

## LATE PICK-UP PROCEDURES:

We understand that life can sometimes get a bit hectic, and unforeseen circumstances may arise causing parents or guardians to be delayed in picking up their little ones. Therefore, we have established clear procedures to ensure the security of every child, even when the center is closed or a child has not been picked up by the designated time.

1. **PROMPT COMMUNICATION:** If you anticipate being late or are unable to pick up your child at the scheduled time between 3:00 and 3:15 PM, please notify U Prep as soon as possible. This allows our staff to plan accordingly and ensures your child is comforted and engaged until their safe departure.
  - **LACK OF COMMUNICATION:** In instances where families consistently fail to communicate delays or provide updated emergency contact information, U Prep reserves the right to take appropriate action to safeguard the child's well-being. This may include mandatory parent meetings, or, in extreme cases, a review of continued enrollment at U Prep.
2. **EMERGENCY CONTACTS:** It is crucial that we have up-to-date emergency contact information for every child. In case of a late pick-up where we have not heard from primary parents/guardians, our staff will attempt to contact the designated emergency contacts. Please provide accurate and current contact details to facilitate efficient communication in such situations.
3. **STAFF SUPERVISION:** Our dedicated staff members will supervise children who are waiting to be picked up after the center's closing time.
  - *We do have after-care until 5:00 PM so at minimum, members of our team are present until that time and would stay later in emergency situations where a parent/guardian has not arrived for pick up.*
4. **SECURITY MEASURES:** In event that a child has not been picked up and the staff is ready to leave, U Prep follows strict security procedures. Staff members will remain on-site until every child is safely picked up, and additional efforts will be made to contact parents or emergency contacts. In the rare event that a child has not been picked up, and both the parent or guardian and emergency contacts are unreachable, U Prep reserves the right to take immediate action to ensure the child's well-being. This may include contacting local authorities, such as 911, to conduct a wellness check and support with contacting the family.

Please remember that communication is key. By notifying us of any changes in your schedule and keeping your contact information current, you contribute to the smooth operation of our late pick-up procedures.

## UNIFORMS

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At University Prep, we believe in fostering a sense of community, teamwork, and a focused learning environment. Our school uniform policy outlined below was established for two primary reasons.

1. **Uniforms unite a community/team.** While each of our children have their own, unique identity, which we honor, celebrate and love, being a part of U Prep means being a part of our community and team. Putting on the

uniform each day is a commitment to upholding the values of our greater school community, doing your best to support the learning and growth of yourself and others, and remembering that we are all in this together.

2. **Uniforms reduce distractions and clothing competition.** We come to school to learn and “grow our brains,” build meaningful relationships with peers and adults, and develop our social/emotional awareness and physical skills. Wherever possible, U Prep works to remove distractions that are not helpful in moving our mission forward. Wearing uniforms helps eliminate distractions or concerns around who is wearing what and keeping up with the latest fashion trends.

We ask all parents, guardians, and scholars to adhere to the following uniform expectations while recognizing that uniform purchasing may be a challenge for some of our families. In those instances, U Prep provides uniforms at no cost to families, ensuring they are not a barrier to children’s engagement and success.

#### UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS:

ECE: 3 U Prep logoed t-shirts (Pink, navy and green) are all available for purchase at the main office. Below is a list of the detailed expectations that go along with U Prep’s uniforms.

- **TOPS:**
  - Scholars are required to wear a U Prep T-shirt daily.
    - The shirt should feature our logo on one of the three colored t-shirts.
  - Children may wear under-shirts (short or long-sleeved) beneath their t-shirts.
    - Under-shirts should be plain and in neutral colors (black, navy, grey, white).
  - Scholars may wear a U Prep cardigan sweater or U Prep crewneck sweatshirt over their polo. **Sweaters and cardigans should be pre-ordered with the front desk.**
    - Cardigan sweaters are navy and feature our graduation cap/logo on the chest.
    - Crewneck sweatshirts are navy with our "U PREP" collegiate print across the chest.
- **BOTTOMS:**
  - Any plain, light khaki pants, light khaki shorts/skorts should be worn with the uniform top.
    - Pants, shorts, and skorts may not have any embellishments, designs, or patterns.
    - A child wearing a skort may choose to wear leggings underneath. Leggings should be plain and in neutral colors (black, navy, grey, white).
      - *Given this is a PreK program and 4-year-olds are quite active (as they should be), scholars may wear elastic waist pants and jogging/soft pants that are khaki colored are also permitted (unique to our 4-year-old, PreK uniform expectations).*
- **JUMPERS:**
  - Scholars may wear a U Prep jumper. Jumpers are navy and feature our graduation cap/logo on the chest.
    - Tights/leggings should be a plain, neutral color (black, navy, grey, white).
  - Jumpers may be worn with a light blue, peter pan blouse underneath, or scholars are welcomed to wear their U Prep polo underneath. **Jumpers should be pre-ordered with the front desk.**
- **FOOTWEAR:**
  - Children may wear any shoes of their choice, but those shoes should be non-distracting (i.e., not light-up or roller shoes).
  - Shoes are expected to be closed-toed (i.e., no sandals) to ensure scholars may participate fully in all physical activity including indoor and outdoor play on the playscape.
    - *\*No Crocs should be worn as they are not ideal for physical play like running and jumping*

- **ACCESSORIES:**
  - Scholars may wear uniform accessories such as hair beads, clips, and bands, etc.
  - Jewelry is allowed, but it should not be a distraction to themselves or the learning environment.
    - For example, if a child's watch has games on it that are distracting from learning, staff will work to resolve the challenge and communicate directly with the family.
- **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS:**
  - Within our classrooms, scholars are expected to remain in full uniform throughout the day, meeting the expectations detailed above.
  - If a child is cold, they may wear a long-sleeve undershirt, a U Prep cardigan, or a U Prep crewneck, all of which help address the issue while staying in uniform.
  - On occasions where a classroom is at an uncomfortable temperature, outerwear may be approved by the teacher. However, hoods and hats are not permitted in these situations.
    - Full visibility is crucial for U Prep's instructional approach, which includes discussions between students. This ensures that all scholars can share, listen, and learn from the classroom community.

#### **ACCIDENTS & EXTRA UNIFORMS:**

- All scholars are required to have an extra full set of uniforms, including undergarments, at the school.
- This extra set is in preparation for accidents or spills that may occur during recess, lunch, or other activities.
- These extra uniforms should be brought to school with your scholar on the first day, and if ever used, scholars should return to school with a replenished set of extras.

#### **DRESSING FOR WEATHER:**

- Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather.
  - Scholars should be sent to school with appropriate layers to accommodate outdoor play.
- Outdoor play may require additional layers, including hats, boots, jackets, and sunhats.
  - *As a reminder, so long as the temperature is between 20 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit and the air quality is not of concern, children will be outside (up to two times daily).*
- If a child does not have suitable outdoor attire, the center will take the following actions:
  - Contact families for the required materials. If the family is unreachable we will loan the child an available coat to ensure their comfort and safety during outdoor activities.

#### **SPECIAL OCCASIONS (out of uniform dress):**

- On designated days, scholars may be allowed to wear themed or special event attire, as communicated by the school in advance. This may also include “dress down” days where scholars can choose what they want to wear to school.

#### **ASSISTANCE AND CLARIFICATION:**

- If you require support in meeting uniform expectations, please reach out to us. We are here to help and will provide assistance to ensure compliance. If you have questions about the uniform and what is or is not aligned

with the policy, again, please reach out to us – we are here to help. For any clarifications, feel free to contact our front office at your child’s campus.

## **NON-COMPLIANCE RESOLUTION:**

In the event that a scholar is not meeting uniform expectations, we will take the following steps:

### **MEET THE EXPECTATION:**

- We will work to resolve the issue by providing the scholar with what they need to meet the expectation. For example, if a scholar isn't wearing a U Prep polo, we'll loan them one. If a scholar is wearing jeans instead of khaki pants, we'll give them a pair of pants to borrow.

### **CONTACT THE FAMILY:**

- We will communicate with the family, informing them of the specific element of the uniform expectation that wasn't being met.
- We will work collaboratively with the family to ensure success with that expectation in the future.

The overall goal is to ensure that families are aware of uniform expectations and that we provide necessary support to meet them.

## **FAMILY TEACHER CONFERENCES**

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Opportunities for more in-depth and extensive conversation between school and home are vital. Conferences allow a family and teacher to spend time discussing children’s overall progress and well-being and work together in partnership to support a child’s learning and healthy development. To quote a teacher, “Conferences are a time to sit down together with families and talk, hope, and plan strategies that will foster growth. And it allows time to celebrate how truly special the child is!”

Conferences occur a minimum of two times per year – after the fall and spring quarter (October & April), and the goal/expectation is to achieve a 100% participation rate. At University Prep, we work hard to make sure that a conference can be scheduled with you at a mutually convenient time. We do ask that conferences occur in-person as we believe this is the best way to share information in both directions while further strengthening the relationship between school and home. Sign-ups are made available well in advance of each conference window (at least 3 weeks) and parents are asked to specify the day/times they’d like to meet. A week prior to conferences, parents/guardians receive a receipt (physical or digital) confirming their conference date/time.

The conference will include a discussion of the assessment data gathered on your child’s development and provide you with the opportunity to add your feedback about what you have observed and noted. You will be asked to sign the assessment data to verify that the information has been discussed, your questions have been answered, and you’ve had a chance to share your feedback.

In the event that a teacher has concerns about a child, the parents will be notified, and a separate meeting may be necessary. Further, at any time should parents have additional concerns or questions throughout the year, outside of conference windows, a meeting can be scheduled upon request.

During these formal, bi-annual conferences, your child’s teacher will discuss:

- Your child's TS Gold portfolio
- Your child's growth and development including a focus on your child's strengths and most critical areas for growth
- Any other relevant information

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND MONEY:

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### 1. LABELING PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

- All personal belongings brought to the childcare facility, including school bags, jackets, and lunchboxes, must be clearly labeled with the child's full name.
- Labels should be easily visible and durable to withstand daily use.

### 2. DESIGNATED STORAGE AREAS:

- Each child will be assigned a designated space or cubby for their personal belongings.
- Parents should place their child's belongings in the assigned space upon arrival, and staff will assist if needed.

### 3. LIMITED VALUABLES:

- Parents are advised not to send valuable or irreplaceable items to the childcare facility.
- The facility is not responsible for any loss, damage, or theft of personal belongings brought from home.

### 4. MONEY HANDLING:

- Money should only be sent for specified purposes, such as field trips or special events. Please place any money in a labeled envelope with the child's name and the purpose clearly stated.
- U Prep discourages families from sending their child with money for general purposes.
- Staff members will collect and store the money securely until the designated time.
- Parents are encouraged to provide exact change whenever possible.

### 5. COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF:

- Parents should communicate any specific instructions regarding their child's belongings or money to the staff.
- Staff members will communicate any concerns or issues related to personal belongings promptly with parents.

## LOST AND FOUND:

- Any unclaimed items will be placed in the lost and found, and parents will be notified periodically to check for missing items.
- At the end of every quarter, items left in the lost and found may be donated to a local charity.

## TRANSITIONS

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Transitions should be smooth and positive experiences for our scholars whether they're arriving, departing or simply going from the classroom to outdoor play time. The following practices are integral to our commitment to a secure and friendly environment and the records we maintain exist to consistently ensure the well-being and safety of your child during their time with us.

- **DAILY CHECK-IN/OUT:**

- Each day at U Prep families sign in and sign out using our parent-friendly application, Brightwheel, ensuring everyone is accounted for and ready for the day ahead. The app has additional layers of

security such as a personal passcode and a signature space to be completed by parents, and also provides a chance when checking in to inform the school of any concerns. In addition Brightwheel is directly connected with our teachers' iPads, which allows them to see exactly when a child has arrived in the building and ensure absolute clarity when a child has formally been checked out.

- **IDENTIFICATION WITH NAME TAGS:**
  - Your child's name tag isn't just for identification; it helps us keep our group together. Staff also have a special form to cross-check and ensure everyone is accounted for during the day.
- **ATTENDANCE CROSS-CHECK:**
  - During transitions, whether to an activity in the gym or coming back to the classroom from outdoor play, our staff engages in a simple counting routine. It's a quick cross-check with the attendance roster in Brightwheel to ensure everyone is where they should be, adding an extra layer of reassurance.
- **CONSISTENT VERIFICATION:**
  - Before and after transitions outside the classroom or every two hours, our staff practices "Name to Face" verification. This involves saying each child's name aloud, looking at their faces to confirm their presence, and documenting their attendance.

## REST TIME (NAPS)

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In our continuous endeavor to ensure every day is a great day of learning and fun, we recognize the significance of structured rest and nap times that allow for children to be their best selves. To support rest time, we adhere to the following:

1. **TRANQUIL ENVIRONMENT:**
  - Our classrooms adhere to a scheduled rest period of 60 minutes daily accompanied by calming music.
  - For individualized comfort, a tailored fitted sheet and blanket will be provided exclusively for each child.
  - Each child is allowed to bring a comforting item such as a plushy or photograph that fits in their backpack for nap time.
  - The school will launder the fitted sheet and blanket on the family's behalf to ensure they always have what they need.
2. **NON-NAPPING ALTERNATIVES:**
  - For children not inclined toward regular napping or those who prefer an alternative, a designated rest on a mat for 30 minutes is provided.
  - Following this interval, children are granted the option to engage in quiet activities in specific sections of the room as to not disrupt those who are sleeping.

## TOILET TRAINING/POTTY LEARNING

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The school building provides a designated bathroom for Pre-K 4-year-old students within the classroom, where our staff is committed to treating each child with care and respect. While we expect most children to be potty trained prior to joining us at four-years old, we understand all children may be on their own toileting journey.

For any children transitioning to using the toilet, teachers and families will collaborate to create a personalized plan, ensuring the child feels capable and successful. This collaborative effort aims to establish consistency between home and school practices. We avoid using food as incentives for toilet use, but encourage other positive reinforcement methods.

Families are responsible for providing diapers/pull ups and, if necessary, wipes of their preferred brand. If a child encounters difficulties in the toilet training process, our staff will work closely with families to implement appropriate support measures. These may include:

- Ensuring children are not left in soiled clothing or diapers, with staff members ready to assist in changing.
- Encouraging regular bathroom intervals for the students.
- Promoting independence by encouraging students to clean themselves and change into fresh clothing.
- Allowing extra clothing to be stored in the classroom.
- Accommodating the use of pull-ups or training undergarments based on family preferences.

In case of soiled clothing, these items will be securely placed in a bag and sent home.

## **MEALS & SNACKS (INCLUDING NUTRITION GUIDELINES)**

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University Prep provides a two meals a day (breakfast and lunch) through our food service provider free of charge along with a snack. Food service at U Prep is designed to create a pleasant and relaxed mealtime atmosphere during both meal times, incorporating developmentally appropriate furniture and eating utensils. In order to foster independence and socialization, meals are eaten family-style, where children sit together at the same table.

For children eating meals prepared at school, they are encouraged, in a friendly and non-directive manner, to try different foods. Importantly, no child is forced to take a food they do not want, and they are never required to eat more than they desire.

**FOOD FROM HOME:** If you are sending food from home, meals and snacks must meet USDA requirements. Those requirements are outlined in the link below and visible on the following page.

### **ALLERGIES AND SPECIAL DIET CONSIDERATIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS:**

At U Prep, we collaborate with families to accommodate children with allergies and dietary restrictions. If you prefer to send meals or snacks from home, please ensure they meet USDA guidelines (guidelines can be requested from the front desk or found online [here](#)). We value your partnership in creating a safe and inclusive environment for all children. If you have any questions or need assistance, feel free to communicate with our staff.

We recognize the importance of addressing unique dietary needs and encourage open communication. Parents, please share relevant information about allergies or special dietary requirements with our staff. If your child requires a special diet, kindly complete and submit the necessary documentation. Should you be selecting to use our food services, this enables us to tailor our approach to meet your child's individual nutritional needs, fostering a supportive and health-conscious atmosphere within our school. Your cooperation is crucial, and we appreciate your engagement and commitment to communication.

Please note that special diets using our food services will be provided only upon explicit instructions from the child's physician and specific requests from parents.

USDA Meal Requirements:

## Meal Guidelines – Ages 1-12 Updated 8/03/05

Source: Child and Adult Care Food Program, USDA Food and Nutrition Service ([www.nal.usda.gov/childcare/Cacfp/index.html](http://www.nal.usda.gov/childcare/Cacfp/index.html))

### BREAKFAST

Food Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12 <sup>1</sup>
<b>1 milk</b> fluid milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
<b>1 fruit/vegetable</b> juice, <sup>2</sup> fruit and/or vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
<b>1 grains/bread<sup>3</sup></b> bread or cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta or noodles or grains	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/4 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/3 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup

### LUNCH OR SUPPER

<b>1 milk</b> fluid milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
<b>2 fruits/vegetables</b> juice, <sup>2</sup> fruit and/or vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
<b>1 grains/bread<sup>3</sup></b> bread or cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta or noodles or grains	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/4 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/3 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup
<b>1 meat/meat alternate</b> meat or poultry or fish <sup>4</sup> or alternate protein product or cheese or egg <sup>7</sup> or cooked dry beans or peas or peanut or other nut or seed butters or nuts and/or seeds <sup>5</sup> or yogurt <sup>6</sup>	1 oz. 1 oz. 1 oz. 1/2 1/4 cup 2 Tbsp. 1/2 oz. 4 oz.	1 1/2 oz. 1 1/2 oz. 1 1/2 oz. 3/4 3/8 cup 3 Tbsp. 3/4 oz. 6 oz.	2 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz. 1 1/2 cup 4 Tbsp. 1 oz. 8 oz.

### SNACK: Choose 2 of the 4 components

<b>1 milk</b> fluid milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup
<b>1 fruits/vegetables</b> juice, <sup>2</sup> fruit and/or vegetable	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
<b>1 grains/bread<sup>3</sup></b> bread or cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta or noodles or grains	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/4 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/3 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup
<b>1 meat/meat alternate</b> meat or poultry or fish <sup>4</sup> or alternate protein product or cheese or egg <sup>7</sup> or cooked dry beans or peas or peanut or other nut or seed butters or nuts and/or seeds <sup>5</sup> or yogurt <sup>6</sup>	1/2 oz. 1/2 oz. 1/2 oz. 1/2 1/8 cup 1 Tbsp. 1/2 oz. 2 oz.	1/2 oz. 1/2 oz. 1/2 oz. 1/2 1/8 cup 1 Tbsp. 1/2 oz. 2 oz.	1 oz. 1 oz. 1 oz. 1/2 1/4 cup 2 Tbsp. 1 oz. 4 oz.

#### Footnotes

- 1 Children age 12 and older may be served larger portions based on their greater food needs. They may not be served less than the minimum quantities listed in this column.
- 2 Fruit or vegetable juice must be full-strength. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only othersnack component.
- 3 Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched or fortified.
- 4 A serving consists of the edible portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish.
- 5 Nuts and seeds may meet only one-half of the total meat/meat alternate serving and must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the lunch or supper requirement.
- 6 Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened.
- 7 One-half egg meets the required minimum amount (one ounce or less) of meat alternate.

## TRANSPORTATION

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The following are critical to note regarding transportation policies.

- 1. NO PERSONAL VEHICLE TRANSPORT:** U Prep strictly prohibits the transportation of children in personal vehicles by our staff or volunteers. This policy is in place to maintain a secure and regulated environment for your child's safety.
- 2. BUS TRANSPORTATION FOR SCHOOL-ORGANIZED EXPERIENCES:** For school-organized experiences that involve off-site activities and require transportation, we will use school buses. These buses adhere to all safety regulations and are equipped with safety features to ensure a secure journey for your child.
  - **SEATING ARRANGEMENTS:** Every child will be securely fastened into an appropriate child safety seat, adhering to state regulations and industry safety standards.
    - Seatbelts will be checked and adjusted to ensure a snug fit, providing maximum protection for each child.
  - **SUPERVISION AND HEADCOUNTS:** A designated staff member will conduct a headcount before departure, during transit, and upon arrival at each destination.
    - Small staff-to-child ratios will be maintained to guarantee adequate supervision throughout any offsite experiences.
    - Staff members will be positioned strategically to monitor children and address any immediate needs during the trip.
- 3. PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR BUS TRANSPORTATION:** Your consent is paramount. Before your child participates in any school-organized experience involving bus transportation, we require explicit permission from you as the parent or guardian. A permission slip will be provided in advance, outlining the details of the trip and seeking your approval.
- 4. EMERGENCY CONTACTS:** We maintain up-to-date emergency contact information for each child. In the event of any unforeseen circumstances during transportation, we can swiftly reach out to you or your designated emergency contact.

## FIELD TRIPS

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A vast majority if not all field trips for our ECE program are in building, however while infrequent for our ECE program, to ensure a smooth and enjoyable outing for everyone when field trips do take place, we have outlined some important guidelines and expectations.

- 1. SCHEDULING AND PLANNING:**
  - a. Field trips will be scheduled well in advance and added to the monthly calendar.
  - b. Parents will be notified in advance whenever children are scheduled for a field trip.
  - c. If a field trip is arranged after the monthly calendar has been sent home, a notice will be sent to all parents and posted on the parent bulletin board along with the parent communications app.
- 2. PERMISSION FORMS:**
  - a. Parents are required to complete the FIELD TRIP PARENT PERMISSION FORMS for their child to participate.
  - b. These forms should be submitted promptly to the front office to ensure proper planning and coordination.
- 3. NOTIFICATION:**
  - a. A notice will be sent to parents for field trips arranged after the monthly calendar is distributed.

- b. A sign will be posted on the classroom door, indicating the children's whereabouts and expected time of return.

**4. ARRIVAL FOR FIELD TRIPS:**

- a. If you arrive after the class has left for the field trip, you may take your child directly to the field trip site.
- b. If space permits, U Prep will attempt to place your child in an alternative classroom. However, if space is unavailable, you will need to arrange alternative child care.

**5. ADULT-TO-CHILD RATIOS:**

- a. For field trips, there should be one adult for every four children.
- b. Parents are encouraged to participate in field trips, but they should arrange their own transportation if space on the school bus is insufficient.
- c. If a class does not have the required adult-child ratios, the field trip may be canceled for the safety and well-being of the children.

**LATE ARRIVAL PROCEDURE FOR CHILDREN DURING FIELD TRIPS:**

We understand that unforeseen circumstances may cause children to arrive late to school when their class/group is away on a field trip. To ensure the safety and well-being of the child, we have established the following procedure:

1. **IMMEDIATE CONTACT:** Parents or guardians arriving after the class has left for the field trip should contact the front office immediately to notify staff of their late arrival.
2. **TRANSPORTATION TO FIELD TRIP SITE:** Parents who arrive after the departure of the class have the option to transport their child directly to the field trip site.
  - Parents must inform the front office staff of their intention to take their child directly to the field trip location and sign them in with the teacher at the location of the field trip.
  - The front office will provide parents with the necessary information to locate the field trip group.
3. **ALTERNATIVE CLASSROOM PLACEMENT:** U Prep will make every effort to place the late-arriving child in an appropriate alternative classroom if the parent prefers not to take the child to the field trip site.
  - Placement will be subject to space availability in alternative classrooms.
    - In cases where alternative classroom placement is not feasible due to space constraints, parents may need to seek alternative child care arrangements for the day.

## CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

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Ensuring the safety and well-being of your child is our top priority. All staff take proactive measures through active supervision to prevent accidents and injuries.

**INJURY RESPONSE:**

In the event that your child sustains an injury during the school day, our dedicated school nurse or a trained office staff member will promptly assess the situation and provide appropriate care.

1. **IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT BY THE SCHOOL NURSE (or office team member):**
  - Upon discovering an injury, the classroom teacher or staff member will notify the school nurse (or trained office staff) immediately.
  - The team member will conduct a thorough assessment of the injury, taking into account the nature and severity of the situation.
2. **FIRST AID AND BASIC CARE:**
  - The team member will administer basic first aid as needed, such as cleaning and dressing wounds, applying ice packs, or providing comfort measures.

- For minor injuries, the child may be allowed to resume normal activities once the nurse determines it is safe to do so.

**3. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS:**

- If the injury is significant or requires ongoing attention, the school nurse or office team member will contact you as soon as possible. It is crucial to keep your emergency contact information updated with the school office.
- The team member will provide details about the incident, the care provided, and any further recommendations or actions needed.

**4. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) NOTIFICATION:**

- In the event of a more serious injury that necessitates immediate medical attention, the school nurse or trained office staff will contact emergency medical services.
- Parents/guardians will be notified simultaneously, and efforts will be made to keep you informed of the situation as it develops.
  - All emergency incidents will be reported to licensing within 24 hours if the family seeks outside medical care as a result of the incident/situation.

**5. FOLLOW-UP CARE AND DOCUMENTATION:**

- After the initial care, the school nurse or office team member will continue to monitor your child's condition and provide any necessary follow-up care during the school day.
- If medical attention is required a detailed incident report will be documented, including the nature of the injury, actions taken, and any recommended follow-up care.
- If medical care was not required, an accident/injury report will be documented and placed in your child's file, and a copy sent home.

**6. REINTEGRATION INTO CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:**

- Once the nurse or designated and trained office team member determines that it is safe for your child to return to regular activities, they will be reintegrated into the classroom with appropriate support and monitoring.
- It is essential for parents/guardians to promptly respond to calls from the school regarding their child's injury. Additionally, any relevant medical information or changes in your child's health should be communicated to the school to ensure the best possible care in case of an emergency. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as we work together to prioritize the safety and well-being of all our scholars.

**ILLNESS RESPONSE:**

**1. NURSE/HEALTH TECH EVALUATION:**

- In addition to the initial observation by staff members, our school nurse or designated and trained office team member will conduct a thorough evaluation of your child's condition. This assessment will help in determining the appropriate course of action and provide valuable insights for communication with parents. The team member engaging in the evaluation will take into account vital signs, symptoms, and any specific medical considerations outlined in your child's health records.

**2. PARENT NOTIFICATION:**

- Following the nurse/health tech's evaluation, parents will be promptly informed of the situation, including the findings and recommended actions. The team member may offer guidance on whether immediate pickup is necessary, if a doctor's visit is recommended, or if any specific at-home care measures should be taken.

By involving our school nurse or designated and trained office team member in the evaluation process, we aim to enhance the accuracy of our assessments and ensure that the well-being of your child remains our top priority. The

team members' expertise contributes to a comprehensive and caring approach to managing illnesses within our preschool community.

## MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES:

If your child requires medication<sup>1</sup> to be administered during the school day, we have established guidelines to ensure their safety and well-being. Families in this situation must adhere to the following procedures:

1. **SCHOLAR MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION AGREEMENT FORM:** Parents or guardians of children requiring medication at school must have their healthcare provider fill out the Student Medication Administration Agreement Form. This form outlines the necessary details about the medication, including dosage and administration instructions. The completed form must be signed by both the healthcare provider and the parent or guardian.
2. **ADDITIONAL FORMS FOR SPECIFIC CONDITIONS:** Depending on the nature of the medication or the child's health condition, additional forms may be required. Families are encouraged to consult with the school nurse for specific details and to obtain any additional necessary forms.
3. **ORIGINAL CONTAINER REQUIREMENT:** All medication must be provided in the original pharmacy-labeled container, which includes the child's name, the name of the medication, dosage instructions, and the prescribing physician's information. This ensures accurate identification and administration of the medication.
4. **MEDICATION STORAGE:** Medications will be stored securely in a designated area, accessible only to authorized staff members. Special considerations will be made for medications that require refrigeration or other specific storage conditions.
5. **ADMINISTRATION BY TRAINED STAFF:** Medication will only be administered by the school nurse or delegated staff members who have received appropriate training. This ensures that medications are administered as prescribed by the healthcare provider, following the outlined dosage and schedule.
6. **EMERGENCY MEDICATIONS:** If your child requires emergency medications, such as an epinephrine auto-injector or inhaler, specific guidelines and procedures will be outlined in consultation with the school nurse and healthcare provider.
7. **COMMUNICATION WITH HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS:** The school nurse may communicate with healthcare providers to clarify any questions related to medication administration or to obtain additional guidance on managing specific health conditions.

By strictly adhering to these medication administration procedures, we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for all children with medical needs. If you have any questions or require further clarification on the process, please do not hesitate to contact our school nurse.

## IMMUNIZATIONS & HEALTH SCREENINGS:

At the time of enrollment, information must be obtained regarding all immunizations a child has had, including the dates that each immunization was given.

1. Any subsequent vaccinations should be promptly communicated to the front office to ensure the safety of both children and staff.
2. Regular health and development screenings should be conducted before a child begins attending Early Childhood Education (ECE). That initial screening should be done prior to enrollment.
  - Parents can obtain this record from their physician's office, and it should be updated annually during regularly scheduled wellness visits.

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<sup>1</sup> Medication is defined as over the counter or prescribed medication such as: cough medicine, cough drops, diaper cream, rash/eczema cream, inhalers, EpiPens, etc.

**IMMUNIZATION EXEMPTIONS:** If a child has not received immunizations due to medical, personal, or religious reasons, the parents are required to sign and date the appropriate exemption form found on the back of the Certificate of Immunization.

*\*Given access to immunization exemptions (defined above), the program may have enrolled children who are not fully immunized.*

#### COMPLIANCE AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION:

Both well-child exams and immunizations must align with the EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment) schedule for entry into the school. Non-compliance with these health requirements may lead to interruptions in child care. It is crucial for parents and guardians to understand that failure to keep immunizations and health screenings current may result in the child being dropped from the program. This measure is taken to uphold the health and safety standards for all children attending the program.

#### WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME: PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS:

To maintain a healthy and safe environment for all children and staff, it is important for parents to be mindful of their child's health condition. Please keep your child at home if they exhibit any of the following symptoms or conditions:

- **DIARRHEA:** If your child has loose or watery stools, it is advisable to keep them at home until the diarrhea has resolved to prevent the spread of potential infections.
- **FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS:** Symptoms such as fever, body aches, fatigue, and respiratory discomfort can indicate a contagious illness. Keep your child at home until they are symptom-free and fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- **SEVERE COUGH, WHEEZING, OR TROUBLE BREATHING:** Persistent coughing, wheezing, or difficulty breathing may indicate a respiratory infection. Ensure your child is kept at home until these symptoms have significantly improved.
- **VOMITING:** If your child has vomited within the last 24 hours, it is essential to keep them home to prevent the spread of potential stomach viruses or infections.
- **COVID-19:** If your child exhibits symptoms consistent with COVID-19, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, please keep them at home and seek guidance from healthcare professionals.
- **CHICKEN POX:** Keep your child at home until all chickenpox lesions are scabbed over, and they are no longer contagious.
- **HEAD LICE OR SCABIES:** Children with head lice or scabies should be kept at home until appropriate treatment has been administered, and they are deemed non-contagious by healthcare professionals.
- **HEPATITIS A:** In the case of suspected or diagnosed Hepatitis A, keep your child at home until cleared by a healthcare provider.
- **IMPETIGO, RINGWORM, OR OTHER SKIN INFECTIONS:** Children with contagious skin conditions should be kept at home until the infections are adequately treated, lesions are healing, and they are no longer contagious.
- **STREP THROAT (UNTIL AT LEAST 12 HOURS AFTER ANTIBIOTICS HAVE BEEN STARTED):** If your child has been diagnosed with strep throat, keep them at home until they have completed at least 12 hours of antibiotic treatment and are no longer exhibiting symptoms.

By adhering to these guidelines, you contribute to the overall health and well-being of our preschool community. We appreciate your cooperation in preventing the spread of illnesses and maintaining a safe learning environment for all children. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact our school nurse or administration for further guidance.

## POSITIVE GUIDANCE AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

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At U Prep, we believe in creating a warm, nurturing and positive environment where every child can thrive socially, emotionally, physically and mentally. Our approach to supporting positive behaviors is rooted in fostering strong connections between children, staff, and families. This section outlines our procedures and strategies for promoting a healthy and supportive atmosphere within our center where children are positioned to learn and grow to their fullest potential.

### POSITIVE GUIDANCE AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

#### 1. SETTING THE CULTURE:

- At the launch of the school year, the team takes significant time, energy and care to establish daily procedures and routines. Whether that's how we transition from our tables to story time at the carpet or how we clean up after using materials at a center, children are trained on all procedures and routines and they remain consistent throughout the year. This allows for children to build their ownership, independence and confidence and is an effective way to pro-actively avoid challenges and frustrations tied to confusion or inconsistency along with any perceived lack of fairness.

#### 2. POSITIVE INSTRUCTION:

- We prioritize positive instruction as a cornerstone of our approach. Our teachers are trained to focus on building and reinforcing positive behaviors rather than simply reacting to negative actions. By training children on the front-end around what good choices look and sound like and using positive language and redirection, we aim to guide children towards making constructive choices that benefit themselves and their peers.

#### 3. SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIORS:

- To create an atmosphere where positive behaviors flourish, we encourage teachers to actively acknowledge and celebrate moments of kindness, sharing, and cooperation. We believe that positive reinforcement is a powerful tool for shaping behavior, and our staff is committed to consistently recognizing and praising children for their efforts and achievements.

### STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES FOR CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

At U Prep, we recognize that some children may require more supports in order to find success in the classroom and build the habits they need to maximize their own learning and contribute to the health of the overall learning environment. With this in mind, we have a number of approaches we take to lean in when challenging behaviors arise.

#### 1. PROMOTING RESPONSIVE RELATIONSHIPS:

- We recognize the importance of responsive and positive relationships among children, staff, and families. Our teachers are trained to build strong connections with each child, fostering a sense of trust and security. Open communication with families is encouraged, ensuring that everyone is actively involved in the child's well-being.

#### 2. CULTIVATING A PROGRAM-WIDE CULTURE:

- Creating a program-wide culture that prioritizes children's mental health, social, and emotional well-being is crucial. Our center promotes a positive and inclusive environment where every child feels valued and supported in their individuality. We organize events and activities that celebrate diversity, encouraging a sense of belonging for all.

#### 3. TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE:

- Our teaching strategies extend beyond academic development to encompass social and emotional competence. Teachers incorporate activities that promote pro-social peer interactions, empathy, and

emotional regulation. Through play-based learning coupled with teacher facilitation and direction where needed, children develop the necessary skills to navigate social situations positively.

**4. INDIVIDUALIZED SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL INTERVENTION:**

- For children who may need additional support, we are committed to providing individualized social and emotional intervention. Our approach involves understanding each child's unique needs and working collaboratively with families to develop personalized plans. Our goal is to reduce challenging behavior, creating an environment where every child can succeed.

**5. TEAM-BASED POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLAN:**

- In instances where challenging behaviors arise, our center adopts a team-based approach to develop and implement a positive behavior support plan. This collaborative effort involves teachers, parents, and any relevant specialists working together to address the root causes of challenging behavior. Our intent is to prevent suspensions and expulsions, creating a supportive space for all children to learn and grow.

Beyond the outlined approaches and strategies above, U Prep's ECE program has a further matrix that outlines potential behaviors we may encounter and the positive interventions we put in place to address those behaviors.

LEVEL	EXAMPLES OF DEMONSTRATED BEHAVIORS	EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS/ NON-EXCLUSIONARY PRACTICES
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minor infraction<sup>2</sup> with no prior incidents or pattern of behaviors.</li> </ul> <p>Other interventions have not been put in place.</p>	<p><b>TAKE A BREAK AND REDIRECTION:</b> children take a short break from activities in the classroom to regain their self-control and/or engage in healing practices that regulate, calm, and/or respond to a child's need (e.g., movement). The break may involve use of a calm down space or cozy corner.</p> <p><b>PRACTICE REPARATIONS AS A CONSEQUENCE:</b> For example, children may be called to replace, clean, or fix damaged property and/or assist in making up for lost learning time.</p> <p><b>VISUAL TIMERS &amp; CLEAR EXPECTATIONS:</b> To help a child understand waiting and taking turns, the teacher may utilize a visual timer. By setting clear expectations with visual cues, we're reinforcing positive behavior and helping them grasp important concepts in a fun and engaging way.</p> <p><b>CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS:</b> Guided prompts for building understanding and learning about actions and the effects they have, recognizing roles and actions with words. Positive responsiveness to making amends and supporting the needs of those involved.</p> <p>Facilitate choice and/or redirection when possible.</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pattern of minor infractions, especially interrupting learning for self and those</li> </ul>	<p><b>OFFER BREAKS OR SENSORY TOOLS:</b> Recognizing when a child may need a break or sensory support, teachers may offer breaks to a child. Providing short breaks or sensory tools, such as stress balls or fidget toys, can help them self-regulate and redirect their focus positively.</p>

<sup>2</sup> Minor infraction is defined as ignoring instructions, minor defiance, disrupting the learning environment, mild rough play, intentionally interrupting, excessive movement or testing boundaries.

	<p>around them. Breaking of classroom norms regarding respect for self, others, and the environment.</p> <p>Interventions for minor disruptions have not been successful.</p>	<p><b>QUIET CORNER OR COZY AREA:</b> To support a child's emotional regulation, we've designated a special area where they can go to calm down or reflect when feeling overwhelmed. This space includes soft elements and sensory items to promote self-regulation and teach your child to manage their emotions positively.</p> <p><b>BUDDY SYSTEM &amp; POSITIVE ROLE MODELING:</b> Implementing a buddy system, pairing your child with a "learning buddy" who serves as a positive role model, can be a great way to motivate and model changed behaviors. This encourages cooperative activities and interactions, fostering a sense of responsibility and teamwork while providing your child with a positive example to follow.</p> <p><b>SOCIAL CONFERENCE:</b> Invite the child to discuss the issue with staff and possibly family, express needs, and build awareness of the impact of behavior on learning and the environment (gain perspective from the child)</p> <p><b>CONSULT WITH FAMILY, MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE CHILD'S LIFE:</b> Gain perspective on strategies, discuss interventions, develop a plan for additional supports (gain perspective from the community)</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant emotional distress and/or physical behavior that places the child or others in the environment at physical/emotional risk.</li> </ul> <p>Interventions for level two behavior have not been successful.</p>	<p><b>BEHAVIOR PLAN:</b> A plan developed with family and key stakeholders including a mental health provider with detailed actions and supports needed to participate fully in the environment. Engage key experts and school community members for plan development and advice, including social worker, behavioral specialist, and/or psychologist. Determine resourced supports needed to aid the child's path to self-discipline.</p> <p><b>TEMPORARY SEPARATION:</b> Timebound, less than one day break from the environment appropriate to the child's age and maturity level. The separation will be communicated to the family on the same day.</p> <p><b>SEEKING ADVICE:</b> Teacher Leader(s) are committed to seeking advice for supporting children and engaging the network and key stakeholders to support positive discipline strategies.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major or repeated infractions including but not limited to assault, weapons, threatening behavior, attempt or willful bodily or emotional injury to another.</li> </ul> <p>Repetitive violent</p>	<p><b>PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT:</b> Seek the assistance of child psychologists, pediatricians, or child behavior specialists to assess underlying causes and identify developmental or emotional challenges.</p> <p><b>SOCIAL CONFERENCE:</b> Invite the child to participate in a Social Conference. This forum allows the child to discuss the issues with staff, possibly family, express their needs, and gain awareness of the impact of their behavior on learning and the environment. This process helps in gaining valuable perspectives directly from the child.</p> <p><b>CONSULTATION WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS:</b> Consult with family, mental health providers, and other key stakeholders in the child's life. Gain perspective on strategies, discuss interventions, and develop a plan for additional supports. This</p>

	behavior. <sup>3</sup>	collaborative approach ensures a comprehensive understanding and support system for the child within their community.
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## SUSPENSION & EXPULSION

The ECE center at University Prep does not recommend expulsion or suspension for children in our program. Instead, we focus on teaching healthy behaviors and supporting students with new problem solving strategies and positive instruction (*outlined throughout this handbook*). We handle difficult situations as a family and school team. We are able to additionally support families by seeking Early Childhood mental health support through a consultant or specialist as needed.

In the very rare instance in which a suspension or expulsion is being considered for a child enrolled in the PreK program (*or in any grades, PreK – 2<sup>nd</sup>*), University Prep adheres to House Bill 19-1194, which was passed in the 2019 Colorado legislative session and outlines required approaches to suspension and expulsion for all public schools in the state. Key elements of that statute (C.R.S. 22-23-106.1) are outlined below for reference.

### Requirements to move forward with an out-of-school suspension or expulsion (In PreK – 2<sup>nd</sup> Gr.):

A school may impose an out-of-school suspension or expel a student enrolled in preschool, kindergarten, first grade, or second grade, only if

1. The school determines that student has engaged in conduct on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or at a school activity event that:
  1. Involves the possession of a dangerous weapon without the authorization of the school;
  2. Involves the use, possession, or sale of a drug or controlled substance, as defined in C.R.S. 18-18-102(5);  
or
  3. Endangers the health or safety of others.
2. If the school determines the student has engaged in one of the conducts above, the school must determine that failure to remove the student from the school building would create a safety threat that cannot otherwise be addressed.
3. If the school determines that provisions (1) and (2) are satisfied, the school, on a case-by-case basis, must consider each of the factors set forth in C.R.S. 22-33- 106(1.2) before suspending or expelling the student. The school shall document any alternative behavioral and disciplinary interventions that it employs before suspending or expelling the student.

#### Factors of C.R.S. 22-33-106 (1.2)

- age of the student
- disciplinary history of the student
- whether the student has a disability
- the seriousness of the violation committed by the student
- whether the violation committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member
- whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation committed by the student

<sup>3</sup> Violent behavior is defined as hitting, biting, kicking, spitting, threats, excessive teasing. Violent behavior may cause physical and/or emotional distress, or require medical attention.

The school must determine that (1), (2), and (3) of the determinations are met before moving forward with an out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

**Timeframe for suspension:**

If a school imposes an out-of-school suspension on a student who meets the criteria listed in (1) through (3), the out-of-school suspension must not exceed three school days. The chief administrative officer or designee may extend the suspension past three school days only if the chief administrative officer or designee determines that a longer period of suspension is necessary to resolve the safety threat or recommends that the student be expelled in accordance with C.R.S. 22-33-105(2)(c).

**Documentation:**

Schools should maintain accurate documentation of any and all suspensions and expulsion determinations. Particularly for out-of-school suspension and expulsions of children in preschool through second grade, this documentation should outline the school's thought process and determinations for each of the listed criteria and evidence of how the school made this determination.

## INTERNET SAFETY & SCREEN TIME

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At U Prep, we are committed to providing a nurturing and developmentally appropriate environment for your child. Our approach to screen time aligns with our dedication to fostering a well-rounded educational experience. Here's what you can expect regarding screen time at our school:

1. **AGE-APPROPRIATE CONTENT:** Media content provided at our school is carefully selected to align with age-appropriate guidelines for 4-year-olds. We prioritize educational and positive content that complements our curriculum.
2. **INTERNET SAFETY EDUCATION:** For children over the age of 5, we incorporate age-appropriate discussions on online safety. Teachers will introduce concepts such as not sharing personal information, seeking adult guidance, and the importance of responsible online behavior.
3. **LIMITED AND PURPOSEFUL USE:** Screen time at our preschool is limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per day, divided into sessions of no more than 15 minutes each. On many days, children will experience no screen time.
4. **EDUCATIONAL CONTENT:** We curate a selection of educational and age-appropriate programs and applications for your child's screen time. Our goal is to integrate technology as a tool for learning and exploration.
5. **CLASSROOM INTEGRATION:** Smart boards (Newline Monitors) and computers are strategically incorporated into the classroom environment to enhance lessons and facilitate interactive learning experiences.
6. **SUPERVISED & MONITORED SESSIONS:** Trained educators will guide and supervise screen time activities to ensure that the content is not only educational but also aligned with our curriculum objectives. Our school's devices will be equipped with appropriate filters and monitoring tools to ensure that children are exposed only to content suitable for their age group.

Students at U Prep are provided with access to the Internet and electronic communications to engage in a modern society. U Prep retains the authority to deny, revoke, or suspend access to technology should a scholar participate in any prohibited activity.<sup>4</sup> Non-compliance with these guidelines may lead to the denial of access to school technology resources.

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<sup>4</sup> Prohibited activities are defined as promoting violence, endorsing discrimination, sharing inappropriate content, plagiarizing, and violating laws or confidentiality. Illegally copying materials is strictly prohibited, and students must adhere to copyright laws and seek permission before downloading or copying materials subject to registration fees. Bypassing network security is not allowed unless the computer is not connected to the U Prep network.

## EMERGENCY & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

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As shared repeatedly, ensuring the safety and well-being of your children is our top priority at U Prep. In the unfortunate event of an emergency or disaster, it is crucial for all parents to be well-informed and prepared. This section outlines the procedures we have in place for various scenarios, including but not limited to lost children, tornadoes, fires, shelter-in-place, lockdown, an active shooter on premises, reunification with families after an emergency or disaster, and evacuating children with disabilities.

SITUATION	OVERVIEW	COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL
<b>FIRE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the event of a fire, staff members are trained to evacuate children calmly and quickly using predetermined exit routes.</li> <li>Fire extinguishers and other safety equipment are strategically placed throughout the facility.</li> <li>Drill conducted monthly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once all scholars and staff have been safely evacuated and accounted for, families will be contacted through text blast.</li> <li>Families will not be notified of the monthly drills.</li> </ul>
<b>SHELTER IN PLACE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In certain emergencies, such as severe weather, we may implement shelter-in-place procedures until the weather has cleared.</li> <li>Staff will guide children to designated safe areas within the facility until it is safe to resume regular activities.</li> <li>Drill conducted every semester.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the weather has cleared families will be contacted as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>LOCKOUT (EXTERNAL THREAT)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is a perceived danger in the vicinity of the building, scholars and staff swiftly move inside.</li> <li>Staff members will secure all entrances and guide children to designated safe areas until law enforcement provides an all-clear signal.</li> <li>No one will be allowed in or out of the building until we are cleared.</li> <li>Drill conducted every semester.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After contacting authorities, school leaders will send a text blast home immediately, followed by a more detailed letter home.</li> </ul>
<b>LOCKDOWN (INTERNAL THREAT)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is a potential intruder inside the building, scholars and staff will move to a secure, locked location inside the building.</li> <li>Staff and scholars will maintain silence and stay out of sight until it is deemed safe to evacuate.</li> <li>Law enforcement will be contacted immediately.</li> <li>No one will be allowed in or out of the building until we are cleared.</li> <li>Drill conducted every semester.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After contacting authorities, school leaders will send a text blast home immediately, followed by a more detailed letter home.</li> </ul>
<b>LOST CHILD<sup>5</sup></b>	<p><b>DURING SCHOOL HOURS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the event that a child becomes separated from the group, our educators will notify administrative staff immediately.</li> <li>Staff will use the intercom to call the child to the lobby while all available staff search the entire premises, inside and out.</li> <li>After a maximum of 8 minutes from the initial report, administrative staff will call #911.</li> <li>Continue to search while the building administrator contacts the parent or guardian and informs them of the circumstances; staff will enquire about where the child might go &amp; ask that someone remains at home in case the child returns home.</li> <li>Documentation of all actions will be filed with the main office</li> <li>When the child is found, all parties involved will be contacted.</li> </ul> <p><b>BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL HOURS:</b> When it is reported that a scholar failed to make it home after school (or not made it to school in the morning), the following procedures will be used by the administrator or designated person(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will determine the route the scholar uses to get home or to school. Depending on if they ride the bus or they are dropped off contact will be made with transportation or the child's guardian.</li> <li>Contact parent (custodial and non-custodial) or guardian, and other emergency contacts to determine if family members or friends may have picked up the child.</li> <li>Check with the classroom teacher, and any other appropriate staff to determine the last time they were seen, and if they mentioned anything unusual about their plans</li> <li>Call #911 to notify appropriate law enforcement</li> <li>Search the building and grounds and continue contacting known siblings or friends of the student (including neighbors, classmates, other students on the bus) to determine the last time the student was seen and if they mentioned anything about where they were going.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After a maximum of 8 minutes from the initial report, administrative staff will call #911. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will provide police with a picture (if available), child's full description and the family's contact information</li> </ul> </li> <li>Building administrator will call the family to inform them of the situation after notifying #911.</li> </ul>

## CHILD RELEASE PROCEDURES AND EMERGENCY PICKUP PROTOCOLS:

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The safety and well-being of your child are our top priorities. For this reason, we strictly adhere to a policy of releasing children only to individuals authorized by the parents or legal guardians. It is imperative that you provide written authorization for anyone who is permitted to pick up your child. This includes parents, guardians, and any designated emergency contacts.

1. **WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION FORMS:** At your child's enrollment or upon any changes to the list of authorized individuals, you must complete and submit the Child Release Authorization Form provided by U Prep. This form includes the names, contact information, and any additional identification details deemed necessary for proper identification.
2. **VERIFICATION PROCESS:** When someone arrives to pick up your child, our staff will verify their identity by cross-referencing the provided information with our records. This may include checking photo identification and confirming personal details. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in ensuring a secure environment for all children in our care.
3. **EMERGENCY CHANGES:** In case of an unexpected situation requiring a change in pickup arrangements, such as a last-minute authorized person or a temporary guardian, please notify the center in advance. Emergency changes will be accommodated with the utmost consideration for the safety and security of your child.

### EMERGENCY PICKUP PROTOCOLS:

1. **COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL:** In the event of an emergency, communication is key. We will make every effort to keep you informed promptly. It is essential to provide updated contact information, including alternative contacts who can be reached if the primary contacts are unavailable.
2. **EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST:** Maintain an updated Emergency Contact List, including names and contact numbers for individuals who are authorized to pick up your child during unforeseen circumstances. This list will be utilized if we are unable to reach the primary contacts.
3. **DESIGNATED EMERGENCY PICKUP PERSON:** In case of a genuine emergency where neither the parents nor the authorized contacts can be reached, you must designate an emergency pickup person. This individual should be someone you trust and can be reached readily in case of urgent situations.
4. **PROCEDURES FOR UNPLANNED CLOSURES:** If the center needs to close unexpectedly due to emergencies such as severe weather, power outages, or other unforeseen circumstances, our staff will follow pre-established protocols to ensure the safety and well-being of the children. We will communicate any closures and the subsequent procedures for child pickup through our designated communication channels.

By adhering to these child release procedures and emergency pickup protocols, we aim to create a secure environment for your child while fostering open communication and collaboration between parents and our childcare team. Your cooperation is vital in maintaining the safety and well-being of all children entrusted to our care.

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<sup>5</sup> A child is considered lost/missing when a child cannot be located after they are known to have been signed into U Prep or boarded school transportation.

## WITHDRAWAL OF CHILDCARE SERVICES AND CHILD RESIGNATION

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Parents/Guardians are entitled to withdraw their child from University Prep at any time. To facilitate a smooth process, we request that parents/guardians provide the teacher and school office staff with advance notice when withdrawing a child from their classroom.

In certain circumstances, withdrawal of childcare services may be initiated by U Prep after parents/guardians have been informed of necessary steps to maintain services, and compliance has not been achieved within a specified time period.

### CONDITIONS FOR CONSIDERING A CHILD WITHDRAWAL:

- 1. Voluntary Withdrawal:** A family voluntarily withdraws their child from the program.
  - Families must complete a withdrawal form with the front office.
- 2. Non-Attendance:** The family does not bring their child to school for ten consecutive days after the school has completed all steps in the attendance escalation protocol outlined earlier, which demonstrates continued and sustained efforts to work with the family to remove barriers to ensure regular attendance.
- 3. Unsuccessful Contact:** All attempts to contact the family regarding their child's attendance or other pertinent matters have been unsuccessful (including text messages emails, phone calls and home visits).

## GRIEVANCES

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We strongly encourage families to work with their child's educators and campus-based leadership to resolve any issues or challenges that may arise. We believe deeply that problems are best solved working with individuals who are closest to the issue at hand. A full outline of U Prep's grievance escalation policy may be found [linked here](#).

Having said that, if a problem warrants greater attention and you find yourself not reaching a resolution or compromised outcome, there is an opportunity for escalation. Any individual or group may bring complaints and/or objections to governing board policies or decisions along with administrative procedures or practices at the school to the Board of Trustees.

### SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

- 1. Timeline for Submission:**
  - Complaints should be submitted in writing to the Board at least one week prior to the next board meeting.
  - Complaints submitted later will be addressed at the subsequent meeting of the Board.
  - Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the Board responding at or prior to its next regular public meeting.
- 2. Handling of Complaints:**
  - Every effort will be made to respectfully address each matter to the satisfaction of the individual or group representing the complaint.
  - The Board, as necessary, may direct the Executive Director or other responsible party to act upon the complaint and report to the Board.
- 3. Determination by the Board:**
  - The Board of Trustees shall render a determination in writing if appropriate or required.

This escalation process aligns with our commitment to transparency and accountability. We value the input of our families and recognize the importance of addressing concerns at various levels within the organization. Your feedback is crucial in helping us maintain a high standard of care and service.

Please share your complaint directly with the Board Chair, Cuneyt Akay ([akayc@gtlaw.com](mailto:akayc@gtlaw.com)), if the issue remains unresolved through the initial channels and efforts. We appreciate your cooperation in working together to ensure the best possible experience for your child.

In addition, if you want to file a complaint about our Early Childhood Education facility, please see the notice below (which is also posted in our building).

**To File a Complaint About This Facility Contact:**

**The Colorado Department of Early Childhood**

710 S. Ash Street

Denver, Colorado 80246

Or Call

**(303) 866-5958 or 1-800-799-5876**

***Our most recent health, fire and report of inspections are available upon request.***

## **CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT**

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University Prep and its employees are required by law to report any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services. All staff members go through annual mandatory reporter training and take the responsibility of mandatory reporting incredibly seriously.

At University Prep we prioritize the best interest of the child, providing support to families, and maintaining a caring and nurturing environment that always puts kids first.

## REPORTING PROCESS:

### 1. RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS:

- Parents are responsible for reporting any inappropriate staff behaviors or actions toward children promptly.

### 2. SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT:

- Suspected child abuse or neglect by a parent, guardian, staff, or other persons should be reported to the Denver Department of Human Services.

### 3. CONTACT INFORMATION:

- Denver Department of Human Services  
Address: 1200 Federal Blvd., Denver, CO 80204  
Child Abuse Hotline: 720-944-3000  
Main Number: 720-944-3666

### 4. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL:

- Detailed child abuse and neglect procedures are outlined in the Standard Operating Procedures Manual, available in various locations within the school. Parents can request a copy from their Child Family Educator.

### 5. MANDATORY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- Parents are informed of staff's mandatory reporting requirements for suspected abuse and neglect before their child enters the program.

## NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

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U Prep welcomes all students and strives to create and maintain a diverse student population that is representative of the community we serve. U Prep is dedicated to the principles of equal opportunity and prevention of harassment in all of its practices. The educational programs, activities, and employment opportunities offered by University Prep are offered without regard to disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, language, religion, ancestry, need for special education services, or any other protected class. If you have a complaint about discrimination or harassment as it pertains to U Prep, please contact one of the coordinators below.

### Title IX Coordinator

Alastair Dawe  
adawe@uprepschool.org  
(303)329-8412

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 Coordinator

Jackie Bass  
jbass@uprepschool.org  
(720)610-1875

## COLORADO OPEN RECORDS ACT POLICY

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As a 501c3, public, non-profit entity, U Prep is committed to being open, accountable, and accessible to the public. These guidelines help U Prep provide the public with efficient access to documents and records.

### Making a Records Request:

Requesters must submit a paper or email request to the U Prep front desk for school records. A request is considered "received" by U Prep the day an email, fax, or letter containing a request is opened. U Prep shall make every effort to respond with an estimated date for completing the request within three working days. U Prep may extend its response period up to seven working days if it finds extenuating circumstances exist and communicates that finding to the requestor in writing. The three-working-day response time begins the first working day following receipt of the request.

### Format and Fulfillment of the Request:

U Prep will not be responsible for conducting analysis or manipulation of records on behalf of a requestor. If a records request requires more than mere retrieval of records—such as technical expertise to synthesize or reconfigure data, reformatting of documents (for example to .pdf), redaction for any reason, or legal expertise from attorneys in order to identify how to comply with confidentiality requirements—U Prep will charge the requester for such costs. Any costs charged to a requester shall not exceed the actual cost of producing the records.

## FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

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

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

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's

information disclosed without their prior written consent. [Note: These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).]

If you do not want University Prep to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the University Prep in writing during the time of registration (annually in early August) – no later than August 15<sup>th</sup>. University Prep has designated the following information as directory information: [Note: an LEA may, but does not have to, include all the information listed below.]

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