



Universal Education
Initiative
&
Universal Family
of Schools

*Serving
2,500 Students
Annually*



UNIVERSAL FAMILY OF SCHOOLS
www.UniversalCompanies.org

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A. Universal Background

Universal Companies (Universal) is a not-for-profit "Community Development and Management Corporation" formed in October 1993 through the efforts and under the direction of one of Philadelphia's greatest talents, Mr. Kenneth Gamble - who continues to serve as its Chairman. Mr. Gamble, world-renowned lyricist, composer, producer, and founder and CEO of Philadelphia International Records, has been credited as a pioneer in the development of soul/rhythm and blues music in America. Since 1960, Mr. Gamble has written, produced, and recorded more than 3,000 songs performed by numerous artists, and is recognized as the creator of "THE SOUND OF PHILADELPHIA (TSOP)." TSOP has placed Philadelphia on the international map as a Mecca of the music industry.

Mr. Gamble, born and raised in South Philadelphia, has always been conscientious of his perceived status and forthright in the way he wanted to address the subpar conditions facing many of America's impoverished. In spite of his tremendous financial success in the music industry, he has never viewed himself as being above others. Because of his genuine concern for the plight of those less fortunate, he has made substantial contributions to the social uplifting and betterment of residents in Philadelphia through diligent involvement in numerous philanthropic efforts. He has personally been at the forefront on a whole host of issues that have challenged our City. Most prodigious among his many civic accomplishments, is his work at Universal. For a man known throughout the world for creating musical hits (with more than 100 standards to his credit), he refers to the birth of Universal and the rebuilding of the community where he was born and raised as, "the biggest hit of my life."

Universal manages five (5) public schools and has significant and demonstrable education management experience and demonstrated proven success in turning around failing schools. Universal utilizes an education philosophy derived from the belief that many of our urban regions have developed separate and unequal societies, with education disparities being a key culprit contributing to the status quo. This inequality between the wealthy and the poor and the educated and the ignorant, negatively impacts more than two-thirds of the African



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American population and significantly impacts a large percentage of the District's students. Universal fundamentally believes that there is a direct correlation between communities that exhibit high poverty levels, blighted neighborhoods, high crime levels, etc., with poor performing schools and low academic achievement. We should not confuse this phenomenon with our youth's inability to achieve academically. Many of these communities are in a vicious cycle of despair and neglect (i.e. social, economic, and educational) which Universal has begun to rectify.

Over the past 15 years, Universal has become one of the most successful community organizations in the City's history. In addition to being a proven successful manager of public schools, Universal has become one of the largest community developers: produced more than 1,000 units of housing; orchestrated very large and impactful public/private initiatives; and been a conduit for more than \$400M in private and public funds from local, state, and federal agencies. Universal brings the distinct ability to focus on areas outside of the school and within the community on social issues that have typically handicapped school administrators' ability to achieve success within schools. Throughout its history, Universal has been a catalyst for bringing the community together to address serious issues like education reform. Essential to the success in transforming low- performing schools into high- performing schools is the full adoption of the Universal Plan, a comprehensive approach to rebuilding communities.

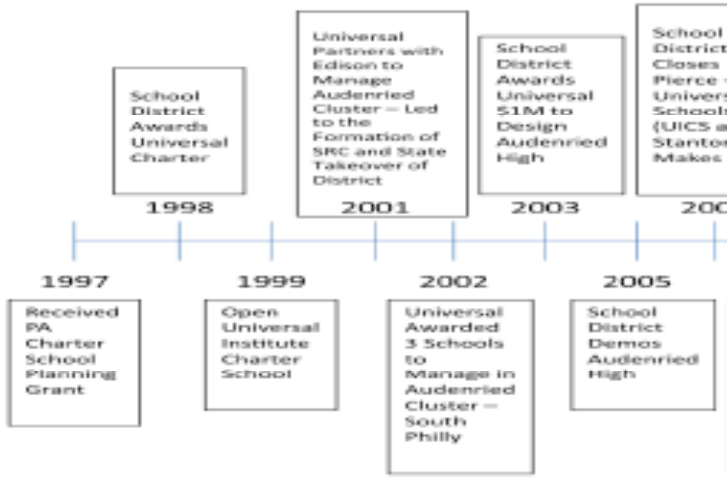


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B. Education Timeline



C. Education Mission and Vision of Universal Family of Schools

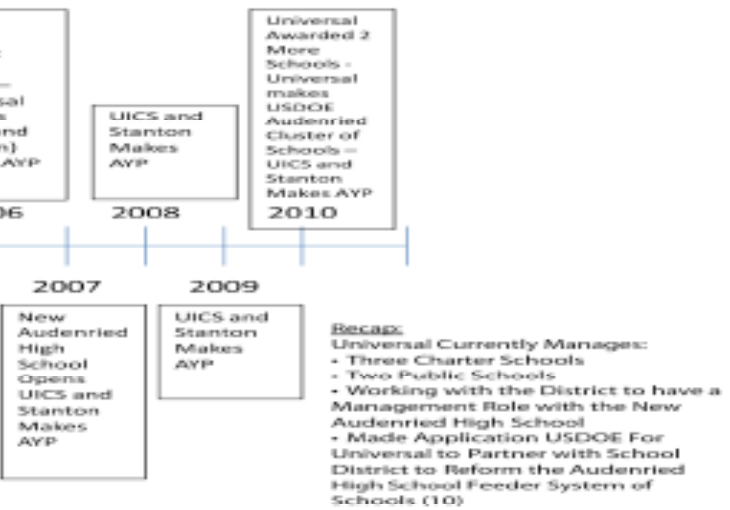
1. Mission – Universal’s education mission is to provide an exemplary program for young learners, grades K- 8, and their families in a holistic approach that focuses on academics, self- sufficiency, civic responsibility, physical well being and community linkages where the values of self, family, and community will be incorporated in all aspects of the educational process. Universal mission is to prepare children to be future leaders and build the foundation for superb student academic achievement while supporting students and their families to being lifelong learning.

2. Vision – Universal’s education vision is to establish an educational environment where all youth are prepared to have meaningful participation in a 21st century society as productive global citizens. Universal will prepare our youth for successful post-secondary educational experiences, specifically college and/or the 21st century workplace in a globalized knowledge-based and technology-based economy. The Universal vision is also to educate the “whole student,” incorporating the arts, languages, and humanities into curricula and to combine community development with the delivery of education and reconnect all of the key stakeholders (i.e. school leadership, parents, community, partners, and students) in the education process.



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D. What's Unique about Universal Schools?

Universal Schools are designed to significantly improve student learning and achievement while addressing the culture of low expectations. This is accomplished by a school design that will raise expectations of all key stakeholder groups, specifically students, teachers, staff, parents, and the community. Universal's school design forces us to mandate change and show our students and staff the value of those changes. This will, over time, foster an overall attitude adjustment and improve student learning and achievement.

1. Governance – Universal Education Management Company is led by Dr. Janis Butler and a team of education specialists and Universal Companies (parent company) is led by A. Rahim Islam and a team of business professionals.

- **Universal Charter Schools** – All three Universal charter schools are governed by their respective Board of Trustees with representation of Universal founders, business professionals, community leaders, and parents. In addition to having shared board members (core group represented on all three boards) specifically for continuity of purpose, all chartered schools have day-to-day management agreements with Universal's Education

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Management Company; a wholly-owned subsidiary of Universal Companies.

- **Universal Contract Schools** – Universal’s Education Management Company, wholly-owned subsidiary of Universal Companies., has a performance contract with the Philadelphia School District to support the academic performance of two public schools.

2. Management Approach – Universal is managed by an experienced educational management organization with a proven track record for improving schools and turning low performing schools around.

- **Corporate Management Oversight/Support** – The sole purpose of corporate management is to add additional levels of resources (i.e. Human, Financial, and Other) to the equation of managing academic outcomes for our children.
 - Fund/Resource Development
 - Marketing/Public Relations
 - Government and Community Relations
 - Corporate Office Operations Support (i.e. Technology, HR, Accounting, etc.)
 - Compliance Monitoring
 - Co-Sponsor of the Regional Talent Center
 - Integrating Community Development with School Reform
- **Central Management Oversight/Support** – The sole purpose of central management is to support and provide expert services and resources to schools, thus enabling schools to deliver an effective program for students while providing an appeal process for staff and families.
 - Special Education
 - Professional Development
 - Academic Assessment
 - Technical Assistance
 - Program Support
 - Full Service Approach



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- **School Leadership Approach** – Our unique structure allows for increased levels of school leadership, specifically 2-3 Assistant Principals (the actual number will depend on the size of the school’s student population)
 - Assistant Principals Focused on Academics
 - Assistant Principals Focused on Operations
 - School-Within-A-School Operation
 - Skilled Building Administrators
 - Leadership Mentoring Program

3. Unique School Features – All Universal schools are designed to promote high academic expectations, standards, and respect.

- Universal Schools are Community Schools
- The adoption of the School District of Philadelphia’s Core Curriculum;
- 100% PA Certified Teachers
- Safe, clean and pleasant learning and working environments
- Extended school year; longer school day;
- Lower student to teacher ratio; smaller class size (maximum 25 students per grade)
- School Advisory Council Partnership
- Literacy/Math rich environment
- In- Class Support by Content Specialist
- Saturday test preparation program
- Standardized homework

4. Professional and Staff Development

Approach – Universal professional staff development is ongoing and consistent training of instruction on current trends, research driven instructional practices, unique ideas, and curriculum resources. Universal has a three-phase process that is implemented before our schools even start, which includes:

- **Phase I – Psychological Alignment, including the following professional development objectives/topics:**
 - *Shifting from a Lack of Awareness and the need for change to Encouraging Perspective Change*
 - *Shifting from Impatience to Understanding the Learning Curve*

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- *Shifting from Complacency to Promoting routine-breaking and cognitive dissonance*
 - *Shifting from Fear of failure/success to developing a culture of experimentation and collective accountability*
 - *Shifting from a sense of loss to making certain that everyone has a clear role in the change process*
- **Phase II – Building Capacity...Helping Individual Students,including the following professional development objectives/topics:**
 - *Identifying the conditions associated with providing effective instruction*
 - *Identifying the range of possible instructional interventions*
 - *Understanding how students can contribute to their own improvement*
 - *Identifying ways to make case review meetings as productive as possible*
 - *Understanding the role that the daily schedule can play in supporting student assistance*
- **Phase III – Improving the Overall Quality of Instruction, including the following professional development objectives/topics:**
 - *Identifying the elements of an aligned improvement program*
 - *Identifying ways to fine-tune classroom supervision and observations*
 - *Developing classroom “maps” as a data-gathering tool*
 - *Developing an effective format for teacher support*

Universal’s Staff Development Training Plan are comprised of the following tenants:

- Align staff development to error analyses of benchmark tests and state tests
- Utilize summer school settings for intensive staff development training under a master teacher
- Engage per diem experts to work with teachers “on site”
- Encourage teachers to set instructional improvement



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goals soon after staff development training

- Expect teachers to share what they learned with colleagues when they attend off-campus training

Additionally, all professional and nonprofessional staff will be trained in School Operations, Procedures, School Safety and Emergency Operations Plans, National Incident Management Systems Certification (FEMA), and Student Code of Conduct. Extensive training will continue year round on the following:

• Core Features

- **Data Director Management System** – a complete data application which allows for the tracking of student assessment data, student demographics data, program/ event attendance, student grades, teacher data, and extensive capacity for reporting
- **Project- Based Learning / Inquiry Approach** – unit of study driven by an essential question or problem where students conduct research, manage information; identify resources, and develop an action planning toward a given product or performance task;
- **School To Career Competencies** – competencies and skills that cut across all content areas that include teamwork, technology, writing, multicultural competence
- **Writing As Learning** – written communication across curriculum to write to explain, inform, persuade, and describe, especially in response to fiction and nonfiction texts
- **Balanced Literacy** – teachers integrate approaches and strategies as they intentionally build on what students know in order to extend knowledge and skills; literacy framework consist of guided reading and writing, writer’s workshop, shared reading, independent reading and writing, read aloud, and modeled writing
- **Differentiated Instruction** – teachers learn the best teaching practices and strategies to create different pathways that respond to the needs of diverse learners; educators study this as an instructional concept that will maximize the learning for all students, regardless of skill level or background;
- **Co-Teaching Model** – an educational approach whereby general and special education teachers work together to deliver instruction to all students in an inclusive classroom; teachers will learn the major considerations

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required to share and delegate responsibilities and roles in order to meet student academic needs

- **100 Book Challenge** – independent and leveled reading program where teacher conferencing is a hallmark for student review and feedback
- **Cultural Proficiency** – the capacity to demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the culture of oneself and others in regard to customs, traditions, and the heritage of others
- **Guided Group Instruction** – organizing and planning small group instruction for students who have similar needs and instructional reading levels
- **Classroom Management** – an emphasis on elements of the well managed classroom that include rules, procedures, room arrangement, understanding of learning styles, effective instructional strategies, clearly stated objectives and expectations, and effective communication skills
- **Teacher Effectiveness** – an examination of key characteristics of the styles of teaching
- **IEP / IDEA** – Specially designed instruction, accommodations, and modifications with emphasis placed on compliance standards and appropriate development of IEP's with measurable goals
- **Cooperative Learning** – a focus on understanding the essential components and rationale for cooperative learning strategies
- **Utilization of Innovative technology** – Study Island, MINDPLAY, Earobics, GIZMO, SKILLS TUTOR programming, and more

● **School Features**

- Block schedule of ninety minutes for math, literacy, and science
- Monthly "In Service" Days – ½ day versus full day of professional development
- Sustained professional development in new curriculum initiatives from orientation, implementation, and evaluation
- Provisions for New Teacher Academy program of bi-weekly, monthly, week-end, and summer opportunities
- Utilizing a "Teacher's Quarterly" highlighting successful programs in curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure system-wide exposure
- Staff development in technology-assisted instruction and data-based decision making as evidenced by frequent



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- utilization in teaching practices
- Bi-monthly meetings of an Instructional Council/School Leadership Team
- Specialized staff development for all staff and support staff on the needs of Special Education and English Language Learners
- Teacher Induction Program
- Guaranteed Common Meeting Time
- Teacher Work Teams
- Math and Literacy Clinics
- Intense Summer Program
- Team Building Across Schools

5. Rigorous Academic Program Approach –

An academic program in which high expectations and project-based learning is emphasized through a “Writing Across The Curriculum” educational model. It is driven by data that provides research-based curriculum aligned to state and national standards.

• Student Writing Projects:

- **Structured Projects** – these projects have limitations; certain criteria are predetermined in terms of size, materials, and functions such as the Egg Drop
- **Topic Related Projects** – generally evolve from a unit of study such as Freedom Fighters of Civil Rights Era
- **Genre Related Projects** – follow a particular genre where students have creative license; unlike a structured project, using repeats each year such as biography from children’s grade level literature
- **Open Ended Projects** – these projects have minimal guidelines, few criteria, and little structure to encourage risk
- **Research based Curriculum**
- **Differentiated Instruction**
- **Constructivism**
- **Inquiry Based Learning**
- **Project Based Learning**
- **Assessment driven and results-oriented**
- **Writing as Learning and Customized Reading Programs**
- **Inclusion Program for Special Education Students**
- **Summer, winter, and spring learning packets**



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- **Enrichment Classes**
- **Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Instruction (STEM)**
- **African American Studies**

6. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Instruction (STEM) Approach

– Universal seeks to articulate and implement a vision for STEM education that will provide its students a high quality education in math and science and prepare them for future opportunities to explore careers in STEM fields. In addition to the creation of a STEM Czar and centralizing all of our science and math academic instruction, Universal has begun exploring the creation of a Math and Science Center at Universal schools that foster and encourage STEM program all year round. Universal's STEM academic will focus on building strong fundamental skills in math, science, and literacy with an emphasis on inquiry-based learning. A major emphasis is on integrating technology throughout the curriculum and pedagogy for instructional purposes. This includes smart classrooms and state of the art biology, chemistry, physics/ engineering laboratories, and instructional materials. In addition, the school serves as a laboratory where enhancing math and science teacher pedagogy is a priority displayed through the many school and grade level STEM projects.

7. African American Studies Approach – With nearly 100% of the students enrolled in Universal schools being African American, Universal implements a multicultural and African centered education into our students' learning environments. Specifically, Universal utilizes the seven (7) principles of Kwanzaa (the African-American celebration of Family, Community and Culture), each and every school day as a part of a broad curriculum infusion of African American history, culture, and contributions.

Enter our classrooms as we succeed in turning around our schools and you will witness teachers utilizing an Afrocentric focus in an integrated curriculum that includes teaching Ancient African History, the African Diaspora, and African-American History. Universal integrates African-American contributions in all school-subject areas, including the Sciences, Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics and Humanities. This significantly changes the climate and culture of our schools. Enter our classrooms and you will see:

- our students interacting with their peers, their instructors, and absorbing the content of the subject matter being taught, while



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actively engaged in learning

- our students are excited about learning because of exposure to teaching instruction that for them has cultural relevance and is now made meaningful
- our students improve their overall academic performance and behaviors
- a level of enthusiasm and desire to learn among our students, like you have never felt before
- a change in the culture of our schools from despair and failure to hope and success

8. Academic Assessment... an Academic Intervention Approach

– Universal’s approach to academic assessment is driven by authentic real data for all students and simply put will place students in either one of two categories: Below Grade Level or Above Grade Level. In addition to periodic evaluations to determine if our program is meeting its goals, all data is reviewed regularly, including report card grades, rate of participation in extra-curricular activities, promotion rates, and mock standardized test results.

- **Below Grade Level** – Student interventions will be provided for students who are at risk. Interventions that will address struggling students include specialized clinics in literacy, math, and science. A particular focus will be provided through computer driven or internet accessible research-based programs for struggling students. These may include Earobics by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for primary through grade three students. MINDPLAY by Educational Solutions or Skills Tutors by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt are also among the technology programs being considered for school implementation for these identified students. Both programs deliver systematic and explicit instruction that is individualized for each student with unique adaptive technology that automatically adjusts the instructional level to ensure mastery before moving on to the next level.
- **Above Grade Level** – For students who demonstrate advanced levels of performance, enhanced learning opportunities will be offered as a result of partnerships with corporate and community school stakeholders in a variety of ways. Technology based programs such as GIZMO, which promotes creative problem solving and higher order thinking is among computer based programs that are being considered for this population of students. Other enrichment activities include:
 - Specialized mini courses in community service project based

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learning

- An advanced placement course in student selected careers
 - Independent study courses
 - Summer institute for advanced studies
 - Summer internships
 - Job shadowing on and off school site
- **Assessment Tools** – Universal Schools utilize formative, summative, and diagnostic performance tools that are grade appropriate and state or locally recommended by the Department of Education as well as School District of Philadelphia. They include the following:
 - **Literacy DRA – Grades Kindergarten – Grade 3** – developmental reading assessment is a standardized system of benchmark running records used to assess reading development in K – 3. It is conducted in one-on-one reading conferences as children read specifically selected leveled text; assessment is ongoing.
 - **Gates – MacGinitie – Grades 4 – Grades 8** – whole class assessment that provides a general level of reading achievement for each student evaluating vocabulary and comprehension.
 - **Project Based Rubrics** – incorporate state standards for writing, math, and science projects, as well as content specific rubrics or checklists for Project Based Learning.
 - **8th Algebra Proficiency Examination** – end of year test of Algebra 1 content and skills.
 - **4 Sight – Grades 3 – Grades 8** – benchmark assessments testing in reading and math; this tool is criterion referenced and aligned to PSSA anchors; follows the PSSA blueprint for the grade and is given five times a year.
 - **Everyday Mathematics** – formative and summative tests are an integral part of the Core Curriculum’s in mathematics.
 - **SRA Corrective Reading** – an intervention program that provides students, teachers, and administrators with critical components of a research-based and classroom proven



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approach to closing the achievement gap for struggling readers. It also provides on-going assessment and evaluation as a tool to monitor student performance.

- **SRA Corrective Math** – an intervention program that provides the tools necessary to teach and learn vital skills, rules and strategies in an efficient and effective manner; provides systematic practice that creates steady, measurable progress.
- **Benchmark Tests** – tests that determine knowledge and skills that students acquired every five weeks of the six week Core Curriculum teaching and learning cycle for grades three through eight in the areas of reading, math and science.
- **Literacy WRAP** – a writing and reading assessment profile; is an informal assessment designed to gain information about the decoding and comprehension strategies used by students while reading a passage aloud; it is individually administered to students in grades 4 – 8 who are reading more than a year below grade level.
- **English Access To ELL** – a screening tool used to identify and measure English language proficiency of students whose first language is not English.
- **PASA** – a systemic and summative test designed for students with severe cognitive abilities; this is a Pennsylvania alternative to the PSSA.
- **MindPlay** – is a combination of computer assisted instructional programs; the desire is to have students visit all three stations.

9. Special Education Approach – All students, including our special education population, will be provided rigorous instruction inside of the regular education classroom, as much as possible. Universal Schools incorporate the Co-Teaching Model as part of an inclusive classrooms framework which involves cooperative planning between regular education and special education teachers. Universal also uses Differentiated Instruction Model to further support our students who learn differently. This model allows for the adjustment of content, process, or product in order to meet the needs of students and promote learning.

10. Gifted Student Approach – Universal recognizes and supports the uniquenesses that come with student giftedness and employs a School-wide Enrichment Model to promote gifted education. This approach ensures that different types of enrichment and acceleration services are made available to targeted groups of students, as well as **all students** within the school or grade level who have demonstrated advanced levels of performance in any and all areas of the curriculum.

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At the heart of this approach is a focus on ***differentiated learning experiences*** that take into consideration each student's unique abilities, interests, and learning styles. Those students that have been identified will participate in a number of structured extracurricular activities, including: advance placement type course offerings, institutes at universities, robotic and science competitions, engineering experiences, creative technology use and math challenge competitions, etc. The goal is to provide every student with the opportunities, resources, and encouragement necessary to achieve his or her maximum potential. Emphasis is placed on ***labeling the services, not the student.***

Services range from general enrichment activities for all students in the regular classroom to a wide variety of advanced-level enrichment experiences for targeted groups of students.

Examples of services are:

- Special mini-course for all fifth graders in community service project based learning
- Advanced placement course in engineering and science for middle school students
- Mixed grade group in algebra/geometry for higher-achieving students
- Special enrichment study for all students interested in the performing arts
- Assigned time in an instructional materials center to work on independent study projects
- Research based instruction/interventions
- Use of Achieve 3000 to support differentiated instruction
- Infusion of arts and technology into the curriculum

11. Foreign Language – The world has become increasingly intercultural and multi- global, multicultural awareness and cultural proficiency becomes paramount to the educational foundation and preparedness of all youth. All grades K through grade eight students will develop basic and above levels of communication in a second language other than English. Universal offers Arabic, Latin or Spanish as its foreign language as part of the curriculum.

12. Use of Technology – Universal schools have full access to the internet and the latest technology driven education tools and utilize A Technology Assisted Writing across the Curriculum educational model of instruction for continuous school improvement. Our students learn technology concepts



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and skills as a result of Project Based Learning where writing is emphasized across the content areas. The technology curricula for Universal managed schools is based on the Technology Foundation Standard's for Students, gleaned from the Black Engineers in Technology Standards Project, which include:

- Basic Operations and Concepts
- Technology Communication Tools
- Technology Problem- Solving and Decision- Making Tools;
- Technology Research Tool
- Technology Productivity Tools

This is a teaching and learning program characterized by teacher utilization and student application of diverse technology tools that enrich student learning and the teaching skills of educators.

13. Unique Extra-Curricular Features – In an effort to provide a wide range of experiences for our youth in a holistic approach, students are provided with an array of activities designed to expand experiences in the arts, sports, and various competitions.

• **After School Clubs**

- Strategic Games – (Chess, Checkers, etc)
- Sports – (Tennis, Golf, Basketball, Baseball, Volleyball, etc.)
- Debate Teams
- Wellness and Health
- Field Trips

• **Performing Arts**

- Dance
- Music Appreciation
- Art Creations
- Dance /Theater
- Health and Wellness



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- **6th – 8th Graders**

- Rites of Passage: Boys to Men (Male) and Pearls of Wisdom (Female)
- Target Field Trips

- **End of Year Academic Exhibition**

- Family Math Literacy Night
- Student Debates Championships
- Student Plays and Performances

14. School Culture and Climate – Universal Schools

thrive on High Expectations, Rigor and Respect that have a rippling effect that impacts everything – our school’s culture, climate, student’s attitudes and overall school performance; and parent and community involvement.

Universal Schools promote a culture of teamwork, high expectations, and ownership for results – **NO EXCUSES.**

Universal Schools use a sound and successful operations policy that is based on: Preparedness—with rapid coordinated response to a crisis; Response – immediate identification of any type of crisis; Recovery – return to learning and restoration infrastructure immediately; and Mitigation/Prevention – assessments to determine and remove any/all hazards. In addition, Universal implements a School Emergency Plan that supports the school’s climate and its operations. Components of the plan are:

- Overview of schools approach to emergency management
- Specific steps to take for critical emergency response and recovery
- Appendices that support the annex and contain details and methods for use in an emergency
- Role and responsibility of school safety team
- Structure for documenting and reporting incidents
- External contacts and the resources
- Staff handbook
- Student handbook
- School Operations Plan



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Universal aggressively engages parents and the community in all aspects of the school and its learning through the implementation of the Universal Family and Student Resource Center (Center). The Center helps make the School a focal point of community activities and demonstrates that organized community engagement significantly adds value to teaching and learning programs related to student achievement, school climate, and children and family services. The new paradigm of the school as the focal point of community activities requires full-scale stakeholder participation. Universal Schools have the following which support our school culture and climate:

- Student and Teacher Uniforms
- Student and School Competition
 - Strategic Games – (Chess, Checkers, etc)
- Parent/Family Compact Agreement and Engagement
- School-wide Behavior Support System
- Student Recitation and Affirmation of School Principles and Values (School Mantra)
- University and Business Partnerships
- School Student Enrichment Programs that Support School Climate
 - Wellness and Health
 - End of Year Academic Exhibition (i.e. Family Math Literacy Night, Student Debates, Student Plays and Performances)
 - Student Gifted Programs

E. What are the Unique Aspects of the Universal Family and Student Resource Center?

1. Governance – The management responsibilities for the Center rest with its Director with oversight from Universal’s Corporate Office and direct reporting responsibilities to the Assistant Principal of Operations. The Center’s Director supports the drafting and execution of the School Action Plan and will be a part of the School Leadership Team. Also housed in the Center is the Parent Liaison; Resource Coordinator; School Greeters; Dean of Students (Discipline); Counselors; After School Coordinators; and Case Managers.

2. Purpose – The purpose of the Universal Family and Student Resource Center (Center) is to consolidate and

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organize the schools non-academic functions under one roof to offer a comprehensive array of school based social services with a primary focus on those students that are “at risk” and the families “in crisis” within the neighboring community. The goal is also to engage community stakeholders at all levels of the school operations and make the school a focal point of community activities, demonstrating that organized community engagement significantly adds value to teaching and student learning.

The Center is located in the school for easy access where students, parents, and guardians receive direct or referred services, including counseling for family and youth. Case management is provided for students at risk and families in crisis. Also available are job training, job opportunities, affordable housing, rentals and home ownership. The Center focuses on the following areas:

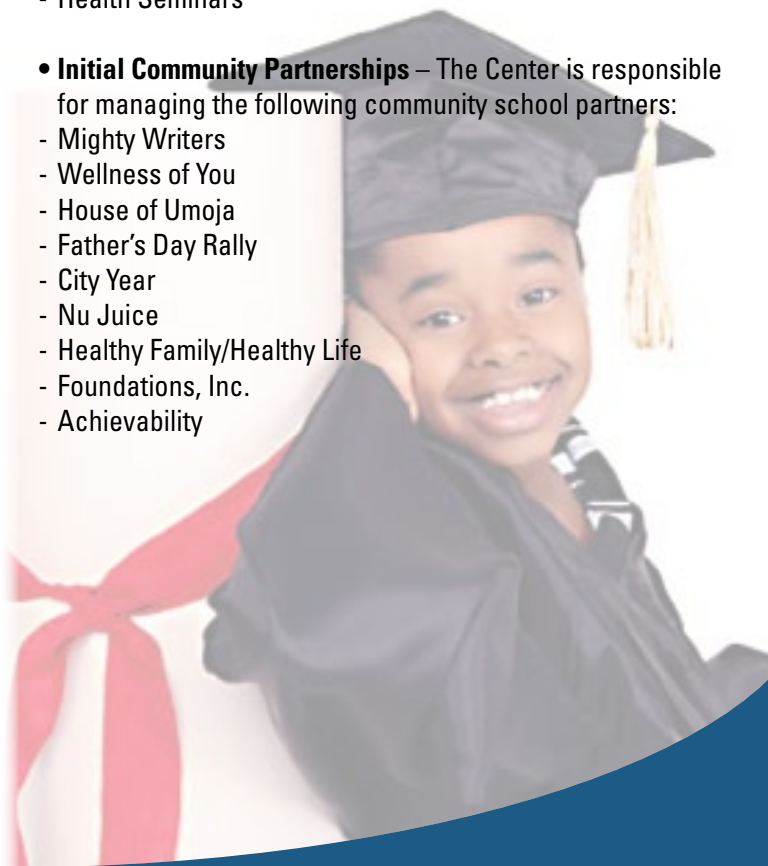
- **Case Management Focus** – The Center provides direct student and family intake assessments, school-based social service intervention support, counseling (i.e. school and home), and referral services (i.e. behavioral health, etc.) for the following:
 - **Student’s At Risk** – To increase students’ academic outcomes, all students identified as “in crisis mode” and in immediate risk of failure are assigned a case manager who will assess the student and the issues that impact his/her academic progress, including looking at their families’ challenges as well.
 - **Crisis Intervention** – Utilizing key indicators (i.e. school lateness, absences, no school uniform, etc.) alerts the Center staff to interview these students to determine what, if any, severe problems are apparent or if any are brewing with the goal of arresting the problem before it reaches the crisis level.
- **Support School Climate and Culture** – The Center supports and extends the School’s activities on School Climate and Culture through its parent and community outreach and programs and the events that it sponsors.
- **Community/Parent Outreach** – The Center increases the communication between the school, the parents, and the community. The Center manages the following:



CONTRACT SCHOOLS

- E.M. Stanton Elementary School, South Philadelphia
- Edwin H. Vare Middle School, South Philadelphia

- All School External Partnerships
 - Structured Communications with the School and School Advisory Councils, Board of Trustees, Parent Teacher Associations
 - School Hotline and Suggestion Box
 - All Social Network Efforts (i.e. School Calendar, Twitter, FaceBook, MySpace, etc.)
 - School Marketing (i.e. Quarterly Universal Newsletter and Universal Messaging in the School, specifically African American Wall of Appreciation, About Universal Wall, and Universal Messages of No Excuses, High Expectations)
- **Sponsored School Events/Programs** – The Center is responsible for undertaking the following:
 - Summer Family Events (ie. Barbeques, Community days, etc.)
 - School Open House Meetings, Tours, Parent Engagement
 - Coordination of School Concerts
 - School Guest Speaking Lecture Series
 - Student Mentorship Program
 - Homework Study Programs
 - Parenting Classes and Seminars
 - Job Preparation and Placement
 - College Courses
 - GED/ABE
 - Financial Literacy Classes
 - Health Seminars
- **Initial Community Partnerships** – The Center is responsible for managing the following community school partners:
 - Mighty Writers
 - Wellness of You
 - House of Umoja
 - Father’s Day Rally
 - City Year
 - Nu Juice
 - Healthy Family/Healthy Life
 - Foundations, Inc.
 - Achievability



CHARTER SCHOOLS

- Universal Institute, South Philadelphia ●
- Universal Bluford, West Philadelphia ●
- Universal Daroff, West Philadelphia ●





CONTACT INFORMATION

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