

UNQUOWA SCHOOL

Family Handbook

2026-2027



Cura Futuri Nobis ~ The Future is in Our Care

"The mission of The Unquowa School is to develop, educate, and prepare our family of children with an unafraid spirit to achieve their personal best in a changing world."

UNQUOWA SCHOOL

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Table of Contents:

Mission (page 4)

Our School's Philosophy (page 4)

School Organization (page 5)

[Board of Governors](#)

[UPA Executive Committee](#)

A Day in the Life of an Unquowa Student (page 6)

[Arrival at School](#)

[Absences](#)

[Vacations](#)

[Field Experiences](#)

Dress Code: (page 7)

[Daily Attire for All Students](#)

[Upper School\(grades 5-8\): Assembly Attire](#)

[Gym Uniform & Ordering](#)

[Gator Goods Spirit Wear](#)

[“Casual” Days](#)

[Lost and Found](#)

Pick-up from School: (page 9)

[Early Dismissal](#)

[Dismissal](#)

[Parking](#)

[Owls](#)

[Late Pickup](#)

[After-School Sports and Activities](#)

Homework Expectations: (page 11)

[Extra Help](#)

Policies (page 12)

[Code of Conduct](#)

Discipline Procedures: (page 12)

[Academic Honesty](#)

[Off-Campus Behavior](#)

[Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)

[Protocol for the Harming of Self or Others](#)

[Mandated Reporting](#)

The Parent's Role (page 14)

[Communications](#)

[Myunquowa Dashboard](#)

[The Role of The Homeroom Teacher / Advisor](#)

[Contacting a Teacher](#)

[Parent / Teacher Conferences](#)

[Special Concerns](#)

[Divorce Proceedings / Domestic Disputes](#)

[Student Phone and Smartwatch Use](#)

[Snow Days, School Cancellations and Early Dismissals](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Changes in Transportation](#)

[Visiting the School](#)

[Student Contracts / Delinquent Payments](#)

[Withdrawal from School](#)

Academic Information (page 17)

[Books](#)
[Course Changes](#)
[Upper School Math Classes](#)
[World Language Classes](#)
[Exams](#)
[Grades and Progress Reports](#)
[Honor Rolls](#)
[High School Placement & Recommendation Forms](#)
[Sectioning and Homerooms](#)
[Standardized Testing & Special Testing](#)

Health Information (page 19)

[Health Assessments](#)
[Accidents and Illnesses](#)
[Peanut and Tree Nut Policy](#)
[Communicable Diseases](#)
[Medication Administration](#)

Technology - Acceptable Use Policy (page 21)

[Artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#)
[Network](#)
[Software and Hardware](#)
[Internet](#)
[Social Networking](#)
[Email](#)
[Third Party Applications](#)
[Plagiarism](#)
[Technology in the Early Years](#)

Addendum (page 23)

[Our Farm to Fork Dining Program](#)
[Food Service Allergy Policy](#)

Calendar Events (page 25)

[Assembly](#)
[Birthday and Classroom Celebrations](#)
[Portrait Day](#)
[Founders' Day](#)
[Field Day](#)
[Family Math Night](#)
[Halloween Parades](#)
[Annual Meeting](#)
[Winter Festival](#)
[STEM Fair](#)
[Author Days](#)
[May Day Celebration with Grandparents and Special Friends Day](#)
[Closing Ceremonies and Commencement](#)

Uniform & Spiritwear Purchasing Information (page 27)

Mission

"The mission of The Unquowa School is to develop, educate, and prepare our family of children with an unafraid spirit to achieve their personal best in a changing world."

Our School's Philosophy

At Unquowa, we aim to:

- teach a traditional academic curriculum with a focus on the whole child and a progressive approach of learning by doing. A small classroom setting is balanced with many field experiences, both out of doors and through area museum collaborations which foster creativity, problem solving, communication and leadership in all aspects of a student's day, be it in mathematics, science, language, social studies, the visual and performing arts, physical education and team sports or technology.
- engender global citizenship values in a school climate which promotes and models respect, responsibility, civility, compassion, cooperation, support, and integrity. Our teachers serve as role models, and the peer student culture embodies these values.
- **The Unquowa School Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Statement.**
The Unquowa School seeks to cultivate an intentional environment of equity and inclusion. Unquowa wishes all members of its community: students, parents and families, faculty, staff and administration, and alumni and friends to feel welcomed and valued for their individual perspectives. The school respects the customs, traditions, and perspectives of individuals of different gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, family configuration, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability and age. The Unquowa community actively guides students to confidently consider multiple perspectives, examine and express their own beliefs, and respond respectfully to the ideas and beliefs of others. We recognize that the richness of the human experience is essential to our core mission of preparing children with an unafraid spirit to achieve their personal best in an ever-changing world.

Unquowa School's DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging) coordinators support the work of classroom teachers and sponsor regular events for both students and families.

School Organization

The Unquowa School was incorporated not for profit in June 1917 under the laws of the State of Connecticut. The school is owned by The Unquowa School Association, Incorporated, a body consisting primarily of current parents. Under its bylaws, the direction of the school is entrusted to a Board of Governors.

Board of Governors

A member of the Board of Governors is elected for a three-year term. The Board is responsible for hiring the Head of School, the Chief Executive Officer, who sits on the Board and is responsible for carrying out policy, for leadership, and for running the School on a day-to-day basis. The Board meets regularly to set policy with special responsibility for the school's financial welfare. Special meetings are called as needed during the academic year.

UPA Executive Committee

All parents and faculty are members of the Unquowa Parents' Association (UPA), which is directed by the UPA Executive Committee. The UPA President or Co-Presidents also serves on the Board of Governors. The UPA supports the school by hosting social events and several major fund-raisers. A list of the UPA positions and the parents holding the positions each year can be found in our online directory.

A Day in the Life of an Unquowa Student

Arrival at School

Students are expected to arrive at school by 8:20 a.m., and may arrive as early as 8:00 a.m. All students who arrive before 8:20 a.m. are asked to go to the dining room where faculty members will be responsible for them until class begins. Students are encouraged to use this time to prepare for the day, read, schedule a meeting with a teacher or chat with friends.

Students may be dropped off at the front of the school, where they can safely enter the school at the front entrance. If you wish to walk your child into the school, please park in the back or side of the school and walk your child in through the front entrance.

How a child's day starts sets the tone for the day. Please make every effort to help your child to arrive at school by 8:30 a.m. **Students arriving at school after 8:30a.m are considered tardy** and must report first to the Main Office to sign in.

Absences

On any morning that your child will not be in school, please contact the main office (mainoffice@unquowa.org) and your child's homeroom teacher prior to 8:30 a.m. to report their absence. If we do not hear from you, the office manager will call you to verify the absence. It is important to report communicable illnesses so that we can alert the nurse. Long-term absence may require tutoring to make up missed work and will be handled individually. If you know in advance that your child will be absent for an extended period, please notify the homeroom teacher or advisor.

Should your student need to leave early, please contact the teacher or advisor as well as the main office in advance and be sure to come in and sign your student out. The student is responsible for missed classwork as well as the assigned homework from any missed class.

Chronic absences can impact both academic progress and social connection. Four unexcused absences from school in one month (30 consecutive calendar days) or 10 unexcused absences in one school year are considered notable by state law and truant officers can be contacted. While our first step in such cases is to communicate with families to alleviate chronic absence, we are, as a school, mandatory reporters. Excessive, unexplained absences that cannot be resolved must be reported.

Vacations

Regular attendance at school and continuity of instruction is at the core of student success. While students are able to make up missed work, it is impossible to replace the unique experiences our students have every day. Families should make all travel arrangements to coincide with our academic calendar. If a planned period of absence is unavoidable, please contact your child's homeroom teacher or advisor at least two weeks in advance. Please note that students are expected to complete all homework assignments and make up any tests, quizzes and/or projects that are assigned or due during the absence.

Field Experiences

Field experiences are an integral part of our curriculum and are built to support and connect with classroom learning. Our collaborations with area museums and programs are seen as an extension of our campus which allows our students and teachers to experience hands-on learning with rich authentic resources.

General permission for field experiences is in the enrollment contract, but you will also receive detailed information prior to each experience. All school rules apply. Unless instructed otherwise by the teacher in charge, students are expected to adhere to the Unquowa Dress Code.

Cell phones or electronic devices are permitted on field experiences exceeding 30 minutes from school.

Dress Code:

Dress code applies to PreK through Grade 8 students from their arrival time in the building until their departure. Students are expected to be neatly dressed and groomed (no torn or frayed clothing, inappropriate jewelry, excessive make-up, etc.). Clothing should be clean and pressed and in an appropriate size. The faculty and Head reserve the right to decide if a student's appearance is appropriate and assign specific disciplinary consequences, if there are violations.

Students typically go outside daily; please make sure students have appropriate clothing.

Daily Attire for All Students

Shirts:

Solid Color: white, dark green/evergreen, pale yellow/maize, light blue or navy blue
Style: long or short sleeve polo or turtleneck.

Sweaters:

Solid Color: gray, dark green or navy blue
Style: pull-over crew neck, small v-neck, quarter zip. cardigan or vest
Hoods are not permitted

Sweatshirts*:

Solid Color: gray, dark green or navy blue
Style: pull-over crew neck - hoods are not permitted
Unquowa branded hoodie sweatshirts and Unquowa branded zip front fleece may be worn during the school day.

Slacks:

Solid Color: khaki, navy blue or charcoal gray
Style: "classic style" slacks (no denim, buckles, rivets, knit or stretch pants, etc.)
Bermuda-style (just above the knee length) shorts are an option when the weather permits.

Skirts or Jumpers:

Color: Unquowa plaid, khaki, navy blue or charcoal gray
Style: Jumpers or skirts (no more than 3" above the knee in length.) A shirt must be worn under jumpers. Please see dress code shirt options above.
Navy blue, white or gray shorts, leggings or tights may be worn under a skirt/jumper.

Shoes:

Students should wear safe, comfortable shoes throughout the school day.
Lower school students are encouraged to wear sneakers.
Boots may be worn from Oct. 1st to Spring Break.
Flip-flops, Croc-style and clogs are not permitted.

*8th graders may wear a sweatshirt, with or without a hood, from their intended high school after Spring Break

Lower School students are encouraged to keep an extra set of clothing, including socks, at school in case of a spill or wet playground.

Upper School Students (grades 5-8): Assembly Attire

Wednesdays are assembly days which are referred to as “Blazer Days”. Upper school students (grades 5-8) are expected to dress more formally on assembly days following the dress code below.

Shirts: White long or short sleeve button down dress shirt with collar. Shirts must be tucked in.

Blazers: Navy blue blazer, clearly labeled with your student’s name

Ties: Students may wear regular ties or bow ties

Slacks: Khaki, navy blue or charcoal gray "classic style" slacks (no denim, buckles, rivets, knit pants) Bermuda shorts are an option when weather permits.

Skirts or Jumpers: Unquowa plaid, khaki, navy or charcoal gray jumpers or skirts (no more than 3" above the knee in length.)

Leggings/Tights: (may be worn under skirts/jumpers) Navy blue, white, gray

With the exception of the P.E gym uniform and the official Unquowa plaid & logo, items may be purchased in any store. School logo and Unquowa plaid items can be ordered through the following vendors.

Dress Code - Lands’ End School Uniform - 800 469-2222

www.landsend.com/schooluniform

Preferred School Account #900028366, School Logo Monogram #9833209

Unquowa plaid = Hunter Classic Navy Plaid

Dress Code - Blakes School Uniform Company - 203 375-5901 (Stratford)

www.blakeschooluniform.com

Unquowa plaid = Plaid #55 - School Monogram is unavailable

Gym Uniform

PreK through Grade 2: Students must wear athletic performance sneakers daily, but do not need a gym uniform. Lifestyle sneakers (Converse, Samba, etc.) are not allowed in PE class.

Grades 3-8: Dark green, navy or gray solid color athletic shorts and white or gray Unquowa t-shirt from Soccer & Rugby Imports (see purchasing information below). Compression shorts may be worn under gym shorts but may not be worn alone. Tank tops are not permitted. For cooler days, plain solid gray sweatpants & plain solid gray crew neck sweatshirts may be worn. Athletic performance sneakers must be worn. Converse and lifestyle sneakers are not permitted.

Gym Uniform Ordering - Soccer & Rugby Imports - 203 254-1979

<https://myuniform.soccerandrugby.com/store/clubdisclaimer/the-unquowa-school>

Items may be picked up at their Southport location (3683 Post Road, Southport) at no charge or can be mailed to you.

Note: Plain solid gray sweatpants, plain solid gray crew neck sweatshirt, plain solid dark green, navy or gray athletic shorts may be purchased at any retail store.

Gator Goods Spirit Wear (Optional)

www.sideline.bsnsports.com/schools/connecticut/fairfield/unquowa-school

Some items of Unquowa branded spirit wear can be used in daily uniform and P.E dress code. Please refer to the Dress Code requirement section to understand what is acceptable to wear in school.

Outside of school - gear up with spirit wear: t-shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces etc. Custom apparel and accessories are available from lululemon, Nike & more at our official Gator Goods store.

Casual Days

On occasion, students are allowed to attend school in clothing of their choice rather than the school dress code. Usually, the last Friday of each month is a “Casual Day” for students. Additional themed casual days are noted on the calendar and appear on the Weekly Reminders email. With prior approval from their advisor or homeroom teacher, students are also allowed their own special casual day on their birthday or half birthday, for those with summer birthdays.

On casual days, student appearance must still be modest, neat and tidy, without excessive rips or frays. Controversial mottos, slogans or images are prohibited. Typical dress code lengths still apply. Midriff shirts, tank tops and thin shoulder straps are not permitted. Shorts must be no shorter than mid-thigh. Pajamas are reserved for the Pajama Day that is celebrated after Winterfest. Safe, comfortable footwear is required. Flip-flops, Croc-style shoes and clogs are not permitted.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found items are brought to the gym and hung on the rack in the gym to the left of the stage. This area is cycled out once a week and items with names are returned to student lockers. Any student or parent who would like to look through lost and found between these assemblies may come to the office. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at winter break and at the end of year. To ensure your students’ lost belongings can be returned, **please label your child’s clothes.**

Pick-up from School:

Early Dismissal

If your child must leave early, the Main Office and the homeroom teacher should be notified in the morning via email or note including the dismissal time and name and identity of the person picking up your child. Your child must be picked up in the Main Office and signed out.

Dismissal

3:30 p.m. - PreK and Kindergarten: Parents should park in the back of the school and walk to the corral to pick up their child(ren).

3:30 p.m.- Grade 1 through Grade 4: School staff will guide parents into the parking lot, to the front curb where the teacher in charge will release the students to the cars. Those with siblings in Upper School will be dismissed at this time as well. **Please remain in the queue on Stratfield Road and wait until directed by a staff member to pull in.**

3:35 p.m. - Grades 5-8: School staff will guide parents to the front curb where the teacher in charge will release the students to the cars. **Please remain in the queue on Stratfield Road and wait until directed by a staff member to pull in. Please do not join the queue before 3:20 p.m.**

K-8 children taking the bus: Students gather in the front entrance and are escorted to their buses by a faculty member. In the event that a bus leaves the school after 3:45 p.m., parents will be notified by School Messenger text to alert them of late arrival.

If there is a change in your child's dismissal plans, a parent or guardian must call or email the main office as soon as possible and await our confirmation. Please do not convey these messages only to your child.

Parking

Parking for parents is available in the rear of the school. Spots with names are reserved and purchased by families at our annual auction. Additionally, visitor spots in front of the school are for prospective families and guests of the school. **Please note that parking in handicapped spaces without a handicap permit is illegal and enforced by the school.**

Upper Schoolers are not permitted to cross from the Upper School waiting area without being escorted by a parent. Please note all spaces along the front curb are designated either for buses or visitor parking.

Owls

Unquowa provides after school care offered on a 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1-day per week basis by our caring staff. There is an additional fee and pre-registration is required which may be found on MyUnquowa.

After school care (Owls) is available to all students from dismissal until 6:00pm. Please note, there is no Owls on early dismissal days. During Owls, students are provided with a snack, time for homework completion, organized activities or crafts, free play and time outdoors on our playground as weather permits.

Late Pickup

Students who are not picked up by 4:00 p.m. must go to the Owls program and a fee will be charged. Under no circumstances do we allow a child to leave school unless in the company of an appropriate adult. If a child is to be picked up by a person unknown to our staff or faculty,

we ask that parents provide the main office and teacher with the person's name. Teachers on car duty will ask for identification.

After-School Sports and Activities

We offer a variety of after-school sports. Games are scheduled with other teams in the Fairchester Athletic League as well as other local teams. Information on both athletics and other after-school activities will be detailed on our online calendar and MyUnquowa dashboard. Information on these after school programs can be found in the Parent Module under Unquowa Programs. All students staying after school are supervised by an adult.

Students who are absent due to illness may not attend any after school activities that day.

Homework Expectations:

Early Childhood (PreK - Kindergarten)

Our Early Childhood philosophy of homework is that of "play with a purpose" which instills the love for both learning and school. In kindergarten, optional activities and games that reinforce math and reading skills, in addition to general curiosity and creativity, will be added by the teacher to the list of nightly activities students may choose from.

Lower School (Grades 1 - 4)

Homework increases gradually from grades 1-4. We consider the following to be homework and should be done on a nightly basis:

- Nightly recreational reading (includes being read to as well as independent reading)
- Review of spelling words
- Review of math facts - addition, subtraction, multiplication and division where applicable
- Any daily or weekly assignments determined by the classroom teacher and long term projects, the pacing of which is identified by the teacher.

Upper School (Grades 5 - 8)

Again, homework from grades 5-8 increases in amount and complexity. We consider the following to be homework and should be done on a nightly basis:

- Nightly recreational reading (does not include assigned reading for classwork)
- Reviewing notes for all subjects in preparation for tests and class discussion
- Re-reading or pre-reading assignments
- Review of math skills
- Review of spelling/vocabulary words
- Any daily or weekly assignments determined by the classroom teacher and long-term projects, the pacing of which is determined by the teacher.

Our teachers post homework and other assignments on the Dashboard. Homework may also be recorded by students in their planners. Both students and parents may check your MyUnquowa dashboard each day!

When a student is absent due to illness, getting well is the top priority. Teachers will help students make up work missed in a timely fashion when the child returns to school. If a student is

out for an extended absence, homeroom teachers/advisors will reach out to you to arrange a time for materials to be picked up.

Extra Help

Teachers provide extra help to our students, as needed, during free periods, before school, or after school. Teachers are available with notice, for extra help before school from 8:00-8:30 a.m., and after school from 3:30 to 4:00 p.m. Please make prior arrangements with the individual teacher. If additional help is required, the teacher will recommend a tutor.

Policies

We expect students and parents of Unquowa School to follow all school rules and procedures as the safety of our students is paramount. As parents who have chosen Unquowa, we expect your full support of the School's philosophy, mission, policies and procedures. We encourage open, direct communication among members of the school community and discourage gossip and negativity. If there is a concern or issue, the first point of contact is the homeroom teacher/advisor. After that, it is appropriate to speak with the Head of School.

Code of Conduct

While at school, students are expected to behave in a polite, responsible, respectful, civil, honest, and considerate manner. Teaching and modeling these behaviors are part of the social emotional curriculum at every grade level. Students whose behavior violates these standards will be held accountable for their actions in an age-appropriate way and asked to engage in restorative work with their teacher or the Director of Social Emotional Wellness.

Discipline Procedures:

Minor Disciplinary Infractions

For minor disciplinary incidents students will be corrected by the teacher in charge, who may reprimand and/or assign a consequence. **Minor disciplinary infractions** include, but are not limited to, the following: excessive lateness to class or appointments; talking in class or assemblies without permission; chewing gum; dress code violations; using electronic devices at school without permission.

Major Disciplinary Infractions

For major disciplinary incidents the situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to evaluate the need for consequences and/or restorative work.

Major disciplinary infractions include, but are not limited to, the following: physical abuse, fighting, biting; dishonesty or cheating; stealing; being disrespectful to a member of the faculty or staff; defacing school property; using profanity or abusive language; harassment of another student; bringing a weapon to school; unauthorized departure from campus; repeated infractions of school rules.

Unquowa School does not permit weapons of any kind. The use, possession or sale of illegal substances including tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs is prohibited on campus and school trips. Violations of this policy may ultimately result in expulsion from school.

Academic Honesty

Unquowa School expects that all students will act honestly in every part of their academic lives. Therefore, cheating is a serious breach of the school's academic standards. Unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence or AI-assisted writing tools without teacher permission constitutes academic dishonesty and may result in academic and/or disciplinary consequences. Consequences will become more serious as students get older and their academic responsibilities increase.

Academic consequences may include the loss of credit and/or the obligation to redo the work. Each student is expected to:

- Present and submit work that is their own
- Properly cite references and sources
- Be honest about all aspects of their school work

Off-Campus Behavior

Any student who engages in off-campus behavior which, in the sole judgment of the Head of School, is a breach of community standards and/or reflects badly on the school may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal. Students' digital presence represents the school. Students are expected to uphold our code of behavior when interacting on social media and digital platforms.

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Unquowa School is committed to providing a safe and positive learning environment for **all** community members and will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment by students or school personnel. Discrimination of individuals based on gender, ethnicity, national origin, race, sexual orientation, physical characteristics, or mental capacity will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to accept these three guidelines for their behavior:

- I will not ridicule, humiliate or intimidate others.
- I will try to support those who feel ridiculed, humiliated, or intimidated.
- I will make it a point to make all community members welcome.

Protocol for the Harming of Self or Others

The Unquowa School is committed to the continued safety of all students and will evaluate each situation with the utmost concern. If a student is heard speaking or writing about harming themselves or others, the Head will be notified immediately. The student will be brought to the Director of Social Emotional Wellness who will meet with the student and gather information to better assess the situation, and the parents will be contacted as soon as possible. It is not up to the school to decide if a child is serious or not when such claims are made; therefore, parents will be asked to have their child evaluated by a healthcare professional outside of school and provide a note clearing the child to re-enter school. Parents will sign a release for The Director of Social Emotional Wellness to have a conversation with the healthcare professional to discuss the child's transition back to school. The child may be required to engage in follow-up therapy

Information is shared on a need-to-know basis. Strict confidentiality is observed by all those who have such information.

Mandated Reporting

All Unquowa faculty and staff are considered mandated reporters and take this responsibility seriously; as such, we are required to report all suspicions of neglect or abuse. As mandated reporters, it is not our role to investigate matters but to report them to the Department of Children and Family Services.

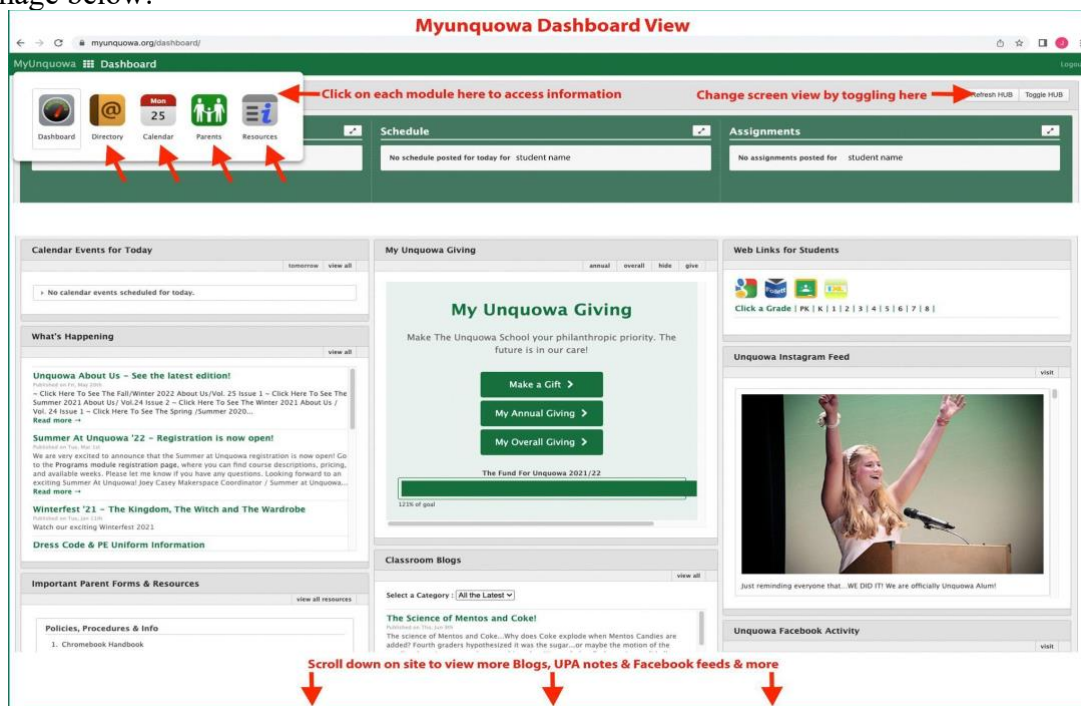
The Parent's Role

Communications

At Unquowa, we work to partner with parents in the education of their children. Vital to the success of that partnership is communication. Communication is a two-way street, and we cannot act at school to resolve issues if we don't know about them. If you have an issue or concern, please don't hesitate to contact your child's homeroom teacher or advisor as soon as possible. Problems usually get worse with time, so the earlier the intervention, the better.

Myunquowa Dashboard

Parents are encouraged to check myunquowa.org regularly. The landing page is our “dashboard” which provides calendar events, homework, “What’s Happening” information, links to classroom blogs, and more. Additionally, the HUB appears on the main landing page of Myunquowa. This is grade specific to your child’s daily schedule and homework. The dashboard also provides access to the Unquowa **Directory**, the **Calendar**, the **Parent** Module where student progress reports are available for review, **program registrations** are completed and **Family Fact Sheets** can be updated, and the **Resources** section for forms and information. See image below:



Please note that the Directory of Unquowa families which provides addresses, phone numbers and maps is intended for use only by them, and such information, in whole or in part, should not be given to others for business or promotional purposes. It is available on our website by password only to Unquowa parents.

The Role of The Homeroom Teacher/Advisor

The homeroom teacher/advisor is your liaison to all things academic, emotional and social that happen in and outside the classroom. Should you feel the need to contact a teacher directly, please also CC the advisor or homeroom teacher. For more global concerns about your child, contact the homeroom teacher/advisor.

Contacting a Teacher

To reach a teacher, you may email the teacher directly through the online directory. The teacher will return your email as soon as possible. If a response is not made after one school day, you may contact the Assistant Head of School.

Parent / Teacher Conferences

If you wish to schedule a conference, please contact the teacher to arrange a time. A brief spontaneous conversation with a teacher is certainly fine, but an extensive discussion or a conference should always be planned. School-wide Parent/Teacher Conferences are in the fall and again in the spring, but team conferences can be called at any time when there is a need. Virtual conferences are an option for those who prefer them.

Special Concerns

There are times when you may have information, concerns or suggestions to share. If your question or concern relates to an academic matter (homework, curriculum, grades, etc.) or any general concerns about your child, contact the teacher/advisor. If you need to talk about a more serious matter, please call the Head of School.

Divorce Proceedings / Domestic Disputes

In the case of divorced families, we assume that all information should still be sent to both parents. It is up to the parent or parents to notify the school and provide documentation if this is not the case. Faculty and staff are not permitted to testify in divorce proceedings and/or become involved in domestic disputes.

Student Phone and Smartwatch Use: *Keeping Students Focused and Engaged*

With respect to student use of technology during school, we work hard to help students to focus on academics.

To help everyone stay focused and make the most of our school day, we've implemented a cell phone/smartwatch policy designed to support your child's learning and well-being:

- **Cell Phone/Smartwatch Bin:** At the beginning of the school day, students will place their cell phone in the designated cell phone/smart watch bin. This applies to all grades. This will help us all stay engaged and reduce distractions.
- **Access Times:** Students can retrieve their cell phone and/or smartwatch at the end of the school day, or if they need to leave early, they can collect it then. **Cell phones should remain in their bags until they have left campus.**

- **During School Hours:** To help everyone stay on track, cell phones and smart watches will not be accessible during the school day.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in making our school environment focused and productive. Thank you for your support and commitment to our learning community!

Snow Days, School Cancellations and Early Dismissals

We use the School Messenger Notification System to send text messages for school cancellations, delays and early dismissals. **To receive these messages, parents must opt in.** To opt in, please see the email from the IT Department at the start of the school year.

We also use the School Messenger automated notification system to notify parents of arrival times from athletic or other events when they vary from the originally scheduled time due to traffic, etc.

When sudden weather makes cancellation look probable during the day, we ask that you check your text messages and MyUnquowa rather than calling the school. We will make such decisions as soon as possible.

Transportation

Prior to the start of school parents should indicate on their **Family Fact Sheet** their child(ren)'s typical drop-off and pick-up information.

Bus transportation for students who live in Fairfield or Southport is provided by the Town of Fairfield. The bus routes are designed by the Town and are communicated to the school who passes them on to families. Please call the Main Office about any changes, and they will be passed along to the bus company.

Changes in Transportation

If there is a change in your child's dismissal plans, a parent or guardian must call or email the main office as soon as possible and await our confirmation. Please do not convey these messages only to your child.

If you are making a more permanent change in transportation, please note that change in the Transportation section of your Family Fact Sheet.

Whenever a child is picked up by a person unknown to our staff or faculty, we will ask them to provide identification. *Please note:* if your child is going to be taking the bus home with a friend, the bus driver will require written permission from the parent.

Visiting the School

Parents are part of our school community and are encouraged to take an active interest in school life and UPA activities. Ways in which parents can visit and share their expertise or volunteer in their child's class are usually discussed at Back to School Night. We simply ask that all such visits be pre-arranged with the teacher at least a week in advance. **For safety and security reasons, we ask that parents and other visitors sign in and sign out of the school log in the Main Office when visiting.**

Student Contracts / Delinquent Payments

Re-enrollment contracts are mailed in early January with an early February return date. After that date, we will reach out to remind families of the urgency to return their child's contract. Families who fail to communicate at this point risk losing their child's seat, and enrollment contracts will be offered to new students to fill such vacancies. Any student whose tuition account is more than 60 days delinquent will not be offered a contract until the current year tuition has been settled and may not be permitted to continue at Unquowa School. Families who do not intend to re-enroll for the following school year should notify the School promptly in accordance with the Withdrawal from School policy below.

Withdrawal from School

If a family is considering withdrawing because of academic, social, emotional, financial, or other concerns, we encourage them to contact the Assistant Head of School before making a final decision. We value open communication and welcome the opportunity to discuss questions, concerns, or possible solutions whenever appropriate.

To formally withdraw a student, a parent or guardian must submit written notification to the School. Notification should be addressed to Business Manager, Janice Cerone, with a copy provided to the Head of School. Written notice may be submitted by letter or email.

Academic Information

Books

Textbooks are to be returned in good condition to the teacher at the end of the school year. Parents will be charged for lost or damaged books.

Course Changes

On the rare occasion that a course change is necessary, parents are involved in the conversation to make such a change and an approval form is signed by both teachers, the advisor or homeroom teacher, the Lower or Upper learning specialist, and the Head of School.

Upper School Math Classes

In regards to Upper School math classes, students are placed into math sections with great care and consideration. Returning Unquowa students are placed by both past and future math teachers, and placements are based on academic achievement, emotional readiness, and standardized test results. New Unquowa students are placed by the Upper School Math department, and are based on recommendations from former teachers, academic achievement, and standardized test results.

Course changes in Upper School Math may occur at any point in the year and are given the utmost consideration with regard to academic and emotional impact. Changes towards an accelerated pathway or towards a slower pathway would occur either in the case of an obvious misplacement or repeated demonstration of success or failure in the current school year.

If a course change is necessary, the student and their parents or guardians will discuss the change with the former teacher, the new teacher, the school learning specialist, and the school guidance

counselor if necessary. This team will work to transition the student to their new class at an appropriate time and with the least social-emotional impact on the student.

The final decision to have a student change course in mathematics is at the discretion of the math department.

World Language Classes

In regards to foreign language classes, the following guidelines are adhered to with regards to switching language classes:

- Returning Unquowa students will have an add/drop period of 2 weeks from the start of school to switch language classes.
- New students to Unquowa will have until October 1st to switch language classes.

For a student who meets the guidelines for transferring or whose desire to transfer falls within the appropriate add/drop window:

- The student should sit in on their desired language class for two class periods, to get a sense of how the class is run, what the expectations are, etc.
- The student should talk to both language teachers in question about how the switch will affect them.
- The student, their parents/guardians, the two language teachers, the student's advisor and the Director of Learning should be in communication and on the same page about the student's language class transition.

Exams

Final exams are given to students in Grades 6-8 at the end of the year. They provide an opportunity for students to show their mastery and understanding of many of the individual topics covered throughout the year.

Grades and Progress Reports

Grades and comments are distributed three times a year, at the end of each trimester in November, March, and June. All new students receive an interim report in the middle of the first trimester.

Any student whose progress has made a remarkable change, either positively or negatively, will receive an interim report mid-trimester throughout the year. Trimester I and II progress reports are discussed at Parent/Teacher Conferences in fall and spring.

Lower School reports are narrative in nature and focus on the child's academic life, school adjustment, social growth, work habits, and acquisition of skills. Beginning in fourth grade and continuing in Upper School reports consist of effort and/or letter grades as well as narrative comments.

Honor Rolls

Upper School students have two honor rolls:

Unquowa Honors = no grade below A and no effort grade below 3

Honor Roll = an average of B+ with no grade below B and no effort grade below 3

For the purposes of the honor rolls, we average letter grades:

A+ 97--100	B+ 87--89	C+ 77--79	D+ 67--69	F 59
A 93--96	B 83--86	C 73--76	D 63--66	
A-- 90--92	B-- 80--82	C-- 70--72	D-- 60--62	

High School Placement & Recommendation Forms

The high school placement process starts in April of Grade 7 with a seminar on the admissions process. In the 8th Grade year, families interested in applying to day and boarding schools will meet with the Director of High School Placement and the Head of School. A checklist and general overview of the process is available from the Director of High School Placement.

Sectioning and Homerooms

Sectioning decisions are made by the teachers based on what is best for the student academically and developmentally. While parent input is taken seriously, the final decision in these areas is made by the faculty and Head.

Standardized Testing & Special Testing

Grades 4-7 take the Educational Records Bureau Comprehensive Testing Program (ERB) Tests in the fall and spring. The results are reviewed with parents at conferences in the fall, with the exception of those for students entering Grade 8, whose results are sent in early summer to allow for their use in the high school preparation process.

The Unquowa team assigned to a student may recommend assessment. Parents whose children have been recommended for educational and psychological testing may elect to have their child evaluated through the public school system. The learning specialist will attend the PPT set up by the student's town school system. Testing may also be conducted privately by an evaluator of the parents' choice, and we encourage and expect that parents will share the results with the school for their child's benefit.

Health Information

Health Assessments

Families of all enrolled students must provide evidence of a currently completed health assessment, and immunizations must be current and on file before the child may attend school. The school nurse sends forms to all families whose children are at the ages where updated assessments and immunization are required.

Athletes in Grades 6, 7, and 8 will be required to provide an annual health assessment to practice and participate in interscholastic team sports. Parents should notify the school nurse if a child has any medical problems, e.g., allergies, chronic illnesses, vision or hearing difficulties.

Accidents and Illnesses

The school is responsible for first aid only, i.e., the immediate and temporary care given to a student whose illness/injury occurs at school during school hours or in school sponsored

activities. Students are not to attend school when ill. It is recommended that a child remain home for 24 hours after his/her temperature has returned to normal without the use of medication.

If a child complains of being ill or is injured, the teacher will send the child to the Health Office, with an escort when appropriate. If the child has a fever or is too ill or hurt to remain in school, a parent will be called, and failing contact with the parent, the emergency contact. Prior to the start of school, parents must provide emergency contact information including two additional people who will care for your child if we cannot locate you.

In the event of a medical emergency at school, the school reserves the right to call Emergency Medical Services (911) and transport the child by ambulance to the hospital. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

Peanut and Tree Nut Policy

As some Unquowa students have different levels of nut allergies, some very severe, we follow the Fairfield Health Department guidelines, which strongly recommend that schools not serve any foods containing peanut or tree nut products. To protect all of our students, foods containing peanut or tree-nut products will not be served in the dining room, or anywhere else in the school. **Teachers, parents, and students may not bring to school for parties, or any event, foods containing peanut or tree-nut products or foods that have been processed on shared equipment with peanuts, or foods that are made in a facility that processes peanuts or tree-nut products (please check food labels.)** The same code is to be adhered to on all field experiences and in all classrooms.

Of course, this diligence on our part cannot serve as a guarantee that a student may not come in contact with a nut product within the walls of the school. We can only guarantee that our staff will not purchase or serve such products and will do our best to patrol all other situations. For our complete food service allergy policy, please see [addendum](#).

Communicable Diseases

All communicable diseases should be reported to the nurse. These include but are not limited to: Conjunctivitis, Chickenpox, COVID-19, Fifth Disease, Measles, Flu, Meningitis, Mumps, Mononucleosis, Ringworm, Strep, Cocksackie Virus, Lice. For a complete list, please consult the school nurse.

Medication Administration

Medications shall only be administered in school when it is not possible to achieve the desired effects by home administration. Medication will be administered in school by the school nurse or, in their absence, by other qualified school staff. Self-administration of medications by students may be permitted when certain requirements are met. Written medical and parental authorizations are required for medications given in school. Forms are available from the nurse and can also be downloaded from our website. (Parent Dashboard - Downloadable Forms). Medications must be brought to school by the parent and provided in the original pharmacy container. These regulations apply to both prescription and over-the counter medications.

Technology - Acceptable Use Policy

The Unquowa School maintains and makes available to its students, faculty, and staff a wide array of technology to promote educational excellence and enhance learning at our school. Use of technology is a necessity in today's world; however, that use demands responsibility on the part of the users.

Technology resources are the property of The Unquowa School. Unquowa reserves the right to investigate, monitor, and access any information stored or transmitted over the network.

Students and faculty are warned that any transmission of information including text, video and picture files may be reproduced indefinitely without the owner's knowledge or consent. Once information is sent, it is nearly impossible to retrieve.

Violations of the AUP will be subject to disciplinary action. For students, consequences for violation of the policy may include, but are not limited to, revocation of network access, suspension of computer use, suspensions or expulsion from school. The school's jurisdiction also includes any and all activities by students' off-campus electronic communication that has or may have an adverse impact on the school or faculty. For faculty, staff, and administration, violation of the policy may result in loss of employment.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

As an institution committed to fostering innovation and preparing our students for a rapidly evolving world, Unquowa School acknowledges the transformative potential of artificial intelligence. We recognize the emergence of powerful AI tools that are reshaping industries and learning environments. While we are actively exploring the responsible and effective integration of these technologies into our curriculum, **the use of AI tools by students for academic purposes is not currently permitted.** Our priority is to ensure that any future implementation aligns with our educational values, promotes critical thinking, and supports equitable access for all learners. We will continue to evaluate AI advancements and develop comprehensive guidelines to best serve our school community.

Network

No one may attempt to bypass any security system of the network. Passwords must be kept confidential and not shared. Users are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of their usernames and passwords and are responsible for activities that occur under the account. Users will immediately notify the technology coordinator of any unauthorized use of their account or any other breach of security. Users will always log off or exit from their account at the end of use. Music files and any other large copyrighted files may not be downloaded or emailed through the school network.

Software and Hardware

Academic use of computers and the network takes precedence over all other activities. Sound must be turned off except when required in a class or by a teacher.

Internet

The Internet is to be primarily used for academic research. Areas of the Internet that would be objectionable to parents or teachers are off limits to all students. Even though Unquowa has an Internet filtering system, it does not provide 100% blocking of objectionable sites. If an objectionable site is encountered accidentally, students are expected to leave that area immediately.

Students should never give out personal information over the Internet. Game playing is not allowed during the academic day unless required and supervised by the teacher.

Social Networking

Faculty and staff should not make their online profiles and information available to students or prospective students or accept friend invitations from current students. Faculty and staff who have contact with alumni through social networking sites are expected to maintain the same level of appropriateness they would display in the school setting. Postings that offend and cause embarrassment to others on websites, blogs or any other public or private internet forum or community are prohibited.

Email

Email messages that are anonymous or signed with a pseudonym may not be sent from the school network or from outside the school. Chain letters, spamming, and solicitations are prohibited. Students may not use address lists or “reply all” to email to an entire class, grade, school, or faculty unless approved by a faculty member.

Because email is written, its tone is difficult to determine. Take care to write an email that is not hurtful to the recipient or disrespectful of someone mentioned in it. Be aware that email can be forwarded to others.

Third Party Applications

We use **Google Workspace for Education** along with select, approved third-party services to support our learning and organization. The security of these accounts and the privacy of our family’s data are our top priorities. All accounts are **fully secure**, and no personal information is ever shared, sold, or used for commercial purposes. Any external services connected to our Workspace environment are carefully vetted to ensure they meet strict privacy standards, keeping our digital space safe and protected.

Plagiarism

Information distributed electronically should be treated the same way as print sources. Rules against plagiarism as cited apply. All information must be properly documented. Students should seek advice from their teachers about citing sources.

Technology in the Early Years

Beginning in the 2026–2027 school year, classroom technology will be intentionally limited in PreK through Grade 3. Students will continue to receive developmentally appropriate technology instruction, including keyboarding, digital citizenship, and foundational technology skills, while classroom learning emphasizes hands-on experiences, collaboration, creativity, and play.

Addendum

Farm to Fork Dining Program

Vision: *To provide a nutritionally balanced, delicious, environmentally and ethically responsible menu that utilizes high quality, local, and sustainably produced ingredients.*

With this vision in mind our dining program promotes:

- Environmental awareness by reducing waste, sourcing responsibly, and utilizing our recycling and composting programs.
- Nutritionally diverse choices of meals by preparing fresh, whole, unprocessed foods. Ideally local and organic whenever possible and always keeping in mind allergies and dietary restrictions.
- Supportive community actions by sourcing from local producers whenever possible.
- A school teaching garden and the use of its produce.
- Inclusive dining experience that engages students and faculty providing ample time for eating and encouraging good eating habits and manners.
- Open dialogue with parents, teachers, and students to encourage learning and growth opportunities as well as creating cross-curriculum learning experiences through utilizing the kitchen.

Some of our local sources include: Fleischer's Craft Butcher, Fairfield Bread Company, Sport Hill Farm, Fairfield Cheese Shop.

Some examples of cross-curriculum learning experiences: Humanities lunches inspired by books from Afghanistan and Chile, Chinese New Year lunch, Food Portion Size Activity for Health Class.

Food Service Allergy Policy

The Food Service Staff shall:

1. **Policy:** Provide in-service training to all Food Service employees regarding food allergies and safe food handling practices to avoid cross-contact with potential food allergens.
Procedure: At least once per academic year, the entire food service team will undergo Food Allergy Training such as the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) Food Allergy Training Guide for College and University Food Service (or similar as approved by the Head of School). This will include a facilitated class, reading material, quizzes and video. New employees whose employment starts after the training must undergo the training before they start work.
2. **Policy:** Food service employees will take precautions to avoid cross-contact of foods/ingredients that may contain a food allergen.
Procedure: This includes, but is not limited to wearing non-latex gloves. Gloved hands will be washed or changed during extended use to avoid cross contact with potential food allergens. Fresh and clean utensils, cutting boards, and work surfaces will be used after the use of a food containing an approved allergen (i.e. wheat, milk, soy)

3. **Policy:** Maintain a list of students with food allergies within the food service area with a photo of the student wherever possible, (Not for public viewing). This list will include kitchen staff signature areas to confirm review.
Procedure: List will be reviewed with the food service team weekly and with the school Nurse and Head of School at least at the beginning of each semester. Any updates throughout the year will be reviewed immediately as posted.
4. **Policy:** Maintain knowledge of which food products contain allergens.
Procedure 1: With the exception of whole, fresh fruits, vegetables or meat products, all food used in the school's food service must have an ingredient list. If it does not, do not use it.
Procedure 2: A daily kitchen pre-service meeting will take place with all staff to discuss food allergens in the day's menu.
Procedure 3: Posters for "*How to Read a Label for a Tree Nut Free Diet*" (Milk, Egg, Peanut, Wheat, Soy Free) will be posted at all times in the kitchen and reviewed with food service staff four times per year.
5. **Policy:** The following food allergens policies will be enforced:
- Peanuts: No products containing, or processed in a facility that processes peanuts will be accepted in the school's food service.
 - Tree Nuts: No products containing, or processed in a facility that processes tree nuts (see "*How to Read a Label for a Tree Nut Diet*" for the list of tree nuts) will be accepted in the school's food service.
 - Eggs: Eggs and egg products will be served in the school. However, the following will be enforced:
 - 1) The salad bar will contain eggs and egg products at times. When this occurs, these containers will be organized together, labeled with item identifiers (see Policy # 6 below). Mayonnaise will only be served on individual packets.
 - 2) All other menu items containing eggs will be identified by the chef talks and the menu board (see Policy #6 below).
 - 3) Kitchen staff and teachers at the dining room tables will be aware of this allergy and guide both student consumption and self-advocacy.
 - 4) Dairy: Kitchen staff and teachers at the dining room tables will be aware of this allergy and guide both student consumption and self-advocacy.
 - 5) Soy: Same as Dairy above.
 - 6) Wheat/Gluten: Same as Dairy above.
 - 7) Particular Fruits & Vegetables: Same as Dairy above.
 - 8) Kitchen staff and teachers at the dining room tables will be aware of these allergies and guide both student consumption and self-advocacy.
- 6) **Policy:** Provide a transparent identification process for foods that contain food allergens.
Procedure 1: Salad Bar: A laminated item identifier card will be posted at the vessel containing the product. Example will be "This Item Contains Eggs" where a potato salad with mayonnaise is used as an ingredient.
Procedure 2: Served menu/desserts: During the daily Chef Talk, the chef will announce to the students in the dining room which item contains a severe food allergen. Also, the daily menu board will list items that contain severe food allergies. This will be executed with the severe food allergen word next to the menu item.
- 7) **Policy:** Participate in in-service training for students with life-threatening allergies including demonstration of Epinephrine use.

Procedure: Food Service staff, as well as faculty, will undergo training from School Nurse on how to react and treat food allergy reaction. Also, a poster with instructions on what to do in the event of a reaction will be posted in the kitchen.

- 8) **Policy:** If there is uncertainty about ingredients or cross-contact, do not serve the food in question.

Procedure: When there is doubt or uncertainty as to purchased or recipe ingredients, cross-contact or any other potential allergy concern. The product will be returned to the vendor or discarded.

- 9) **Policy:** Respond appropriately to all questions and/or concerns from any student with a food allergy.

Procedure: When a student with a food allergy has a question in the dining room, the Chef Manager shall be the person to address and answer the student. In absence of the teacher at the table will address the question.

- 10) **Policy:** Any student events where catered food is served at the school must adhere to the above guidelines.

Procedure: All student events catered by outside food services as well as food related fundraisers must submit menus to the Chef Manager for approval.

Calendar Events

Assembly

Parents are welcome to attend our weekly assemblies on Wednesdays at 8:40 a.m. Assemblies include birthday celebrations, performances by individuals and classes, special presentations, and speeches by our Eighth Graders.

Birthday and Classroom Celebrations

Birthdays are announced each week at our Wednesday morning assemblies.

Our commitment to providing healthy and nutritious food to our children, as well as ensuring the safety of those with severe allergies means that we do not allow children to bring in birthday treats. Food for classroom celebrations will be coordinated by homeroom reps and teachers.

Students are invited, however, to dress in casual clothes on their birthdays (or half birthdays for summer birthdays).

Portrait Day

Photos of all the students are taken in the fall by a professional photographer. Portraits are used for the student's directory ID and in the yearbook. Individual pictures will be available for purchase.

Founders' Day

Founders' Day was established to recognize and celebrate our school's original founders and those individuals who have maintained the philosophy and integrity of the institution through the decades. The event, which is for all current and former families and alumni, is held in October and includes a Farm-to-Fork barbecue, live music and games and activities for kids sponsored by the eighth grade.

The Unquowa School opened on October 3, 1917 with forty-eight children under the direction of Mrs. Virginia Birdsall. Founded on the philosophy of Miss Marietta Johnson's school in Fairhope, Alabama, this new kind of school emphasized an "organic education" of the whole child. The school was organized by the parents who operated the school on the basis of a "triangle," with the parents, teachers and students sharing equally for the good of the School.

Field Day

The School has a half-day field day in the spring, in which students participate in outdoor games. Parents are welcome to attend.

Family Math Night

Family Math Night occurs every other year for grades four through six and involves parents and children working together to solve problems, experiment, and discover mathematics. Families explore a variety of activities in estimation, arithmetic, measurement, reasoning, number patterns, and geometry. Students from seventh and eighth grade help to prepare for and run the event.

Halloween Parades

As Lower School students parade through the school, this opportunity showcases their costumes. Parents are welcome to visit and share the excitement.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting, an important fall event for our school's adult community (parents, faculty, staff, and the Board of Governors), is a time for reporting the state of the school, fiscal and academic, for the previous year and highlighting plans for the upcoming year.

Winter Festival

Scheduled in mid-December, the Unquowa Winter Festival recalls the Winter Solstice celebrations of medieval times with music, drama, costumes and elaborate sets. There is a day performance and a final evening performance on Thursday. If the kings and queens decree, an all-school pajama day follows on Friday morning.

STEM Fair

The Unquowa STEM Fair by students in grades 4-6 is held in the spring. The entire student body and parents have the opportunity to view the projects and learn from our student scientists.

Author Days

Author Days focus on authors and illustrators of children's literature. In small workshop settings, students have the opportunity to meet and learn from leading creative artists.

May Day Celebration with Grandparents and Special Friends Day

Unquowa celebrates the coming of spring with dancing around the Maypole by fourth and fifth graders and other dance and choral performances by the rest of the school. Parents, grandparents and other adult friends are invited for this special assembly. Dismissal is at noon so that students and their guests can spend the afternoon together. This is a dress-up day for all students.

Closing Ceremonies and Commencement

All Unquowa parents are encouraged to attend the morning Closing Ceremonies on the first Tuesday in June. It is a ceremony of celebration, recognition and formal goodbyes for our eighth graders with their younger classmates, in addition to the announcement of several seventh and eighth grade awards.

Commencement occurs that evenings, where eighth graders receive their diplomas and additional awards and hear from a guest commencement speaker as well as their class salutatorian and valedictorian.

Uniform & Spirit Wear Purchasing Information

Gym Uniform - Soccer & Rugby Imports - 203 254-1979

<https://myuniform.soccerandrugby.com/store/clubdisclaimer/the-unquowa-school>

Items may be picked up at their Southport location (3683 Post Road, Southport) at no charge or can be mailed to you. Green gym shorts, white or gray Unquowa t- shirt.

Lands' End School Uniform - 800 469-2222

www.landsend.com/schooluniforms

Preferred School Account #9000 2836 6

School Logo Monogram #9833209

Unquowa plaid = Hunter Classic Navy Plaid

Blakes School Uniform Company - 203 375-5901 (Stratford)

www.blakeschooluniform.com

Unquowa plaid = Plaid #55

Blake's School Uniform Company does not supply School Logo Monogram

Gator Goods Spirit Wear (Optional)

www.sideline.bsnsports.com/schools/connecticut/fairfield/unquowa-school

Gear up with spirit wear: t-shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces etc. Custom apparel and accessories from lululemon, Nike & more are available at our official Unquowa fan store.

Refer to pages 7 and 8 for branded spirit wear items suitable for uniform and P.E. dress code.