Well-Being & Joy
The School District of University City

**Healthy and Nurturing School Climates**
Students learn better in schools where they feel loved, safe, included and challenged. The School District of University City places a premium on creating an environment of well-being and joy in its schools. The District measures social emotional health in all its schools twice a year through a Panorama survey of students, staff and parents and responds to data with targeted programs and training.

**Relationships**
All teachers are trained and expected to teach with the head and the heart with the understanding positive relationships are the foundation of exceptional learning. We call this leading with a Heart of a Lion. Staff participate in Washington University in St. Louis’ Transformational Leadership Initiative, a human-centered approach to education.

**Student Voice, Social Justice and Equity**
A healthy school encourages a healthy student voice. At University City Schools students are encouraged to speak through a productive social justice mindset to better their community both in school and outside of school. As part of this work, the District is a member of WE Schools. More than 20 classroom-based service learning projects take place each year at all grade levels. Students and faculty are expected to participate in reflective circle dialogue so everyone is heard.

**Restorative Practices**
Restorative Practices is a social science that builds positive relationships and strengthens communities. All district schools utilize inclusive restorative circles that amplify student, teacher, staff and sometimes parent perspectives and mindsets. When students fail to meet behavioral expectations, restorative justice is used to repair harm from a wrong that has been done. In 2019, University City High School launched a Restorative Practices class for academic credit to further seed a restorative practice mindset in the school culture.

**Trauma-Informed**
Working in partnership with Alive and Well Communities, University City Schools consistently trains teachers and staff on trauma-informed practices with the understanding children face obstacles to learning if traumatic experiences and toxic stress are not recognized and properly addressed. University City Schools has been named a national Acceleration Site by America’s Promise Alliance and receives special support to accelerate best practices in dealing with trauma and toxic stress among students and staff.

[www.ucityschools.org](http://www.ucityschools.org)
Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
MTSS is employed for students facing academic and social emotional challenges. Care teams address social emotional and educational supports and interventions connect children and families with a variety of wrap-around programs and services offered by multiple partners.

Wellness
Elementary and middle schoolers practice mindfulness exercises. Free yoga classes are available for staff. Self-care is emphasized in classroom, school and administrative settings.

Basic Necessities
School supplies, backpacks, clothing, laundry detergent, toiletries and other necessities are collected and distributed to families and students in need. Brittany Boutique, operated in partnership with Helping Hand-Me-Downs, enables students and families to obtain clothing, shoes and other supplies in a private, shop-like setting inside Brittany Woods Middle School.

Coordination and Implementation
Working in partnership with Wyman, specialists are embedded in every school to coordinate services and programs among partners and staff and ensure all students and teachers get the support they need for academic and social-emotional success.

Learning Reimagined
The District operates under the vision of Learning Reimagined, a plan to Humanize, Personalize and Problematize student learning through modern, rigorous and relevant experiences and academics. The plan strives for well-being and joy in our students and staff, excellent staff, all hands in partnership with others, and strategic, equitable use of resources. Student voice is supported and a social justice mindset is encouraged.

Contacts
Superintendent of Schools
Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, PhD PHR - shardin@ucityschools.org

Executive Director of Student Services and Innovations
Gary Spiller - gspiller@ucityschools.org