

UMBRELLA ACADEMY

Where Leaders Grow, Communities Thrive



Student & Family Handbook

2026 – 2027 School Year

Fostering Leadership, Community & Academic Excellence

UMBRELLA ACADEMY

6140 E Peak View, Cave Creek, AZ



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Welcome to Umbrella Academy!

Dear Umbrella Academy Families,

We are **so** thrilled to welcome you to the 2026–2027 school year! Umbrella Academy is a private school and so much more than a typical classroom — it is a living, breathing community built on what we call the Umbrella Way: showing up fully, caring deeply, learning boldly, and lifting each other higher every single day. built on curiosity, kindness, leadership, and joy. Every single child who walks through our gate brings something irreplaceable, and we cannot wait to learn alongside your family this year.

This handbook is your go-to guide for everything you need to know: our daily rhythms, policies, programs, and the values that unite us. Please read it together as a family, keep it handy, and reach out any time with questions. Our door — and inbox — are always open.

Here's to an extraordinary year ahead.

With love and excitement,

The Umbrella Academy Team



Meet Our Team

Julia Piedmont — Founder & Director

With a hands-on approach to leadership and an open-door philosophy, Julia is present, accessible, and fiercely committed to every family in the Umbrella Academy community. She oversees school operations, curriculum vision, partnerships, and sets the tone for the Umbrella Way — a warm, empowering culture that makes this school unlike any other.

julia@umbrella-academy.com | (480) 694-5438

Brianna Torres Agostini — Co-Founder & Head of School

Brianna is Co-Founder and Head of School at Umbrella Academy, bringing warmth, expertise, and an extraordinary gift for building community. She is the day-to-day heartbeat of our campus — ensuring that every student, family, and teacher feels supported, celebrated, and at home.

Brianna leads student life, teacher coordination, family communication, and the implementation of Umbrella Academy's programs and values on the ground. Her door is always open, and her commitment to every child's growth is unwavering. Families are encouraged to reach out to Brianna with day-to-day questions, celebrations, and anything in between.

brianna@umbrella-academy.com | (602) 785-3772

WHO TO CONTACT?

For curriculum questions, enrollment, and school vision — reach Julia. For daily school life, student needs, and general communication — reach Brianna. Both are here for you and your family!



Our Mission & Vision

Our Mission

Umbrella Academy is a **private school** dedicated to fostering **leadership, community engagement**, and the Umbrella Way — a belief that education should be joyful, purposeful, and deeply human. and **academic excellence** in a nurturing and inclusive environment. Our goal is to develop responsible, resilient, and socially conscious leaders who carry their values far beyond the classroom.

Our Vision

To create a vibrant community of learners who are empowered to make a positive impact in the world — through education, leadership, and heartfelt community service. We believe every child has the capacity for greatness, and our role is to help them discover it.

Our Core Values

■ Growth Mindset

We celebrate effort, curiosity, and the courage to try new things.

■ Community First

We show up for each other — students, families, and neighbors alike.

■ Resilience

We embrace challenges as opportunities to grow stronger and wiser.

■ Creative Thinking

We honor imagination and original ideas in every subject and project.

♥ Kindness

We lead with empathy and treat every person with dignity and respect.



Non-Discrimination Policy

Umbrella Academy is a private school committed to a policy of non-discrimination in all of its educational programs and activities.

In accordance with IRS requirements for 501(c)(3) organizations and applicable federal and state law, Umbrella Academy does not discriminate on the basis of **race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law** in its admission policies, educational programs, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and extracurricular activities, hiring practices, or any other school-administered programs.

This policy applies to all students, families, employees, volunteers, and contractors who are part of the Umbrella Academy community.

Umbrella Academy affirms that all children deserve to learn in a safe, welcoming, and affirming environment. Any concerns regarding discrimination should be directed to the school director:

REPORT A CONCERN

Julia Piedmont | julia@umbrella-academy.com | (480) 694-5438 | 6140 E Peak View, Cave Creek, AZ



School Policies

Attendance

We do not enforce a strict attendance policy; however, **regular attendance is warmly encouraged**. Consistent presence supports continuity of learning, peer relationships, and full participation in community activities. If your child will be absent, a quick note or email is always appreciated.

Dress Code & School Uniform

There is no dress code or school uniform at Umbrella Academy. We encourage students to dress comfortably and appropriately for active days that include outdoor adventures, art projects, and physical activity. Clothes that can get a little dirty are always a great choice!

Code of Conduct

- Respect for all community members — peers, teachers, staff, and visitors — is expected at all times.
- Bullying, harassment, and discrimination in any form are not tolerated.
- Students take responsibility for their actions and contribute positively to our school environment.
- Disagreements are resolved through open, respectful conversation.
- We celebrate differences and champion a culture of inclusion.

Health & Safety

The well-being of every child is our highest priority.

- Students follow all health guidelines, including proper hand hygiene throughout the day.
- Please keep sick children at home to protect the whole community.
- Regular safety drills are conducted and our campus is kept secure at all times.
- Sunscreen is highly recommended daily — we are in Arizona! Please apply before arrival.
- Any allergies, medical conditions, or medications must be communicated to Julia in advance.

Arrival & Pick-Up

	Time	Details
Arrival	8:15 – 8:30 AM	Students may be walked in or dropped at the open school gate in the yard. Parking will be clearly marked.
Pick-Up	2:30 PM	Students are released through the yard gate. Please be on time! Need after-school care? Just reach out — we are happy to discuss options.



Your First Day of School

What to Expect

First days are full of magic and a little bit of nervous energy — and that's completely normal! Here's what you and your child can expect when you arrive on **Wednesday, August 5th, 2026**:

❖ A warm welcome at the gate

Our teachers will be waiting at the gate to greet every child and family personally. Parking will be clearly marked — just follow the signs and someone will guide you in.

❖ A tour of our campus

Students will explore classrooms, the yard, cubby spaces, the garden, and all of our amazing outdoor project spaces.

❖ Meeting your people

A cozy morning circle to introduce everyone — no pressure, just warmth and fun icebreakers.

❖ Settling into your cubby

Every student has their own dedicated cubby to store personal items, school supplies, and their house shoes.

❖ A gentle, joyful day

First day is designed to feel welcoming and calm — no pressure, just exploration and connection.

❖ A delicious lunch

Cassie will be serving her famous homemade organic lunch. Families are welcome to join!

❖ Pickup celebration

At 2:30 PM we'll gather for a mini send-off with music and a little treat for every student.



First Day Schedule

Our first day is carefully crafted to ease every child into the rhythm of school life with joy, wonder, and zero overwhelm.

8:15 – 8:30

Arrival & Welcome

Teachers greet families at the gate. Parking is marked. Walk in together!

8:30 – 9:00

Coffee & Pastries with Families

Parents stay and hang out! Enjoy coffee, pastries & good conversation while kids settle in

9:00 – 9:30

Campus Adventure Tour

Explore every corner of our amazing space together

9:30 – 10:15

Getting-to-Know-You Activities

Art, storytelling, icebreaker games — purely joyful

10:15 – 10:30

Snack Break

Enjoy your snack in the yard under the shade

10:30 – 11:15

Creative Free Play & Exploration

Art table, building blocks, instruments, books — you choose!

11:15 – 12:00

Story Time & Read-Aloud

A magical book about adventure, community & belonging

12:00 – 12:45

Cassie's First-Day Lunch

Homemade organic feast — families welcome to join!

12:45 – 1:30

Outdoor Play & Nature Walk

Explore the yard, meet the garden, breathe the fresh air

1:30 – 2:00

Our School Community Pledge

Students craft and sign their personal community promise

2:00 – 2:45

Show & Tell

Bring one item from home that tells your story

2:00 – 2:20

Reflection & Gratitude Circle

What was your favorite moment today?

2:20 – 2:30

Celebration Send-Off!

Music, high-fives, and a little first-day surprise for everyone



What to Bring

Daily Essentials

Here's everything your child needs to thrive each day at Umbrella Academy:

◆ Water Bottle

A reusable water bottle is essential — Arizona is hot and staying hydrated is non-negotiable! We require a **minimum 32 oz (1 liter)** water bottle, though we strongly encourage 40–64 oz for active outdoor days. We have a cold-water refill station on campus, so it can be topped up throughout the day. Please label it with your child's name.

◆ House Shoes

A comfortable pair of indoor shoes (slippers, soft-soled shoes, or similar) to wear inside the classroom. These stay at school in their cubby and are swapped at arrival.

◆ Closed-Toe Ankle Boots — For Outdoor Play

Our terrain is rocky Arizona desert, and safety is our priority. Students are required to wear closed-toe ankle boots for all outdoor play and activities. These can be left at school in their cubby and we will keep them here all year!

◆ Comfort Item (K–2 Students)

Younger students (Kindergarten through 2nd grade) are warmly encouraged to bring a comfort item — a small blanket, stuffed animal, or plushie. These live in their cubby and are available whenever needed. There is absolutely no shame in needing a little comfort; we love it.

◆ Healthy Snack

A nutritious mid-morning snack (fruit, yogurt, crackers, veggies, etc.). Lunch is lovingly provided by Cassie — see our Lunch Program section for details.

◆ Backpack (Optional)

A backpack is entirely optional. All students have a dedicated cubby for their belongings. If your child enjoys having one for transporting artwork and notes home, go for it!



Items That Live at School

The following items can be brought on Day 1 and left at school in your child's cubby all year long — no need to pack and unpack daily!

- House shoes
- Closed-toe ankle boots (for outdoor play)
- Comfort item for K–2 students
- Any decorative items for their cubby space (photos, small plants, drawings)



Our Lunch Program

At Umbrella Academy, lunch isn't just a meal — it's a **daily celebration of nourishment, community, and gratitude.**

Meet Cassie — Our Lunch Chef

Our beloved lunch program is led by **Cassie**, who brings passion, creativity, and a deep love of real food to our kitchen every single day. Cassie prepares fresh, **healthy, homemade organic lunches** available for all students Monday through Thursday. Every meal is crafted with whole ingredients, seasonal produce, and a lot of heart.

What to Expect at Lunch

❖ **Homemade & Organic**

All lunches are made from scratch using organic ingredients sourced locally when possible.

❖ **Warm & Nourishing**

Cassie serves hot meals that fuel growing bodies and minds for the afternoon ahead.

❖ **Inclusive & Allergy-Aware**

Please let us know of any dietary restrictions, allergies, or preferences — we will always accommodate your child.

❖ **Community Dining**

Students eat together in a relaxed, social setting. Lunch is a time to connect, share stories, and practice gratitude.

❖ **Monday – Thursday**

Cassie's lunches are available every Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, students bring their own lunch.

A NOTE ON NUTRITION

We believe food is medicine and joy combined. Cassie's meals are designed to support focus, energy, and wellness. No processed foods, no artificial ingredients — just real, delicious, lovingly prepared food.



Life Skills & Communication

At Umbrella Academy, we believe that **how students show up in the world matters as much as what they know**. Our Life Skills and Communication curriculum is woven throughout the week — equipping students with the practical tools, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills to thrive in school, at home, and out in the community.

Life Skills

◆ Personal Organization & Independence

Students learn to manage their time, organize their space, plan their work, and take ownership of their responsibilities — building genuine independence day by day.

◆ Problem-Solving & Critical Thinking

Through real challenges and creative projects, students develop the ability to think flexibly, weigh options, and find solutions with confidence.

◆ Emotional Regulation

We teach students to identify, name, and manage their emotions. Using mindfulness, reflection, and practical strategies, students build the self-awareness to navigate big feelings with grace.

◆ Financial Literacy

Age-appropriate lessons in budgeting, saving, giving, and understanding the value of money prepare students for real-world financial responsibility.

◆ Household & Practical Skills

From cooking and baking to basic repair and organization, students build hands-on competence in everyday life tasks that matter.

◆ Household Skills & Cleaning

At Umbrella Academy we believe that caring for your environment is an act of self-respect and community respect. Students learn practical household skills: tidying and organizing shared spaces, washing dishes, sweeping, wiping surfaces, doing laundry, and taking pride in a clean and beautiful environment. This is the Umbrella Way — we take care of our space the way we take care of each other.

◆ Self-Advocacy

Students learn to express their needs, ask for help, set healthy boundaries, and stand up for themselves and others — with respect and clarity.



Communication Skills

Strong communication is one of the most powerful life tools we can give a child. Our curriculum explores the full spectrum of how humans connect:

◆ Understanding Communication Styles

Students explore the four primary communication styles — assertive, passive, aggressive, and passive-aggressive — learning to identify them in real life and develop their own healthy, assertive voice.

◆ Verbal Communication

Public speaking, storytelling, debate, and discussion build confidence and clarity. Students learn to speak with purpose, listen actively, and engage in meaningful dialogue.

◆ Non-Verbal Communication

Body language, facial expressions, tone, and presence — students become aware of what they communicate without words and how to read others with greater empathy.

◆ Written Communication

From journaling and letters to emails and creative writing, students develop the ability to express themselves clearly and powerfully on the page.

◆ Digital Communication

In an increasingly connected world, students learn responsible, respectful, and effective communication in digital spaces.

◆ Active Listening

One of the most underrated communication skills — students practice truly hearing others, asking thoughtful questions, and responding with care.

◆ Conflict Resolution

Real-world frameworks for navigating disagreement, finding common ground, and repairing relationships with honesty and compassion.

◆ Cross-Cultural Communication

Exploring how culture, background, and identity shape the way we communicate fosters deep empathy and a genuine appreciation for diverse perspectives.



Yearly Calendar 2026 / 2027

Our full school-year calendar is below. Key dates include the first and last day of school, all school breaks, no-school holidays, teacher planning days, MAP testing windows, and monthly PTA meetings.

UMBRELLA ACADEMY 2026/2027

August							September							October							November						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4						1	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
17	18	19	20	21	22	23					25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
31							28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	30							
December							January							February							March						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17								15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
April							May							June													
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN							
			1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6							
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13							
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20							
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27							
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30											
							31																				

No School Holiday

No School/Teacher Planning Day

School Break

First/Last Day of School

MAP Testing

PTA Meeting

8/5 First Day Of School (Wed)

8/12-13 MAP Testing

8/3 PTA Meeting

9/1 No School/Labor Day

9/14 PTA Meeting

9/25 No School/Teacher Planning

10/5 PTA Meeting

10/9 No School/Teacher Planning

10/12-16 Fall Break

10/12 No School/Columbus Day

10/31 Halloween

11/2 PTA Meeting

11/11 No School/Veterans Day

11/20 No School/Teacher Planning

11/23-27 Thanksgiving Break

11/26 Thanksgiving Day

11/27 No School/Black Friday

12/7 PTA Meeting

12/9-10 MAP Testing

12/18 No School/Teacher Planning

12/21-1/1 Christmas Break

12/24 Christmas Eve

12/25 Christmas Day

1/1 New Year's Day

1/4 PTA Meeting

1/15 No School/Teacher Planning

1/18 No School/MLK Day

2/1 PTA Meeting

2/12 No School/Teacher Planning

2/14 Valentine's Day

2/15 No School/Presidents Day

3/1 PTA Meeting

3/12 No School/Teacher Planning

3/15-19 Spring Break

3/17 St. Patrick's Day

4/2 No School/Good Friday

4/5 PTA Meeting

4/13-14 MAP Testing

4/16 No School/Teacher Planning

5/3 PTA Meeting

5/19-20 MAP Testing

5/21 No School/Teacher Planning

5/28 Last Day of School (Fri)

5/31 No School/Memorial Day

6/1-30 Summer Break

*Dates/Events subject to change



Academic Programs

Curriculum Overview

Our curriculum is carefully designed to offer a rich, balanced education rooted in real-world application and student-led discovery. Core subjects are taught through hands-on, project-based, and rotational learning models.

Core Subjects: Math · Literacy & Reading · Social Studies · History · Science & STEM · Art & Music · Technology & Robotics

Special Programs: Yoga & Mindfulness · Outdoor Activities · Life Skills & Communication · Creative Work Projects · Community Service · Student-Led Workshops

Math at Umbrella Academy

Math is taught through a **rotational learning model** — students cycle between independent practice, partner collaboration, and 1:1 teacher instruction. On **Tuesdays and Thursdays, Sam**, our private math specialist, joins to provide targeted support and MAP test preparation. Hands-on projects — baking, building, financial literacy — bring math to life.

Literacy at Umbrella Academy

Our literacy program uses the same rotational model to build reading fluency, comprehension, and creative writing. Students enjoy journal buddies, poetry slams, book presentations, storytelling sessions, and genre exploration. Every child reads at their own level and grows at their own pace.

Assessment & MAP Testing

Each quarter, students complete the **MAP Test (Measures of Academic Progress)**. This assessment measures individual growth — not grades — and helps us tailor instruction to each child's needs. Testing dates appear in the school calendar. The following week, we meet with families to celebrate progress and set new goals.



Special Programs

At Umbrella Academy, special programs are not fixed — they are **living, breathing experiences designed around student interests and current world events**. This is the Umbrella Way: we meet students where they are, follow their curiosity, and let the world itself be the classroom.

Special programs are reimagined regularly and may include:

◆ Boarding a Virtual Plane

Students embark on virtual journeys to countries around the world, learning about cultures, languages, geography, food, art, and daily life through immersive, themed experiences. One week you might be in Japan learning origami and tasting miso soup — the next, in Brazil exploring carnival traditions and the Amazon rainforest.

◆ Going Back in Time

History comes alive when students step into it. Through themed classes built around historical events — from Ancient Egypt to the Civil Rights Movement to the Space Race — students don't just learn history, they experience it through art, roleplay, debate, cooking, music, and storytelling.

◆ Learning Through World Events

Current events shape our world every day. We believe children deserve to understand them. Special programs may be built around relevant global topics — environmental challenges, cultural celebrations, scientific breakthroughs — taught with age-appropriate depth and genuine curiosity.

◆ Student-Driven Themes

When students bring us a topic they are burning to explore, we build a program around it. This is the Umbrella Way — student voice drives the learning, and teachers create the magic around it.

THE UMBRELLA WAY

Our special programs are intentionally flexible. We follow the students, the season, and the world. Expect to be surprised, delighted, and inspired by what your child brings home.



Communication, Technology & Support

Staying Connected

Regular updates, weekly recaps, and important announcements are sent via **email and text message**. We encourage families to stay engaged — your involvement is one of the most powerful things you can offer your child's education.

Technology Use

Students are provided the technology they need for learning. Responsible, purposeful use is expected at all times. The school provides safe storage for all devices when not in use. Screen time is intentional and always educationally purposeful.

Support Services

We are committed to supporting the whole child — academically, emotionally, and socially. If you have concerns about your child's learning, social dynamics, or emotional well-being, please reach out to Julia directly. We work collaboratively with families to ensure every child feels seen, safe, and supported.

PTA Meetings

Parent-Teacher Association meetings are held on the **first Monday of every school month**. These gatherings are a wonderful opportunity to stay informed, share ideas, ask questions, and strengthen our community. All families are warmly welcome and encouraged to attend.



A Note to Our Families

You chose Umbrella Academy because you believe in something different — an education rooted in love, curiosity, community, and the full potential of every child. We don't take that trust lightly.

This year is going to be extraordinary. We will grow together, laugh together, learn from each other, and build something truly special. Thank you for being part of this community.

“The purpose of education is not to fill a bucket, but to light a fire — and once that fire is lit, nothing in this world can extinguish it. We do not raise children to fit into the world as it is. We raise them to build the world as it should be.”

— Umbrella Academy

Umbrella Academy

6140 E Peak View, Cave Creek, AZ

2026 – 2027 School Year